



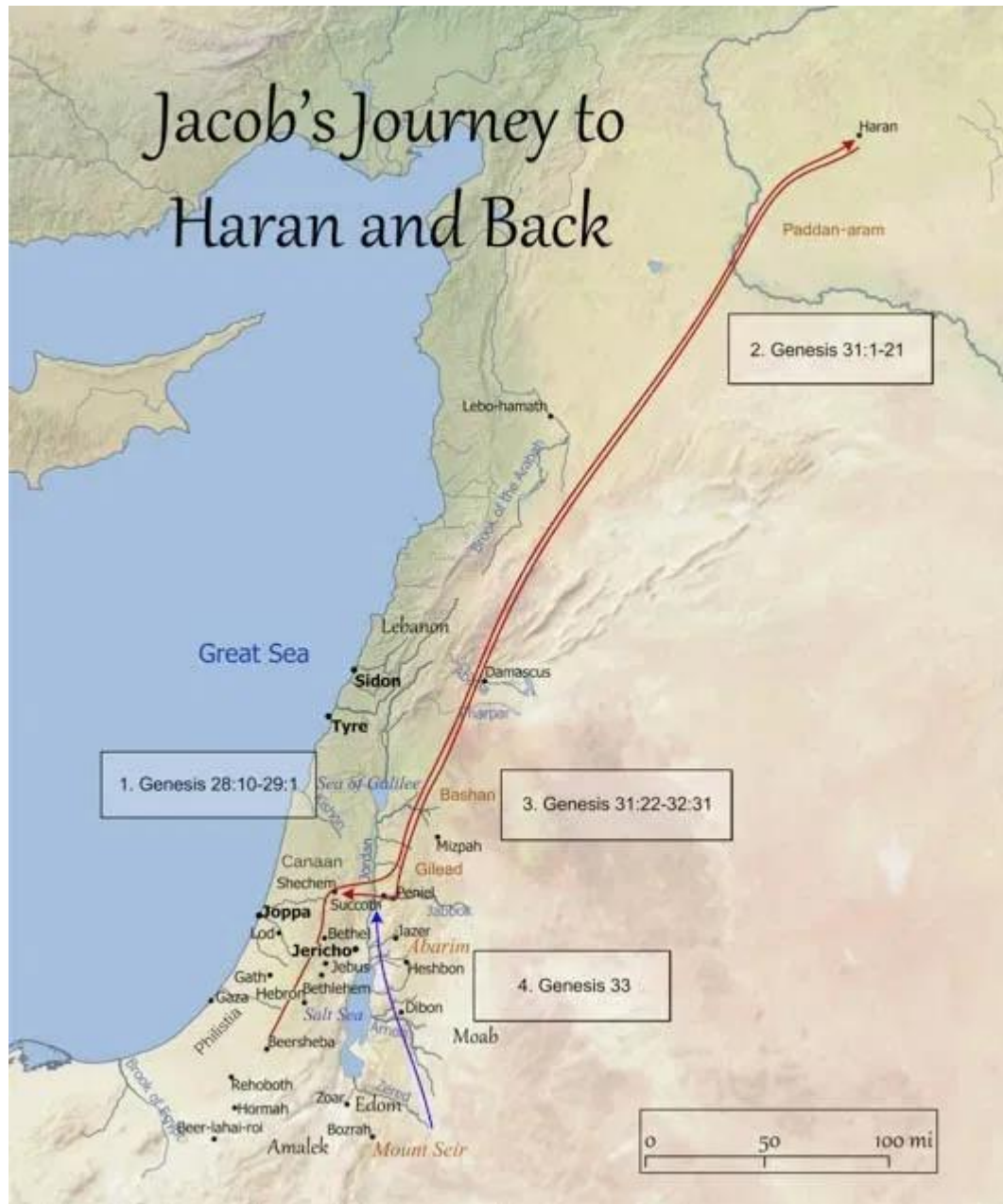
Genesis 29-34

University of Utah Institute of Religion

Genesis 27.37-38

Shedding the tears of Esau

