



December 5-6, 2025

טו כסלו תשפ"ו

Candle Lighting 4:21 PM

Parashat Vayishlach וישלח Genesis 32:4-36:43
Stone - p 170 Hertz - p 122 Etz Hayim - p 198

Haftarah Obadiah 1:1-21 עבדיה
Stone - p 1141 Hertz - p 137 Etz Hayim - p 222

Kiddush following services
is sponsored by the congregation

Shabbat ends 5:21 PM

TRADITIONAL CONGREGATION

Rabbi Seth D Gordon - Rabbi.Gordon@yahoo.com
Marian S. Gordon, Executive Director - traditionalcong@gmail.com

WEEKDAY AND SHABBAT SERVICES
Tuesday - 6:30 PM Shabbat - 9:30 AM

Board of Directors

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*We welcome new members!
If you or someone you know would like to receive membership information,
please contact our office at 314-576-5230
or traditionalcong@gmail.com*

On This Week's Parashah - Vayishlach

Jacob and Esau are about to meet again after a separation of twenty-two years. It is a fraught encounter. Once, Esau had sworn to kill Jacob in revenge for what he saw as the theft of his blessing. Will he do so now – or has time healed the wound? Jacob sends messengers to let his brother know he is coming. They return, saying that Esau is coming to meet Jacob with a force of four hundred men. We then read: “Jacob was acutely afraid and distressed.” [Bereishit 32:8](#)

The question is obvious. Jacob is in the grip of strong emotions. But why the tautology, the duplication of verbs? What is the difference between being afraid and being distressed? To this a Midrash gives a profound answer:

Rabbi Judah bar Ilai said: Are not fear and distress identical? The meaning, however, is that “he was afraid” that he might be killed. “He was distressed” that he might kill. For Jacob thought: If he prevails against me, will he not kill me; while if I prevail against him, will I not kill him? That is the meaning of “he was afraid” – lest he should be killed; “and distressed” – lest he should kill.

The difference between being afraid and distressed, according to the Midrash, is that the first is a physical anxiety; the second a moral one. It is one thing to fear one's own death, quite another to contemplate being the cause of someone else's. However, a further question now arises. Surely self-defence is permitted in Jewish law? If Esau were to try to kill Jacob, Jacob would be justified in fighting back, if necessary at the cost of Esau's life. Why then should this possibility raise moral qualms? This is the issue addressed by Rabbi Shabbetai Bass, author of the commentary on Rashi, *Sifte Chachamim*:

One might argue that Jacob should surely not be distressed about the possibility of killing Esau, for there is an explicit rule: “If someone comes to kill you, forestall it by killing him.” Nonetheless, Jacob did have qualms, fearing that in the course of the fight he might kill some of Esau's men, who were not themselves intent on killing Jacob but merely on fighting Jacob's men. And even though Esau's men were pursuing Jacob's men, and every person has the right to save the life of the pursued at the cost of the life of the pursuer, nonetheless there is a condition: “If the pursued could have been saved by maiming a limb of the pursuer, but instead the rescuer killed the pursuer, the rescuer is liable to capital punishment on that account.” Hence Jacob feared that, in the confusion of battle, he might kill some of Esau's men when he might have restrained them by merely inflicting injury on them.

The principle at stake, according to the *Sifte Chachamim*, is the minimum use of force. Jacob was distressed at the possibility that in the heat of conflict he might kill some of the combatants when injury alone might have been all that was necessary to defend the lives of those – including himself – who were under attack.

There is, however, a second possibility, namely that the Midrash means what it says, no more, no less: that Jacob was distressed at the possibility of being forced to kill even if that were entirely justified. At stake is the concept of a moral dilemma. A dilemma is not simply a conflict. There are many moral conflicts. May we perform an abortion to save the life of the mother? Should we obey a parent when he or she asks us to do something forbidden in Jewish law? May we break Shabbat to extend the life of a terminally ill patient? These questions have answers.

There is a right course of action and a wrong one. Two duties conflict and we have meta-halachic principles to tell us which takes priority. There are some systems in which all moral conflicts are of this kind. There is always a decision procedure and thus a determinate answer to the question, “What shall I do?”

