

Punch Up Your Drash

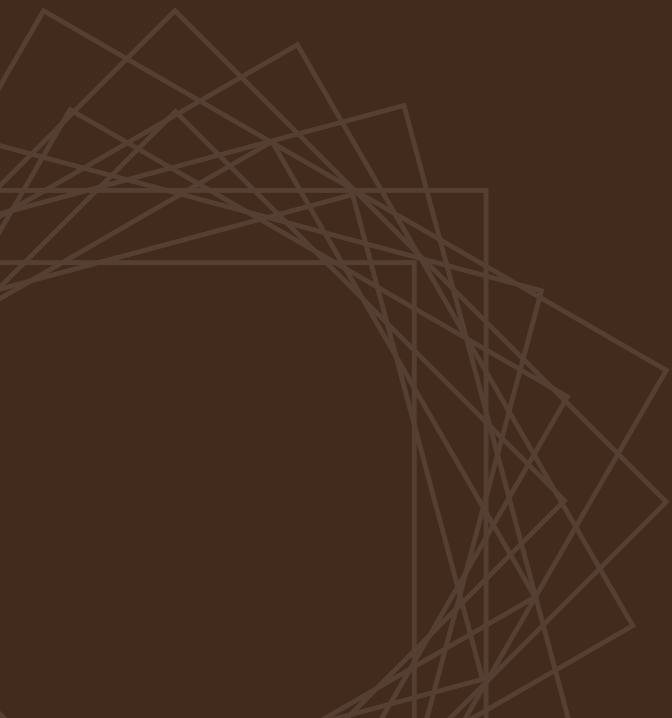
Crafting Concise Divrei Torah

Rabbi Gabriel Botnick



Overview of Session

- Quick Bio
- Understand the Context
- Best Practices
- Introduction to Available Resources/Tools
- The Writing Process
- Practice (Writing a 4-Line Drash)



Understand the Context

- Know Your Audience
- Know Your Timeframe
- Know Your Topic

How Might Your Drash Change if:

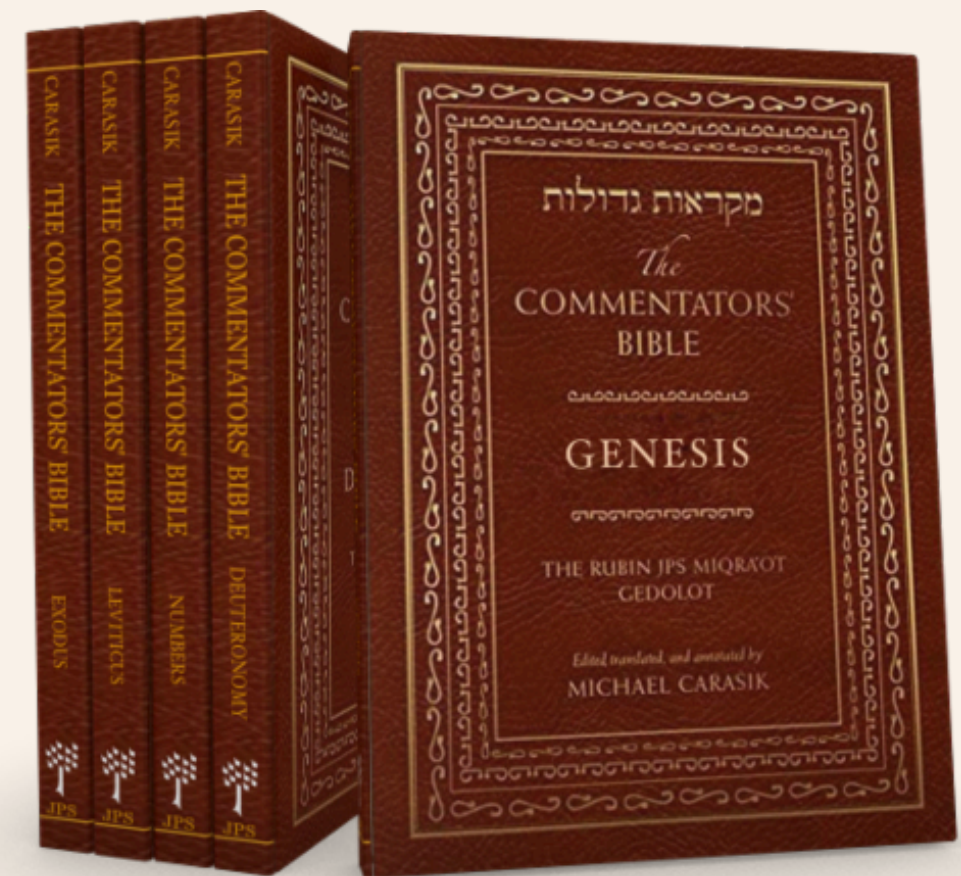
- Your audience consists of general shulgoers, committed learners, teens, kids?
- You have 5, 10, or 15 minutes?
- You're speaking on Shabbat, at a Shivah, or at a Tisch?