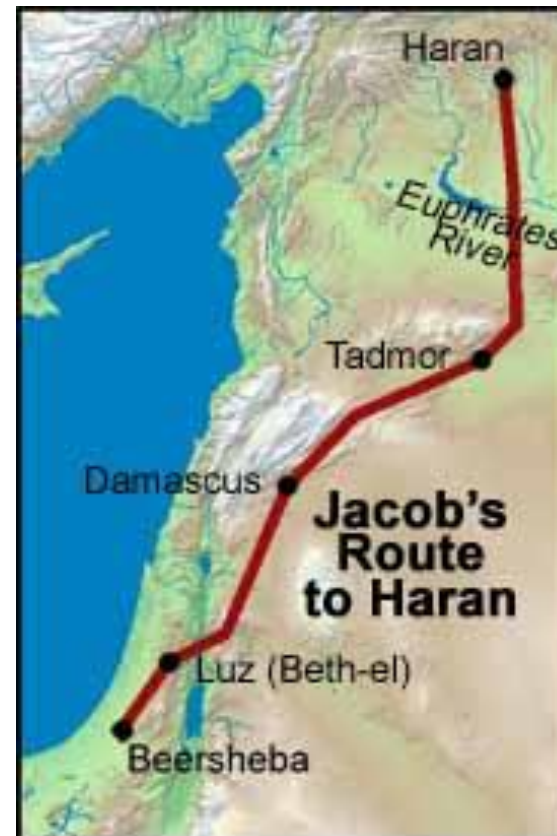




Jacob leaves home & goes to Haran

Gen. 29.1-4

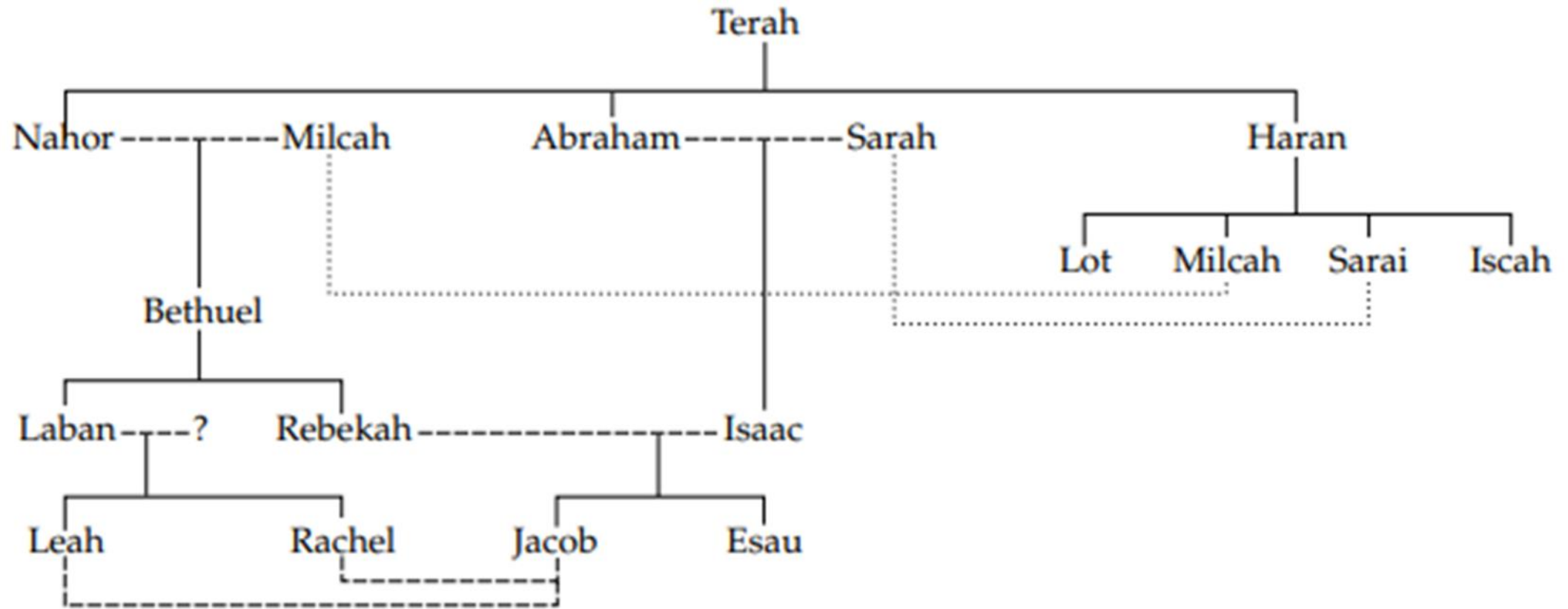
