



Vayishlach

Beresheet (Genesis) 32:4 – 36:43

Jacob spends 20 years in Haran, and on his journey back to Canaan prepares to meet Esau. Before he meets him, he sends gifts ahead hoping to avoid a confrontation. He divides his family into two camps, sending them to safety. A “man” comes to Jacob that night and wrestles with him until dawn. He wrenches Jacob’s thigh, but Jacob will not release him. Jacob demands a blessing from the “man,” who gives Jacob a new name ... Yisrael, “for he had striven with divine beings and prevailed.”

Jacob then meets Esau and they are reconciled. Esau wants Jacob and his household to travel on to Seir with him, but Jacob says that because of the frailty of the children and flocks, he will lag behind.

Jacob settles in Shechem, a city in Canaan. One day Dinah, his daughter, goes out to the fields and is assaulted by Shechem, a Canaanite, who ultimately wishes to marry her. Her brothers convince the male inhabitants of Shechem to be circumcised so that marriages may take place between Jacob’s household and the Canaanites. On the third day after the circumcisions, while the Canaanites are still in pain, Jacob’s sons rise up in retaliation. Jacob expresses anger, reminding his sons that they are few in number and may easily be destroyed by the rest of the inhabitants of the land. The brothers respond by saying that they were defending the honor of their sister.

G-d tells Jacob to go to *Bethel* and build an altar. On the journey, Rachel goes into labor. She delivers a son, but dies in the process. Jacob names the son Benjamin.

As the *Parshah* concludes, Jacob and Esau bury their father Isaac.



Jewish Community Center of Paramus
E. 304 Midland Ave., Paramus NJ 07652
Phone: (201) 262-7691 Fax: (201) 262-6516
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