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A dilemma, however, is a situation in which there is no right answer. I ought not to do A (allow myself to be killed); I ought not to do B (kill someone else); but I must do one or the other. To put it more precisely, there may be situations in which doing the right thing is not the end of the matter. The conflict may be inherently tragic. The fact that one principle (self-defence) overrides another (the prohibition against killing) does not mean that, faced with such a choice, I am without qualms. Sometimes being moral means that I experience distress at having to make such a choice. Doing the right thing may mean that I do not feel remorse or guilt, but I still feel regret or grief that I had to do what I did.

A moral system which leaves room for the existence of dilemmas is one that does not attempt to eliminate the complexities of the moral life. In a conflict between two rights or two wrongs, there may be a proper way to act (the lesser of two evils, or the greater of two goods), but this does not cancel out all emotional pain. A righteous individual may sometimes be one who is capable of distress even when they know they have acted rightly. What the Midrash is telling us is that Judaism recognises the existence of dilemmas. Despite the intricacy of Jewish law and its meta-halachic principles for deciding which of two duties takes priority, we may still be faced with situations in which there is an ineliminable cause for distress. It was Jacob's greatness that he was capable of moral anxiety even at the prospect of doing something entirely justified, namely defending his life at the cost of his brother's.

That characteristic – distress at violence and potential bloodshed even when undertaken in self-defence – has stayed with the Jewish people ever since. One of the most remarkable phenomena in modern history was the reaction of Israeli soldiers after the Six Day War in 1967. In the weeks preceding the war, few Jews anywhere in the world were unaware that Israel and its people faced terrifying danger. Troops – Egyptian, Syrian, Jordanian – were massing on all its borders. Israel was surrounded by enemies who had sworn to drive its people into the sea. In the event, it won one of the most stunning military victories of all time. The sense of relief was overwhelming, as was the exhilaration at the re-unification of Jerusalem and the fact that Jews could now pray (as they had been unable to do for nineteen years) at the Western Wall. Even the most secular Israelis admitted to feeling intense religious emotion at what they knew was an historic triumph.

Yet, in the months after the war, as conversations took place throughout Israel, it became clear that the mood among those who had taken part in the war was anything but triumphal. It was sombre, reflective, even anguished. That year, the Hebrew University in Jerusalem gave an honorary doctorate to Yitzhak Rabin, Chief of Staff during the war. During his speech of acceptance, he said:

"We find more and more a strange phenomenon among our fighters. Their joy is incomplete, and more than a small portion of sorrow and shock prevails in their festivities, and there are those who abstain from celebration. The warriors in the front lines saw with their own eyes not only the glory of victory but the price of victory: their comrades who fell beside them bleeding, and I know that even the terrible price which our enemies paid touched the hearts of many of our men. It may be that the Jewish people has never learned or accustomed itself to feel the triumph of conquest and victory, and therefore we receive it with mixed feelings."

A people capable of feeling distress, even in victory, is one that knows the tragic complexity of the moral life. Sometimes it is not enough to make the right choice. One must also fight to create a world in which such choices do not arise because we have sought and found non-violent ways of resolving conflict.

Shabbat shalom,
Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks zt"l

Share the Light for Hanukkah's First Night!

Sunday, December 14, 4:00 PM at Congregation B'nai Amoona

Celebrate the first night of Chanukah with Traditional and B'nai Amoona
and enjoy breakfast for dinner!

Info and registration link: <https://www.bnaiamoona.com/form/stlfhfn>

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**HANUKIAH
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BINGO WITH MEN'S CLUB!

Thank you for your support!

Tributes listed below were received from 5/14 - 12/2/2025
To send a tribute card, contact Marian: traditionalcong@gmail.com
or order online: <https://www.traditional-congregation.org/donate>

Tributes In Honor Of...

