Class # 8 - **Parshat Vayishlach: Controlling the uncontrollable**

Advanced Fellowship Parsha Class - Sponsored in memory of Alice Toby Barbanel Z”l

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Billy Beane (Brad Pitt), general manager of the Oakland A's, one day has an epiphany: Baseball's conventional wisdom is all wrong. Faced with a tight budget, Beane must reinvent his team by outsmarting the richer ball clubs. Joining forces with Ivy League graduate Peter Brand (Jonah Hill), Beane prepares to challenge old-school traditions. He recruits bargain-bin players whom the scouts have labeled as flawed, but have game-winning potential. Based on the book by Michael Lewis.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bpMKSiAgs2c>

1. Why was the baseball establishment resistant to the new approach to analyzing baseball players? Why were they prone to overlook players with potential?
2. What is the balance between knowing all the information to make a decision and trusting your gut?
3. Have you ever agonized over a decision and not acted until it was too late?

**The Colin Powell 40-70 rule of Decision Making**

Colin Powell has a rule of thumb about making tough decisions that I feel is helpful when facing such situations. He says that every time you face a tough decision you should have no less than forty percent and no more than seventy percent of the information you need to make the decision. If you make a decision with less than forty percent of the information you need you are shooting from the hip and you will make too many mistakes. The second part of the decision-making rule is what surprises many leaders. They often think that they need more than seventy percent of the information before they can make a decision. But, I explain to them, if you get more than seventy percent of the information you need to make the decision then the opportunity has usually passed and someone else has beaten you to the punch.

*Jacob Meets Esau*

32:4 Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to his brother Esau, to [Edom's Field](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=1&CHAPTER=32#C597) in the [Seir area](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=1&CHAPTER=32#C598). 32:5 He instructed them to deliver the following message:

'To my lord Esau. Your humble servant Jacob says: I have been staying with Laban, and have delayed my return until now.

32:6 I have acquired cattle, donkeys, sheep, slaves and slave-girls, and am now sending word to tell my lord, to gain favor in your eyes.' 32:7 The messengers returned to Jacob with the report: 'We came to your brother Esau, and he is also heading toward you. He has 400 men with him.' 32:8 Jacob was very frightened and distressed. He divided the people accompanying him into two camps, along with the sheep, cattle and camels. 32:9 He said, 'If Esau comes and attacks one camp, at least the other camp will survive.' 32:10 Jacob prayed:......

' 32:14 After spending the night there, he selected a tribute for his brother Esau from what he had with him…... When my brother Esau encounters you, he will ask, 'To whom do you belong? Where are you going? Who owns all this that is with you?' 32:19 You must reply, 'It belongs to your servant Jacob. It is a tribute to my master Esau. [Jacob] himself is right behind us.' ……..

[Jacob] said [to himself], 'I will win him over with the gifts that are being sent ahead, and then I will face him. Hopefully, he will forgive me.'

32:22 He sent the gifts ahead of him, and spent the night in the camp. 32:23 In the middle of the night he got up, and took his two wives, his two handmaids, and his eleven sons, and sent them across the [Jabbok River](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=1&CHAPTER=32#C601) shallows. 32:24 After he had taken them and sent them across, he also sent across all his possessions. 32:25 Jacob remained alone. A “MAN” [appeared and] wrestled with him until just before daybreak. 32:26 When [the MAN] saw that he could not defeat him, he touched the upper joint of [Jacob's] [thigh](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=1&CHAPTER=32#C603). Jacob's hip joint became dislocated as he wrestled with [the stranger]. 32:27 'Let me leave!' said [the MAN]. 'Dawn is breaking.'

'I will not let you leave unless you bless me.'

32:28 'What is your name?'

'Jacob.'

32:29 'Your name will no longer be said to be Jacob, but [Israel (*Yisra'el*)](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=1&CHAPTER=32#C604). [You have become great (*sar*) before God and man](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=1&CHAPTER=32#C605). You have won.' 32:30 Jacob returned the question. 'If you would,' he said, 'tell me what *your* name is.'

'[Why do you ask my name](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=1&CHAPTER=32#C606)?' replied [the MAN]. He then blessed [Jacob].

32:31 Jacob named the place Divine Face (*Peniel*). [He said,] '[I have seen the Divine face to face, and my soul has withstood it](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=1&CHAPTER=32#C607).' 32:32 The sun rose and was shining on him as he left [Penuel](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=1&CHAPTER=32#C608). He was limping because of his thigh. 32:33 The [Israelites](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=1&CHAPTER=32#C609) therefore do not eat the [displaced nerve](http://bible.ort.org/books/pentd2.asp?ACTION=displaypage&BOOK=1&CHAPTER=32#C610) on the hip joint to this very day. This is because [the MAN] touched Jacob's thigh on the displaced nerve.

**Rabbi Avraham Ben Ha’Rambam**

1. Who was the Man?

(כה) ויותר וג׳ – אחר שהתבודד (יעקב) ע״ה בלבדו התבודדות גשמית ולא נשארו אצלו עבדים וחפצים נתעלה באותה ההתבודדות הגשמית אל ההתבודדות הרוחנית אשר בסופה השיג השגת נבואה שנדמה לו בה כאילו יאבק איש עמו והוא מלאך כמו שנאמר בגבריאל והאיש גבריאל.

1. What was the key message?

(כט) כי שרית וג׳ – בישרו כי עשו לא יתגבר עליו ולא ינצחנו והטעם בזה שמכיון ששרית עם אלהים כל שכן שתהיה כך (לשר) עם אנשים.

3) What is the essence of the dialogue?

(ל) וישאל יעקב וג׳ – שאלו ע״ה לפי מה (שהיה) בדעתו מתחילת המחזה שהוא איש או אפשר כי עד אותו הזמן לא עלה על לבו בחזיונו אלא שהוא איש אלהים גדול היכולת כמלאך ולא נתאמת אצלו שהוא מלאך אלא כשהקיץ וזה הוא הקרוב יותר; ותשובתו לו למה זה תשאל לשמי טעמו ״והוא נסתר״ כמו שאמר המלאך למנוח והוא פלאי. (אמנם) מפני עילוי מדריגתו של יעקב לא היה יפה שידבר אליו (המלאך) בלשון זה מבלי לכסות בו [את הנזיפה המרומזת] דרך כבוד לגדולתו אלא נאמר לו למה זה תשאל לשמי בלבד; ובשאלת יעקב לשם [המלאך] המדבר אליו רמז אל בקשתו סודות אלוהיים שלא קדמה (לו ידיעה) בהם ובתשובתו (של המלאך) למה זה תשאל רמז כי התכלית המבוקשת נמנעת עם מציאות דביקות בגשמיות דומה (למאמר) כי [לא] יראני האדם וחי וב(מאמר) ויברך אתו שם רמז אל התעלותו (של יעקב) בסודות וידיעות (התעלות) יתירה על מדריגתו בעת ההיא.