

עטרת השבוע



ATERES HASHAVUA

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לז"נ
 שרה שיינדל
 בת אריה משה

פרשת וישלח
 י"ג כסלו תשע"ד
 NOVEMBER 16, 2013

Candle Lighting:	4:18
First זמן קריאת שמע:	8:35
Second זמן ק"ש:	9:11
Sunrise:	6:42
Latest זמן תפלה:	10:00
שקיעה:	4:36
Earliest Havdalah:	5:26

(50 minutes)
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WHAT'S IN A NAME?

By Rabbi Tsvi Greenfield, Sho'el Umayshin

In this week's *Parsha*, we find ourselves on the cusp of a battle between עשו and יעקב. The עשו go into great detail about יעקב's thoughts and actions leading up to this encounter. The כתב סופר says "ויירא יעקב מאד ויצר לו". Yaakov was very afraid and it distressed him. The כתב סופר points out that these words seem to be repetitive. Furthermore, it says "הצילני נא מיד אחי מיד עשוי", "save me from the hands of my brother, the hands of עשו. Wouldn't it have been enough to say, "Save me from the hands of my brother עשו or just from עשו for that matter?"

The כתב סופר answers that יעקב was really afraid of two possible outcomes: 1) maybe עשו will take revenge and try to kill him 2) maybe עשו will want to reconcile and live together as brothers. Not only was יעקב nervous about the physical health of his family, he was just as nervous about their spiritual wellbeing. Having any connection to עשו הרשע was not an option.

If we take a step back and look at this story with a broader lens, we are hit with a question. יעקב was by לבן's house for twenty years so these same fears that we have talked about were very real the whole time. Why then does יעקב wait until now to confront them? Additionally, it seems that יעקב takes the initiative, and that only when he leaves לבן does עשו put together an army to fight his brother. What changed? Why does יעקב now have the confidence to face his dangerous brother?

Rabbi Frand points out that in last week's פרשה after the birth of Yosef, Yaakov tells his wife Rachel that it is the right moment to return to

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HEAD OVER HEELS

By Dovid Lesser, 11th Grade

"ויאמר לא יעקב יאמר עוד שמך כי אם ישראל כי שרית עם אלקים ועם אנשים ותוכל" (בראשית ל"ב כ"ט)

"No longer will it be said that your name is Yaakov, but Yisrael, for you have fought with the Divine and with man and have overcome" (Beraishis 32:29).

The *Pasuk* in this week's *Parsha* says that is once Yaakov crossed the waters of *Yabbok* that he encountered the angel of Eisav. The two of them fought throughout the night, until Yaakov overpowered the angel. The angel begins to beg for Yaakov to release him. Yaakov agrees to the angel's demand, but only on condition that the angel bless him. The angel agrees and asks Yaakov his name. Yaakov tells the angel his name and the angel responds by saying that from now on you will be called Yisrael.

This incident, of the changing of Yaakov's name, occurs right after Yaakov crossed the waters of *Yabbok* to retrieve forgotten jugs he left there. Yaakov went back for these jugs because Hashem had specifically given them to him, so he felt he couldn't just leave them behind. The *Ba'al Haturim* points out that the terminology used in that *pasuk*, where it states "ויעברם את הנחל" appears only twice in Tanach: once here and once again in *Tehillim* 78:13 where it says "בקע ים ויעבירם". The passage in *Tehillim* talks about Moshe splitting the sea in order to bring the people across.

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Rabbi Greenfield (continued from page 1)

to face Esav. *Rashi* notes that this implies that until Yosef was born, Yaakov could not deal with Esav, but with Yosef's birth he was able to confront his brother. *Rashi* connects this *pshat* to a pasuk in this week's *Haftorah* [עובדי א: ויהיה בית יעקב אש ובית יוסף להבה ובית עשו לקש]: And the house of Yaakov is a spark, the house of Yosef a flame and the house of Esav is straw. *Rashi* comments that alone is only a spark, he is unable to face עשו by himself. But when Yosef, the flame, is born, then יעקב can overcome him.

What exactly do *Chazal* mean when they say that Yosef is the key to the destruction of Esav? Yaakov himself was known as the בחיר שבאבות, what מעלה did Yaakov see specifically in Yosef that made him a new "secret weapon" against Esav? The משמואל answers by pointing out that names in *Tanach* are significant. They are not random labels. Names express the essence of the person. Esav, he says, is from the word "עשוי" (done). In fact, when Esav was born, he didn't look like a baby; he was like a completely developed adult.

The spiritual danger that Esav poses is a threat called עשי, I'm finished. When we feel that we are perfect and there is no room to improve -- that is what Esav is about. "I am fine. My *middos* are fine. My learning is fine. I am OK." This sense of complacency that our actions are good enough is precisely what Esav thrives on. On the other hand, there is a Yosef who represents the constant need to add on, be מוסיף, and grow from where we are holding today. Realize that Yosef spent 22 years in Mitzrayim, the lowest place in the world. He had every reason to say "I'm doing ok. Look how much better I am than those around me. I can relax a little." Instead, Yosef, as his name implies constantly sought to improve and add to his level of *kedusha*.

