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HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!

Parshat Vayetze 5770

This Shabbat (Parshat Vayetze, November 27-28) in the Yeshiva the Oneg Shabbat as well as Seudah Shlishit will be open to prospective students and their parents.

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New Weekly Melave Malke-Learning Program

The Yeshiva is pleased to announce a new weekly Five Towns Melave Malke/learning program that will, IY"H, be starting this Motzaei Shabbat. The chabura will be led by Rav Ariel Edelstein. This week's Melave Malke will take place at the home of Eitan Kestenbaum, 11 Manor Lane in Lawrence at 7:45pm. To learn more or to be added to the program's direct mailing list, please contact mm@yna.edu.

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Alumni planning on learning in the Yeshiva during their college break should please be in touch with [Elisha](#) ASAP. The Alumni Shabbat will be IY'H Parshat Shmot (Jan 9).

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Little Things

by Gabe Felder, Shana Alef - RAMAZ

My parents often told me it's the little accomplishments that make all the difference. As most parental wisdom goes, it got filed away into the recesses of my mind, but I am only now beginning to understand it.



By way of example: in Netiv, little accomplishments fill the tables of the Beit Midrash and the shiurim. A student solves a hard piece of Gemara, makes an extremely sound observation, or perhaps raises an extremely difficult question, and at the praise of his rebbe beams with pride at how far he has advanced since his first day at Netiv. While our building may be filled to the brim with many of these moments, for the individual such a moment is truly something special.



[Click here](#) for some sample audio from Kever Rachel

With this in mind, let me recount the events of Monday night of last week (Rosh Chodesh Kislev). Earlier that evening I met with HaRav Amos Luban and we discussed some difficulties I was having with *emunah*. We concluded the meeting with his giving me a seemingly impossible task: in order to perceive the world as constantly in Hashem's control, one needs to delve into the inner essence of every happening within the world around him. Distressed as to the enormity of this task, I began to think how I would go about accomplishing it.

In what can only be described as pure non-coincidental Divine intervention, that same evening the entire Yeshiva made the trip to Kever Rachel to pray for the *refuah shelemah* of Rebbetzin Korn.

I must say that what took place there was just the answer I had been seeking.

The small building housing the Kever was filled to the brim with the entire Netiv Aryeh staff and student body. At first, the room was silent. Overall a feeling of claustrophobia and anxiety filled the air of what little space was still available. We all waited till HaRav Bina's voice rose from the center of the room, pleading to all of us to beseech the mercy of Rachel Imeinu, so she may help us in our prayers. His cries echoed through the building and continued to ring in each of our ears for the remainder of the evening.

He then began a responsive recital of several chapters of Tehillim and we responded with intensity rarely seen anywhere. I felt incredibly fulfilled at what we had accomplished that evening - our prayers felt as real as the very keyboard I am typing on now. It is rare that all present can hone all their concentration towards one cause, but in that room, that night, we were all focused on our united goal.

At the conclusion of Tehillim we sang for an hour and a half, but the atmosphere in that room transcended time as we ended one song and immediately began the next. The unity of our voices which echoed through the building seemed to permeate the heavens.

Words cannot sufficiently describe the experience. Our voices may have rung out

in unison, but each person individually discovered his new personal connection to Hashem. Every Jew has his own unique relationship with Hashem and his own method of prayer. I am disappointed at my inability to properly capture the cries and pleas of the entire Netiv Aryeh family, Rav or *talmid*. The emotions of the individual faded together as part of a larger picture. This does not detract from the prayer of each person, for even one less voice would have changed the picture entirely.

I believe that this is the lesson which HaRav Amos wished for me to learn. Every accomplishment, every little experience of ours may appear insignificant in the grand scheme of things. However, when viewed in the context of the broader spectrum of Hashem's world, they are essential to the development and progression of the world around us - deeply impacting the whole as they do the individual.

HaRav Amos would relate to these "minor accomplishments" by saying: "These are big things to think about." And I think I can proudly agree that they are very big indeed.

HaRav Nebenzahl on Parshat Vayetze

HaRav Nebenzahl asks that his Divrei Torah are not read during Tefillah or the Rabbi's sermon

"HAD I KNOWN I WOULD NOT HAVE SLEPT!"

LEIL TISHA B'AV

Yaakov Avinu leaves his parents' home and spends fourteen years at the Academy of Shem and Ever on his journey towards Haran.. On the way to Lavan he stops to rest overnight:

"He encountered the place and spent the night there because the sun had set; ... and he lay down in that place." (Bereishit 28:11).

