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HaRav Nebenzahl on Parshat Vayishlach

Staff Dvar Torah by Rav Yaacov Darmoni

Student Dvar Torah by Aaron Rosenberg, Shana Alef - Hasmonean

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Parshat Vayishlach 5770

APPLICANTS and PARENTS of APPLICANTS

are invited to spend an evening with

HaRav Aharon Bina Shlit"a

and some of the alumni of the YNA Program. In these informal information sessions, Harav Bina will be speaking and answering any questions you may have about the Yeshiva and about spending a year in Israel.

New York:

When: Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Time: 8:00 pm

Where: The home of Shelli & Harvey Dachs
120 Willow Road

Woodsburgh, NY 11598

New Jersey:

When: Wednesday December 9, 2009

Time: 7:30 pm

Where: The home of Marcia & David Kreinberg
443 Winthrop Ave

Teaneck, NJ 07666

RSVP: 718-601-5826 or scheiner@yna.edu

Looking forward to seeing you there!



The Yeshiva is pleased to announce a new weekly Five Towns Melave Malke/learning program. The chabura is led by Rav Ariel Edelstein. This program is open to all alumni of all ages. This week it will be at the home of Etan Kestenbaum, 11 Manor Lane in Lawrence at 7:30. For information or to be added to the program's direct mailing list, please email mm@yna.edu and include what year you were in Yeshiva.

YNA.EDU

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Our hesder students having just received their berets from the Givati Brigade on Thursday: Scott Ehrenberg (5768-69) Naftali Gidon (5768-69) Danny Landesman (5768-69) Adam Rosenfeld (5768-69), featured here with some of our students and our Director Uri Kari

Shabbat Parshat Vayeitzei - We had the honor of being joined by parents of 7 of our current students. We hope the following families enjoyed their "in Shabbat" full of ruach.

- Aaron Family, IL**
- Bollag Family, Switzerland**
- Cohen Family, NY**
- Klein Family, NY**
- Landesman Family, NY**
- Webber Family, NY**
- Yammer Family, NJ**



Mr. Zvi Yammer learning with his son Joshua - Frisch

.HaRav Nebenzahl on Parshat Vayishlach

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

DISTANCE YOURSELF FROM A BAD NEIGHBOR

A WRESTLING MATCH

"Yaakov was left alone and a man wrestled with him until the break of dawn" (Bereishit 32:25). Who was this man and what was his purpose in wrestling with Yaakov? Rashbam is of the opinion that Yaakov did not really desire to go through with his planned reunion with Esav and was attempting to escape. This man/angel came to block the attempted escape. If Yaakov had no interest in meeting Esav, why did he send him animals and other gifts? According to this view, Yaakov wished to give Esav the impression of wishing to meet him in order to bring



about a reconciliation, however in reality he wished to avoid a face-to-face meeting with him. The angel, however, prevented his escape thus forcing the meeting. This does not appear to concur with the view of Rashi who is of the opinion that Yaakov did in fact wish and intend to meet Esav.

The Torah records that Yaakov instructed his messengers to deliver these gifts to Esav to tell him: "behold your servant Yaakov is behind us, for he said: 'I will appease him with the tribute that precedes me, and afterwards I will face him; perhaps he will forgive me'" (Bereishit 32:21). According to Rashbam, Yaakov instructed his messengers to say the words, though he had no intention of fulfilling them, while Rashi understands that Yaakov's message to Esav was genuine.

Why did Rashbam need to interpret events to mean that Yaakov did not truly wish to meet Esav? Firstly, one of the opening *psukim* in the *parsha* is Yaakov's prayer to Hashem: "rescue me, please, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esav, for I fear him lest he come and strike me down" (Bereishit 32:12). Nowhere do we find Hashem's response to this prayer. Perhaps Rashbam believed that Yaakov took this as a message that he should not be meet with Esav. He therefore tried to escape and the angel took him by force. Clearly had Hashem commanded him to, Yaakov would have met Esav, but in the absence of such a command he tried his best to avoid meeting this *rasha*. The Torah writes that "Yaakov became very frightened and it distressed him" (ibid. 8), on which Rashi comments that he was afraid of bloodshed - either he would be killed or he would have to kill.

I would like to suggest another reason that Yaakov tried to avoid meeting Esav. The Mishna teaches us to: "distance yourself from a bad neighbor" (Pirke Avot 1:7). Why does the Mishna refer to a neighbor rather than to a friend? The Rishonim explain that a bad neighbor is worse than a bad friend, because a person is in more frequent contact with his neighbor than with his friend and this can be more damaging.