In truth, anyone who believes he can stand still in his עבודת ה' will automatically descend. The solution to the philosophy of being an "עשוי" (complete) is Yosef – to always add on. Imagine trying to stand still on a moving treadmill. If one does not exert effort to move forward one is forced backwards.

This is the only way that we can defeat the spiritual dangers that Esav brings. We must make every effort to "shteig", and not be satisfied with easing through life, and not be happy with an "It's all good" attitude. Let us take the lesson of the name of Yosef and work to infuse this attitude of consistent growth in our lives.

David Lesser (continued from page 1)

From this, the *Ba'al Haturim* infers that here too, in Yaakov's honor, the waters of *Yabbok* split in order for him to cross on to dry land.

The names Yaakov and Yisrael refer to two special spiritual Jewish periods. Harav Meir Shapiro, *zt"l*, says that the name Yisrael refers to the strength and sovereignty during the glory period of the Jewish people. This time occurred and continues to occur when *Torah* and *Mitzvos* are learned properly and performed daily and when Hashem is present in the hearts of the people. Rav Shapiro says that there are also periods of lowliness of the Jewish people. The Rav says this time occurs when the Jewish people assimilate and turn their hearts away from Hashem and acted like the other surrounding nations. Rav Shapiro says that here the name Yaakov is applicable. His reason is, since Yaakov got his name from holding the heel of Eisav, being on the bottom, so too when we are on the "bottom" we are referred to as Yaakov.

We see that Yaakov triumphed over the angel of Eisav, and received a blessing from him. The terminology Yaakov uses when asking for this blessing is ברכתני (bless me) which is equal in *gematria* to 682. The phrase "הודה לברכתי" (acknowledge my blessing) is also equivalent to 682. This shows that Yaakov wanted the angel to acknowledge the fact that Yaakov was the rightful and deserving one to have received the blessings from their father, and that therefore Eisav shouldn't have any claims against him or say that he stole them.

Yaakov was promoted when he was given the name Yisrael. The majesty and splendor of the Jewish people should always be on such a high level, deserving of a name that signifies strength, and sovereignty. We should always be worthy of Hashem's benevolence based upon our individual merit and on the merit of all the Jewish people.

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STORIES OF TZADDIKIM

Chezky Friedman, 12th Grade

True offerings and sacrifices for Hashem involve the small but consistent decisions to do the right thing, when there is no spiritual crisis or adrenaline present.

As the Yiddish expression goes, “*Groiser maasos, kleiner mensch. Kleiner maasos, groiser mensch.*” “Big actions-small man. Small actions-big man.” If one is only concerned about the “big” aspects of life, then one will remain a shallow person. True greatness can only be achieved through caring about the small but steady things of life. We need to be big men, we need to care about small actions. Rav Weinberger gave the following example of a *Tzaddik* who as great as he was, never became insensitive or desensitized to the mundane, even while in his grandeur and spiritual light of greatness. He never neglected the “small” aspects of life.

Rav Chaim Shmuelewitz *zt”l* met an old friend in the Yeshiva on Friday night and invited him for the *seudah*. At the beginning of the meal the *Rebbetzin* brought out the soup. After they finished, the Rosh Yeshiva asked for seconds, The *Rebbetzin* brought out more. Then the Rosh Yeshiva asked for a third serving. Dumbfounded, the old friend asked Rav Chaim while his wife was in the kitchen, what happened to him. He was worried that that his holy friend had become a “*Fresser*.” The Rosh Yeshiva explained, “When I give *shiur* in the yeshiva, and a *talmid* comes over to me after the *shiur* and tells me how great a *shiur* it was, it gives me a lot of *nachas*. The *Rebbetzin* spends a whole day preparing her “*shiur*,” the *Shabbos seudah*. In the beginning of the day, she had to go buy the vegetables. This was one *shiur*. Then she went to cook them, but there was a problem with the oven fuel, so she had to go to a neighbor to get more propane for the oven. That was another *shiur*, and so on. Thus, I eat with gusto because my wife gets a lot of *nachas* when I ask her to repeat her *shiur* for me.

We must learn to be sensitive always, never getting lost in our own spiritual world and forgetting the “little” yet truly momentous things in our life.

B'DCHILU U'RECHIMU ~ WITH LOVE AND WITH AWE

Naftali Engel, 12th Grade

“וַיִּירָא יַעֲקֹב מְאֹד” (בראשית ל”ב ח)

“And Jacob became very frightened and distressed.” (*Beraishis*, 32:8)

Although G-d had promised to protect Jacob with His Providence, Jacob was afraid in case he had sinned. (*Berachos 4a*)

When a person perceives G-d’s will – when he sees that everything happening to him is a result of Divine Providence (G-d’s intervention in the world) he comes to fear G-d. But if he believes that nature is its own force in and of itself he cannot attain the true fear of G-d. Yaakov was afraid he had not appreciated the Divine Providence and therefore had lost his fear of G-d and allowed himself to sin, in which case he no longer deserved G-d’s providence.