Birthdays of: Kathy Green, Susie Lippmann, Revi Belk, Julie Rosenbluth, Daniel Rinder, Ophira Melnick, Zumi Brody, Alex Levy, Jack Heller, Muriel Beckerman, Ilan Brody, Spencer Levison, Jules Stiber, Richard Becker, Stephen Rosenberg, Stan Greenberg, Sam Ockner, Mel Weinberg, Arlene Fox, Daniel Kweskin, Pamela Neuman, Sherri Lopatin, Bettina Weinberg, Muriel Zimring, Joan Stiber, Paul Goldstein, Matthew Rosenbluth, Michael Roth, Morty Rinder, Rosemary Cooper, Ceil Tobin, Elaine Farkas, Joe Ingram, Brigette Rosenbluth, Daria Rosenbluth, Marilyn Levison, Noémi Neidorff, Alayna Lerner, Barbara Mirowitz, Stuart Boxerman, Ron Green, Sondra Dobinsky, Ken Bohm, Hayley Lerner, Eric Farkas, Joyce Becker, Lori Zeid Ingram, Allen Gliner, Francine Schraier, April Levison, Sandy Friedman, Louise Saltzman, Marcia Lisker, BelleAnne Curry, Stanley Estrin, Mel Saltzman, Evie Levison, Karyn Lisker, Phil Radman, Mary Pomerantz, Zeta Chervitz, Marian Gordon, David Holden, Amy Garriga, Justin Zeid, Gary Golden, Leila Shafman, Marc Singer, Andy Curry, Gary Lerner, Cole Levison, David Levison, Sandy Bell, Nanci Gold, Ellis Frohman, Jay Englander, Rafi Rabinoff, Christy Brick, Annette Heller, Jean Estrin, Gali Brody, Steve Puro, Shelah Feldman, Barbara Levin, Scott Shafman, Erika Greenberg, Barry Schapiro, Liz Holden, Leslie Campbell, Nancye Gliner, Gabriella Shafman, Beth Golden, Barbara Gaponoff Berson, Neal Neuman, Marvin Schneider

Anne & Chris Brown

Birthdays of: Zumi Brody, Jules Stiber, Richard Becker, Stan Greenberg, Anne Brown, Mel Weinberg, Arlene Fox, Daniel Kweskin, Sherri Lopatin, Bettina Weinberg, Muriel Zimring, Joan Stiber, Morty Rinder, Rosemary Cooper, Ceil Tobin, Elaine Farkas, Marilyn Levison, Noémi Neidorff, Alayna Lerner, Barbara Mirowitz, Stuart Boxerman, Sondra Dobinsky, Ken Bohm, Hayley Lerner, Eric Farkas, Joyce Becker, Allen Gliner, Francine Schraier, Louise Saltzman, Marcia Lisker, Stanley Estrin, Mel Saltzman, Mary Pomerantz, Zeta Chervitz, Justin Zeid, Gary Golden, Chris Brown, Gary Lerner, Sandy Bell, Nanci Gold, Ellis Frohman, Jean Estrin, Steven Puro, Shelah Feldman, Barbara Levin, Erika Greenberg, Barry Schapiro, Nancye Gliner, Marvin Schneider

Annette & Jack Heller

Anniversaries of: Traude & Gary Wilson, Claire & Richard Hack, Nikki & Paul Goldstein, Louise & Mel Saltzman, Gayle & David Berwald, Susan & Stuart Boxerman, BelleAnne & Andy Curry, Robbyn & Michael Roth, Muriel & Randy Zimring, Mimi & Marty Levy, Joyce & Richard Becker, Marilyn & Marty Levison, Nancy & Gary Feldman, Dina & Morty Rinder, Revi & Akiva Belk, Nancye & Allen Gliner, Florence & Joe Schachter, Mary & Sandy Pomerantz, Rita & Mark Weinstein, Rabbi & Marian Gordon, Annette & Jack Heller, Alayna & Gary Lerner, Beth & Gary Golden, Francine & Joel Schraier, Dikla & Steve Roufa, Caryn & Zumi Brody, Donna & Alan Rosenberg, Marcia & Mauricio Lisker, Anat Reschke & Brad Fink, Erika & Stan Greenberg, Lisa Binowitz & Jay Englander, Susan & Benjamin Schwartz, Kathy & Ron Green, Barbara & Sid Levin, Daniel & Gloria Ezekiel Kweskin, April & Matthew Levison, Julie & Daniel Rosenbluth, Bill Rosenfeld & Susie Lippmann, Judy & Stan Becker, Ophira & Jeffrey Melnick

Anne & Chris Brown

Anniversaries of: Traude & Gary Wilson, Claire & Richard Hack, Louise & Mel Saltzman, Gayle & David Berwald, Susan & Stuart Boxerman, Muriel & Randy Zimring, Mimi & Marty Levy, Joyce & Richard Becker, Marilyn & Marty Levison, Nancy & Gary Feldman, Dina & Morty Rinder, Nancye & Allen Gliner, Florence & Joe Schachter, Mary & Sandy Pomerantz, Rita & Mark Weinstein, Rabbi & Marian Gordon, Alayna & Gary Lerner, Beth & Gary Golden, Francine & Joel Schraier, Dikla & Steve Roufa, Caryn & Zumi Brody, Donna & Alan Rosenberg, Marcia & Mauricio Lisker, Anat Reschke & Brad Fink, Erika & Stan Greenberg, Judy & Stan Becker, Anne & Chris Brown, Ophira & Jeffrey Melnick

Annette & Jack Heller

Tributes In Honor Of...

