



וישב *Vayeshev* And He Lived

[Genesis 37.1](#)—40.23 / [Amos 2.6](#)—3.8 / [Matthew 19-20](#)

Life as a Stranger Jacob lives as a stranger in the Land as did his father Isaac and grandfather Abraham. Then the story goes to Jacob's son יוסף *Yosef* Joseph, whom Jacob loves more than Joseph's brothers. And so begins the chain of events that will result in the brothers betraying יוסף, ישראל *Yisra'el* Israel going down to Egypt, redemption through Passover centuries later, and so many parallels to the life of ישוע *Yeshua* Jesus/salvation.

Dreams It's Jacob's obvious preference for יוסף that ticks off the brothers. But יוסף makes it worse by telling them his dreams. And so they hate him even more. In the first dream, his brothers' sheaves of wheat bow down to his. In his second dream, 11 stars plus the sun and moon bow down to him. Jacob rebukes יוסף for this dream, asking if he means that his whole family will bow to him—and that's exactly what happens.



God works all things together for good, for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose, [Romans 8.28](#).

It is the brothers' very hatred of יוסף and his dreams that lead them to strip his clothes, put him in the earth, raise him from the earth, sell him to Gentiles, and dip his coat in goat's blood to deceive Jacob. יוסף ends up in Egypt in the home of Potiphar. He becomes so much like a Gentile that his own brothers won't recognize him. Through his trials, יוסף is so accepted by the Gentiles that he will be second in power only to Pharaoh in Egypt.

יוסף and ישוע Both יוסף and ישוע are loved by their Fathers, sent to do their Fathers' will, their pleading goes ignored by their brothers, they are betrayed by their brothers, stripped, put into the earth, raised from the earth, sold for silver, punished, accepted by Gentiles, confused by their Jewish brothers as actually being Gentile, finally recognized as regal authority, and their brothers bow to them. [Revelation 19.13](#) says that when the Word of God appears again, He will be in a robe dipped in blood.

Transgressions: Jewish and Christian In [Amos 2.6](#), God says that one of the transgressions of ישראל is that they sell the righteous for silver. ישראל did this with both יוסף and ישוע. But in the two verses before that, God also lists rejecting the תורה [Torah](#) Law/Instruction of יהוה [YHVH](#) The LORD and not keeping His statutes. The Church has done this. Both ישראל and the Church need to repent.



Hidden Identity Abraham and Isaac conceal their wives' identities. Jacob conceals his identity from Isaac to get the blessing. Leah conceals her identity from Jacob. Tamar conceals her identity from Judah. יוסף, when his brothers arrive in Egypt for food, conceals his identity from them. For much of the last 2,000 years, the identity of ישוע is hidden from his Jewish brothers—they don't know He is the Messiah, and they think He is a Gentile!

Who is Benjamin? Benjamin is mentioned as a son of Rachel in [Genesis 35.24](#), then not again until [Genesis 42.4](#), when Jacob keeps Benjamin from going down into Egypt the first time with his brothers. Over the next three chapters, Benjamin's presence is the catalyst that leads יוסף to reveal himself to his brothers.

יוסף is a type of ישוע. Benjamin is a type of believing Jew. Benjamin does not reject יוסף; the believing Jews did not reject ישוע. Benjamin is mentioned at the beginning of the story of יוסף, then not again until יוסף is about to reveal himself to his brothers; believing Jews are mentioned in the book of Acts, then we won't see multitudes of them again until ישוע is about to reveal Himself to His brothers. יוסף would not reveal himself until his brothers brought Benjamin to him; ישוע *will not reveal Himself until the Jews include the believing Jews*. The brothers of יוסף repent; the Jews will repent.

Amos, Obedience, and God's Heart In [Amos 2.9a-12](#) the prophet gives God's rebuke to ישראל, that even though God fought their enemies for them and gave them their enemies' land, when God asks for something in return, Nazarites and prophets, the people tell the Nazarites to drink, which they weren't supposed to do, and the prophets not to prophesy, which there are supposed to do. The people do not want to hear from God. In [Amos 3.1-3](#) God tells ישראל that they are the only family on earth He knows. Of course, God knows all the families on earth. But He has a special relationship with the Jews. Therefore He will punish them first.

