

Dvar Torah - Vayishlach by Jorge Orencel

Each story has a beginning and an end, and to understand the process that allows us to reach that end, first we have to get to the initial point.

Jacob becomes Israel, we will go to that, but in the beginning he was Jacob, the one to follow, the one to be behind.

At his birth he followed his brother Esau, he came behind.

But Jacob also means "supplanter, usurper" and we know that in order to please his mom, Rebecca, he agreed to supplant his brother and receive the blessing of his father Isaac.

He made a mistake, and had to pay for it by leaving his house, putting distance.

On his journey we learned, reading last week parashah about Jacob's dream about the angels ascending the ladder to the sky, which might mean he was trying to connect with the supreme, with G'd.

He worked 14 years to be with Rachel, the love of his life. 14 years!

This week we read that Jacob wrestles with an "Ish" (a man?) along the banks of the river Jabbok.

Certainly he was addressing his fears, fears to confront his brother, most likely he was wrestling with himself.

And he was alone, it happened during the night.., maybe even he was dreaming.

All night he wrestled, until before dawn, when he said to the "Ish" (or angel?, or G'd himself?): I let you go, but not before you bless me. He was looking for his own strength, his confidence, even forgiveness for the mistake he made when he was young, naive, accommodating. He was looking for a new opportunity in his life, and G'd granted it to him.

Now he is ready to confront whom he deceived, with humility, with vulnerability.

He sent his emissaries to tell Esau that he was sending gifts, he wanted to repair his mistake.

He learned that he was not perfect, we learn that not human being is perfect, but with sincere teshuvah, with reverence, we can have a new opportunity.

Thanks, Shabbat Shalom