Best Practices

- Heart vs Head
 - Start with your Nafka Minah (takeaway) and work backwards
 - Never assume - always explain
 - Sandwich technique
 - Brief Bios
- K.I.S.S. (Keep It Simple, Shlemiel)
 - Carpark Metaphor
 - Logical Flow

Available Resources + Tools

- Texts
 - Chumash/Tanakh
 - Mikra'ot Gedolot (Commentator's Bible)
- Websites
 - Sefaria.org



Browse the Library



Tanakh

Torah, Prophets, and Writings, which together make up the Hebrew Bible, Judaism's foundational text.

Talmud

Generations of rabbinic debate about law, ethics, and Bible, structured as commentary on the Mishnah with stories interwoven.

Halakhah

Legal works providing guidance on all aspects of Jewish life. Rooted in past sources and growing to address changing realities.

Liturgy

Prayers, poems, and ritual texts, like Siddur and Haggadah, recited in daily worship or at specific occasions.

Tosefta

Companion volumes to the Mishnah, containing laws and discussions that were not included in

Mishnah

First major work of rabbinic literature, compiled around 200 CE, documenting a multiplicity of legal opinions in the oral tradition.

Midrash

Interpretations and elaborations upon biblical texts, including stories, parables, and legal deductions.

Kabbalah

Mystical works addressing topics like God's attributes and the relationship between God's eternity and the finite universe.

Jewish Thought

Jewish philosophy and theology, ranging from medieval to contemporary, analyzing topics like free will and chosenness.

Chasidut

Spiritual revival movement founded in the 18th century, focusing on communion with God and

A Living Library of Torah

Sefaria is home to 3,000 years of Jewish texts. We are a nonprofit organization offering free access to texts, translations, and commentaries so that everyone can participate in the ongoing process of studying, interpreting, and creating Torah. [Learn More >](#)

▶ Getting Started (2 min)

Recently Viewed

Pirkei Avot 5:21 • Sanhedrin 42a:15 • Yalkut Shimoni on Nach 960:38

[All history >](#)

Translations

Access key works from the library in several languages.

عربي • Deutsch • English • Esperanto • Español • فارسی • suomen kieli • Français • română • Italiano • Polski • Português • Русский • Türkçe • עִבְרִית

TANAKH



TORAH (The Five Books of Moses)

Genesis

Creation, the beginning of mankind, and stories of the patriarchs and matriarchs.

Exodus

The Israelites' enslavement in Egypt, miraculous redemption, the giving of the Torah, and building of the Mishkan (Tabernacle).

Leviticus

Laws of sacrificial worship in the Mishkan (Tabernacle), ritual purity, and other topics like agriculture, ethics, and holidays.

Numbers

Wanderings of the Israelites in the desert, census, rebellion, spies and war, interspersed with laws.

Deuteronomy

Moses' final speeches, recalling events of the desert, reviewing old laws, introducing new ones, and calling for faithfulness to God.

PROPHETS

Joshua

Conquer, and settle Israel under the leadership of Joshua.

Judges

Cycles of sin, foreign oppression, repentance, and redemption through leaders appointed by God.

About Tanakh

The Tanakh, or Hebrew Bible, is Judaism's foundational text. "Tanakh" is an acronym for the three sections of the canon, the Torah (the Five Books of Moses), Nevi'im (Prophets), and Ketuvim (Writings). This first library of the Jewish people contains many genres: narrative history, law, poetry, wisdom, and theology. It begins with the creation of the world and ends with Cyrus's edict that the Jews be allowed to return to Judea and rebuild their Temple in Jerusalem in 539 BCE.

