

# 119

## MINISTRIES

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### **Parashah Points: Vayishlach – Don’t Let Go**

Welcome to another episode of Parashah Points—short thoughts from the weekly Torah Portion.

This week’s Parashah Point comes from Vayishlach, which is Hebrew for “and he sent,” and it goes from Genesis 32:3 to Genesis 36:43.

This parashah begins with the story of Jacob wrestling with God at Peniel, where his name was changed to Israel (Genesis 32).

It also tells the story of Jacob reconciling with his brother, Esau (Genesis 33).

Then we read about Jacob’s daughter, Dinah, being raped in the city of Shechem, and her brothers killing all the males in the city out of revenge (Genesis 34).

Afterward, Jacob returns to Bethel, and the parashah speaks about the birth of Benjamin and the death of Rachel and the death of Isaac (Genesis 35).

The parashah concludes with a record of Esau’s descendants (Genesis 36:1-15)

There’s a lot we can talk about in this Torah Portion. Today we’re just going to present a thought.

Jacob’s life consisted of many trials and difficulties—many the result of his own poor choices. Nevertheless, he was forced to leave his home, he was deceived by his own family, he was used and abused, and on and on. Finally, as he was about to encounter his brother Esau after many years—the same brother who threatened to kill him—he was feeling nervous and afraid for himself and his family. He prayed to God, [“Please deliver me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, that he may come and attack me, the mothers with the children”](#) (Genesis 32:11).

As Jacob waited for this encounter with Esau, something interesting happens: a wrestling match!

**Genesis 32:24-29**

And Jacob was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the day. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he touched his hip socket, and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for the day has broken." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." And he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with men, and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him.

So Jacob wrestled and he was blessed with a new name, Israel. This raises a question. Why was it necessary for Jacob to wrestle before he could be blessed? The lesson here for all of us is that God *uses* the struggle to produce the blessing. As it says in James:

**James 1:2-4**

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

In life, we must struggle. We must wrestle with God. We must endure trials and refuse to let go until we receive the blessing. And just as it was with Jacob, that blessing comes in the form of a new identity. When we endure trials and refuse to let go of God when our faith is tested, we will come out of it "perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." That's the blessing God wants to give us.

It was on the basis of Jacob's new identity as a mature believer that reconciliation occurred between the two brothers. And that maturity came through struggling and refusing to let go.

Do you want to grow in spiritual maturity? Do you want to be conformed into the image of the Messiah Yeshua? Trust God and hold on in the midst of trials.

Thank you for joining us for another Parashah Point!

*We pray you have been blessed by this teaching. Remember, continue to test everything. Shalom! For more on this and other teachings, please visit us at [www.testeverything.net](http://www.testeverything.net)*

**Shalom, and may Yahweh bless you in walking in the whole Word of God.**

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