When we were raising children, we chastised them: we inflicted pain in order to change a heart attitude. It's done out of love—we didn't chastise other people's kids. Why? We didn't love them as much as our own. I told one of my boys after a certain chastisement that he might not experience that much pain again in his life. He remembers that and told me recently that even after multiple judo tournaments, including temporary blackouts from getting slammed onto the mat, and Air Force basic training and mountain survival training, he has yet to experience that pain. This sounds barbaric to some, like I'm an out-of-control parent who doesn't know that "violence only begets more violence." But if you ask our children today, they would think you were silly if you said that. They know it was done for their benefit, out of love, not anger. One of my sons was able to endure the chastisement without crying, and then smile. If I were trying to humiliate him in anger, I would get angrier. Instead, my purpose was to deliver a previously agreed-upon consequence for certain actions on his part. He did it. He got the consequence. That's it. I was proud of him for smiling after a chastisement that might have made me cry! I would shake his hand and congratulate his strength. Chastisement is about love, not hate. Punishing just to be angry can be abuse. But when done *with love in a way that preserves the child's dignity*, even children understand chastisement.

When God chastises, it's harder to see the love because we can't see God and if we're not reading His Word, we don't realize how often He inflicts it. I think sometimes God even holds back deserved consequences rather than let us misunderstand His heart.

The Church has gotten into the habit of thinking that תורה doesn't count anymore, that it's all been abolished by ישוע, even though ישוע specifically says that He did not come to abolish תורה, [Matthew 5.17-20](#). When we ask, "Can I do whatever I want because I'm free in Christ?" The answer is still, "No!" If we trust God to chastise us appropriately for turning away from Him, we won't mind as much when we suffer. Can two walk together unless they agree?

[Amos 5.12-15](#) relates how God knows our sins and waits for us to turn to Him. Then He will be with us. If we hate evil, love good, and establish judgment in the gate, it may be that God will be gracious to the remnant of יוסף.



Headed Down for Different Reasons [Genesis 38](#) starts with Judah going down from his brothers and marrying a Canaanite. [Genesis 39](#) starts with יוסף getting brought down to Egypt. They're both going down. But Judah's going down follows his idea to sell יוסף into slavery and results in suffering and the loss of Judah's sons. יוסף gets brought down to Egypt following obedience to his father and it results in the saving of many lives from famine, including the families of ישראל. So it's OK to get brought down if you're doing your Father's will! But it's not so great to go down because of sin.



What Goats Around Comes Around In [Genesis 27](#),

Isaac asks for מטעם *mat'am* savory food/"especially applied to dishes made of flesh taken in hunting" but gets a kid goat and a goat skin on Jacob instead. In [Genesis 37.31-32](#), Judah puts blood on the coat from יוסף to deceive Jacob into thinking that יוסף is dead. Starting in [Genesis 38.16](#), Judah and Tamar (disguised as a prostitute) arrange for a kid goat to be the price for a liaison, but Tamar gets Judah's signet, cord, and staff as security. Later, when Judah accuses his daughter-in-law of prostitution, she sends these items as proof that he is the father of her child. Jacob and Rachel deceive Isaac

with a goat. Judah deceives Jacob with a goat. Tamar deceives Judah with a goat. A man reaps what he sows, [Galatians 6.7](#). But God can make all things work together for good, for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose, [Romans 8.28](#).

In the family line of ישוע we find deceivers and Judah, who also seeks a prostitute, Tamar, who acts the prostitute, Ruth, a pagan foreigner who turns to the God of ישראל, and the prostitute Rahab.

Breaking Out Judah's first son by Tamar is ([Genesis 38.29](#)) פרץ *perets* Pharez/breach, the same as פרץ *perets* breach/gap/bursting forth/outburst/broken wall, and Judah's second son is ([verse 30](#)) זרח *zrach* Zarah/rising. פרץ earns his name because, even though his twin brother's arm arises first during birth, פרץ bursts forth ahead of זרח to be the eldest.

פרץ gives us an insight into [Matthew 11.12](#), translated in the KJV as, "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." From this and other translations, it seems ישוע is saying that violence or force is the way the Kingdom operates, which contradicts many other verses. Is this what He is saying?

Another Explanation of Matthew 11.12 The word translated “suffereth violence” in the Greek is βιάζω *biazō* to use force/apply force/inflict violence upon, and the word translated “the violent” is βιαστής *biastēs* strong/forceful/using force/violent. If we were to translate this passage into Hebrew, the appropriate word to use here would be פּרֵץ. While פּרֵץ is the Hebrew equivalent of the Greek words for violence, it primarily means force or action in tearing down or breaking through a wall. פּרְצִים *peretsiyim* very strong men would be the word for “the violent,” breachers of the wall. With פּרֵץ, the passage would mean, “From the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of the Heaven is being breached and the breachers are possessing it.” יְשׁוּעָה is referring to Micah 2. In [verse 12](#), God says that He will gather the remnant of יִשְׂרָאֵל like a flock. The idea is getting the sheep altogether into the sheep pen, as יְשׁוּעָה talks about in [John 10.1-18](#), when He says that He is the Good Shepherd. In that passage, יְשׁוּעָה says that He will lead the sheep out, because they know His voice and they follow Him. [Verse 13](#) of Micah 2 makes it clear יְשׁוּעָה is referring to it when it says that the פּרֵץ breaker has come up before them, they have פּרֵץ broken up/broken out, passed through the gate, and their King, יְהוָה is at the head of them.