He arrives in Haran



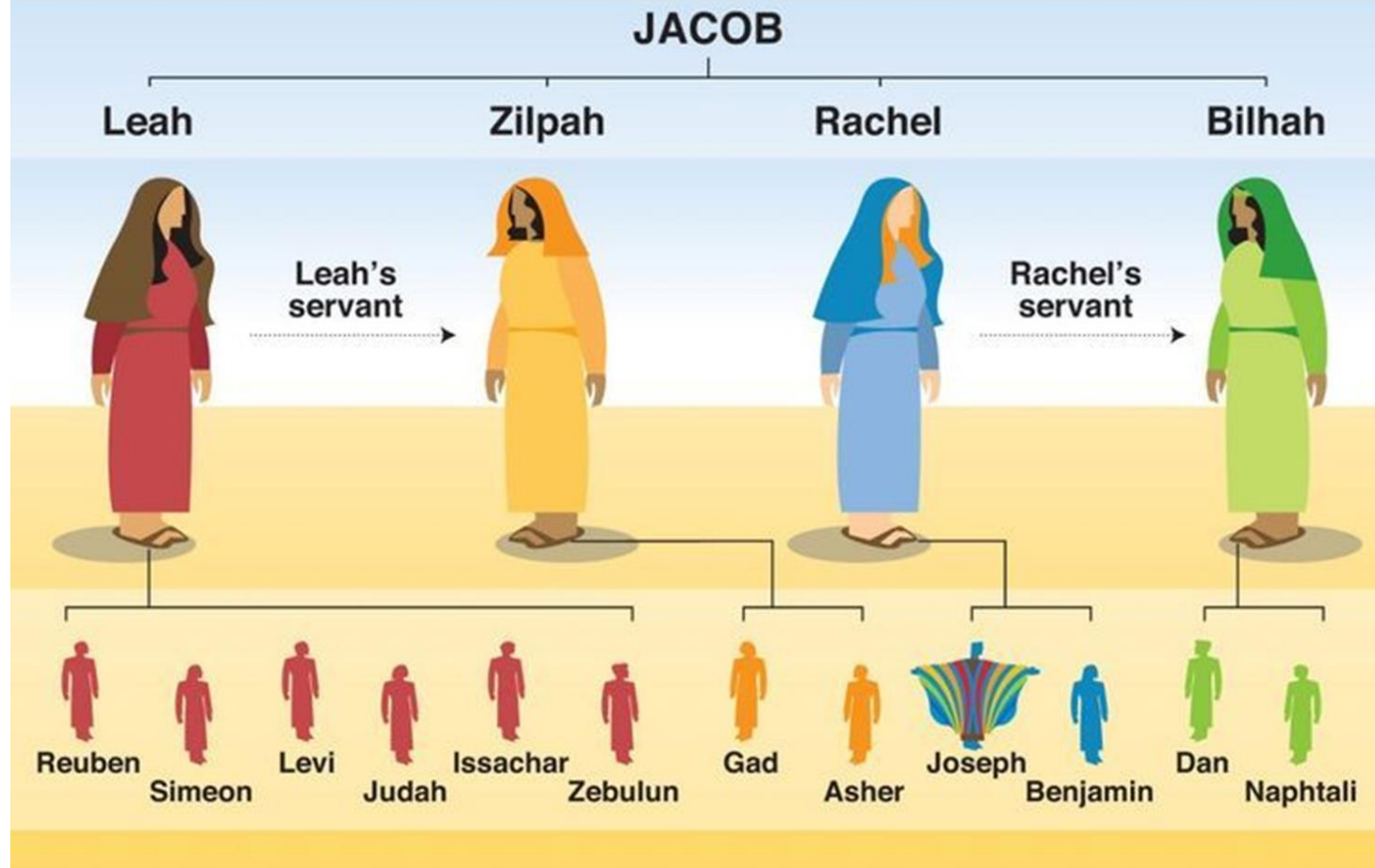
Gen. 31.20-21

Jacob leaves Haran to go back home

How were Jacob and his wives related?