At first glance, the words *bamakom hahu* - "in that place" seem superfluous. Did the Torah not just record "he lay down"? Is there any place other than *bamakom hahu* that he would have lain down? Rashi quotes the *midrash*: "This expresses exclusion; in *that* place he lay down, but during the fourteen years that he served in the house of Ever, he did not lie down at night, because he was occupied with Torah." It is difficult to believe that Chazal meant that Yaakov did not sleep at all. In Gemara Sukka we learn: "He who takes an oath not to sleep for three days is to be punished with *malkus* and he may sleep immediately." (Sukka 53a). Not sleeping at all, even for just three days, is impossible! What Chazal meant was that he would doze off at times, but he never actually lay down to sleep. It was only when he arrived "at that place" that he deliberately went to sleep.

Why did Yaakov go to sleep? We would have expected a Yeshiva scholar of his caliber to be engrossed in his learning. It is hardly possible that when he left the Yeshiva, he left his love for learning behind. Furthermore, Chazal tell us that Yaakov went there to *daven*: "When he reached Charan, he said to himself: 'Shall I have passed through the place where my fathers prayed and not pray too?'" (Chullin 91b) This was not merely a stop on the road. Yaakov purposely returned to Har HaMoriah in order to daven. If Yaakov realized what the place was, why does he say: "Hashem is present in this place and I did not know"? (Bereishit



28:16). How could he not have known? His sole motive in returning there was that he knew what it was!

We can gain some insight into this incident through a *midrash* that is also cited in the *halacha*. The night that Yaakov slept "in that place" was the night of *Tisha B'Av*. Although fourteen *Tisha B'Avs* had passed during the fourteen years Yaakov was in the Yeshiva, Yaakov did not feel the destruction. It was only when he arrived *bamakom hahu* - at the site of the *Beis HaMikdash* and he actually saw the destruction that he felt *Tisha B'Av*. The *Kinos* recited on *Tisha B'Av* mention the fact that Yaakov saw the destruction. Upon perceiving the *Beis HaMikdash* lying in ruins, Yaakov remarked: "*ein zeh kee im Beit Elokim vezeh shaar hashamayim*", whose simple translation is "This is none other than the abode of G-d and this is the gate of the heavens!" (Bereishit 28:17). According to this *midrash*, we can interpret the words "*ein zeh*" to mean "it was not there" - Yaakov Avinu suddenly realized that the *Beis Hamikdash* -the abode of G-d- was no longer standing. He stopped learning immediately, since *halacha* mandates that learning Torah is forbidden on *Tisha B'Av*. Now that he was observing his first *Tisha B'Av* and could not learn, he lay down to sleep.

When he arrived at the place and beheld the destruction, "Yaakov instituted the *Maariv* prayer." (Brachot 26b). Yaakov established the prayer that is recited at night, because night represents the darkness of the exile. Avraham and Yitzchak established *Shacharis* and *Mincha*, which are recited during the hours of daylight, corresponding to the time when the *Beis HaMikdash* was standing. *Shacharis* and *Mincha* are obligatory, but "the evening prayer is elective." (ibid. 27b). Perhaps this is because the exile too was "elective" - it did not have to take place. If we had not deserved it, it would not have happened. On *Tisha B'Av*, the *halacha* states, one should sleep with some discomfort, which explains why Yaakov placed a rock under his head when he lay down

"HAD I KNOWN I WOULD NOT HAVE SLEPT!"

Perhaps we can offer another understanding of Yaakov's declaration: "This is none other than the abode of G-d and this is the gate of the heavens." Chazal teach us that while the *Beis HaMikdash* stands, "Their interiors are consecrated but their rooftops are unconsecrated." (Pesachim 86a) There was no sanctity in the roofs of the Sanctuary. Following the destruction, the sanctity was boundless and continued upward to the heavens. Yaakov knew that this was the place where his fathers had prayed, but on witnessing the destruction in all its darkness, he thought that the Divine Presence had left. When he awoke, he realized that the *Shechina* was indeed present, even during times of destruction, and so he exclaimed: "Achen yesh Hashem bamakom hazeh ve-anochi lo yadati" - "Hashem is present in this place and I did not know!" Had he been aware of the fact that Har HaMoriah retained its holiness even after the destruction, he would have known that it was an inappropriate place to sleep. Yaakov realized that this night had offered him a golden opportunity to grow to new heights, and he had wasted it.

Yirmiyahu the prophet declared: - "You, Hashem, are enthroned forever, Your throne is eternal." (Eicha 5:19) What does this *pasuk* teach us that we do not already know? We can understand it in the context of the previous *pasuk*:" "For foxes prowl on Mount Zion which lies desolate." Yirmiyahu is teaching us that even at times when foxes tread on Har Zion, during times of destruction, when it lies desolate, "You, Hashem, are enthroned forever, Your throne is eternal." This is what Yaakov Avinu learned: the Divine Presence had not departed, therefore it was inappropriate to sleep "in that place."

