

Newer Than News

"The children agitated within her, and she said, 'If so why am I thus?' And she went to inquire of HASHEM. And HASHEM said to her, 'Two nations are in your womb; two regimes from within your insides shall be separated; the might shall pass from one regime to the other, and the elder shall serve the younger.'" (Bereishis: 25:22-23)

Rivka was experiencing difficulty with her pregnancy so she went for a supernal sonogram and gained a prophetic report about her twin boys. A superficial reading may lead us to believe that this is just some ancient soap opera from 3600 years ago. Although there are lessons for all time about relationships, there's a much bigger play in the making here.

Besides being born ruddy, Eisav murders and slurps "red- red" soup and earns a new title. "Therefore his name is called Edom-Red" (Breishis 25:30). Edom becomes Rome, the capital of Western Civilization, where fifteen centuries later, Christianity would take root before spreading all over the world. The Romans destroyed the second Temple and drove us into a more than 2000 year exile. Eisav is given for all time the task of being a watchdog to ensure that Yaakov remains worthy of the blessings, as it says, "And by your sword you shall live, and your brother you should serve, and if you should become bereaved (when Israel will violate the Torah and you should have cause to complain about the blessing he took... *Rashi*) and you can throw off his yoke... (Bereishis 27:40)

Yishmael turns out to be the father of the Arab/Islamic world. The Zohar tells us that because he made a circumcision at the age of 13, as his descendants do so today, he was given guardianship of the land until it is time for Israel to return. The Zohar states "they will prevent the Children of Israel from returning to their place until the merit of the Children of Yishmael is depleted. And in the future the Children of Yishmael will arouse a great war in the world and the Children of Edom will gather against them and awaken a war against them..."

It is interesting to note that the Arab world keeps Friday as their day off while the Christians occupy Sunday. The Jewish people rest on Shabbos -Saturday. There is no dispute about which day is actually Shabbos. Everyone agrees Shabbos is Shabbos! The Islamic world abides by a lunar calendar which is 354 days, and the Christian world adheres to the solar calendar which is 365 and ¼ days long. The Jewish universe is managed by a lunar calendar that adjusts to the solar calendar so Pesach should be in the spring season.

The source of Yishmael's name in Hebrew is the word "Shema" - hear. Eisav's name was picked because he came into the world complete-done. His name implies action- "asu". Yishmaelites are notorious nowadays for their willingness to obliterate themselves and others in this world in order to gain an imagined reward for doing so in the next world. Eisav's descendants are credited with filling out the paradigm of building and developing this world materially. When the Jewish People accepted the Torah on Mount Sinai 3320 years ago there was a unanimous agreement at the time "we shall do and hear (learn)" - "nasa v' nishma". What we do in the world will be understood completely in the next. Who today would be so bold that they can tell us which persons or family will be prominent 100 years now, and it will have turned out to be true! The Torah foretold this history 3320 years ago. It's more informative than today's paper and newer than today's news.

(Rabbi Label Lam and Torah.org)