

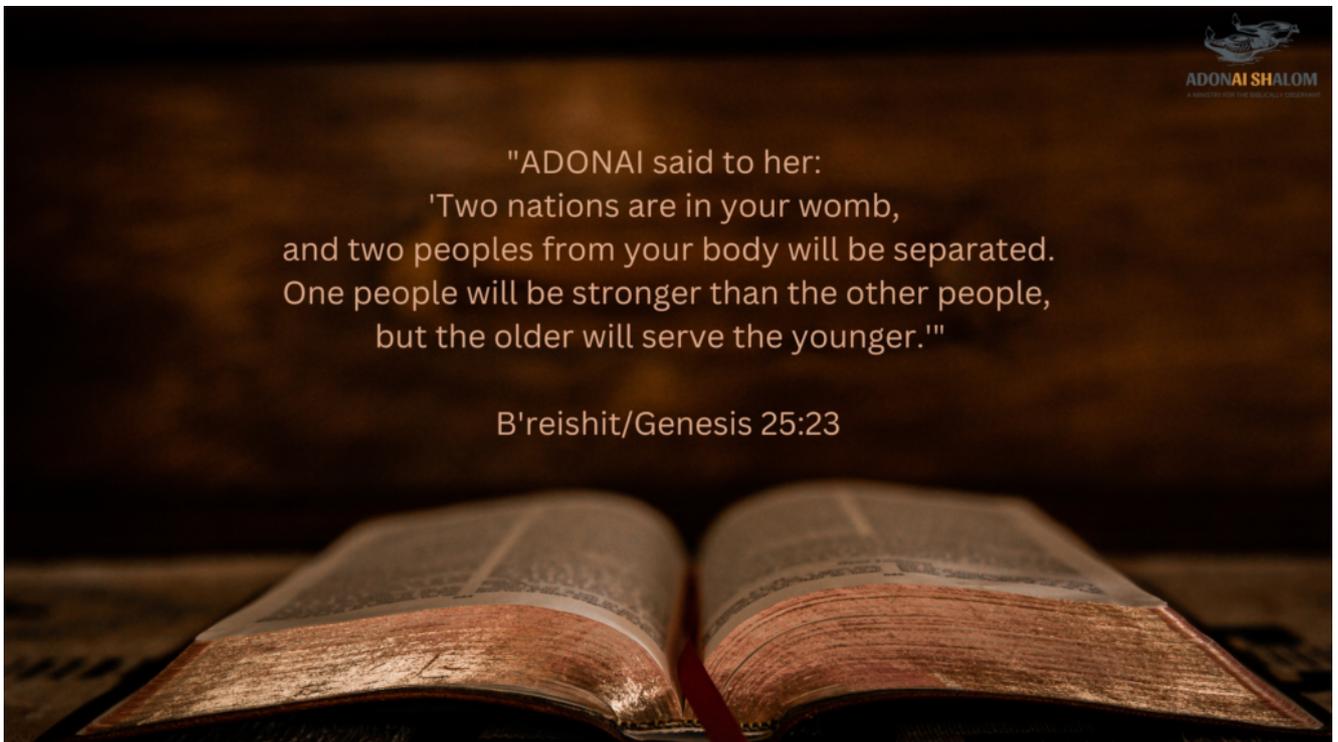
Timna & Amalek: hatred fueled by rejection

Parashat Vayishlach ([B'reishit/Genesis 32:4-36](#)) 5783 B"H
(Updated 11/6/23)

Before the holidays, we left off in [Genesis 32](#) and looked at [Jacob's \(Yaacov's\) family life](#). Today, we will focus on Esav's (Esau's) side, namely his relationship with a woman named Timna.