Jacob's Family



The Children of Israel – Name Meanings

<i>Mother</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>Meaning</i>	<i>Reason for Name</i>
Leah	Reuben	See a son	Joy for having a son (see Genesis 29:32).
Leah	Simeon	Hearing	Because the Lord heard that she was hated (see Genesis 29:33).
Leah	Levi	Joined	"This time will my husband be joined unto me" (Genesis 29:34).
Leah	Judah	Praise	"Now I will praise the Lord" (Genesis 29:35).
Bilhah	Dan	Judging	"God hath judged me" (Genesis 30:6).
Bilhah	Naphtali	Wrestling	"With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister" (Genesis 30:8).
Zilpah	Gad	Troop	"Leah said, A troop cometh" (Genesis 30:11).
Zilpah	Asher	My happiness	"Leah said, Happy am I" (Genesis 30:13).
Leah	Issachar	A reward	God hath given me my reward (Genesis 30:18).
Leah	Zebulun	Dwelling	"Now will my husband dwell with me" (Genesis 30:20).
Rachel	Joseph	Adding	"The Lord shall add to me another son" (Genesis 30:24).
Rachel	Benjamin	Son of my right hand	"You are the son of my right hand" (see Genesis 35:18).

Genesis 32.24-30

Jacob has a name change to Israel



Who is Jacob wrestling with?

God? (verse 30)

A man? (verse 24)

Himself? (verse 24)

An angel? (verse 28 – he prevails over Elohim/divine beings... see also Hosea 12.4)

[An angel representing Esau?](#) (Midrash – Rashi)¹

Esau himself?

Notes:

1. Howard Schwartz; Elliot K. Ginsburg (2006). *Tree of Souls: The Mythology of Judaism* (illustrated, reprint, annotated ed.). Oxford University Press. p. 359



Is Jacob alone here?

Jacob is left **alone**. There is no other being, divine or human, not wholly other and no holy brother. Jacob, perhaps for the first time in his life, is actually alone facing an opponent he cannot deceive ? himself. He looks at himself and confronts an *ish*, a "humane being," with whom he is unfamiliar and from whom he is alienated. Jacob is blessed with an opportunity to change his identity by coming to terms with a part of himself that he has suppressed. The Mishnah records a memorable aphorism attributed to Hillel: "In a place where there are no worthy persons, you be an *ish* [a worthy person]" (Pirkei Avot 2:5). The *ish* awakens inside Jacob when he is alone. Jewish ethics are three-dimensional. There is the relationship *bein adam l'atzmo*, "between ourselves and God," the relationship *bein adam l'chevro*, "between a person and another person," and *bein adam l'atzmo*, "between a person and him- or herself." Jacob's wrestling may be intrapersonal, and from it he emerges a changed human being.

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(Jan Katzew, Wrestling Within, [Reform Judaism.org](http://ReformJudaism.org), 12.04.06)

יִשְׂרָאֵל - Israel

Noun [\[edit \]](#)

אֱלֹ • (el) *m* (*plural indefinite* **אלים**, *singular construct* אֱלֹ־, *feminine counterpart* אֱלֹה)

1. A **god**, supreme **deity**.

Proper noun [\[edit \]](#)

אֱלֹ • (el) *m*

1. **God**, the God of Israel.