Rav Aryeh Levin, who was the *Mashgiach* in *Yeshivas Etz Chaim*, quoted this reaction of Yaakov's: "Had I known, I would not have slept." This, he told his students, is how a Yeshiva *bochur* should feel. He must realize the importance of the Yeshiva and the opportunities it presents. The years should not be wasted in sleep! Obviously sleep is a necessary bodily function and none of us can be expected to be like Yaakov Avinu, who did not sleep during his fourteen years in Yeshiva. However, it should be confined to its appropriate time and place, not during the *shiur* or during time which should be set aside for learning.

"Had I known I would not have slept." Even during his sleep Yaakov Avinu achieved tremendous heights. He dreamt of a ladder:

"A ladder was set earthward and its top reached heavenward; and behold! angels of G-d were ascending and descending it." (Bereishit 28:12)

He dreamt of Hashem's promise to grant him *Eretz Yisrael* and to protect him, as well as Hashem's other promises mentioned in the Torah. Despite this, he regretted that he had wasted the opportunity of a night at the site of the *Beis Hamikdash* by sleeping.

This is how a Yeshiva student should feel. He should realize the holiness of the place and value the years in which he has the opportunity to sit in Yeshiva and study Torah. It would be sad if when the time came to leave the Yeshiva, the student were full of regrets for not having realized what a tremendous place it is, and instead he wasted his time sleeping! Of course, a student must eat when it is time to eat and sleep when it is time to sleep, but he must also learn when it is time to learn! The years in Yeshiva must not go to waste.

A TORAH PATCHED TOGETHER FROM TATTERED PIECES

The Gemara (Sanhedrin 71a) tells us: "If someone sleeps in the *Beis Midrash*, his Torah becomes *kraim kraim* - 'tattered,' as it says, 'and a slumberer will wear tattered clothing.'" (Mishle 23:21) Although this statement of Chazal has profound meaning, it can be understood on a simple level as well. Let us imagine, for example that a student asks the Rav a *she'eilah*: "Is cooking permissible on *Shabbos*?" The Rav obviously answers that it is forbidden. Another student then asks the Rav if cooking is permissible on *Yom Tov* and of course the Rav answers that it is allowed. What would happen if a student dozed off after the first question and woke up just before the second answer? He would mistakenly believe that cooking is permissible on *Shabbos*! His Torah becomes tattered - patched together from tattered pieces.

INFORMATION AND LOGIC

Although we should attempt to accumulate as much knowledge as possible in the Yeshiva, to learn as many pages of Gemara, *Tosafos*, and R' Chaim as we can, we must realize that spending the time in Yeshiva merely amassing volume of knowledge constitutes wasting time in the preference of quantity over quality. The purpose of Yeshiva is also to teach us how to think using the Torah's logic.

Knowledge can be gained outside the Yeshiva as well. All one needs do is sit in a *Beis Midrash* and open up some books. However, learning to think in a logical manner and to uncover the depths of the Torah is very difficult to learn elsewhere. Obviously the Torah giants of the world can do so outside the Yeshiva as well, but

an ordinary person can only accomplish this within the walls of the Yeshiva. We must take advantage of the time we have here, to understand why Rashi rules as he does, why *Tosafos* did not accept this, and why the Rambam differed from both of them. Did the Rambam simply have a different version of the text or was there another reason for his divergent view? Although the knowledge we gain without discovering the logic may be true, life is not conducted solely based on the cases mentioned in the Gemara, thus it is important to understand and to be able to compare one case to another.

The Gemara cites a *halacha* in the name of R' Evyatar. R' Yoseph asked: "Who tells us that R' Evyatar is reliable?" Abaye says: "It is understandable that you can discredit the standing of a scholar for a mistake in something dependent on logic, but an *oral* teaching? He may never have heard this oral tradition." (Gittin 6b) No person can master the Torah in its entirety. There is no end to the amount of information one can still learn. We must strive to master everything, all the while remembering: *lo alecha hamelacha ligmor* לא עליך המלאכה לגמר - "You are not required to complete the task." (Pirke Avot 2:21) However, the ability to use logic is an art which a person must master, and it is not found in any book. If a person uses logic incorrectly, he cannot achieve greatness in Torah, while in the area of information, he may be unaware of a particular point and yet still be considered great. Paradoxically, the Gemara teaches us: "Rav Yosef was a well-read scholar (literally, like Har Sinai) - he was familiar with the many precepts of the Torah: Rabba, on the other hand, was a keen dialectician (literally, he could uproot mountains with his logic.) An inquiry was sent: Which of these should take precedence? The reply came back: 'A well-read scholar is to take precedence.'" (Horayot 14a) This implies that amassing knowledge is preferable to developing one's thinking ability. The reason for this is that without basic knowledge, logic cannot produce correct results. Once there is a basis of knowledge, one can compare one thing to another using his own logic and draw his own conclusions on particular *halachic* issues.