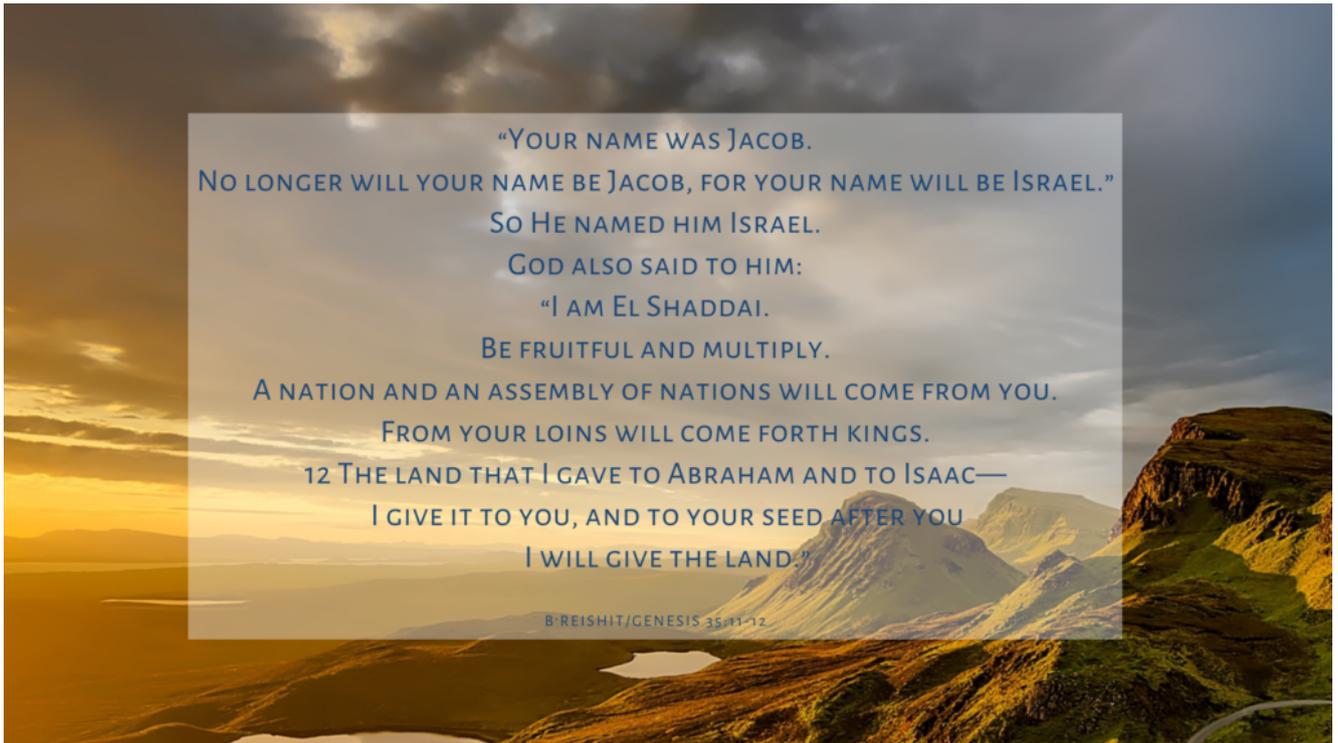
Recall the prophecy given directly to Rivkah (Rebekah) by the LORD:

["ADONAI said to her: 'Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from your body will be separated. One people will be stronger than the other people, but the older will serve the younger.'"](#) [Genesis 25:23, emphasis added](#)



Rivkah's older son, Esav (Esau) would serve the younger Yaacov (Jacob). This becomes quickly apparent in the passages that follow and by [Genesis 35:11](#) the LORD blesses Yaacov (Jacob)

and gives him a new name: “Israel.”



It is also at this point that the LORD also chooses to reveal that He is “El Shaddai.”

El Shaddai אֱלֹהֵי שַׁדַּי is a term that means “Almighty.”



The Almighty God, El Shaddai, had chosen **Israel**.

The names of God are wonderful to study, but today, I'd like

to remain focused on the family lines extending from Yaacov and Esav and how this affects the nation of Israel today.

Esav – father of the Edomites

Esav (Esau) became known as the father of the Edomites. He had at least two wives and his sons' names were Eliphaz and Reuel ([Genesis 36:10](#)).

Sadly for him, Esav gave up his birthright, remember, and as time went on, Edom faced desolation for **constantly seeking to rule over the Jewish people**. Ezekiel records:

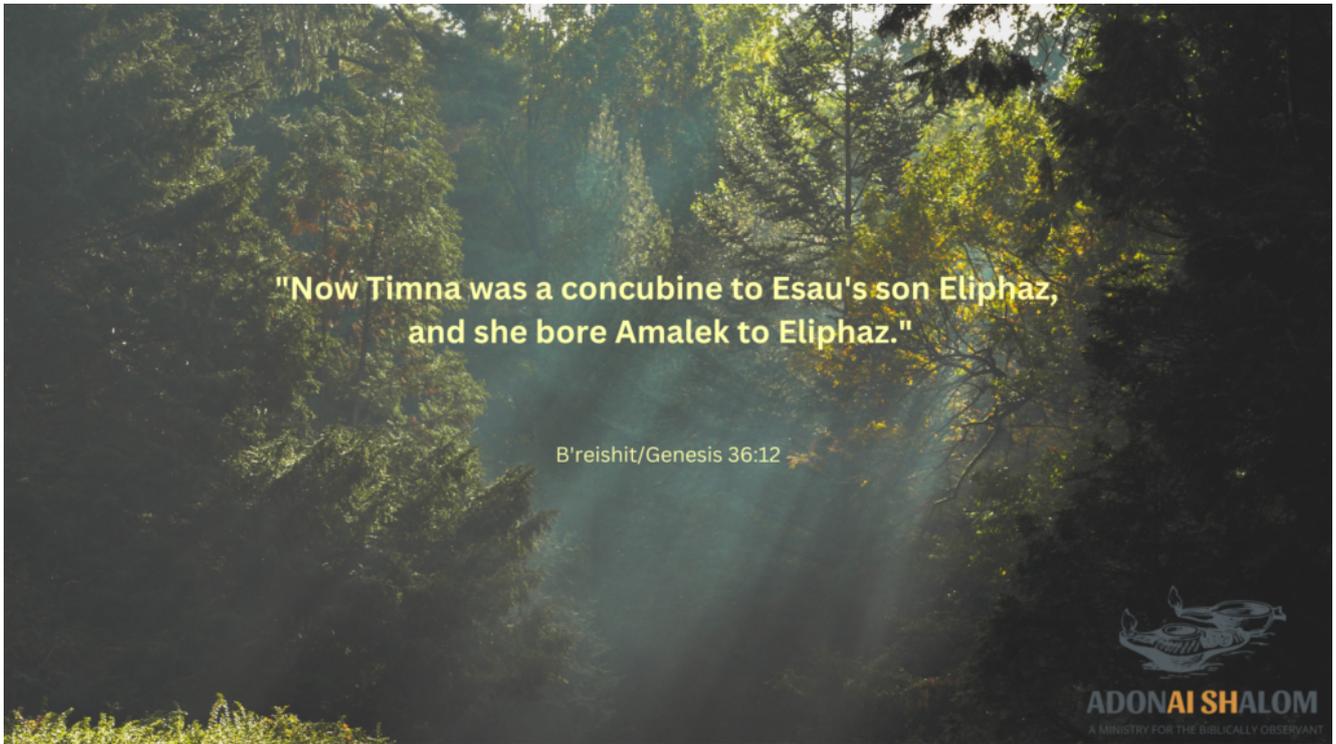
[“You have magnified yourselves against Me with your mouth. You multiplied your words against Me. I heard it.” Thus says ADONAI ELOHIM: “When the whole earth rejoices, I will make you desolate. As you rejoiced over inheriting the house of Israel, because it was desolate, so I will do to you. You will be desolate, Mount Seir and all Edom—all of it. Then they will know that I am ADONAI.” Ezekiel 35:13-15](#)

So to try to keep things succinct, just remember that there is **enmity between Edom and Israel**.

Timna of Edom

Esav's son, Eliphaz, had a concubine named Timna.

[“Now Timna was a concubine to Esau's son Eliphaz, and she bore Amalek to Eliphaz.” Genesis 36:12](#)



Timna is not well-known, and there is not much written about her in Scripture. Jewish tradition has attempted to fill in some of the blanks, but being extra-Biblical, we cannot know with any certainty the validity of the story. That said, it *is* an interesting story!

We know from [Genesis 36:21-22](#) that Timna (assuming she is the *same* Timna) was Lotan's sister – and that Lotan was one of the **chiefs** of the Horites in the land of **Edom**.

That would suggest that Timna had an **elevated status, a princess of her people**.

Why would a princess become a concubine?

Well, midrash says that Timna was a convert.

The midrashic story goes that Timna had approached the patriarchs Abraham, Yitzhak (Isaac), and Yaacov (Jacob) wanting to join the nation of Israel.

But according to tradition, Timna was rejected. So as a response, this *princess* chose to become a *concubine* as a way to still be *near* to the nation of Israel.