Weekly Torah Portion

Vayigash

Genesis 44:18-47:27

Haftarah

Ezekiel 37:15-28

All Portions >

Visualizations

Explore interconnections among texts with our interactive visualizations.

Genesis 47:28 Revised JPS, 2023 [icon] A

Egypt, in the region of Goshen; they acquired holdings in it, and were fertile and increased greatly.

- Source
- Translation
- Source with Translation

Vayechi

Jacob lived seventeen years in the land of Egypt, so that the span of Jacob's life came to one hundred and forty-seven years.

28

עשרה שבע

Layout [icon] [icon] [icon]

Aliyot

Font Size [minus] [plus]

Vowels

Cantillation

And when the time approached for Israel to die, he summoned his son Joseph and said to him, "Do me this favor, place your hand under my thigh as a pledge of your steadfast loyalty: please do not bury me in Egypt.

29

אֲנִי אֶפְתָּח יָדַי וְאֶמַּת אֶל־נְאֻם לְבָנִי לְיוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִם־נָא מְצַאתִי חַן בְּעֵינֶיךָ שִׁים־נָא יָדְךָ תַּחַת יְרֵכִי וַעֲשֵׂיתָ עִמָּדִי חֶסֶד וְאָמַת אֶל־נְאֻם תִּקְבְּרֵנִי בְּמִצְרַיִם:

When I rest with my ancestors, take me up from Egypt and bury me in

30

וְשִׁכַבְתִּי עִם־אֲבֹתַי וְנִשְׂאתָנִי מִמִּצְרַיִם

Vayechi

Jacob lived seventeen years in the land of Egypt, so that the span of Jacob's life came to one hundred and forty-seven years.

28 וַיְחִי יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם שִׁבְעַת עָשָׂרָה שָׁנָה וַיְהִי יַמֵּי יַעֲקֹב שְׁנַיִם חֲזָיוֹן שִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים וְאַרְבָּעִים וּמֵאֵת שָׁנָה:

And when the time approached for Israel to die, he summoned his son Joseph and said to him, "Do me this favor, place your hand under my thigh as a pledge of your steadfast loyalty: please do not bury me in Egypt.

29 וַיִּקְרְבוּ יַמֵּי יִשְׂרָאֵל לָמוּת וַיִּקְרָא לְבָנּוֹ לְיוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִם־נָא מִצְאֹתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ שִׁים־נָא יָדְךָ תַּחַת יְרֵכִי וַעֲשֵׂיתָ עִמָּדִי חֶסֶד וְאָמַת אֶל־נָא תִקְבְּרֵנִי בְּמִצְרַיִם:

When I rest with my ancestors, take me up from Egypt and bury me in their burial-place." He replied, "I will do as you have spoken."

30 וְשָׁכַבְתִּי עִם־אֲבֹתַי וְנִשְׂאֹתֶנִי מִמִּצְרַיִם וְקִבַּרְתֶּנִי בְּקִבְרֹתָם וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי אֶעֱשֶׂה כְּדַבְּרְךָ:

RESOURCES

- About this Text
- Table of Contents
- Search in this Text
- Translations (26)

RELATED TEXTS

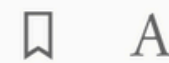
- Commentary (116) [EN]
- Talmud (3) [EN]
- Midrash (17) [EN]
- Halakhah (1)
- More

RESOURCES

- Sheets (89)
- Topics (5)
- Manuscripts (1)
- Torah Readings (1)



Genesis 47
Revised JPS, 2023



Vayechi

Jacob lived seventeen years in the land of Egypt, so that the span of Jacob's life came to one hundred and forty-seven years.

28 וַיְחִי יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם שִׁבְעַ עָשָׂרָה
שָׁנָה וַיְהִי יַמֵּי יַעֲקֹב שְׁנַיִם חֲזָיוֹן שִׁבְעַ
שָׁנִים וְאַרְבָּעִים וּמֵאֵת שָׁנָה:

And when the time approached for Israel to die, he summoned his son Joseph and said to him, "Do me this favor, place your hand under my thigh as a pledge of your steadfast loyalty: please do not bury me in Egypt.

