



In your opinion, did Jacob and Esau truly reconcile when they met? What did rabbinic interpretation say, and why?

Genesis 33:4
And Esau ran to meet him (Jacob), and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him; and they wept.

Genesis Rabbah 78:9 (5th cen., CE, Land of Israel)
The word (kissed him – *vayishakehu*) is dotted (above the word).
R. Simeon b. Eleazar said:
Hence it teaches that he kissed him with all his heart .
Said R. Jannai to him:
If so, why is the word dotted?
It teaches, however, that he wished to bite him (*vayeshachehu*) but that the Patriarch Jacob's neck was turned to marble and that wicked man's teeth were blunted and loosened. Hence "and they both wept" one wept because of his neck and the other wept because of his teeth.

Nursery school children Parshah Sheet "MeBreshit" 2009



What role do texts play in identity conflicts?

Rabbi Moses b. Nachman (Ramban, 13th cen., Spain) Commandments which the Rambam omitted.

That we are commanded to inherit the Land which G-d may He be blessed and exalted, gave to our fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and that we may not leave it in the hands of the other nations or leave it to be desolate....And in this commandment He specified its borders and territories... that they not leave any place within it... We may not leave the Land in their hands nor in the hands of any other nation in any generation. Even if those nations fled before us and went away...we are commanded to come to the Land and to conquer its territories and to settle there our tribes... And I say that the mitzvah which the sages so praised, namely, dwelling in the Land of Israel... is all part of this positive commandment, that we are commanded to inherit the Land and to dwell therein. Hence, it is a positive commandment throughout the generations, obligating every individual among us, even during the time of Exile.

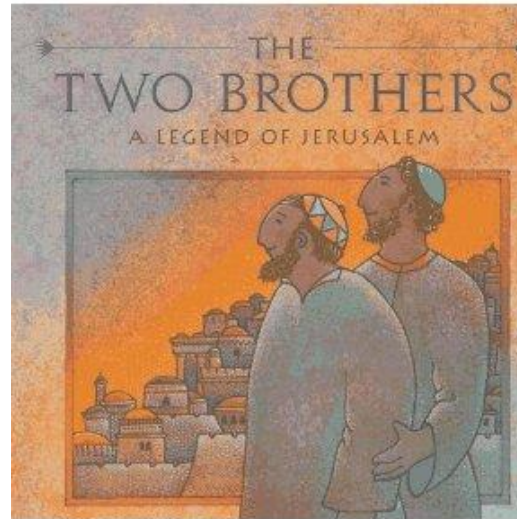


Rachel Roth, age 7, Bible - art project



A Tale of Two Brothers¹

Every corner in Jerusalem has a story, a legend, a myth. One of the stories, coming deep from the Jewish texts, speaks about the place where the First and Second Temples will stand, about the Temple Mount. An old tale speaks about two brothers who shared a field. One night, after they divided the crops to two equal piles, the married brother woke up. "I have children to take care of me when I am old," he thought, "but my brother have no one. I should give him some of the wheat..." The single brother also awoke. "My brother has a family to provide," he thought, "and I am by myself. I should give him part of my pile." And so both brothers carried some of the wheat to the other's pile. In the morning they were amazed to see that the piles remained the same. Each night they carried wheat from side to side, and each morning nothing changed. Until one night they ran into each other in the middle of the field and fell, crying, on each other's shoulders. And in that place of pure brotherly love, a place of sacrifice and devotion, king Solomon decided to build a temple to God.



Children's Book

How will Jerusalem be 'redeemed' in the future?

Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 139a
(6th century CE)

Ulla (3rd century CE, Land of Israel) said: Jerusalem will be redeemed only through justice.



The Seal of Social Justice in Jerusalem Restaurants

Deuteronomy Rabba, 5:15
(8th century CE, Land of Israel)

Great is peace, for the Holy One announces the redemption of Jerusalem only with peace.



The Annual Jerusalem Hug

¹ <http://www.jerusaleminside.com/#!a-tale-of-two-brothers/c1vfg>. See also "The Founding of Jerusalem: A Palestinian Midrash?" http://people.ucalgary.ca/~elsegal/Shokel/940505_Pal_Midrash.html