[“You are not to detest an Edomite, for he is your brother. You are not to detest an Egyptian, for you were an outsider in his land. The children born to them—the third generation—may enter the community of ADONAI.” Deuteronomy 23:7](#)

Timna was with an Edomite, Eliphaz, so they were not to be detested but all of this potentially paved the way for generational bitterness and hatred . . .

The Consequences of Rejection

*If you've ever felt rejected, you might know the swelling up of **anger** that can arise.*

When the feelings associated with a rejection are permitted to fester rather than be entrusted to the LORD for healing, **hatred** can blossom and flourish.

Was Timna indeed rejected by Israel?

There is no Bible verse to confirm that.

But **we do know** she gave birth to a son, **Amalek**, whose lineage has become **the greatest enemy** to Israel in history.

Harboring Hatred: the spirit of Amalek

This is but speculation, but if indeed Timna was rejected, I could imagine her teaching her son to harbor hatred against the nation of Israel.

Consider the war between Israel and Hamas. The Palestinians have, generationally, been taught to harbor great hatred against Israel and now we see this spiraling into a huge conflict. This is a spiritual issue. Israel, because it is founded on the principles of Torah, is legitimately a morally superior nation – founded on God's way of doing things.

Despite all of the animosity Israel deals with, Israel does its best to exercise restraint, patience, and consider the humanitarian needs of civilians in conflict. In complete contrast, the Palestinians do not decry the horrors of Hamas, but seem rather to justify the violence and perpetuate it. Harboring hatred leads only to grief and more death and violence.

In our congregations and communities today, how often do we show genuine love and welcome to newcomers? Are we careful to ensure that children learn to love and model forgiveness and kindness? I had a conversation today with a homeschool mother who shared sentiments with me that the other "Christian" homeschoolers in the area do not demonstrate a welcoming attitude whatsoever. How often are we each guilty of making others feel unwelcome when they so very much would like to be a part of what we are doing? We must repent for our inhospitable actions and take notice when we are unwittingly contributing to someone else harboring resentment.

But **resentment does NOT have to be the outcome.** [Ephesians 4:31](#) teaches us to

["Get rid of all bitterness and rage and anger and quarreling and slander, along with all malice."](#)



"Get rid of all bitterness and rage and anger
and quarreling and slander, along with all malice."

Ephesians 4:31



Some people will simply choose to stay in that dark place, ruminating on all the ways they have been hurt or rejected.

That's the spirit of Amalek.

The Amalekites

The generations after Amalek became known as the Amalekites because they inherited Amalek's hatred toward the Israelites:

ADONAI said to Moses, "Write this for a memorial in the book, and rehearse it in the hearing of Joshua, for I will utterly blot out the memory of the Amalekites from under heaven." Then Moses built an altar, and called the name of it ADONAI-NISSI. Then he said, "By the hand upon the throne of ADONAI, ADONAI will have war with Amalek from generation to generation."
Exodus 17:14-16, emphasis added

"Remember what Amalek did to you along the way as you came out from Egypt— how he happened upon you along the way and attacked those among you in the rear, all the stragglers behind you, when you were tired and weary—he did not fear God. Now when ADONAI your God grants you rest from all the

enemies surrounding you in the land ADONAI your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, you are to blot out the memory of Amalek from under the heavens. Do not forget!"
Deuteronomy 25:17-19, *emphases added*

Did you notice in the [Exodus 17](#) passage above that it was in this context that we see the name of God, ADONAI-NISSI? יהוה נסי The LORD, my victory, the LORD my banner. When Hamas attacked Israel on October 7, it was in this same spirit of Amalek, not fearing God and attacking the innocent.



But no matter what Amalek tries to do, if you are on God's side, you're with the Victorious One.

There is a stark difference between the Edomites and the Amalekites. While the Edomites have their undesirability, it is the Amalekites who are considered the very worst of the worst.

If you know the history of Queen Hadassah (Esther), you will know that evil Haman was a descendent of Amalek. **There is no place for the Amalekites – their end will be one of destruction.**

[Haman's wife Zeresh was right about this 1 thing](#)

Demonstrate love

Timna may well have been a victim of rejection.

And in today's world, there are so many people who have suffered in this way.

Amalek represents all that is evil and violent and terrible in this world, but we can each do our part to show the love of our Messiah whenever possible – to avoid the perpetuation of the vicious cycles of evil and terror that continue in the world.