Rebecca Weinstein becoming a bat mitzvah

BelleAnne & Andy Curry
Ellis Frohman

Happy birthday to Paul Goldstein

Judy & Stan Becker
Lynn Harris
Carol Max
Gail & Jerry Tullman

Happy birthday to Chris Brown

Vilma & Alan Levi

Mazal Tov to Barbara Gaponoff Berson on the birth of a grandson

Judy & Stan Becker

Happy 53rd anniversary to Francine & Joel Schraier

Bettina & Mel Weinberg

Mazal tov to Ken Bohm on being chosen as the 2025 Rededication Shabbat honoree

Ellis Frohman
Annette & Jack Heller
Marcia & Mauricio Lisker
Sherri Lopatin
Carol Max
Dina & Morty Rinder

Mazal tov to Stanley Estrin on completing all the aliyot of the Torah

Darrien & Stephen Arnstein
Marci & Richard Cornfeld
Ellis Frohman
Nikki & Paul Goldstein
Mindy Strauss
Mark & Rita Weinstein

Mazal tov to Marty & Mimi Levy on Marty being chosen as an Unsung Hero

Joyce & Richard Becker
Judy & Stan Becker
Lisa Binowitz & Jay Englander
Ann & Ken Bohm
Ellis Frohman
Annette & Jack Heller
Joni & Bob Kaiser
Vilma & Alan Levi
Marcia & Mauricio Lisker
Sherri Lopatin
Neal & Pam Neuman
Dina & Morty Rinder
Bettina & Mel Weinberg
Traude & Gary Wilson

In appreciation to Rabbi & Marian Gordon

Ellis Frohman

In appreciation to Barbara Levin, Mimi Levy, Mark Weinstein, Anat Reschke and Rabbi Gordon

Dina & Morty Rinder

Tributes In Honor Of...

In appreciation to Marty Levy, Mark Weinstein, Dina & Morty Rinder, Stanley Estrin

Ken & Ann Bohm

In appreciation to Mimi & Marty Levy

Sondra Dobinsky

In appreciation to Rabbi Gordon

Bettina & Mel Weinberg

Refuah sh'leimah for Gary & Beth Golden

Judy & Stan Becker

Ken & Ann Bohm

Carol Max

Refuah sh'leimah for Arlene Fox

Ellis Frohman

Refuah sh'leimah for Florence Schachter

Ellis Frohman

Mazal tov to Barbara Gaponoff Berson on the birth of a grandson

Judy & Stan Becker

Mazal tov to Prisella Grodsky on the marriage of her granddaughter, Rachel, to Jesse

Suzanne Gilden

Mazal tov to Ophira & Jeffrey Melnick on the engagement of Lior and Sydney

Barbara Gaponoff Berson

Mazal tov to Arlene Fox on the bar mitzvah of her grandson, Asher Lander

Ellis Frohman

Mazal tov to Julie & Michael Lander on the bar mitzvah of their son, Asher

Ellis Frohman

Mazal tov to Mimi & Marty Levy on the marriage of Jeremy & Lauren

Ellis Frohman

Mazal tov to Marian Gordon on the 55th anniversary of her bat mitzvah

Steven Puro

Mazal tov to Mel Weinberg on being honored by MKSSA for 40 years of leadership in the search and recruiting industry

Annette & Jack Heller

Additional Contributions Made by:

Leslie Campbell

Michael Davis

Ellis Frohman

Nanci & Bill Gold

Rabbi Seth & Marian Gordon

Gidon & Simcha Hawley

Kevin Heuser

Tributes On the Passing Of...

Stuart Kaufman

Laurie & Sid Bennett

Ken & Ann Bohm

Ellis Frohman

Nikki & Paul Goldstein

Carol Max

Henry & Suzanne Stolar

Mindy Strauss

**Selina Rovinsky, wife of Rabbi Mike
Rovinsky**

Rita & Mark Weinstein

Ruth Frohman

Ellis Frohman

Charles Comins, brother of Carol Max

Judy & Stan Becker.

