

וַיֵּצֵא

Vayetzei

(and departed)

הברית החדשה

HaB'rit HaChadashah
(the new covenant)

We have chosen this passage because it reminds us of Ya'aqov's ladder.

The Ladder

Yochanan [John] 1:43-51

43 *The next day He purposed to go forth into Galilee, and he found Philip; and Yeshua says to him, "Follow me."*

44 *Now Philip was from Beth Tzaida, of the city of Andrew and Kepha.*

45 *Philip found Natan'el, and says to him, "We have found him, of whom Moshe in the law, and the prophets, wrote, Yeshua of Natzeret, the son of Yoseph."*

46 *And Natan'el said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip says to him, "Come and see."*

47 *Yeshua saw Natan'el coming to him, and says of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!"*

48 *Natan'el says to him, "How do you know me?" Yeshua answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."*

49 *Natan'el answered him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of Elohim; You are King of Israel."*

50 *Yeshua answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you underneath the fig tree,' you believe? You shall see greater things than these."*

51 *And He says to him, "Amein, Amein, I say to you, you shall see the heavens opened, and the messengers of Elohim ascending and descending upon the Son of man."*

Our attention has been drawn to verse fifty-one, and in particular, what Yeshua says about the messengers of Elohim ascending and descending upon Himself. Please note that He says that these messengers would ascend and descend upon Him.

There are two basic ways in which to understand these words: 1) literally, or 2) figuratively. If these words are to be understood as literal, then Yeshua is saying that His disciples would witness this event. However, there is no record that His disciples witnessed such an event. We know from the record that not all the things that Yeshua did were recorded. But why record the prophecy and not the actual fulfillment? That does not seem to follow YHWH's pattern.

Some have proposed the transfiguration. However, Natan'el was not present at that particular event. Others have proposed the ascension. While this is a possibility, it does not seem to fit this scenario very well, because He went up and not the messengers going up and down. Still others have proposed the immersion of Yeshua by Yochanan haMatbi'el. However, once again this does not seem to fit this statement, as that had already happened and was in the past; so why say that they would see, rather than that they had seen? Also, this was the Ruach rather than messengers ascending and descending. Doesn't really fit, does it?

If we are to understand these words as figurative (as much of His teaching was), then perhaps we can get to a fuller understanding of what it is that Yeshua was teaching us.

The Sayings of Yeshua

We have selected a few of Yeshua's sayings to illustrate that not everything that He said should be taken literally.

Yochanan [John] 6:48
"I am the bread of life."

Is Yeshua literally bread? No! Does He expect us literally to eat His flesh?

Yochanan [John] 6:53
Yeshua therefore said to them, "Amein, Amein, I say to you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you have not life in yourselves."

If we were to take these words literally, then we have several problems to overcome. It is against Torah to eat human flesh or to eat any creature's blood. So it would seem that the only way to take this teaching of Yeshua was figuratively.

Yochanan [John] 8:12

Again therefore Yeshua spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world; he that follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Is Yeshua literally light? No, He is not in the physical sense.

Yochanan [John] 10:7

Yeshua therefore said to them again, "Amein, amein, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep."

Is Yeshua literally a door? No.

So we can see that there are teachings that Yeshua gave us that He expects us to take as figurative. So it should not surprise us that, as He said that he was bread, light and a door, He also was telling us that He is a ladder as well. But what could this mean to us?

I Am the Way

Yochanan [John] 14:6

Yeshua says to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one cometh to the Father, but by me."

If we were to examine that passage of Scripture in B'reshit (Genesis) 28:10 we would find that one end of this ladder was on earth and the other end of the ladder was in heaven. What this seems to illustrate is that if one is to go from earth to heaven, then it must be by this ladder. Yeshua tells us that He is the proper way to come to the Father in heaven. It is also by this same ladder (way) that He sends forth His ministering spirits to His people.

Just as an interesting side note: when those spirits who rebelled against YHWH lost their bid for power, He cast them down to the earth.

Revelation 12:9

And the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.

Please note that they did not descend to earth upon this ladder, but rather were cast down to the earth.

Yochanan [John] 10:1, 10

1 "Amein, amein, I say to you, he that enters not by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

10 "The thief comes not, but that he may steal, and kill, and destroy; I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly."

Please also note that Yeshua tells us that these same ones, and in particular Satan, cannot get back into the fold through the door, but rather they attempt to sneak in only to destroy those rightfully in the fold.

When we begin to understand that Yeshua is the only proper way to eternal life, then we can also see that He is the ladder seen in the dream of Ya'akov. But why would Yeshua be the ladder to eternal life? Or, why would Yeshua be the only proper way to gain entrance to the olam haba (world to come)?

