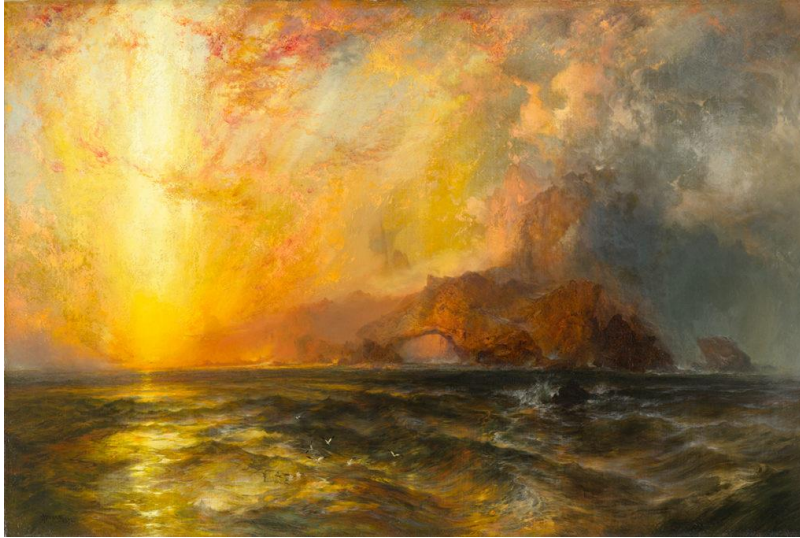


PARSHAT VAYISHLACH
GENESIS 32:4-36:42
HAFTARAH HOSEA 11:7-12:12
17 KISLEV 5784/30 NOVEMBER 2023



*Fiercely the red sun descending
Burned his way along the heavens
Oil on canvass by Thomas Moran*

WHEN THE SUBLIME AND MUNDANE EMBRACE

1. He named that place Mahanaim....I have now become two camps (*shnei mahanot*) (Genesis 32:3, 11)
2. “I fear he may come and strike me down....Yet, You have said, ‘I will deal bountifully with you...’” (Genesis 32:12-13)
3. Fearing the confrontation with Esau, Jacob wanted to run away, and God sent an angel to wrestle with him to stop him doing so. On this reading, God was teaching Jacob how to wrestle with his fears and defeat them. (Rabbi Jonathan Sacks)

God answers a person’s prayers if the person prays by searching himself, becoming his own opponent. (Rabbi Benno Jacob)

“I will deal with you in great goodness” (Genesis 32:13) suggests that God promises Jacob that his sense of his own life will share in the experience of God’s goodness. God will not merely be good to Jacob. God will make Jacob accomplice in the benign self-creation of Israel. (Sefat Emet)

4. “No longer will your name be Jacob but Israel.” (Genesis 32:29)

סָרַח (*sarah*) = persist, exert oneself, persevere

אֱלֹהִים (*el*) = God

5. Jacob as: heel-grabber; transactionalist; God-wrestler; returnee and altar builder

“When will this crisis be over? The unpleasant truth is, no one knows. Harder still is that even when we declare this crisis behind us, the life we ‘get back to’ will not be the one it was....Some of the most profound chapters of our lives won’t get a title until much later. So uncertain and uncomfortable as this crisis may be, it holds a powerful catalyst for profound transformation, individually and collectively....Collectively, it invites us to transcend the divisive, ego-dominated paradigms that keep us from rallying together to create a more sustainable, compassionate and courageous world.” (Dr. Margie Warrell)

6. Moving from the transactional to the transformational:

- ❖ Know that you have all that you need within you.
- ❖ Know that you contain the power of loving creation.
- ❖ Focus on blessing others, rather than seeking to receive anything from others.
- ❖ Trust that fulfillment is realized in and through relationships of mutuality with others.