In this week's parashah Jacob and Esau are reunited and reconciled, Jacob receives a new name, Dinah is violated, her brothers exact revenge in the name of her honor and Rachel dies giving birth to Benjamin and is buried in Ephrath, Isaac dies and is buried in Hebron, the progeny of Jacob and Esau are given. Some questions to consider for our discussion are:

1. **Why does Jacob say that he is "unworthy of all the kindness that You have steadfastly shown Your servant"?** (Genesis 32:11) What does he now understand about his life and his relationship with HaShem? His relationship with HaShem had deepened in all that he went through and he acted righteously in all that Laban defrauded him of as he finally says to Laban in Genesis 31:36-42 (CJB)

   36 Then Ya’akov became angry and started arguing with Lavan. “What have I done wrong?” he demanded. “What is my offense, that you have come after me in hot pursuit? 37 You have felt around in all my stuff, but what have you found of all your household goods? Put it here, in front of my kinsmen and yours, so that they can render judgment between the two of us! 38 I have been with you for these twenty years! Your female sheep and goats haven’t aborted their young, and I haven’t eaten the male animals in your flocks. 39 If one of your flock was destroyed by a wild animal, I didn’t bring the carcass to you but bore the loss myself. You demanded that I compensate you for any animal stolen, whether by day or by night. 40 Here’s how it was for me: during the day thirst consumed me, and at night the cold — my sleep fled from my eyes. 41 These twenty years I’ve been in your house — I served you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flock; and you changed my wages ten times! 42 If the God of my father, the God of Avraham, the one whom Yitz’chak fears, had not been on my side, by now you would certainly have already sent me away with nothing! God has seen how distressed I’ve been and how hard I’ve worked, and last night he passed judgment in my favor.”

   As it is written in Sefat Emet, Itturei Torah, Vol 1, p.293, “Pious people think they are unworthy of God’s gifts, while others they think are deserving of such gifts and even more.”

2. **Have you ever had a moment of insight and recognition similar to Jacob's? How did your life and your relationship with HaShem change as a result?** Several personal testimonies were shared.

3. **Who do you think is the "man" who wrestles with Jacob? Does he represent an external or an internal force? Or both? Did Jacob merit his name change?** One opinion of who the "man" wrestled with was that it was Yeshua HaMashiach. Another opinion quoted from Midrash Genesis Rabbah 77:3 on Genesis 33:10 stating,

   “ R. Hama b. R. Hanina said: It was the guardian Prince [angel] of Esau. To this Jacob alluded when he said to him [Esau]: Forasmuch as I have seen thy face, as one seeth the face of Elohim, and thou wast pleased with me  (Genesis 33:10). Another opinion was that Jacob was wrestling with himself. This is the first time he is not running away without facing a conflict - he ran from Esau before, he ran away from Laban, now he is willing to face and try to resolve the conflict without running away, hence the resulting limp that prevented him from running away. Whomever he wrestled with
he was received a revelation of HaShem in his wrestling and was blessed by this “man” because he showed his strength to both God and men as he was told, “Then the man said, “From now on, you will no longer be called Yaakov, but Isra’el; because you have shown your strength to both God and men and have prevailed.” Genesis 32:28 (CJB)

4. Rashi says that Jacob suffered both fright and anxiety (Genesis 32:8 [E7]). Fright--that he might be killed by Esau; anxiety--that he might himself be led to kill. Do you agree with Rashi’s implication that Jacob fears his own actions as much as he fears those of Esau? Why or why not? Genesis 32:7 related that Jacob was greatly afraid (vayirah meod) distressed (tzarar). From this Rashi deduces “anxiety.” Some felt that perhaps Jacob was anxious for perhaps there would be a physical confrontation in which he might have to kill his brother to protect his family. This he did not want to do.