Who Is Yeshua?

Yochanan [John] 1:3

3 All things were made through Him; and without Him was not anything made that has been made.

Scripture teaches us in many places that Yeshua is the Creator YHWH. When we consider this in light of some of the passages that we find in the Tanak (Old Testament), then those passages make a whole lot more sense. Here are a few of them.

Mishle [Proverbs] 30:4

Who has ascended up into heaven, and descended? Who has gathered the wind in His fists? Who has bound the waters in His garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is His name, and what is His son's name, if you know?

Since we are discussing Ya'akov's ladder, this passage takes on added significance considering that it is speaking of the very same idea of ascending and descending from heaven. Please note that the answers to these questions are rather rhetorical, and the only answer that fits is "YHWH"; but what of the second part of the last question? It is the same answer, "YHWH". The distinction between what is the Father's name and what is the Son's name is being in YHWH gadol and YHWH katan; YHWH godol meaning the greater YHWH and YHWH katan meaning the lesser YHWH. Then are you saying that there are two YHWHs? Yes. Scripture clearly bears this out. Let us continue.

B'reshit [Genesis] 19:18

And Lot said to them, "Oh, not so, YHWH."

This verse is one of the places where the Shophtim substituted the word "adonai" for YHWH's name. We have reinserted it here for clarity. Lot was standing face to face with YHWH (katan) and speaking with Him. This becomes even more apparent when we consider the next verse that occurs just a few verses later.

B'reshit [Genesis] 19:24

Then YHWH rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from YHWH out of heaven;

The YHWH that Lot was speaking to rained down brimstone and fire upon Sodom and Gomorrah, and this came from the YHWH that was in heaven. In this passage we have two YHWHs, one on earth (at that moment) and one in heaven: a lesser (son) and a greater (father). There are many such passages in the Tanak that speak of two YHWHs in the same verse.

Now let us consider this next passage in light of these other passages.

Yesheyah [Isaiah] 9:6

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

כִּי יֵלֵד יֵלֵד לָנוּ בֶן נִתָּן לָנוּ וְנִתְּהִי הַמְּשָׁרָה עַל שִׁכְמוֹ וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ פֶּלֵא
יוֹעֵץ אֵל גִּבּוֹר אָבִיעַד שֵׁר שְׁלוֹם :

Many have attempted to make this passage to be about a human son of the king of Israel. That just simply does not work. Let us consider these titles carefully. For your convenience we will put the titles into a chart.

English translation	Transliteration	Hebrew
His name	sh'mo (long "o")	שְׁמוֹ
Wonderful	pele (both short "e")	פֶּלֵא
Counselor	yo'etz ("e" long "a")	יוֹעֵץ
Mighty El	El gibbor (long "o")	אֵל גִּבּוֹר
Eternal Father	avi ad ("a" as in father)	אָבִי-עַד
Prince of Peace	sar shalom	שֵׁר-שְׁלוֹם

Some of these titles one might be able to apply to a man. But Eternal Father can only rightfully be applied to our Creator. So we begin to see the pieces of this puzzle fall into place, that YHWH has a son, who is the Creator of the universe and His name is also YHWH, at least before He came in the form of a man. While here on this earth as that man, He was called "Yeshua" (which means YHWH saves or perhaps just "salvation").

B'reshit [Genesis] 1:1

In the beginning Elohim created the heavens and the earth.

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ:

There has been much written about the first four words of this passage by the sages. Basically, it is their understanding that this passage is saying that in a beginning Elohim created the aleph and the tau.

The letter aleph	א
The letter tau	ת

This word אֶת is not translated into English, nor can it be. So the English translation is missing something important that we need to understand. The letter “aleph” is the first letter in the Hebrew aleph-bet. The letter “tau” is the last letter in the Hebrew aleph-bet. So what this verse is saying in essence, is that in a beginning, Elohim created the first and the last, whom we know to be Yeshua. He then in turn created everything else. Now please consider this passage.

Ivrim [Hebrews] 10:5

Wherefore when He comes into the world, He said, “Sacrifice and offering You would not, but a body have You prepared Me;”

It is plain to see that Yeshua is the Creator of this world. It is plain to see that He existed before anything else, but not necessarily in the form that we would understand. He then came in the form of a man so that we could understand what YHWH’s (His) will was for us.

So when we come to Yeshua, we are coming to the ladder or the means by which we may ascend to those spiritual heights and commune with Elohim.

ABBA YHWH, may You find us not only climbing this ladder, but also helping our fellow travelers to climb up as well; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach, Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

zerubbabel@onetorahforall.org

www.onetorahforall.org