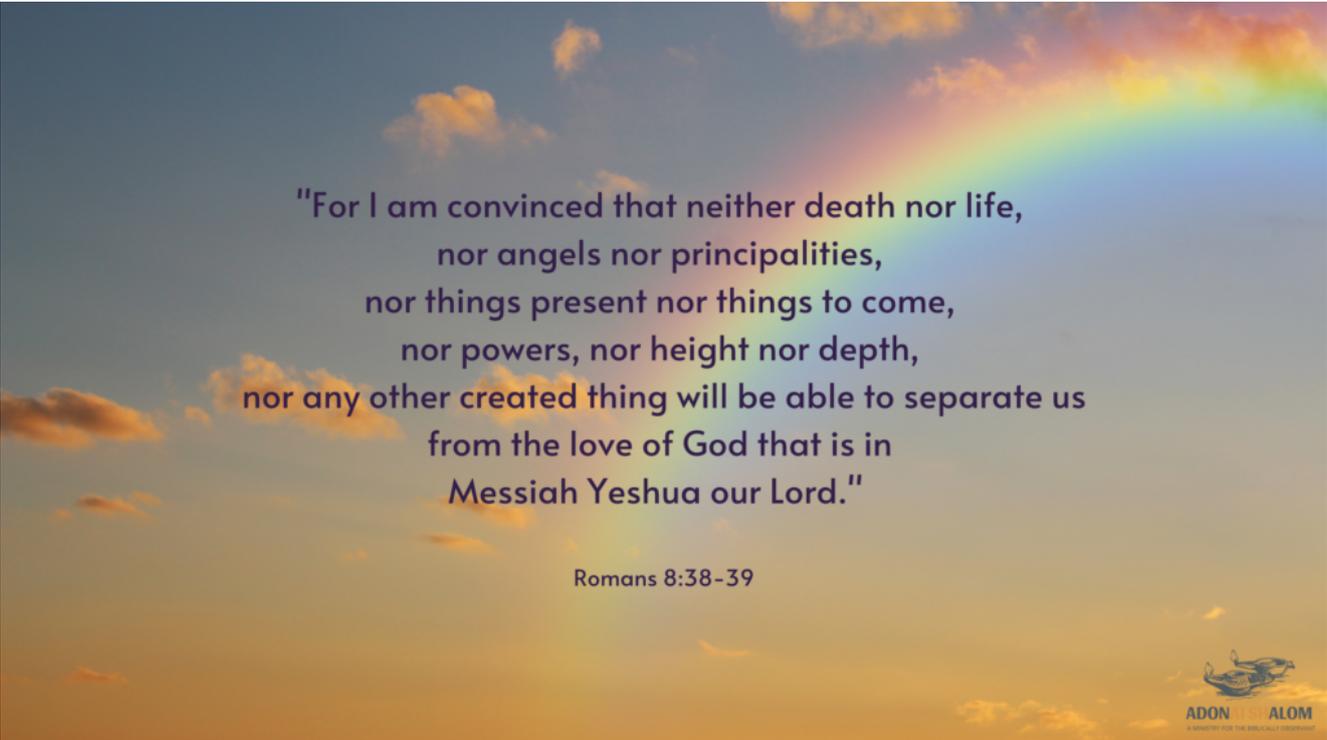
We must pray for the people of Israel, who are fighting the spirit of Amalek. We must pray that they do not become discouraged, but that they, too, would know the love of our Savior and see that all of this terror going on is part of a much bigger, spiritual battle.

We need not befriend the devil, but we can certainly make his job harder.

We must acknowledge the Truth taught by our Savior that **in this world there WILL be trouble**. But be encouraged today:

We have *shalom* because our Messiah Yeshua (Jesus Christ) has overcome the world! [\(John 16:33\)](#)

["For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Messiah Yeshua our Lord." Romans 8:38-39](#)



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And neither Amalek nor Timna nor anyone else who would conjure up harm against us will be able to separate us from our Savior's great and marvelous and victorious love!

How can we pray for you today? Have you ever felt rejected or ashamed? I assure you, the LORD can bring healing and restoration into your life, even right this very moment. He can even free you from bitterness and resentment. Do you need encouragement? Do you need peace? The LORD will give you His *shalom* and His salvation if you will invite Him to do a mighty work in you. And He will be faithful to do it. Please pray for Israel today and leave a comment below! I'd love to hear from you!