"ROLLING OBSTACLES" - APPLYING A PRINCIPLE

How does one infer *halacha*? Let us view an example. Nowadays, most stores have tiled floors and do not generally contain a *bor*, or 'pit'. At one time sugar and salt were kept in large sacks. When a customer came in to the store, she would tell the owner how much salt she wanted and he would take the appropriate amount from the large sack and transfer it into whatever container she had. One time several women came in to a store at the same time. They all requested sugar. The shopkeeper gave them what they asked for and they each brought it home and used it as an ingredient in the food that they cooked. A short while later it was discovered that there had been a mix-up and they had been sold salt instead of sugar. One woman's cake was ruined, another's tea, and another's fish. Is the storekeeper obligated to reimburse them for their losses? The Rav (Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach) *zt"l* ruled that he is. This ruling was based on the concept of *bor hamisgalgel* "a pitfall that is moved about." (See *Baba Kamma* 6a. A person placed a large stone in a public area which caused no damage while stationary. The stone was then kicked by people walking and caused damage in its new location (Rashi)).

The Rav explained that a *bor hamisgalgel* need not be in the form of a pit, but can be, as in this case, in the guise of a bag of sugar or salt. This is what true learning is. We must know how to compare one thing to another.

Yeshiva students commonly ask why they need to learn *Baba Kamma* if they

neither own an ox nor have pits in their yards! It is indeed possible that they have a *halachically* defined *bor* in their house. I believe that each of us has some type of obstacle in our homes, for example, a child may fall off a chair or table and break his leg. The child does not realize the ramifications of what has occurred, but when he grows up he should actually be able to sue his father for damages! Although I am not a *dayan*, this would seem to be the *halacha*. This is just one of many examples of how the study of Gemara is relevant to our daily lives.

Some people might not understand how to use the laws as practical guidelines. They view the Gemara as esoteric concepts that have no connection to their lives. A person might be in the middle of learning, "If one leaves a jug in a public domain and someone else comes along and stumbles over it and breaks it ..." (Mishna Baba Kamma perek 3, Mishna 1) yet on his way out of the *Beis Midrash*, he throws a banana peel into a public domain. The banana peel now has the status of a *bor birshut harabim* "a pit in a public domain." (Shabbat 99a)

The Gemara states: "He who wishes to be pious must fulfill the laws of *Nezikin*." (Baba Kamma 30a) One way to attain piety is to fulfill the precepts relating to laws of damages, one of which is not to throw a banana peel into the street. Where in the entire *Shas* is it mentioned that one should not throw a banana peel in the street? Does the *Talmud* even mention bananas? Rabenu Nosson Rosh HaYeshiva states that the word 'banana' is hinted at in *Shas* in the words *bnos shuach*. (See Brachot 40b) *Bnos shuach* is a type of fruit described by the Gemara as "white figs". Even if he is correct, it does not say anywhere in *Shas* that a person should not throw the peels of *bnos shuach* into the street! The only way to derive a *halachic* conclusion regarding the banana peel is to apply the principles of *Maseches Baba Kamma*. Torah is not irrelevant abstract pieces of information - it is our life!

We learn that if a person steals something and is caught, he must pay double the value of the item he stole. The Torah specifies that this applies "from an ox to a donkey to a lamb." (Shmot 22:3) Presumably this includes other things as well, even if they are worth significantly less. Chazal tell us that the entire Torah comprises one unit. Every *Maseches* has information relevant to other subjects. Not only can we learn laws of damages in *Baba Kamma* and laws of *Shabbos* in *Maseches Shabbos*, but laws of damages are found in *Maseches Shabbos* and laws of *Shabbos* can be found in *Maseches Baba Kamma*.

Authorities such as *Eglei Tal* and the Rogatchover demonstrate how the entire Torah is one large picture. When the *Eglei Tal* discusses issues related to the prohibited *melachos* of *Shabbos*, he brings proofs from *Kodshim*, *Taharos*, *Nezikin*, and the rest of *Shas*. The Rogatchover also makes reference to sources from all over *Shas*. One would have to work extremely hard to gain expertise in all these areas. As we mentioned before, one must not only have knowledge in all areas of Torah, but one must also understand its inner logic as well as the *Rishonim* and *Acharonim* and know how to apply all of it.

