

עטרת השבוע

Ateres HaShavua

A Weekly Torah Publication from the Students of Mesivta Ateres Yaakov
Ruth & Hyman Simon High School

פרשת וישלח
י"ז כסלו תשע"ג

December 1, 2012

Candle Lighting:	4:10
First קריאת שמע זמן:	8:46
Second קריאת שמע זמן:	9:22
First תפלה זמן:	9:45
Second תפלה זמן:	10:09
שקיעה	4:28
Earliest הבדלה:	5:18 <small>(50 minutes)</small>

All times are for The Five Towns

This week's edition of the Ateres HaShavua is sponsored by Rabbi Oratz and Rabbi Bennett in honor of the engagement of Koby Merel ('09) to Baila Koot of Miami Florida

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DUAL PERSONALITY

By Ezra Sturm, 10th grade

”ויותר יעקב לבדו ויאבק איש עמו עד עלות השחר” (לב:כה)

“Yaakov remained alone, and a man wrestled with him until dawn.” (32:25)

There are two opposing opinions of who the “man” was that appeared before Yaakov. According to Rav Shmuel bar Nachmani, the man appeared to him as an idol worshipper. Rav Shmuel bar Acha, however, says in the name of Rava bar Ula, that he appeared to him as a talmid chacham. (Chullin 91a). What is the significance about the way the man, or as Rashi says, the Malach of Eisav, appeared before Yaakov. Further, was the Malach really an idol worshipper or a talmid chacham?

The Kli Yakar explains that the fight that took place between Yaakov and Eisav's malach was not a one-time struggle, but rather an ongoing battle which is continuously taking place between every Jew and his yetzer hara. The yetzer hara uses multiple strategies in order to get a Jew to sin. The yetzer tov has a set place in a person's heart, while the yetzer hara constantly switches places inside a person, settling wherever it can best cause a person to sin at any given moment.

Yaakov Avinu's battle with Eisav's malach represents to us each individual's lifelong battle with his yetzer hara. The different opinions of the

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ON THE WAY BACK HOME

By Gavriel Guttman, 12th grade

Parshas Vayishlach commences with Yaakov Avinu sending messengers to Esav. He commands the messengers to inform Esav of the fact that Yaakov had lived with Lavan for the past 20 years and that Yaakov had become extremely wealthy with animals and slaves which he planned to offer to Esav. Rashi explains that Yaakov wanted Esav to know that he lived with Lavan - עם לבן - גרתי - a Lashon of גר which is a temporary, unimportant settling; he was trying to show Esav that the brachos really weren't so chashuv. The Ramban explains similarly that the reason why Yaakov was treating Esav with such respect was because one is supposed to treat his oldest sibling, the bechor, as if he is his father. So, in order to appease Esav about the sale of the Bechora, Yaakov still treated Esav as the Bechor. Rav Shamshon Raphael Hirsh uses a different part of the Pasuk to derive a very similar point. Yaakov tells the messengers to tell Esav - עם לבן גרתי ואחר עד עתה - “With Lavan I lived, and I held back there until now”. The words ואחר עד עתה are Yaakov's emphasis on the fact that Yaakov didn't want to be with Lavan; he was held back there and he was asking Esav that in merit of his own pain and suffering that he be forgiven.

Once the aforementioned explanations of the introductory Pasukim to this week's Parsha are understood, the following question can be asked. Esav had a very strong grudge against Yaakov; he wanted him dead. After all, Yaakov

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ATERES HASHAVUA

Ezra Sturm (continued from page 1)

malach's appearance reveal to us one of the yetzer hara's strategies used to cause us to stray from the Torah's path. This explains why the malach of Eisav appeared to Yaakov in two different forms. Each individual's yetzer hara will appear before him in the form that best fits the situation he is in. Sometimes, the yetzer hara can appear as an idol worshipper, which means that the yetzer hara will make the Aveira so appealing causing a person to do it even though he knows it is a sin. Other times, the yetzer hara will appear dressed as a talmid chacham, convincing him not to do a Mitzvah, because that Mitzvah is really against halachah. That yetzer hara can also convince a person to commit a terrible Aveira, persuading him that it is really an important Mitzvah.