29 וַיִּקְרְבוּ יַמֵּי יִשְׂרָאֵל לָמוּת וַיִּקְרָא
לְבָנָו לְיוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִם־נָא מִצְּאֹתִי
חַן בְּעֵינֶיךָ שִׁים־נָא יָדְךָ תַּחַת יְרֵכִי
וַעֲשֵׂתָ עִמָּדִי חֶסֶד וְאַמַּת אֶל־נָא
תִּקְבְּרֵנִי בְּמִצְרַיִם:

When I rest with my ancestors, take me up from Egypt and bury me in their burial-place." He replied, "I will do as you have spoken."

30 וּשְׁכַבְתִּי עִם־אֲבוֹתַי וְנִשְׂאֹתֵנִי מִמִּצְרַיִם
וּקְבַרְתֵּנִי בְּקִבְרֹתָם וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי
אֶעֱשֶׂה כְּדַבְּרְךָ:

Resources



All Commentary (100) EN

Interpretations and discussions surrounding Jewish texts, ranging from early medieval to contemporary.

Rashi (1) EN

Most widely-read biblical commentary, compiled in the 11th-century, explaining the simple meaning of the text with interpretive elaborations.

Ibn Ezra

12th-century commentary focusing on the simple meaning of the text and incorporating grammar and linguistics.

Ramban (1) EN

13th-century commentary weaving together biblical interpretation with law, philosophy, and mysticism.

Sforno

Commentary by 16th-century Italian rabbi and physician.

Abarbanel (1)

15th-century commentary on the Torah and Prophets, opening each section with a list of questions on the biblical text.

Available Resources + Tools

- Sefaria.org
 - Commentaries (Selection of those in English)
 - Rashi - First Stop, Straightforward Explanation
 - Ibn Ezra - Linguist
 - Ramban - Mystic
 - Chizkuni - Midrash and Early Rabbis
 - Or HaChaim - Mystic and Midrash
 - Rabbeinu Bachya - All-Arounder (rather verbose)

Available Resources + Tools

- MyJewishLearning.com
 - Kveller, HeyAlma, et al
 - ExploringJudaism.org
 - Hartman.org.il
 - TheTorah.com
- AI Chatbots
 - ChatGPT
 - Claude
 - Copilot
 - Custom Instructions!!!
 - Always cite original sources

Types of Questions

- Upsetting / outdated / offensive / illogical
- Superfluous, repetitive, or unexpected language
- Unclear or multiple meanings

The Method

First Steps

- Identify your question
- Read Commentaries
- Determine your message/takeaway

Refining Steps

- Identify the best logical flow
- Find any relevant, supporting stories
- Tighten it up!

The 4-Part Drash

- Quick Overview
- Focus + Question
- Offer Answers + Takeaway
- Make It Relevant

Practice

(Gen. 32:25-29)

(25) Jacob was left alone. And a figure wrestled with him until the break of dawn. (26) When he saw that he had not prevailed against him, he wrenched Jacob's hip at its socket, so that the socket of his hip was strained as he wrestled with him. (27) Then he said, "Let me go, for dawn is breaking." But he answered, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." (28) Said the other, "What is your name?" He replied, "Jacob." (29) Said he, "Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with beings divine and human, and have prevailed."

(כה) וַיִּנְתָּר יַעֲקֹב לְבִדּוֹ וַיֵּאבֶּק אִישׁ עִמּוֹ עַד
עֲלוֹת הַשָּׁחַר: (כו) וַיִּרְא כִּי לֹא יִכְלֹ לּוֹ וַיִּגַּע
בְּכַף-יְרֵכּוֹ וַתִּקַּע כַּף-יְרֵךְ יַעֲקֹב בְּהֵאבְקוֹ
עִמּוֹ: (כז) וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁלַחְנִי כִּי עֹלָה הַשָּׁחַר
וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֲשַׁלְּחֶךָ כִּי אִם-בֵּרַכְתָּנִי:
(כח) וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו מַה-שְּׁמֶךָ וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב:
(כט) וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא יַעֲקֹב יֵאמָר עוֹד שְׁמֶךָ כִּי
אִם-יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי-שָׂרִיתָ עִם-אֱלֹהִים וְעִם-
אֲנָשִׁים וַתּוֹכַל:

NJPS his two wives, his two maidservants, and his eleven children, he crossed the ford of the Jabbok. ²⁴After taking them across the stream, he sent across all his possessions. ²⁵Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the break of

RASHI Esau would not lay eyes on her. But Jacob was punished for withholding her from his brother when she might possibly have brought him back to the good. For she fell instead into the hands of Shechem. **The ford of the Jabbok.** Literally “the Jabbok ford,” but in this case Jabbok is indeed the name of the river.

