



ב"ה

Parshas Vayishlach in a Nutshell
(Genesis 32:4–36:43)

Jacob returns to the Holy Land after a 20-year stay in Charan, and sends angel-emissaries to Esau in hope of a reconciliation, but his messengers report that his brother is on the warpath with 400 armed men. Jacob prepares for war, prays, and sends Esau a large gift (consisting of hundreds of heads of livestock) to appease him.

That night, Jacob ferries his family and possessions across the Jabbok River; he, however, remains behind and encounters the angel that embodies the spirit of Esau, with whom he wrestles until daybreak. Jacob suffers a dislocated hip but vanquishes the supernal creature, who bestows on him the name Israel, which means “he who prevails over the divine.”

Jacob and Esau meet, embrace and kiss, but part ways. Jacob purchases a plot of land near Shechem, whose crown prince—also called Shechem—abducts and rapes Jacob’s daughter Dinah. Dinah’s brothers Simeon and Levi avenge the deed by killing all male inhabitants of the city, after rendering them vulnerable by convincing them to circumcise themselves.

(continued next column)

**Join us each
weekday morning
Mon-Fri as we delve into
the mysteries of
Chassidic concepts.
5:55 am
followed immediately
by Shacharis.**

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Jacob journeys on. Rachel dies while giving birth to her second son, Benjamin, and is buried in a roadside grave near Bethlehem. Reuben loses the birthright because he interferes with his father’s marital life. Jacob arrives in Hebron, to his father Isaac, who later dies at age 180. (Rebecca has passed away before Jacob’s arrival.)

Our Parshah concludes with a detailed account of Esau’s wives, children and grandchildren; the family histories of the people of Seir, among whom Esau settled; and a list of the eight kings who ruled Edom, the land of Esau’s and Seir’s descendants. ❖

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Halachic Zmanim
Shabbos, December 5
Eastern Standard Time
Earliest Tallis 6:04 AM
Latest Morning Shema 9:24 AM
Earliest Mincha (Gedola) 12:12 PM
Plag Hamincha3:34 PM
Earliest Evening Shema5:00 PM

Anshei Lubavitch Congregation
Rabbi Levi and Leah Neubort

Adult education:
Rabbi Avrohom and Rivky Bergstein

Youth Outreach:
Rabbi Eli and Ruty Steinhauser

Shabbos Schedule

Erev Shabbos – Dec 4 / Kislev 18
Candle Lighting.....4:10 pm
Mincha4:15 pm

Shabbos Day – Dec 5 / Kislev 19
Shacharis..... 9:30 am*
Torah Reading10:30 am
Rabbi Drasha 11:05 am

Mincha4:15 pm
Rabbi’s Drasha.....4:35 pm
Shabbos Ends5:14 pm

**Latest morning Shema is now 9:24 AM. Be sure to recite the Shema at or before that time (even if at home).*

**Weekday Schedule (not on a holiday):
Minyan**

Shacharis (Mon-Fri)6:15 am
Shacharis (Sunday) 9:00 am
Mincha (Sun-Thurs)1:45 pm
Maariv (Sun-Thurs)9:15 pm

Bulletin
*This week’s Bulletin
is sponsored by
the Shul.*

Chassidic Masters

"Outgoing Woman"

*Based on the teachings of the
Lubavitcher Rebbe
Courtesy of MeaningfulLife.com*

Dinah, the daughter of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land. And Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the land, saw her; and he abducted her . . .

-- Genesis 34:1-2

In the thirty-fourth chapter of Genesis we read of Dinah's abduction, her brothers' cunning plot to disable the people of Shechem, her rescue and the destruction of the city.

Our sages note that in the opening verse of its account, the Torah introduces Dinah as Leah's child. She is not referred to as "the daughter of Jacob," or "the daughter of Jacob and Leah," or even as "the daughter of Leah and Jacob," but as "the daughter of Leah, whom she bore to Jacob." Rashi explains:

Because of her going out, she is called "the daughter of Leah." For [Leah,] too, was an "outgoer," as it is written, "And Leah went out to greet him" (Genesis 30:16). Regarding her it has been said, "Like mother, like daughter."