The Ibn Ezra writes, "The empty-headed will wonder what Moshe did on Har Sinai for forty days and forty nights." (Ibn Ezra's commentary to Shmot 31:18) They wonder why it took Moshe forty days and forty nights to master the Torah. Why does Ibn Ezra refer to them as "empty-headed"? Perhaps if they believed that they could master the entire Written and Oral Torah including Rashi, Rambam, *Ketzos*, *Nesivos*, etc. in less than forty days and nights, they must be the Torah giants of the world! The Ibn Ezra explains that they are empty-headed because they do not realize that "If Moshe stood there with Hashem for this number of

years (forty) and double double of this number (an additional 160 years totaling 200), he would not be able to understand even one thousandth of the ways of Hashem, and what lies behind His *mitzvos*." This means that even if someone were as great as Moshe Rabenu and had two hundred thousand years to learn, he would still not be able to achieve a complete understanding of the Torah through natural means. I would therefore suggest that everyone spend as much time as he can in Yeshiva.

STUDYING THE THIRTEEN RULES BY WHICH THE TORAH IS EXPOUNDED

Chazal describe the Torah as a gift from Hashem. If so, what did Moshe spend his time studying during these forty days? It seems to me that he studied the outlines and patterns of the *mitzvos*. Moshe learned, for example, what a *Sukkah* should look like and what *Tefillin* should look like. He studied the "the rules by which the Torah is elucidated," the methods of logic and in-depth study. For example, Moshe learned what can be derived from a *kal vachomer* and from a *gezeira shava*.

Without some basic knowledge, using the tool of *kal vachomer* alone can produce warped ideas of what the Torah is trying to say. By means of a *kal vachomer* one can theoretically conclude that one is required to eat *matzah* on *Sukkos*! The *kal vachomer* would be that if even on Pesach when one is not required to live in the *Sukkah*, one is required to eat *matzah*, then *kal vachomer* on *Sukkos* when one is required to live in the *Sukkah*, he should certainly be required to eat *matzah* as well. Applying the principle of *gezeira shava* without basic knowledge can also lead to error. An example of this is "*chamisha asar chamisha asar*" comparing Pesach to *Sukkos* because they each fall on the fifteenth of the month, can lead to the same erroneous conclusion. It is not enough to read the thirteen principles as they are written in the *siddur*; we must know how to apply them in order to learn what can be derived using which principle.

Chazal relate the story of a *Tzdukki* (Sadducee) who invented the following *kal vachomer*: if one is permitted to live with one's own wife but not with her daughter, then when it comes to someone else's wife with whom one is forbidden to live, certainly he should be forbidden to live with her daughter. Of course this is absurd because it means one is forbidden to marry the daughter of a married woman! We must know how to determine which *kal vachomer* is correct and which is not. This is how Moshe Rabenu spent those forty days - learning how to study the Torah in depth.

This too is what Yaakov did during those fourteen years he was in the Yeshiva of Shem and Ever. I don't know whether he only studied the seven *mitzvos* required of all descendants of Noach or the Torah in its entirety. He was mainly busy acquiring methods of analysis - first in the house of Yitzchak, then in the Yeshiva of Ever.

REMOVING ROCKS

After spending fourteen years in the Yeshiva, Yaakov began his journey towards Charan. He was not a young man at this point - he was seventy-seven years old. Despite this, he succeeded in removing the large rock placed on the mouth of the well to prevent robbers from stealing the water. (See Bereishit 29:2) It usually took all the shepherds together to remove the rock: "When all the flocks were assembled there, they would roll the stone from the mouth of the well and water the sheep." (Bereishit 29:3)

Yaakov removed the rock with ease. "like a person who removes a plug from the

mouth of a flask, to let you know that his strength was great." (Rashi Bereishit 29:10)

My esteemed teacher HaRav Chaim Shmuelevitz *zt"l* asked where Yaakov Avinu got such strength - certainly not from studying in the Yeshiva for fourteen years! In *Tefillas Geshem*, the prayer for rain recited on *Shmini Atzeres*, Ashkenazim recite: "*yichad lev vegal even mipi be-er mayim*" "He dedicated his heart and rolled a stone off the mouth of a well of water." Yaakov's strength was not physical, but came from the dedication of his heart and his faith in Hashem.

One who studies the Torah as he should, and attains this *יהוד הלב* can accomplish anything. The most difficult task will become like removing a plug from the mouth of a flask. Even the spiritual rock - the *yetzer hara* is referred to as a rock - can be removed with the proper amount of *yichud halev*. It all depends how much we involve ourselves in Torah study. When one does not delve into the Torah and serve Hashem properly, the rock is insurmountable.

