SHABBAT TABLE TALK: Vayishlach

MESA SHABBAT TABLE TALK

MAGEN EPHRAIM SEPHARDIC ACADEMY

Parashat Vayishlach

וַיִּשְׁלַח

Making Peace First, a New Name and a Small Jar

18 Kislev 5787 · November 28, 2026

Hadlakat Nerot · Fri. Nov. 27 **4:11 PM**

This week's Table Talk is sponsored by Sammy & Evelyn Kashani
L'ilui Nishmat Eliyahu Ben Mordechai

This week Yaakov goes back home after twenty years with Laban. But first he must face his brother Esav, who once wanted to hurt him.

1 Making Peace First

שָׁלוֹם

וַיִּשְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב מַלְאָכִים לְפָנָיו אֶל־עֵשָׂו אָחִיו אַרְצָה שֵׂעִיר שְׂדֵה אֱדוֹם׃

"Yaakov sent messengers ahead of him to Esav, his brother, to the land of Seir." **(Bereshit 32:4)**

Esav is coming with 400 men. Yaakov is afraid, but he does not hide. He makes the first move, and he still calls Esav אָחִיו, "his brother." He prays to HaShem and sends Esav a big gift. When they meet, Esav runs to Yaakov, falls on his neck and hugs him, and they both cry. No fight!

Making the first move to make peace is brave.



2 A New Name: Israel

יִשְׂרָאֵל

וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא יַעֲקֹב יֵאָמֵר עוֹד שִׁמְךָ כִּי אִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי־שָׂרִיתָ עִם־אֱלֹהִים וְעִם־אֲנָשִׁים וַתּוּכָל׃

"Your name will no longer be Yaakov, but Israel, because you struggled with angels and men, and won." **(Bereshit 32:29)**



At night Yaakov stays alone by the river. An angel struggles with him **until dawn** and cannot win. Before leaving, the angel gives Yaakov a new name: **Israel**. Later it becomes the name of all of us, **Am Israel**.

Why not call us after Abraham, or Sarah, or Rachel? Look at the letters: **all our fathers and mothers are inside the name!**

ל לֵאָה	א אַבְרָהָם	ר רִבְקָה · רָחֵל	ש שָׂרָה	י יִצְחָק · יַעֲקֹב	= יִשְׂרָאֵל

Parashat Vayishlach in Short aliya by aliya

1. **Esav Is Coming:** Esav comes with 400 men. Yaakov splits his family into two camps and prays.
2. **Alone at Night:** A big gift for Esav. Yaakov struggles with an angel until dawn.
3. **The Brothers Meet:** Esav runs to Yaakov and hugs him, and they both cry.
4. **Going Separate Ways:** Esav returns to Seir. Yaakov buys a field near Shekhem.
5. **Back to Bet El:** After trouble in Shekhem, Yaakov goes to Bet El. HaShem blesses him.
6. **Binyamin:** Binyamin is born. Rachel dies near Bet Lechem. Yitzchak passes away.
7. **Esav's Family:** The Torah lists Esav's children and the kings of Edom.

3 MIDDAH OF THE WEEK

Small Things Matter

פַּכִּים קְטַנִּים

וַיִּוָּתֵר יַעֲקֹב לְבַדּוֹ וַיֵּאָבֵק אִישׁ עִמּוֹ עַד עֲלוֹת הַשָּׁחַר׃

"Yaakov was left alone, and a man struggled with him until dawn." **(Bereshit 32:25)**

Yaakov took his family and everything he owned across the river. So why was he **alone**, at night, on the other side? Our Sages explain: he went back for some **small jars**, פַּכִּים קְטַנִּים, he had left behind. He was rich and did not need them. But he had worked hard for them, twenty years with Laban, so he took care of them, **even the small things.**



Yaakov teaches us: I take care of my things, even the small ones: my pencil, my crayons, my snack box. My parents worked hard for them.

4 HANUKKAH IS COMING · NEXT FRIDAY NIGHT, DEC. 4

The Hashmonaim and the Small Jar

פַּךְ קָטָן



The Greeks made all the oil in the Bet HaMikdash impure. After the Hashmonaim won, they found only **one small jar** of pure olive oil, still closed with the seal of the Kohen Gadol. It was enough for **one day**. They lit the Menora anyway, and HaShem made a miracle: the oil burned for **eight days**! (Shabbat 21b)

Yaakov took care of his פַּכִּים קְטַנִּים. The Hashmonaim did not give up on one small jar. Small things matter!

OUR HANUKKAH SONG

מָעוֹז צוּר יְשׁוּעָתִי, לְךָ נָאֶה לְשַׁבֵּחַ, תִּכּוֹן בֵּית תְּפִלָּתִי, וְשָׁם תּוֹדָה נְזַבֵּחַ.
לְעֵת תָּכִין מַטְבֵּחַ, מִצַּר הַמְנַבֵּחַ, אָז אֶגְמֹר בְּשִׁיר מִזְמוֹר, חֲנֻכַּת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ.

HaShem, my strong Rock, it is good to praise You. Build again Your House, and we will thank You there. Then I will sing for the Hanukkah of the altar.

8 Hebrew Words: Ask Your Children!

Say the word. Can they tell you what it means?

מַתָּנָה gift	נָהָר river	פַּךְ small jar	צַוָּאר neck
אָח brother	מַלְאָךְ angel, messenger	לַיְלָה night	שָׁלוֹם peace

3 Table Talk Questions

1. Yaakov was scared, but he made the first move to make peace. Who can you make peace with first this week?
2. Yaakov went back at night just for some small jars. What small thing of yours will you take better care of?
3. The Hashmonaim had oil for only one day. Why do you think they lit the Menora anyway?

SHABBAT SHALOM

Rabbi Yosef Bitton and Rabbi Adam Sabzevari