Shelah Feldman

Herbert Goodfriend

Annette & Jack Heller

Dori & Marvin Lerner

Barbara & John Lewington

Joan & Lester Schwartz

Valerie Shapiro

Mindy Strauss

Bettina & Mel Weinberg

Tributes On the Passing Of...

Richard "Rick" Hack, husband of Claire Hack

Joyce & Richard Becker
Ann & Ken Bohm
Annette & Jack Heller
Joe & Lori Zeid Ingram
Carol Max
Myra Perlman
Mindy Strauss
Dr. Margaret Guilfooy Tyler

Penny Goldenhersh, sister-in-law of Muriel Zimring

Nikki & Paul Goldstein

Janice Heuser, wife of Kevin Heuser

Judy & Stan Becker
Revi & Akiva Belk
Ann & Ken Bohm
Ellis Frohman
Sherri Lopatin
Mindy Strauss

Morton Secter, father of Barbara Levin

Judy & Stan Becker
Laurie & Sid Bennett
Ann & Ken Bohm
Shelah Feldman
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Nancye & Allen Gliner
Annette & Jack Heller
Wilma & Alan Levi
Sherri Lopatin
Neal & Pam Neuman
Barry Schapiro & Maggie Berk
Simone Schnidman
Mindy Strauss
Muriel Beckerman
Ann & Ken Bohm
Carol Max

Tributes In Memory Of...

Gladys Ethel Portlock, Kate Bond, Martha Leah Reynolds

Revi & Akiva Belk

Morris Bell

Marty Bell

Burton Boxerman, Benita Boxerman, Maurice Abrams, Sherwin Abrams, Herbert Boxerman

Susan & Stuart Boxerman

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Louis Geeser, Jo Taub, Shirley Geeser

Nikki & Paul Goldstein

Leonard Heller, Zelda Heller, Israel Meyer Heller, Flora Heller, Bernadine Seigel, Alexander Seigel, Nathan Becker, Rose Becker

Annette & Jack Heller

Tributes In Memory Of...

Robert Perlman, Stephanie Perlman, Ann Perlman

Joe & Lori Zeid Ingram

Bobbie & Simon Kohn

Renée & Lenny Kohn

Matthew Rosenberg

Jaime & Jonathan Landes

Helen Lopatin, Lori Jackson

Sherri Lopatin

Charles Kornitzer

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Ida Dolgin, Mitchell Dolgin, Stephanie Perlman, Robert Perlman, Joseph Perlman, Ann Perlman

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Esther R. Gerber, Marian Radman

Nina & Phil Radman

Peter Soibel, Clara Schuster, Isaac Vladimirovsky, Clara Rap

Cecilia Soibel

Christopher George, Preston Strauss, Mildred Strauss, Harry Fried, Nina Moritz, Sadye Strauss,

Seymour Moritz

Mindy Strauss

Jake Shmuger

Ceil Tobin

Ruth Woodward

Traude & Gary Wilson



If you would like to say **kaddish** for a loved one, please contact Rabbi Gordon, Mark Weinstein or Marty Levy so that we can arrange a weeknight evening **minyan** for you.

Additionally, upcoming yahrzeits are announced at **Shabbat** services each week; it is a beautiful way to remember and pay tribute to your loved ones. Join us on **Shabbat**, we would love to see you here!

PRAYER

We are not poor if we love something, someone, humanity maybe –
and have faith that we will somewhere, sometime be satisfied,
though we know not how.

We may even feel that our sorrow is but a school to teach us
the virtues of sympathy and gentleness
that will avail us hereafter, though we know not where.

We may not always be on the highway that leads us to this hilltop,
but we have seen the lighted road stretching on and on.
Sometimes, we even fancied that we saw the windows of the castle aglow.

We have hastened our steps to be in time for the feast,
and taken counsel of our courage
lest we falter and fall on the way.

May we keep this vision of the castle ever before our eyes,
and a belief in our hearts that the journey is worthwhile.
May the castle and the glow in the windows
always be reality, and never illusion.

Max Ehrmann

(adapted)

THOUGHT FOR THE MOMENT OF SILENCE

Who of us is mature enough for offspring before the offspring themselves arrive?
The value of marriage is not that the adults produce children, but that the children
produce adults.

Peter De Vries