On Chanukah in *Al Hanissim* we thank Hashem because:

"You delivered the strong into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few, the impure into the hands of the pure, the wicked into the hands of the righteous, and the wanton into the hands of the diligent students of Your Torah."

The final praise in this sentence - "the wanton into the hands of the diligent students of Your Torah" - sheds light on all the "pairings". The weak defeated the strong because the weak were "diligent students of Your Torah". When one is involved in Torah, the Greeks are not insurmountable - even the elephants of the Greeks are like that plug on the flask.

REINSTATING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

The war against the Greeks was a holy one. The Chashmonaim fought not only for the sake of *Kiddush Hashem*, but in order to save the study of Torah and keeping of *mitzvos* which the Greeks had forbidden. They were victorious because they had *yichud halev*.

According to the Rambam, as a result of the war, Israel was victorious in that the kingdom lasted for more than two hundred years. However this was not the main purpose of the Hasmonean uprising. Had Antiochus permitted the Jewish people to observe the Torah, they would have been willing to accept him as their king. Since this was not the case, they rebelled, not to return the kingdom to Jewish hands, but to reinstate the Kingdom of Heaven. Their rebellion was for the sake of giving our sons a *bris mila* and observing *Shabbos*, *Rosh Chodesh*, and other *mitzvos*.

Involving themselves in the study of Torah and holy pursuits was *Am Yisrael's yichud halev* against the Greeks - making them like a mere plug on a flask.

It is well-known that the Chazon Ish was able to perform miracles, particularly in the area of medicine, but in other areas as well. I once asked the Rav (HaRav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach) *zt"l* whether I am required to believe these stories, to which he answered 'Yes.' At the time, similar stories were circulating regarding another individual who supposedly was also a miracle worker and when I asked the Rav whether I should believe those stories, he replied in the negative. (Later I happened to be present when the Chazon Ish performed one of the miracles

described, and when the other person attempted to do so unsuccessfully.) The difference between them was that while the other man was observant and had studied some Torah, the Chazon Ish's entire being was the Torah. He delved into it and had insights into all sections of the *Shulchan Aruch*. Anyone familiar with his *seforim* can see that the entire Torah was open to him. Such a person can perform miracles.

Yaakov Avinu achieved his *shlemus* (perfection) by being a *yoshev ohalim* - by "sitting in the tents (of Torah)," (Bereishis 25:27) by spending fourteen years in the Yeshiva of Shem and Ever without sleeping. This was the only reason Yaakov had the ability to roll that rock off the mouth of the well.

TAKING UPON ONE'S SELF THE YOKE OF TORAH

In *Sefer Daniel*, the *pasuk* states: "It will throw truth to the ground, and it will achieve and prosper," (Daniel 8:12) referring to kingdoms he saw in a vision. The *Yerushalmi* comments that the *pasuk* teaches us that the kingdom of evil succeeded because truth was thrown to the ground. Truth refers to the Torah. When *Klal Yisrael* is involved in Torah, the other nations cannot exert control over us.

"*Hakol kol Yaakov vehedayim yedei Esav*" - "The voice is Yaakov's voice, but the hands are Esav's hands." (Bereishit 27:22) When the voice of Yaakov is strong in the ways of Torah, the hands of Esav cannot rule over us, but when the voice of Yaakov is not strong, when Yaakov is not involved in the Torah, the hands of Esav can overpower us.

"If someone takes upon himself the yoke of Torah, the yoke of government is removed from him." (Pirke Avot 3:6) It does not matter whether it is the government of Rome or Greece, or America. If today we are obligated to listen to everything America dictates, it is because something is lacking in our acceptance of *ol haTorah*, the yoke of Torah. Had we observed the *mitzvos* better, created more *Yeshivos* and *Kollelim*, put more effort into our Torah study during our time in Yeshiva, the *ol malchus* would not be able to overpower us. We must hope and pray that by accepting the yoke of Torah and *mitzvos* properly, we will be able to rid ourselves of the burden of the other nations, and speedily in our day may we reach the stage of "Then You Hashem will reign alone over all Your works on Mount Zion, resting-place of Your glory." (Shmoe Esrei of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur)

Staff Dvar Torah by Rav Yitzchak Landa

In the beginning of Parshas VaYitzei, we read of Yaakov Avinu making his way to the house of Lavan to find a wife. When he reaches Har HaBayis, the *pasuk* states [28:11] "he encountered the place and he slept there because the sun had set." The Medrash explains that Yaakov wanted to continue on his journey but the entire world became "as a wall before him" - a wall appeared in front of him, blocking his way.