The fact that the yetzer hara is capable of using such strategies on us presents us with an enormous challenge. In his battle with Yaakov Avinu, Eisav's malach realized that he was not capable of defeating Yaakov. However, once he saw that he would not win over Yaakov, he was sure to leave his mark. As the Pasuk states, "he touched [Yaakov's] thigh, and [Yaakov's] thigh became sprained while he wrestled with him" (32:26). We must realize that in a never ending fight with the yetzer hara, the yetzer hara will always have some degree of influence over us. The yetzer hara's influence lies in his ability to cloud our thoughts so that it is hard for us to see whether it is the yetzer tov or the yetzer hara that is causing us to do a particular action. This influence of the yetzer hara especially holds true when the yetzer hara chooses to appear in the form of a talmid chacham.

It is our lifelong work to remain constantly on guard of the yetzer hara. We must always ask ourselves whether each one of our actions is in reality being influenced by the force of the yetzer hara or that of the yetzer hatov.

Gavriel Guttman (continued from page 1)

had taken everything from him! So what was Yaakov expecting as a reaction from Esav? Did he think that all this flattery would really work?

I believe the question can be answered using one of the most fundamental concepts in Judaism- Teshuva! Teshuva, on a very superficial level can be understood as follows: As Jews we believe that G-d created the world and as Jews we believe that G-d created the world with rules. We have the Torah which contains the Mitzvos which are the rules that apply to us as Jews. So in essence, when one violates one of these Mitzvos, he is violating the rules of existence and should really suffer/die on the spot. But instead, G-d created the world with Rachamim and we have the ability to do Teshuva; to repent from our sins. The goal of Teshuva, as the Rambam explains in Hilchos Teshuva, is for one to completely separate himself from the aveirah that he has done; to make it as if he had never done it. With this understanding, we can answer our question. Yaakov was trying to impress Esav with the fact that he was taking all the steps necessary to remove himself from his past actions. According to Rashi, he told Esav how he was a lowly common person. According to the Ramban, he treated Esav as the Bechor and according to Rav Hirsh, he explained to Esav how he was stuck in a place where he didn't want to be, a cause of much suffering. All of these things were meant to counteract Yaakov buying the Bechora and stealing the Brachos, which obviously caused Esav tremendous pain. Yaakov was trying to show Esav that he was trying to do Teshuva; his actions were not just mere flattery.

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Stories of Tzaddikim

By Eli Bienstock

R' Shneur Kotler, son of R' Aharon Kotler and grandson of R' Isser Zalman Meltzer, had escaped Europe and managed to survive the Holocaust after experiencing many great miracles. Eventually, he arrived in Eretz Yisrael, joining his grandfather R' Isser Zalman with whom he shared a very close relationship. Upon arriving in Eretz Yisrael, news reached him that his kallah who he was engaged to before the war broke out, was said to be still alive. However, she was unable to join him in Eretz Yisrael so R' Shneur made plans to travel to her to finally get married.

On the day of his departure, R' Shneur went to his grandfather's house to say his goodbyes. R' Isser Zalman expressed his great joy on his grandson's upcoming marriage and began accompanying him down the stairs towards the exit. Surprisingly, after descending only two steps from his second floor apartment he turned around and went home. Everybody present was shocked and puzzled by the Rosh Yeshiva's behavior. Was this a fitting way for R' Isser Zalman to part from his dear grandson who he would probably never get to see again?

One of his talmidim dared to ask him why he had not accompanied his grandson all the way to the exit. R' Isser Zalman said, "As I was walking down the steps, I saw a vision of the thousands of Yidden who did not merit to live long enough to get married. I returned home to join them in their pain."

Thoughts On The Haftorah

By Ari Halpern

In this week's Haftorah, the navi Ovadya rebukes the nation of Eisav about their sins against Hashem. Though Hashem wanted the nations of Eisav to be the messengers to punish the Jews for their sins, Eisav went above and beyond the call of duty, and for that, they themselves were deserving of punishment. He says that Eisav is hiding themselves up in the mountains to avoid punishment. Rashi explains that the mountains refer to the Avos. Ovadya meant that they erroneously thought that the merits of Avraham and Yitzchak would save them from Hashem's wrath.