Announced by Elijah/John the Baptist, יְשׁוּעָה is breaking down the barrier between heaven and earth. By His life and sacrifice, those who know the Good Shepherd’s voice simultaneously break out of the world and into the Kingdom of Heaven. We don’t need to be violent to get into the Kingdom of Heaven. But we need to be willing to break through with יְשׁוּעָה into the life He offers us.

Ready?

Go!

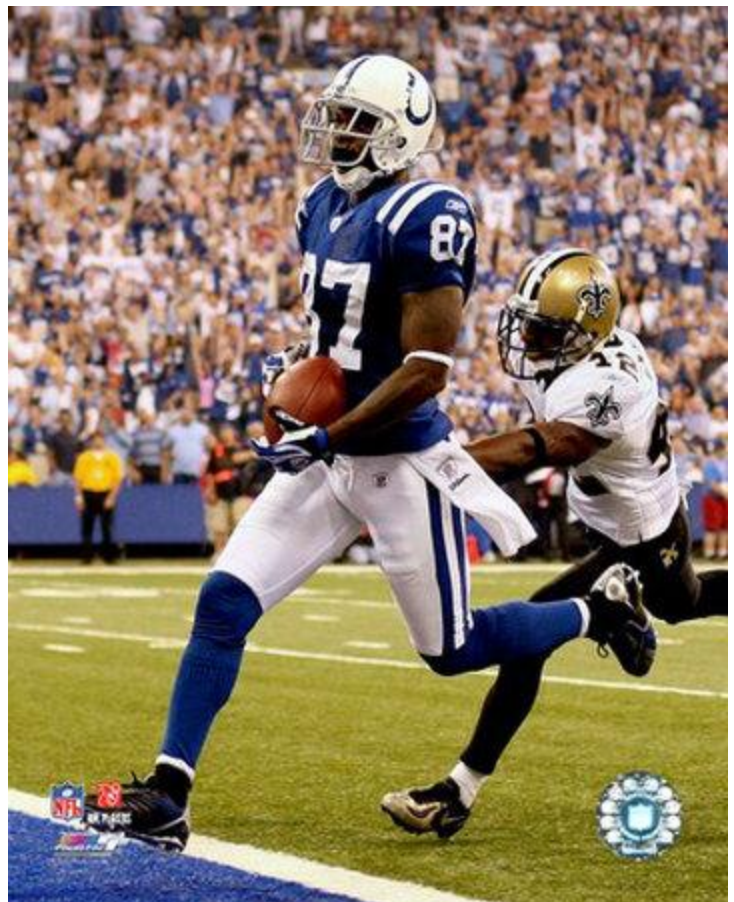


Run to Live! When **יוסף** is tempted by Potiphar's wife in [Genesis 39](#), he runs. True, he goes to prison, but eventually he rises to a position of great authority and honor. The biblical strategy when tempted: Run like Joseph. When faced with the devil: Resist, and he will flee, [James 4.7](#). Too often, immature believers get these two mixed up. They try to resist temptation and flee the devil. Resisting temptation instead of fleeing is asking for trouble.

When tempted, **פגע**, *Run!*



Football players are paid a lot of money to carry a ball across a line, and they work very hard at it. We can work at least as hard at escaping from sin!



Glossary, in order of appearance:

וישב	<i>vayeshev</i>	and he lived
יוסף	<i>Yosef</i>	Joseph
ישראל	<i>Yisra'el</i>	Israel
ישוע	<i>Yeshua</i>	Jesus/salvation
תורה	<i>Torah</i>	Law/instruction
יהוה	<i>YHVH</i>	The LORD/God's holy Name
מטעם	<i>mat'am</i>	savory food/"especially applied to dishes made of flesh taken in hunting"
פרץ	<i>perets</i>	Pharez/breach
פרץ	<i>perets</i>	breach/gap/bursting forth/outburst/broken wall
זרח	<i>zerach</i>	Zarah/rising
βιάζω	<i>biazō</i>	to use force/apply force/inflict violence upon
βιαστής	<i>biastēs</i>	strong/forceful/using force/violent
פרצים	<i>peretsiym</i>	very strong men