Yaakov spent his entire life learning, first with his father Yitzchok and then at Yeshivas Shem V'Ever. Until now, his entire existence had been dedicated to

Hashem alone. Now, Yaakov was on his way to find a wife, a job, and start a family, and the heavens themselves tried to obstruct his path in order to keep him within the confines of the beis medrash!

When Yaakov falls asleep, he has a dream of "a ladder standing on the ground with its top in the heavens" [28:12] while angels ascend and descend the ladder. The Nesivos Shalom explains that Hashem is teaching Yaakov a fundamental life lesson through this dream. The purpose of an Eved Hashem is not to sequester oneself from the world, staying only in a beis medrash. Rather, we have to leave the comfort and security of the beis medrash, to partake of the physical world symbolized by the ladder standing on the ground. It is part of our purpose to support ourselves and our families, to marry and raise children who will follow in His ways and sanctify Hashem's Name in this world. Hashem created this beautiful world for us to enjoy and appreciate through the framework of Torah.

One can only live properly in this world, however, by focusing on what is above, as the pasuk says, "its top reached to the heavens". A person must always stay connected to Hashem by setting aside time to learn and daven, reminding himself Who created and Runs this world, even when involved in worldly material pursuits. This helps a person remain honest and upright in all his dealings, with all people, as well as a generous dispenser of tzedakah. A person can enjoy the wonderful and delicious offerings of the world appropriately, without being a glutton.

I would like to add that this idea of always setting aside time for learning and davening is only possible, as we learn from Yaakov Avinu, after one has ensured a steady foundation in Torah, acquired by full time study in Yeshiva. In order for the Torah to become a part of a Jew, he must immerse himself in its study completely. Only then, with the Torah steeped in his bones can he move out into the greater world.

When Yaakov awakes from his dream, he declares [28:16] "Hashem is in this place and I did not know it." Until now, Yaakov had thought that it was only possible to serve Hashem while being engaged in full time Torah study. Upon dreaming of the ladder spanning both heaven and earth, he realized that with a strong foundation, one can remain a loyal servant of Hashem and still go out into the world. It is precisely at this point that Hashem blesses Yaakov "I will be with you and guard you in all your ways" [28:15]. When leaving the protective walls of the beis medrash, we need extra help from Hashem to remain steadfast in our observance and faith. There are many challenges and potential pitfalls involved in working and raising a family. For example, it is easy to forget Hashem when one is wealthy and powerful, and can seemingly rely on himself, we must understand that only with Divine assistance can we succeed.

In Tehillim [27:4] we say "I have asked one thing, this I shall request, I shall dwell in Your house all the days of my life." Our desire as Jews is to sit in Hashem's house, always. Understood through the context of the Nesivos Shalom's message, we can gain a deeper understanding of this pasuk. "All the days of my life" emphasizes our single-minded desire to stay true to Hashem, no matter where we are in life or what our particular challenges may be. Whether in our youth, during our time in yeshiva when we are relatively unburdened and free of obligations, or later as adults, working and raising children, our goal is unchanged - to serve Hashem .

Student Dvar Torah by Cobi Friedman, Shana Bet - TABC

"Hashem saw that Leah was unloved, so he opened her womb, but Rachel remained barren." (Genesis 29:31)



The simple understanding of this *pasuk* is that Rachel was the loved one, so to compensate Leah, Hashem gave her children, as we just quoted: "Hashem saw Leah was unloved." Yet many issues arise from Leah's "compensation" for her hardship. Before we elaborate on this, we have a different query on the language of the *psukim*. The previous *pasuk* writes that Yaakov loved Rachel more than he loved Leah, why is it that the very next *pasuk* describes Leah as being completely unloved? Lastly, in regard to Leah's compensation for being unloved, Hashem gave Leah children so that Yaakov would love her, we do not find anywhere a description in the Torah of Yaakov's newfound love for Leah - how then did Leah benefit by having children?

There is a beautiful "Midrash Rabba" which helps us understand what happened overnight to explain the transformation from Yaakov's lukewarm love to his hatred of Leah. When Leah and Yaakov awoke the morning following their wedding, the midrash states that Yaakov turned to Leah and said: "you are the daughter of a trickster and that you are also a trickster by deceiving me under the wedding canopy." Leah responds sharply accusing Yaakov of being no better than she in that he deceived his own father by posing as Esav to steal the brachot! In other words Leah's thought process mirrored Yaakov's - just as Yaakov tricked Esav for a spiritual gain, so did Leah. It was at this point that we see Yaakov's almost non-existent love for Leah. Not exactly the way to start off a marriage which was never supposed to happen in the first place!

