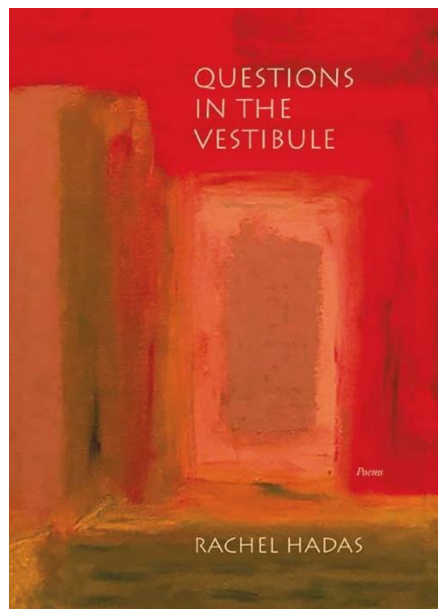


PARSHAT TOLDOT  
3 KISLEV 5781/19 NOVEMBER 2020



TO LIVE IN THE QUESTIONS

*In the weed of summer comes this green sprout why...  
Peter the voyant says, "Mother, what is that" –  
The object that rises with so much rhetoric,  
But not for him...  
His question is complete because it contains  
His utmost statement. It is his own array,  
His own pageant and procession and display...  
~ Wallace Stevens, "Questions Are Remarks"*

1. לָמָּה זֶה אֲנִי למה זה אני? "Why do I exist/Why is there an 'I'?" (Genesis 25:22)
2. קרבה רבקה
3. She goes to inquire of God. (Genesis 25:22)
4. "Is God in our midst, or not?" Rabbi Yehuda said: "If God is master over all reality, then we will serve God. If not, we will rebel."  
Rabbi Nehemiah said: "If God provides us with nourishment, like a King who resides at the center of the state and his people do not have to ask him continually for food, then we will serve him. If not, we will rebel."  
The Sages said: "If we harbor doubts in our hearts and God knows how we are questioning, then we will serve God. If not, we will rebel." (Shemot Rabbah 26:2)

5. Prayer vs. theology
6. “Anochi Adonai Eloheicha (I am Adonai your God)” [Exodus 20:2]. The word Ani is not used, but rather Anochi. Had it been written “Ani,” the meaning would have been that the Holy Blessed One had revealed God’s light to Israel in all its completeness, and then they could not have reached deeply into God’s words, for God would have already revealed everything. The additional letter caf in “Anochi,” teaches that it is not in a state of completeness, but an imagined image of the light that the Holy Blessed One would reveal in the future. (Mei HaShiloach)
7. “We do not need an answer to our question. To be present in the middle of the question is itself complete.” (Taigen Dan Leighton)