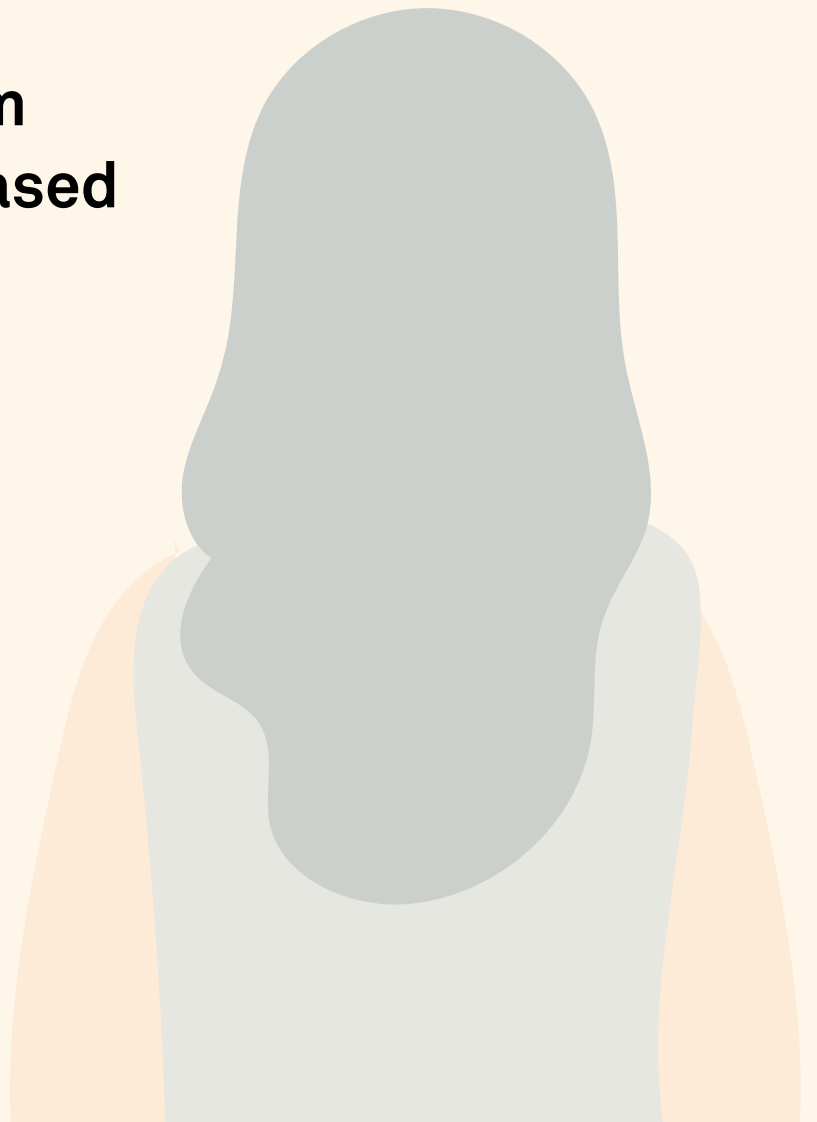


Shabbat Vayishlach: Conversation toolkit

Why we need to talk about Dinah

**A resource for the
16 Days of Activism
Against Gender-Based
Violence**



Shabbat Vayishlach: Conversation toolkit

Why we need to talk about Dinah

It is apt that Parsha Vayishlach - the story of Dinah's rape - should often coincide with the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (November 25), which marks the beginning of the United Nations' 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence (November 25 - December 10).

Violence against women is a critical issue - in our community; across Australia; and around the world. It is the single leading contributor to preventable death, disability and ill health for Victorian women aged 15 - 44 (VicHealth). Globally, 1 in 3 women around the world will experience physical or sexual violence at some point in their lifetime (World Health Organisation).

Parsha Vayishlach, and its associated commentaries, depicts a number of enduring themes that are no less relevant today: the issue of men's violence against women (Shechem's abduction and rape of Dinah); 'victim-blaming' (the suggestion that Dinah's "going out" was partly to blame); women's silence (we never once hear her voice). Dinah's story is devastatingly timeless.

The weekly gathering around the Shabbat table provides us with the opportunity to reflect and explore with our loved ones the things that are most important - to us, to our community, and to the world.

It is our hope that in the leadup to the 16 Days of Activism, families and friends across our community will use Shabbat Vayishlach as an opportunity to start a conversation about violence and inequality: the way they hurt us all, and what we can do to respond.

We invite you to use the toolkit in whatever way you wish. Use the below questions as conversation starters at your Shabbat meal, or as the basis of a drash, classroom lesson or peulah. Share the social media tiles with your networks.

In whatever way you can: start the conversation. It may seem small, but it is in these everyday interactions that the seeds of change are planted. Ending violence needs a whole-of-community response, and each and every one of us can play a role. Let's work together to create a safer and more equal world - for ourselves, for our children, and for the generations to come.

"How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world." - Anne Frank.

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence

Parsha Vayishlach - Shabbat table conversation starters

What does respect look like in a healthy relationship?

What are some of the expectations that we have for men and women in society? How do they differ from one another?

Do you think society would look different if men and women were equally represented in leadership? In what way?

Has there ever been a time where you felt unsafe because of your gender? How might that answer be different for someone of a gender different to your own?

Dinah has no voice in this parsha. In what ways are women silenced in our world today?

What does 'shalom bayit' mean to you? In what ways is this concept sometimes distorted to excuse or minimise violence?

What does 'victim-blaming' mean? What is our responsibility in calling it out?

What are some of the ways that we can help to stand up to violence or inequality? How does this relate to our Jewish values?

When Dinah's brothers rescue her, in turn killing the men and pillaging the town: whose honour was being upheld? How does the concept of men's honour relate to patriarchy?

What do you think are some of the negative impacts of gender stereotypes? For men and boys? Women and girls? How might they relate to violence?