Obviously Yaakov should have not had any fear for he saw the angels that were to protect him last week at the end of the *Parsha*; they were there to protect him so why did he worry? One of Yaakov’s angels was Michael, Yaakov’s personal guardian, whereas the other angel was Esav’s angel. Yaakov had no way of knowing which angel would be more powerful – this is why he became fearful for he did not know if through some inadvertent sin, he would’ve lost the Divine Providence and fallen victim to his brother.

(Based on; *Likutey Moharan II*, 4:5|*Chizkuni*)

As I wrote in my *Dvar Torah* on *Parshas Toldos* there is a lesson that must be reiterated about the importance and meaning behind Yaakov’s sending of messengers to Esav. But the most amazing thing about Yaakov’s relationship with Esav was that: even though Esav’s moral and spiritual standing was low, to the extent he sold his birthright for such a materialistic want (a bowl of soup), nevertheless we see that Yaakov sent messengers (angels) to inform Esav that he was at peace with him, and sought his affection. From this we can learn a powerful lesson: we should reach out and send “messengers” even to those Jews who appear on the level of Esav. Even such a Jew is still your “brother” who needs to be treated in a pleasant and peace loving manner, with love and affection. He needs to be drawn closer to the Torah with “Ropes of love, warmth & Kindness.”

(Based on; *Tanya Ch.32*| *Hisvadyos* 5764,p.693)

HALACHA CORNER

Rabbi Yossi Bennett, Assistant Menahel

In this issue we will briefly discuss whether or not one fulfills the *mitzvah* of *hadlakas neiros Chanukah* with electric lights.

The *Shulchan Aruch* [O.C. 683:1] states that all oils and wicks are *kosher* for *neiros Chanukah*. The *Ram" a* [ibid] adds, however, that the choicest medium for oil is olive oil and the *Mishna Berura* [683:2] points out that the choicest wicks are those made of cotton or linen.

With that being the case, granted that it is not the “choicest” method for lighting *Chanukah neiros*, would electric lights still fall into the category of “all oils and wicks”?

The *Nishmas Avraham* [O.C., v. 1, p. 334] quotes the majority of *poskim* prohibiting doing so. [See *Shu" t Bais Yitzchok*, Y.D. 120; *Pekudas Elazar*, 23; *Levushei Mordechai*, 59] The reason is that since the miracle of *Chanukah* was performed via oil and a wick, therefore only oil or something similar to it (e.g., wax which melts into a liquid when lit) and a wick of some sort may be used. [*Levushei Mordechai*, ibid] A bulb, which has neither fuel nor a wick, therefore, would not be a fulfillment of *neiros Chanukah*.

Another reason, offered by Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, *zt" l*, [*Me'orei Ha'Eish* p. 95], is that the *mitzvah* is that there must be enough oil with the potential of burning for a continuous 30 minutes. Electricity is not continuous. Rather, every second is considered a new flame and therefore cannot be used. The *Pekudas Elazar* [ibid] takes a similar approach: that since the electric company can turn off the power if they see the need, the lights do not contain the requisite *shiur*.

Rav Ovadia Yosef, *zt" l*, [*Yabi'a Omer* 3:35] rules that in a situation where one cannot obtain or light oil or candles (e.g., in a hospital), he may kindle electric lights but without a *bracha*.

Not to be relied upon for *p'sak halacha*.

Geshmake Gemmatrios

Yehudah Auerbach, 12th Grade

- When Yaakov talks to Eisav, he beseeches Hashem to protect him from his brother. He tells of the good things Hashem has done for him. He says “... כי במקלי עברתי את הירדן...” “For with my staff I crossed the Yarden River...” *Rashi* comments on this that Yaakov split the Yarden with his staff to cross it. The Steipler Gaon brings an amazing allusion to this. The words “... כי במקלי עברתי את הירדן...” “for with my staff I crossed the Yarden” is the exact numerical equivalent of the words “נתן מקלו בירדן ונתבקע”, “He put his staff in the Yarden and it split.”
- After Yaakov passes his children over the Yabbok, Yaakov remains behind to get some small jugs that he left on the other side. The *pasuk* says “ויותר יעקב לבדו”, “And Yaakov remained alone.” The words “ויותר יעקב לבדו” are equal to the number 846. 846 is also the numerical equivalent of the words “חזר להביא פכים קטנים”, “He went back to bring back the small jugs.”
- Later on in the *parsha*, the *pasuk* says that the children of Yaakov were twelve. The *pasuk* states “ויהיו בני יעקב שנים עשר”, “And the children of Yaakov were twelve.” *Rashi* comments that this comes to show us that they were all equal and that they were all *Tzaddikim*. The Steipler shows an amazing hint to this *Rashi*. The words “ויהיו בני יעקב שנים עשר” are equal in *gemmatria* to the number 1251, which is the same as the words “מלמד שכולן שוין וכולן צדיקים”, “It teaches us that they were all equal and they were all *Tzaddikim*.”



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