24 He sent across. That is, “he transferred,” ferrying things across from this side to that. **All his possessions.** More literally “that which he had” (OJPS), but NJPS correctly understands that this refers to the livestock and the movables.

25 Jacob was left alone. He had forgotten a few small items and returned to get them. **And a man wrestled with him.** Menahem identifies the verb as deriving from the word meaning “dust”: the man “got himself dusty.” The scraping of their feet on the ground raised a cloud of dust. But to me it seems that this must mean the man “wrapped himself” around him as men do when they wrestle, trying to feel their opponents. That is how this root is used in Aramaic. In any case, our Sages explain this “man” as being the prince of Esau. [E]

[E] As the word is used in “Now I must go back to fight the prince of Persia. When I go off, the prince of Greece will come in” (Dan. 10:20).

KIMHI little, in order to transfer his camp during the night. **Taking his two wives, his two maidservants, and his eleven children, he crossed the ford of the Jabbok.** He “took” them to the edge of the Jabbok, getting them ready to cross, while he himself went across to check how deep the water was. The “ford” of any river or stream is the place where the water is known to be shallower than elsewhere. Dinah, being so young that she was still with her mother, Leah, is not included in the count here.

24 After taking them across the stream. Having tested the water, he now went back and brought each of them across individually, carrying the ones who needed to be carried and leading by the hand the ones who were capable of crossing in that way, until he had brought them all across.

25 And a man wrestled with him. An angel who interacts with human beings can be called a “man” and in fact does appear to them as such. God sent this angel to strengthen Jacob’s courage; having overcome him, he need not fear Esau.

NAHMANIDES camps. [D] We see him bringing his wives and children to the bank of the river and then fording it by himself to make sure the water had not risen.

24 After taking them across the stream. His wives and children, all together. **He sent across all his possessions.** His livestock and his other possessions.

25 Jacob was left alone. See Rashi’s comment. But the straightforward explanation must indeed be that the repeated verb in v. 24 (see OJPS) is being used in two different ways (see NJPS). First he personally brought his family across; then he went back and “sent across” his possessions with his servants, leaving him as the last one on that side.

And a man wrestled with him. See Rashi’s comment. Since the Sages apparently had difficulty in pronouncing נ, they often replaced it with כ; so our verb may indeed refer to “grappling”; a comparison of Zech. 6:3 with Isa. 63:1 (and perhaps also Ezek. 27:24 with Song 1:10) demonstrates that this interchange did sometimes occur in the Bible as well. But Genesis Rabbah makes mention of the “dust” of Menahem’s explanation, which is in fact the correct one.

[D] Others think Nahmanides is saying that the order of the family in this verse is irrelevant to the order in 33:2; Nahmanides generally thinks the Torah is written in chronological order unless it explicitly says otherwise. But he may simply be cautioning against a too-literal reading of vv. 23–24.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS **wives, his two maidservants, and his eleven children.** Here he puts the women ahead, affording the children a measure of protection; in 31:17, when he is running away from Laban, he put the children ahead of the wives, again protecting them (Hizkuni). **He crossed the ford of the Jabbok.** Some say Jabbok here is just another name for “this Jordan” of v. 11 (Hizkuni).

24 After taking them across the stream. From the Hebrew word, I cannot tell whether this was a stream with actual water or simply a dry wash (Bekhor Shor).

25 Jacob was left alone. The “few small items” our Sages say he forgot is a reference to his “possessions” (v. 24); he had returned to that side to organize their transfer. They were “small” in comparison to his wives and children (Abarbanel). **And a man wrestled with him.** The Hebrew verb is unique, occurring only here (Masorah). Calling this man “the prince of Esau” should not be understood to mean that individuals have angelic princes of this kind. But the prince of Edom was also the prince of Esau, the founder of that nation (Abarbanel).

