

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

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What's in a Name?



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"What's your name?" That's normally the first question we ask when we meet somebody new. It's a great conversation opener because everybody knows the right answer! This week though, that becomes a challenging question for our forefather Yaakov (Jacob).

There's a moment in which he finds himself alone, on the opposite side of the river to the rest of his family, and he's accosted by a man. They fight each other until dawn, when eventually the man tells Yaakov to let him go. Yaakov will not let him

leave until the man gives him a blessing.

The man, who it turns out is an angel, says, "Your name shall no longer [only] be Yaakov, but Yisrael, for you have striven with beings divine and human, and have prevailed."

From this point onwards, Yaakov himself maintains a dual identity, sometimes referred to as Yaakov and sometimes as Yisrael, but the nation that emerges from him, the Jewish people, becomes known as Bnei Yisrael, the Children of Israel. Our central prayer becomes Shema Yisrael (Listen, Israel), a reminder of the power and oneness of God, spoken specifically to the children of Israel.

Bereishit Rabbah, an early rabbinic

commentary, explains the blessing that Yaakov received from the angel to mean that Yaakov had heavenly struggles and earthly struggles; he fought an angel but also faced conflict with his brother Esav here on earth, and he managed to overcome both. One of the root meanings of the word Yisrael is *Yashar-El*, the upright ones of God. We're named the Children of Israel as we too will face both physical and spiritual struggles; throughout life we have ups and downs, and it can feel extremely challenging to know the right thing to do and the correct way to respond. As the Children of Israel, we have the power to overcome anything, in an upstanding way and emerge stronger than ever before.

Parasha Wordsearch

J	T	S	H	E	C	H	E	M	S	A	M	O
H	Y	X	E	D	L	L	E	G	N	A	Y	I
C	I	C	I	K	I	E	A	B	S	Y	R	U
A	H	H	W	G	N	N	A	T	W	A	N	B
N	K	A	F	S	W	E	A	R	C	R	I	I
A	E	L	M	U	L	O	P	H	S	U	T	N
A	G	E	E	O	H	Y	E	R	P	I	R	Y
N	D	P	K	R	R	L	E	J	M	R	Y	A
M	Y	H	I	Y	J	V	S	G	I	E	E	M
G	S	C	B	S	K	E	A	E	L	O	W	I
K	A	A	N	M	K	A	V	K	Y	A	Q	N
F	Z	M	E	H	C	E	L	T	E	B	T	H

CANAAN
ESAV
ANGEL
YISRAEL
LIMP
SHECHEM
CHAMOR
DINAH
BINYAMIN
RACHEL
BET LECHEM
MACHPELAH