Zchus Avos is only effective, however, when the descendants follow in the path of their ancestors. That is why only Jews can daven in the name of the G-d of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov with the expectation of being answered positively in their merit. In Eisav's case, however, his lifestyle choices have led him far away from the path of his avos, Avraham and Yitzchak, and they will no longer protect him.

This is why Ovadya in particular was chosen to prophetically criticize Eisav. Despite being a ger from the nation of Eisav and working for two infamous Reshaim, Achav and Izevel, he remained a tzaddik and saved the remaining neviim of his generation from the hands of his employers. This stands in stark contrast to Eisav who was raised by two great tzaddikim, Yitzchak and Rivka, and could have been influenced positively by Yaakov, and yet chose his evil path.

אם תשיב משבת רגלך

Last week we discussed the basic outlook of refuah on Shabbos. This week we will talk about some common situations that include refuah.

Removing a splinter- one may remove a splinter on Shabbos because it isn't a cure, but rather is just removing an affliction from the outside of your skin. Also, if the splinter is extremely painful it may be removed even if it will definitely cause bleeding.

Deodorant and antiperspirant- deodorant sprays may be used on Shabbos because they aren't curing you but they are just merely hygienic actions. However, one cannot use a deodorant stick on Shabbos, because of the melacha of smoothing.

One may put on a dental brace on Shabbos because the use of the brace isn't a medication.

One may take an antacid to prevent heartburn because the cure isn't put into effect yet.

One who is anticipating a headache may take an Advil to prevent the headache but once he already has one he may not take it.

Once any pain or discomfort is felt, one may not take a pill to offset the pain as that is a direct transgression of refuah.

וקראת לשבת עונג

שלהן ביום תערוך

Are you ready? You *are* having visitors this Friday night, you know. You're not going to wait to set the table until after they arrive, are you?

The halacha is that one should set the table on erev Shabbos so that when he arrives home from Shul on Friday night he should find everything prepared. The Mishna B'rurah, quoting the well-known gemara, brings that two *Malachim* escort one home from shul Friday night, and upon finding the table set and the candles lit, the *malach tov* wishes that it be so the next week as well. The *malach ra*, like it or not, answers Amen.

You don't have to be a *malach* to appreciate the beauty and the benefit of greeting the Shabbos with the table already set. The warmth and tranquility of the Shabbos atmosphere and the guaranteed blessing of the *Malachim* are reason enough to eagerly and scrupulously fulfill this halacha each week, but when we reflect that the Torah associates the *kedusha* of Shabbos and the *kedusha* of the *Beis Hamikdash*, this becomes even more significant.

Let's explain. The *Mikdash* is the pinnacle of *kedusha* in *makom* (place), and Shabbos is the pinnacle of *kedusha* in *zman* (time). The *neiros* of Shabbos, and the Shabbos table set with the *lechem mishneh*, parallel the *Menorah* and the *Shulchan* of the *Beis Hamikdash*.

So although, sadly, we don't presently have the *Beis Hamikdash* to bask in the glory of the *kedusha* in *makom*, we do have the Shabbos, and when we set our *Shulchan* and light our *neiros* can be embraced by the *kedusha* in *zman*.

The Arizal, in his Friday night *piyut*, highlights these aspects of Shabbos preparation:

Nizamin la hashta-let us invite now (through our preparations for the arrival of Shabbos)

B'psora chadta-with a new table (set with *lechem mishneh*, in contrast to the weekdays)

Uv'minarta tavta-and with beautifully lit candles

D'nahara al reishin-that cast their luminosity upon our heads (referring to the *Brachos* bestowed by the *malachim* upon the head of each Jew who prepares his home for Shabbos)

With these preparations we can be comfortable inviting any guests, not least of which are our angelic visitors-and may it be so every week as well.



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