Now the obvious question is: for what purpose did Leah remain with Yaakov, a husband whom the Torah describes as having no love for her? We can find the answer through a study of the birth of the third son, Levi, and the fourth son, Yehuda. When Levi was born Leah said that now my husband will be attached to me. Rashi says that her husband will be attached because, as we know, the matriarchs were prophetesses and she saw that twelve tribes would come from her and the other wives. If there were four wives, this meant that each wife was destined to have three sons - this means that Levi was expected to be her third and final child. Thus when Yehuda was born, she said "this time I will give thanks to Hashem." Apparently Yaakov did not attach to Leah after Levi's birth so instead Leah sought to attach to Hashem. Although from a simple reading of the *psukim* it would appear that Leah was giving thanks for Yehuda, I would like to suggest that "this time I will give thanks to Hashem" was thanks for Levi. Leah believed that Levi's birth would bring her closer to her husband but in reality it was of far greater significance for it brought her and ultimately the Jewish nation closer to Hashem - "this time I will give thanks to Hashem."

It was the tribe of Levi which was responsible for the survival of the Jewish nation. We know that by the sin of the golden calf, the tribe of Levi did not get involved and kept their loyalty and attachment to Hashem. This is what Leah understood and the real reason for her thanks. She saw that her third child would guarantee the future of our nation and so she expressed her thanks to Hashem upon the birth of her next child, Yehuda. She chose to remain with Yaakov, not for her good but for the good of the Jewish nation.

Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List

Announcements from the Yeshiva

Rav Mark Mays will be in the UK from November 22nd until the 30th. He would love to hear from you (07931-808-713).

Mazal Tov

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh wishes a Mazal Tov to:

- [Ilan](#) (5763-64) and Devorah Weinstein on the birth of a baby boy.
- [Michael](#) Nahmias (5761-62) on his marriage to Diana Weilgus.
- [Noam](#) Insler (5765-66) on his marriage to Robin Kessel.
- [Aaron](#) (5764-65) and Shani Hass on the birth of a baby girl.
- Ben (5764-65) and Nechama Rapport on the [birth](#) of a baby girl.
- [David](#) (5763) and Sarah Orenstein on the birth of a baby boy.

Visitors

The following people visited/learned in the Yeshiva:

- Rabbi Jonathan Rosenblatt, Rabbi of the Riverdale Jewish Center and Rosh Yeshiva at RIETS (YU) addressed our students. The talmidim all agreed that Rabbi Rosenblatt's drasha was "truly amazing".

Tehillim List

The following members of our extended YNA family need our tefilot:

- Taube Yehudit bat Temma Gasia
- Yitzchak ben Shayna Ita
- Zev Eliezer ben Chaya Shayndel
- Rueven ben Tova Chaya
- Fruma bat Eeta
- Moshe Zanel ben Breindel
- Sima Rivkah bat Eidel
- Leah bat Eidel
- Chaim Shmuel Moshe ben Golda
- Aryeh Rephael ben Sarah
- Chaya Sarah bat Fanya Luna
- Yitzchak ben Tova
- Fraida Rachel bat Sarah Milcha
- Lea bat Bracha
- Miriam Rivka bat Adina Leah
- Dina Sarah bat Shaindel Mira
- Tali bat D'vorah Bina
- Tobah Pessal bat Esther
- Lottie Adina bat Claudia
- Orly bat Yaerah
- Miriam Naomi bat Sarah
- Dov Eliyahu ben Mindel Hudis
- Rahamim ben Miriam
- Hinda bat Sara Leah
- Rivka Zelda bat Bracha
- Dovid Ben Miriam

- Yaackov Chaim Meir ben Miriam
- Avraham ben Leah
- Chaim Naftali Yaakov ben Shifra Shaulah
- Michael Yosef ben Tzipora
- Gidon Shlomo ben Esther
- Haya Rebecca Rivka bat Jeanne Yaffa
- Temima Adina bat Keren Ronit
- Avraham ben Meela
- Bracha Sara bat Rivka Zelda
- Ita Blima bat Malka Fraidel
- Eliyahu ben Victoria
- Chaya Malka bat Rachel Braindel
- Elnatan Meir ben Devorah Ze'eva
- Yahel Liam Gittel bat Rachel
- Shifra Sheulah bat Chana Sarah
- Dovid Chaim ben Brina
- Natan Zelig ben Leah
- Refoel Chaim Simcha Binyamin ben Devorah Aliza
- Menachem Mendal Halevi ben Tova\
- Akiva ben Gittel

[Send Us Your Announcements](#)

Please, if you have any smachot or chas v'shalom, less happy occasions, [let our office know](#) so we can keep everybody updated. Are you visiting Israel? - [let us know!](#) We'd love to host you for a shabbat meal, davening, a shiur and would love for you to stop by.

Shabbat Shalom,

HaRav Aharon Bina, Netiv Aryeh
Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh

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