OJPS his two wives, and his two handmaids, and his eleven children, and passed over the ford of the Jabbok. ²⁴And he took them, and sent them over the stream, and sent over that which he had. ²⁵And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the

וְאֶת־שְׁתֵּי שְׁפָחוֹתָיו וְאֶת־אֶחָד עֶשֶׂר יְלָדָיו וַיַּעֲבֹר אֶת מַעְבַּר יַבֵּק׃ ²⁴ וַיִּקְהָם וַיַּעֲבֹר אֶת־הַיַּבֹּקֵךְ וַיַּעֲבֹר אֶת־אֶשְׁרֵלֹו׃ ²⁵ וַיִּוָּתֵר יַעֲקֹב לְבָדּוֹ וַיֵּאָבֵק אִישׁ עִמּוֹ עַד

ABARBANEL'S QUESTIONS † How are we supposed to understand in what way Jacob first “crossed the ford of the Jabbok” (v. 23), then took his family “across the stream” (v. 24)—after which “he sent across all his possessions”?

RASHBAM from Absalom: “David and all the troops with him promptly crossed the Jordan, and by daybreak not one was left who had not crossed the Jordan” (2 Sam. 17:22). In fact, David crossed in the same area, for by the time Absalom crossed the Jordan in pursuit (two verses later), “David had reached Mahanaim.” **The ford of the Jabbok.** Again, he forded the water so as to flee.

25 Jacob was left alone. He had taken everything he had across; there was nothing left to bring across but himself. And he meant to follow behind them, intending to flee rather than encounter Esau. **And** an angel **wrestled with him.** To keep him from fleeing, so that he would see the fulfillment of the Holy One’s promise: Esau would not harm him.

IBN EZRA brought his wives and children across. Then he went back once more, to make sure nothing had been left behind.

25 Jacob was left alone. It is not correct to say that Jacob was trying to run away, abandoning his family and all his possessions. He had already informed Esau he was on his way, and had sent the gift he promised. If he fled now, that would just get Esau angry again, and he would kill the entire camp. Jacob was a smart man—how could anyone think he would do this? **And a man wrestled with him.** Etymologically, the man “had a dustup” with him; their struggle raised dust. **Until the break of dawn.** The Hebrew idiom is literally “until the darkness lifted.” But some understand this word to refer not to darkness but to light, the light seen on the clouds before the sun itself has risen; “for one who speaks thus there shall be no dawn” (Isa. 8:20).

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יְלָדָיו וַיַּעֲבֹר אֶת מַעְבַּר יַבֹּק: ²⁴ וַיִּקְהָם
וַיַּעֲבֹרֵם אֶת־הַנַּחַל וַיַּעֲבֹר אֶת־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ:
וַיִּזְתֶּר יַעֲקֹב לְבָדּוֹ וַיִּאָּבֵק אִישׁ עִמּוֹ עַד ²⁵

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25 Jacob was left alone. He had taken everything he had across; there was nothing left to bring across but himself. And he meant to follow behind them, intending to flee rather than encounter Esau. **And an angel wrestled with him.** To keep him from fleeing, so that he would see the fulfillment of the Holy One’s promise: Esau would not harm him.

NJPS his two wives, his two maidservants, and his eleven children, he crossed the ford of the Jabbok. ²⁴After taking them across the stream, he sent across all his possessions. ²⁵Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the break of

RASHI Esau would not lay eyes on her. But Jacob was punished for withholding her from his brother when she might possibly have brought him back to the good. For she fell instead into the hands of Shechem. **The ford of the Jabbok.** Literally “the Jabbok ford,” but in this case Jabbok is indeed the name of the river.

24 He sent across. That is, “he transferred,” ferrying things across from this side to that. **All his possessions.** More literally “that which he had” (OJPS), but NJPS correctly understands that this refers to the livestock and the movables.

25 Jacob was left alone. He had forgotten a few small items and returned to get them. **And a man wrestled with him.** Menahem identifies the verb as deriving from the word meaning “dust”: the man “got himself dusty.” The scraping of their feet on the ground raised a cloud of dust. But to me it seems that this must mean the man “wrapped himself” around him as men do when they wrestle, trying to fell their opponents. That is how this root is used in Aramaic. In any case, our Sages explain this “man” as being the prince of Esau. [E]

[E] As the word is used in “Now I must go back to fight the prince of Persia. When I go off, the prince of Greece will come in” (Dan. 10:20).