At first glance, this seems an indictment of Leah's and Dinah's behavior. The hallmark of the Jewish woman is her *tzniut*, the modesty in dress and demeanor expressed by the verse (Psalms 45:14), "The entire glory of the king's daughter is within."

A Jewish girl, Rashi seems to be saying, has no business going out to visit with the daughters of a pagan land; when she does, she is not acting as a daughter of Jacob but like her mother, who is known to have—on occasion—embarked on outings of her own. For the king's daughter to leave her inner sanctum is to expose herself to all sorts of negative encounters, as Dinah's case tragically demonstrates.

This, however, cannot be Rashi's intention, for it runs contrary to what he writes in his commentary on a previous verse. A few chapters back, where Jacob is preparing for his encounter with his wicked brother Esau, we read (Genesis 32:23):

[Jacob] took his two wives, his two handmaidens and his eleven sons, and he crossed the ford of Jabbok.

Asks Rashi: What about his daughter?

Where was Dinah? Jacob had placed her in a chest and locked her in, lest Esau set his eyes on her. For this, Jacob was punished, for had he not withheld her from his brother, perhaps she would have brought [Esau] back to the proper path. [The punishment was] that she fell into the hands of Shechem.

In other words, it was Jacob's isolation of Dinah, not Dinah's and Leah's outgoingness, that was the cause of Dinah's misfortune. Dinah should not have been hidden from Esau. Her encounter with the big, bad world should not have been avoided; indeed, it should have been welcomed.

Jacob feared that she would be corrupted by her wicked uncle; he should have realized that, with her firm moral grounding and unassailable integrity, she was far more likely to influence Esau for the better.

Interestingly enough, here, too, there is a mother-daughter connection. The Torah (in Genesis 29:17) tells us that "Leah's eyes were weak." Rashi explains that they were weak from weeping:

She wept over the thought that she would fall to the lot of Esau. For everyone was saying: Rebecca has two sons and Laban has two daughters; the elder son (Esau) is destined for the elder daughter (Leah), and the younger son (Jacob) for the younger daughter (Rachel).

This was more than common speculation; according to the Midrash, these were matches ordained in heaven. But Leah's tearful prayers changed the heavenly decree, and both sisters were married to the righteous younger son. But it was Leah who was Esau's potential soulmate. If she herself felt unequal to the challenge of dealing with his wickedness, her daughter and spiritual heir, Dinah, could have served as the instrument of Esau's redemption.

This is the deeper significance of the adage "Like mother, like daughter" quoted by Rashi. Our children inherit not only our actual traits but also our unrealized potentials.

(Continued next page)

Physically, a brown-eyed mother may transmit to her child the potential for blue eyes inherited from her mother but dormant in her genes. Spiritually, a parent may impart to a child the ability to achieve what, for the parent, is no more than a subtle potential buried in the deepest recesses of his or her soul.

So Dinah's going out to make the acquaintance of the daughters of the land was fully in keeping with her and her mother's unique gifts. Her exposure to an alien environment would not have adversely affected her Jewish femininity, her "king's daughter's" inner glory. On the contrary: she was born to the role of the outgoing Jewish woman, who serves as a source of enlightenment to her surroundings without compromising her modesty and innerness. Rather, it was Jacob's attempt to closet her that invited disaster. In going out to "the daughters of the land," Dinah was truly the daughter of Leah—in the positive sense. She was not the daughter of Jacob, for Jacob had hesitated to put her outgoing nature to its intended use.

Within Without

Therein lies a message to women of all generations:

The Torah sees man and woman as having been imbued by their Creator with distinct characteristics and roles. Man is a conqueror, charged to confront and transform a resistant, often hostile, world. hy.

To this end, he has been supplied with an extroverted and aggressive nature, a nature he is to apply constructively in the war of life—the war to combat the negative without, and to redeem the positive elements and opportunities held captive in the most spiritually desolate corners of G-d's creation.

