

ParShaT *VaYiShLaCh*— One Pager Series

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Rashi #1: Biblical Text Gn38-11a *Thus should you (Jacob's messengers) say to my lord, Esau, I stayed over with Laban, and delayed (writing to you) until now.*

Rashi text #1: Stayed Over: A) I didn't become a communal leader or even an influential person (by Laban), but I just stayed over there. (B) Therefore you shouldn't hate me because (I stole) "father's blessing" which says, "Be an influential person to your brothers," because (as you can see) that blessing was not fulfilled. C) Another matter: The Hebrew word for stay over, Garti, when rearranged spells Tarig, which means 613, the number of Biblical commandments. Even though I lived with Laban, I observed all 613 commandments and did not learn from Laban's ways.

Rashiyomi explanation #1: (A) The blue text is the *peshat*, the spontaneous, instant reaction of a native speaker, who upon hearing from a person who lived 20 years in a Town where he married and established a fortune, that he just *stayed over*, would infer that he never became established, that is, was never recognized as an influential person. Here Rashi uses the **nuance-synonym** method, distinguishing between the stronger terms, *dwelt, established*, vs. *stay over*. (B) The orange text is a **fill-in** or consequence of the *peshat*. Since the context of the chapter deals with a potential confrontation between Jacob and Esau; and since Jacob fled his home to which he was returning after stealing blessings from his father by disguising himself as Esau, leading Esau to want to kill him, causing Jacob to flee, Rashi clarifies that the message Jacob sent, toned down the theft of the blessings, since the blessing to become influential never happened. (C) The red text is simply the **Rashi form**, a clever pun to help you remember the Rashi comment. It is similar to the English mnemonic "The principal is your pal." It is just a silly mnemonic. No one thinks principals are pals; similarly, no one literally believes that Jacob observed the Torah which had not yet been given; it is simply a mnemonic to facilitate retention.

Rashi #2: Biblical Text Gn38-27b: *Jacob stayed by himself: A man wrestled with him until the dawn. And the man said, "Let me go"; Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you had blessed me." And the man said what is your name? and he said "Jacob (Which means double cross)" And the man said, "They will no longer call you double-cross; rather they will call you "wrestler", because you have wrestled with Angels and men successfully*

Rashi text #2: Unless you had blessed me: *Confirm for me the blessings father gave me which Esau complains about.*

Rashiyomi explanation #2: Superficially Rashi is commenting on the past tense "unless you had blessed me" vs. "unless you will bless me." So explains the Zohar (Vayikra 45) which is identical with this Rashi. Here, we follow the position of the Rambam that all biblical passages with angels are dreams and not real events. The man according to Rashi is the guardian angel of Esau. Let us recap the dream with the Zohar. i) A man wrestled with him till dawn (*for in darkness and bleakness Jacob, the Jews, must struggle with Esau, and evil*) ii) And dawn came (*Jacob was no longer in night; he had two wives; 13 children, and great wealth*). iii) And the man said, "Let me go" (*I no longer can fight you*). iv) And Jacob said, "I will not let you go until you had blessed me" (*remove the stigma of my stealing the blessings; confirm Isaac's blessings to me*). v) And the man said what is your name and he said Jacob (*My name is Jacob which means double-cross the stigma I just asked you to remove*). vi) And the man said, you will no longer be called double-cross (*The stigma is hereby removed as you requested*). vii) Rather you will be called wrestler (*Yisroel means to fight and wrestle*). For you have wrestled with Angels and Men successfully. (*You have spoken well: You never double crossed anyone: For Esau when angry said "He double crossed me twice a) taking my birthright, and b) taking my blessing"* (Gn27-36). *You have spoken well: a) The man acknowledged Esau voluntarily sold his birthright because he lived the life of the hunt and death (Gn25-31). b) A careful examination of the so-called blessings stolen shows that neither Jacob nor Esau were given the "blessing of Abraham". For we find that both Jacob's blessings (Gn27-28:29) and Esau's blessings (Gn27-39:40) were simply blessings of wealth and a revolving power struggle between Jacob and Esau. The blessings were never given in Gn26. Only after Esau wanted to kill Jacob did Isaac call Jacob and give him the true blessing, the "blessing of Patriarchy" (Gn28-03:04)*

Praise be Him who Chose Them and Their Learning