

וַיִּשְׁלַח

Vayyishlach

(and sent)

B'reshit [Genesis] 32:4-36:43
In English Bibles 32:3-36:43

הפטרה וישלח

Haftarah Vayyishlach

Ovadyah [Obadiah] 1:1-21

The Fire of Israel

Ovadyah (Obadiah) 1:18

“And the house of Ya’aqov shall be a fire, and the house of Yoseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall burn among them, and devour them; and there shall not be any remaining to the house of Esau;” for YHWH has spoken it.

There is a very interesting play on words here in this verse that is instructive to us today. The word “fire” in the above verse comes from the Hebrew word אֵשׁ – “eish” as we might expect. The Hebrew word that is translated as “flame” in the above verse is the word לְהַבָּה – “lehavah,” which means “to gleam,” so by implication, “a flame.” This word is also used to indicate the gleaming point of a spear or sword. What this teaches us, is that while Ya’aqov is the fire, Yoseph is the point of that fire in much the same way that a sword has a handle as well as a point.

Zecharyah (Zechariah) 9:13

“For I have bent Judah for Me, I have filled the bow with Ephrayim; and I will stir up your sons, Tzion, against your sons, Yavan, and will make you as the sword of a mighty man.”

The southern kingdom of Judah is like a bow to YHWH in which He will bend them. It would seem as though YHWH is even now in the process of bending that bow. At some point once the bow is bent, then YHWH will fill that bow with Ephraim and when He does that then He will take aim at Yavan and shoot Ephrayim at them.

As we see in the verse in Ovadyah, Ya'aqov (the southern kingdom) is the fire and the tip or point of that fire is Yoseph. In this passage we see that Judah is the bow and that Ephrayim is the arrow. The analogy is saying the same truth, that Ephrayim is the destroying edge of Israel.

Yirmeyah (Jeremiah) 31:9

"They shall come with weeping; and with supplications will I lead them; I will cause them to walk by rivers of waters, in a straight way wherein they shall not stumble; for I am a Father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn."

Why is Ephrayim the firstborn of YHWH? Because he was first in accepting Yeshua as Mashiach, thus receiving new life and being born again as a new creature in Mashiach. The son of the father has the same characteristics as the father.

Shemot (Exodus) 15:3

"YHWH is a man of war; YHWH is His name."

As YHWH is a man of war, so is His son, Ephrayim.

Zecharyah (Zechariah) 10:7

"And they of Ephrayim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as through wine; yea, their children shall see it, and rejoice; their heart shall be glad in YHWH."

To be a mighty man, is to be a man of war, a man of valor proven on the field of battle.

Please notice what the context of Ephrayim being a mighty man is concerning in the above passage.

Zecharyah (Zechariah) 11:1

"Open your doors, Lebanon, that the fire may devour your cedars."

This brings us back to where we began this study with Judah being a fire and Ephrayim being the flame of that fire, with Esau being the stubble. We see that in this passage that same flame of Ephrayim is devouring the cedars of Lebanon. In this context, Lebanon is taken as part of the land of Israel in which he returns to settle, until no room will be found for them.

Zecharyah (Zechariah) 10:10

"I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; until no place shall be found for them."

This raises a question in our minds as to what is it that allows Ephrayim to be this devouring flame of fire?

Matithyah (Matthew) 3:11

“I indeed immerse you in water to repentance; but He that comes after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; He shall immerse you in the Set-apart Spirit and in fire;”

Indeed, we see the beginning of the fulfillment of this in the following passage.

Ma’aseh (Acts) 2:3

Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire, which separated and came to rest on each one of them.

This seems to be the fulfillment of this passage as well:

Tehillim (Psalm) 29:7

The Voice of YHWH cleaves the flames of fire.

The truth which we need to understand here is that all of us will have to be consumed by the fire at some point. YHWH in His infinite compassion and mercy has given us the opportunity to choose to be purified by the fire now, rather than be consumed by the fire later as we see in the following passage.