ישר

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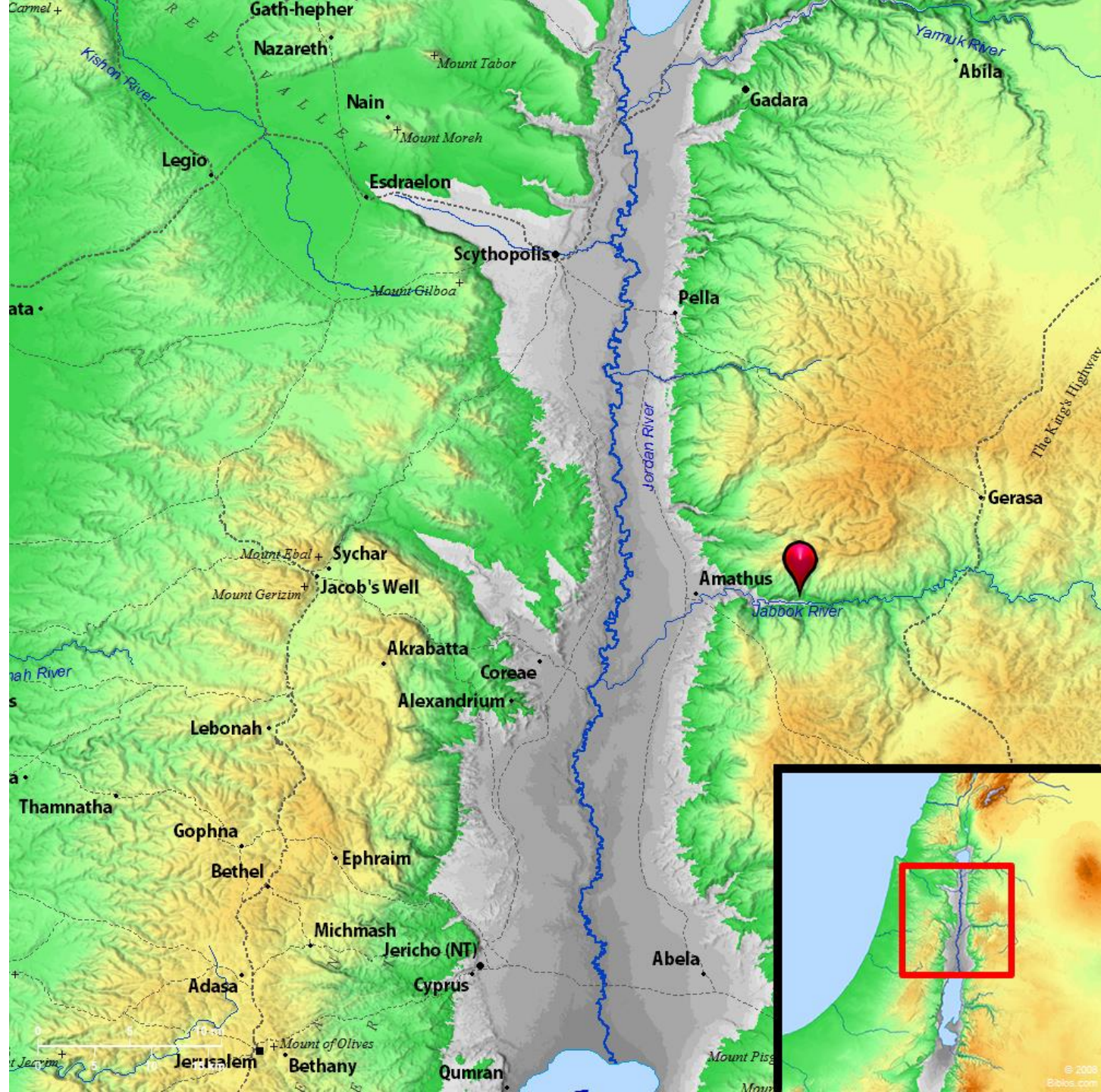
Compare **Arabic** **يَسِير** (*yasīr*, “easy, plain, simple”)

Adjective [\[edit \]](#)

יָשָׁר • (yashár) (*feminine* **יְשָׁרָה**, *masculine plural* **יְשָׁרִים**, *feminine plural* **יְשָׁרוֹת**)

1. right, straight
2. right, correct (complying with justice) [\[quotations ▼\]](#)
3. (*colloquial*) honestly, straightforwardly, forthrightly
4. (*slang*) immediately, right away

Wadi Zerka/Jabbok River – Genesis 32.22



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Genesis 33.1-4

Brothers are reunited

Genesis 34

Shechem rapes Dinah



Two conflicting accounts of Shechem

There are actually two accounts of how Jacob's family came into possession of Shechem. One account is in Genesis 33:18-20, the other account is in Genesis 34. Genesis 34 is the more violent account, and more remembered.

In the Genesis 33 account, Jacob buys the land with money. The Genesis 34 account is much more messy!

Genesis 33 comes from the northern tradition, the Elohist. In this account Simeon & Levi are not blamed of any wrongdoing. In the account we all know, these two tribes are disparaged. This account in Genesis 34 is attributed to the "J" author or the Yahwist.

Butchered or Bought?

There are two accounts in the book of Genesis detailing how the Israelites came to possess Shechem, which became the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel. Butchered or Bought? might make a great title for these chapters!

The southern Yahwist account is telling. It reveals how the southern storytellers viewed their northern brethren. For according to this version, the founding of Shechem was achieved through a deceptive, brutal, and bloody affair (Gen 34). It recounts how Dinah gets raped by one of the Shechemites and how her brothers persuaded all the male Shechemites that they had to circumcise themselves in order to marry Dinah. After they had agreed to this, Simeon and Levi decide to kill them for revenge, win their sister back, and gain a city!

Of course the northerners told the story differently. It was after all a story about them. The Elohist professes, in opposition to J, that Jacob (i.e., Israel) bought the land from its inhabitants for a hundred pieces of money (Gen 33:19).