

Parshas Vayishlach

In this week's parsha, Yakov is preparing to meet Esav, where he splits his camp, and then Yakov fights with Esav's guardian angel, leading to the confrontation between Esav and Yakov. Then we learn of the encounter between Dinah and Shechem and the continued journeys of Yakov and his family, concluding with the birth of Binyamin, the death of Rochel, the death of Yitzchak, and a recounting of the offspring of Esav and Yakov.

In 33:14, Yakov tells Esav that he will meet him in Seir, which Yakov will not fulfill. Rashi and others ask this question, for which the general answer touches on the prophecy of Ovadia 1:21, that Mashiach will come when the mountains of Esav are conquered... (from Bereishis Rabba). The Rebbe and the Mepharshim explain that Yakov did not lie to Esav but explained the future when they would meet again after a long, arduous road.

The encounter between Yakov and Esav was more of a spiritual battle than a battle of strength. As I've explained, Yakov was never 100% sure of his place as a twin, so long as Esav was loved by his father and Esav had the protection of honoring his parents (from earlier). Only when Yakov overcame Esav's angel, which concretized that Yakov was the forefather of the Jewish people, could the prophecy given to Rivkah (2 warring children in your womb) be fulfilled, that is, the older will serve the younger.

Yakov said, "Let my master go ahead before his servant, and I will move at my own slow pace...until I meet my master at

our final destination of Seir..." This reminds me of Rabbi Tarfon from Pirkei Avos 2:15, "the day is short, and the work is plentiful, and the laborers are indolent, and the reward is great, and the master of the house is insistent..."

Yakov was telling us, his future offspring and the offspring of Esav, that the war is not yet over, the time of arrival will happen, and then we will meet again. In a Sichah from Chelek 20, the Rebbe tells us that we are on a journey while in exile. That exile is a temporary state, headed toward a permanent redemption, just as Yakov's journey will only be completed at redemption.

The very globalized language Yakov used negated the ability to claim Yakov lied; instead, he broadly referred to the journey, which applies to us today. There is much to do, and we will arrive at our own pace on the merits of our good deeds. This time will be when we arrive at Mashiach speedily in our days so we can ultimately live in the realization of Yakov's prophecy.

The Rebbe also tells us the name of the Parsha, Vayishlach, is likened to the concept of an emissary, which Yakov made all of us on the mission to bring Mashiach.

Good Shabbos.