Kepha Bet (2nd Peter) 3:10

But the day of YHWH will come as a thief; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall be dissolved with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

If we come to YHWH now and allow Him to purify us and mold us into the image of His Son, Yeshua our Mashiach, then when YHWH melts the elements with fervent heat (fire), then we will not be affected by this as we have already been purified and there is nothing left to burn up. However, if one has not been purified when this happens, then he will suffer great and eternal loss.

Then we will be able to say with the fullest of assurance:

Qorintyah Aleph (1st Corinthians) 15:55

Death, where is your victory?

Death, where is your sting?

Make no mistake about it, YHWH is a consuming fire!

Ivrim (Hebrews) 12:29

for our Elohim is a consuming fire.

Let us examine some past examples of YHWH's consuming fire.

Shemot (Exodus) 24:17

And the appearance of the glory of YHWH was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.

At this point the whole nation of Israel witnessed the consuming devouring fire of YHWH.

B'midbar (Numbers) 11:1

And the people were complainers, speaking evil in the ears of YHWH; and when YHWH heard it, His anger was kindled; and the fire of YHWH burnt among them, and devoured in the outermost part of the camp.

Complaining in the hearing of YHWH is like playing Russian roulette with a fully loaded gun. It will cause one's death. This is particularly true when we should be thankful for all the many and manifest blessings that He pours upon us, rather than complaining.

B'midbar (Numbers) 16:35

And fire came forth from YHWH, and devoured the two hundred and fifty men that offered the incense.

Once again we see YHWH purifying His people. If the individual cannot be purified, then he is consumed like these 250 men were who offered incense before YHWH when they should not have been doing such a thing.

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 9:3

"Know therefore this day, that YHWH your Elohim is He who goes over before you as a devouring fire; He will destroy them, and He will bring them down before you; so shall you drive them out, and make them to perish quickly, as YHWH has spoken to you."

YHWH is a devouring fire to those who are His enemies and to those who hate Him. Even those who hate Israel and are the enemies of Israel, will YHWH consume with His fire.

Yeshayah (Isaiah) 66:15

"For, behold, YHWH will come with fire, and His chariots shall be like the whirlwind; to render His anger with fierceness, and His rebuke with flames of fire."

This passage seems to be speaking about Mashiach Yeshua who is YHWH in the flesh, when He comes to render the judgment of YHWH upon the earth.

Ivrim (Hebrews) 10:26-28

26 For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more a sacrifice for sins,

27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries.

28 A man that has set aside Moshe's Torah dies without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses.

To all those who teach that His Torah has been done away with (set aside), please note that such a one will die. And he will die without compassion or mercy.

Yeshayah (Isaiah) 5:24

Therefore as the tongue of fire devours the stubble, and as the dry grass sinks down in the flame, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust; because they have rejected the Torah of YHWH Tzava'ot, and despised the word of the Set-apart One of Israel.

We began this study with Ovadyah 1:18 in which we learned that the house of Ya'aqov would be a fire and the house of Yoseph would be the flame of that fire in which they would go forth and consume Esau as fire consumes stubble. Here we see much the same analogy in which fire is burning stubble and grass. Those being burned up and consumed in this passage are those who have rejected the Torah of YHWH. What we do not want to miss in this instance is just exactly what Torah is. Torah is the five books of Moshe, and it is also Yeshua, the Torah made flesh, which is represented in the above passage as "the word of the Set-apart One of Israel". So, if a person rejects either the Torah Moshe or Torah Yeshua (or even both of these) then that person will be consumed by fire.

So, we may be purified by His fire or consumed by His fire. It is each individual's own choice. What does your life declare you are choosing?

ABBA YHWH, please purify us and remove from us each and every thing that is not pleasing to You; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

Zerubbabel Ben Emunah

zerubbabel@onetorahforall.com

www.onetorahforall.com