OJPS his two wives, and his two handmaids, and his eleven children, and passed over the ford of the Jabbok. ²⁴And he took them, and sent them over the stream, and sent over that which he had. ²⁵And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the

וְאֶת־שְׁתֵּי שִׁפְחֹתָיו וְאֶת־אֶחָד עֶשֶׂר יְלָדָיו וַיַּעֲבֹר אֶת מַעְבַּר יַבֹּק: ²⁴ וַיִּקְהָם וַיַּעֲבֹר אֶת־הַנַּחַל וַיַּעֲבֹר אֶת־אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ: ²⁵ וַיִּזְתֶּר יַעֲקֹב לְבָדוֹ וַיִּאָּבֵק אִישׁ עִמּוֹ עַד

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KIMHI little, in order to transfer his camp during the night. **Taking his two wives, his two maidservants, and his eleven children, he crossed the ford of the Jabbok.** He “took” them to the edge of the Jabbok, getting them ready to cross, while he himself went across to check how deep the water was. The “ford” of any river or stream is the place where the water is known to be shallower than elsewhere. Dinah, being so young that she was still with her mother, Leah, is not included in the count here.

24 After taking them across the stream. Having tested the water, he now went back and brought each of them across individually, carrying the ones who needed to be carried and leading by the hand the ones who were capable of crossing in that way, until he had brought them all across.

25 And a man wrestled with him. An angel who interacts with human beings can be called a “man” and in fact does appear to them as such. God sent this angel to strengthen Jacob’s courage; having overcome him, he need not fear Esau.

NAHMANIDES camps. [D] We see him bringing his wives and children to the bank of the river and then fording it by himself to make sure the water had not risen.

24 After taking them across the stream. His wives and children, all together. **He sent across all his possessions.** His livestock and his other possessions.

25 Jacob was left alone. See Rashi’s comment. But the straightforward explanation must indeed be that the repeated verb in v. 24 (see OJPS) is being used in two different ways (see NJPS). First he personally brought his family across; then he went back and “sent across” his possessions with his servants, leaving him as the last one on that side.

And a man wrestled with him. See Rashi’s comment. Since the Sages apparently had difficulty in pronouncing נ, they often replaced it with כ; so our verb may indeed refer to “grappling”; a comparison of Zech. 6:3 with Isa. 63:1 (and perhaps also Ezek. 27:24 with Song 1:10) demonstrates that this interchange did sometimes occur in the Bible as well. But Genesis Rabbah makes mention of the “dust” of Menahem’s explanation, which is in fact the correct one.

[D] Others think Nahmanides is saying that the order of the family in this verse is irrelevant to the order in 33:2; Nahmanides generally thinks the Torah is written in chronological order unless it explicitly says otherwise. But he may simply be cautioning against a too-literal reading of vv. 23–24.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS **wives, his two maidservants, and his eleven children.** Here he puts the women ahead, affording the children a measure of protection; in 31:17, when he is running away from Laban, he put the children ahead of the wives, again protecting them (Hizkuni). **He crossed the ford of the Jabbok.** Some say Jabbok here is just another name for “this Jordan” of v. 11 (Hizkuni).

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IBN EZRA brought his wives and children across. Then he went back once more, to make sure nothing had been left behind.

25 Jacob was left alone. It is not correct to say that Jacob was trying to run away, abandoning his family and all his possessions. He had already informed Esau he was on his way, and had sent the gift he promised. If he fled now, that would just get Esau angry again, and he would kill the entire camp. Jacob was a smart man—how could anyone think he would do this? **And a man wrestled with him.** Etymologically, the man “had a dustup” with him; their struggle raised dust. **Until the break of dawn.** The Hebrew idiom is literally “until the darkness lifted.” But some understand this word to refer not to darkness but to light, the light seen on the clouds before the sun itself has risen; “for one who speaks thus there shall be no dawn” (Isa. 8:20).

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The 4-Part Drash

- Quick Overview
- Focus + Question
- Offer Answers + Takeaway
- Make It Relevant

Who was the “man”?

- Prince of Esav (Rashi)
- An angel to keep him from fleeing (Rashbam)
- An angel to strengthen his courage (Kimhi)
- Angel of Esav (Abarbanel)

Thank You!

Rabbi Gabriel Botnick