Woman is his diametric opposite. Her intrinsic nature is non-confrontational, introverted, modest. For while man battles the demons without, woman cultivates the purity within. She is the mainstay of the home, nurturer and educator of the family, guardian of all that is holy in G-d's world. The entire glory of the king's daughter is within.

But within does not necessarily mean indoors. The woman, too, has a role that extends beyond the home, extends also to the most alien of daughters and the most pagan of lands. A woman who has been blessed with the aptitude and talent to influence her sisters can, and must, be an "outgoer," periodically leaving her haven of holiness to reach out to those who have lost grounding and direction in their lives.

And when she does, she need not, and must not, assume the warrior stance of the man. Confrontation and conquest is not the only way to deal with the outside world; there is also a feminine way, a gentle, modest and compassionate way, to extract goodness from the evil that rages without. ❖

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The 19th day of the Hebrew month of Kislev is celebrated as the “Rosh Hashanah of Chassidism.” It was on this date, in the year 1798, that the founder of Chabad Chassidism, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi (1745–1812), was freed from his imprisonment in czarist Russia. More than a personal liberation, this was a watershed event in the history of Chassidism, heralding a new era in the revelation of the “inner soul” of Torah.

On this day in 1772, 26 years prior, the “Maggid of Mezeritch” returned his soul to his Maker. Before his passing, he said to his disciple, Rabbi Schneur Zalman: “This day is our yom tov (festival). ❖

From Our Sages

Jacob sent messenger-angels before him to Esau his brother (Genesis 32:4)

Actual angels.

-- (Rashi)

The Hebrew word “malachim” means both “messengers” and “angels” (an angel being a divine messenger). Thus, the verse “Jacob sent malachim to Esau his brother” can be understood as a reference to human messengers as well. Hence Rashi’s clarification that it means “actual angels.”

Chassidic master Rabbi DovBer of Mezeritch sees a deeper meaning in Rashi’s words: Jacob sent the “actuality” of his angels to Esau, but kept their higher spiritual essence with him.

If Esau comes to the one camp, and smites it, then the camp which is left shall escape (Genesis 32:9)

He prepared himself in three ways: he sent a gift, he prayed, and he made ready for war.

-- (Rashi)

A man wrestled with him (Genesis 32:25)

This was the “prince” of Esau (the angel who embodies the spirit of Esau).

-- (Midrash Rabbah; Rashim).

Haftorah for Vayishlach in a Nutshell

Obadiah 1:1-21

This week's haftorah mentions the punishment of Edom, the descendents of Esau, whose conflict with Jacob is chronicled in this week's Torah reading.

The prophet Obadiah, himself an Edomian convert to Judaism, describes the punishment destined for the nation of Edom. The Edomites did not come to Judea's aid when she was being destroyed by the Babylonians, and even joined in the carnage. Many years later the Edomites (the Roman Empire) themselves destroyed the Second Temple and mercilessly killed and enslaved their Jewish cousins.

Though the Roman Empire was one of the mightiest to ever inhabit the earth, the prophet forewarns: "If you go up high like an eagle, and if you place your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down, says the Lord. . . And the house of Jacob shall be fire and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau shall become stubble, and they shall ignite them and consume them, and the house of Esau shall have no survivors, for the Lord has spoken."

After describing the division of Esau's lands amongst the returning Judean exiles, the haftorah concludes with the well known phrase: "And saviors shall ascend Mt. Zion to judge the mountain of Esau, and the Lord shall have the kingdom." ❖

I am unworthy of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant (Genesis 32:11)

The meaning of this is that every kindness bestowed by G-d upon a person should cause him to be exceedingly humble. For a divine kindness is an expression of "His right hand embraces me"—G-d is literally bringing the person closer to Himself. And the closer a person is to G-d, the greater the humility this should evoke in him, for since "all before Him is as naught," the more "before Him" a person is, the more "as naught" does he perceive himself to be.

This is the manner of Jacob. The very opposite is the case in the contrasting realm of kelipah (evil). There, the greater the kindness shown a person, the more he grows in arrogance and self-satisfaction.

-- (Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi)

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