We mentioned that Rashbam is of the opinion that Yaakov tried to avoid meeting Esav. I would venture to say that even though according to Rashi, meeting Esav may have been the appropriate course of action, Yaakov certainly wanted to have as little to do with him as possible. This is clear from the *psukim* describing their reunion. Esav asks Yaakov to return with him: "travel on and let us go - I will proceed alongside you" (Bereishit 33:12), but Yaakov responds with: "my lord knows that the children are tender and the nursing flocks and cattle are upon me" (ibid. 13). Esav then offers to leave one of his men behind to accompany Yaakov at a slower pace, to which Yaakov responds: "to what purpose, let me just have favor in my lord's eyes" (ibid. 15). It is clear that Yaakov wishes to part ways from this *rasha* once and for all. Outside of this meeting there is very little future contact between them.

SHUTTING THE BOX TOO TIGHTLY!

We find that our forefathers all tried to bring the people of their generation to belief in Hashem. However, if they saw that the people they were dealing with were totally not interested, not only would they not persist but they would actually drive them away. When Avraham detected that Lot was not following the right path, he instructed him: "separate from me" (Bereishit 13:9) - you can live anywhere in the world but not with me. Yaakov, too, saw Esav's true colors and he knew that it was not good for him to be in his proximity, so he tried his best to keep away from him. Chazal teach us that he went so far as to hide Dina from him. Rashi in fact comments that he was punished for this for he could have had a positive influence

on Esav. R' Nossan Tzvi Finkel, the Alter of Slobodka, wonders whether it is really expected of a person to marry his daughter off to a *rasha* in the hopes of returning him to the fold. Aren't we taught that a man should search for a son-in-law who is a *talmid chacham*? Why then was Yaakov Avinu punished for hiding Dina? The Alter answers in his own inimitable way, that hiding Dina was the right course of action for he was not expected to take the evil Esav as his son-in-law. Yaakov went wrong in that he should have at least had a desire to exert a positive influence upon Esav, who knows perhaps he could have made him into a *baal tshuva*. As the Alter says: he should not have shut the box so tightly!

The Rambam writes that we may only teach Torah to one who is of fine character, while a *rasha* should not be taught Torah. Only when he agrees to become a *baal tshuva* may we teach him Torah. In the same manner that Yaakov wanted nothing to do with Esav, Avraham Avinu wanted to separate from Lot, and Avraham Avinu expelled Yishmael. Although we know that Yishmael became a *baal tshuva* at the end of his life, at this point he was a very negative influence and Avraham did not want to have any dealings with a *rasha*.

Similarly, Hashem commands the prophet Yirmiyahu to encourage the people to return to Hashem, while at the same time He warns him not to be negatively swayed by them (see Yirmiyahu 15:19). When a person attempts to influence others he runs the danger of being affected by them. The forefathers were therefore very careful to have nothing to do with *reshaim*.

HOLINESS IS NOT TRANSMITTED BY TOUCH BUT IMPURITY IS

During the time of the prophet Chaggai, Hashem commands Chaggai to "quiz" the Kohanim to see how well-versed they are in the laws of ritual purity and impurity: "inquire, now, for a ruling from the Kohanim, saying 'if a person carries sanctified flesh in the corner of his garment, and then he touches bread with his garment's corner, and the bread touches stew, and the stew touches wine or oil or any other food - does that food become sanctified?' The Kohanim answer and say 'No', Chaggai says 'if one who touched a dead person would touch all of these would it become defiled?' and the Kohanim answered and said" 'it would become defiled'" (Chaggai 2: 11-13).

The Gemara discusses what precisely Chaggai asked and whether or not the Kohanim were mistaken in their response (see Pesachim 17a). The prophet's question can also be understood on a *drush* level. Chaggai's asking the Kohanim whether they were of the opinion that unsanctified food that comes in contact with sanctified food becomes sanctified. The Kohanim answered that it does not - this is not the way to make something holy. Chaggai then asks whether one who is ritually defiled causes that which he touches to become impure and here the answer is yes. Holiness is not transmitted through touch, yet impurity is.

Chaggai then proclaimed in the Name of Hashem: "so is the people and so is the nation before Me - the word of Hashem, and so is all their handiwork" (ibid.). It is very difficult to try to sanctify one who is profane without running the danger of being negatively influenced one's self. Absorbing impurities is very easy. When trying to bring others closer to Torah and Mitzvot, we must be very careful to be the ones doing the influencing and not the ones being influenced!

Chaggai prophesied at the beginning of the period of the second Beit HaMikdash, when the Jewish people were about to come in contact with the Greeks. Chaggai was warning them not to be so sure that they will be able to bring the Greeks to

accept our Torah. Furthermore, they must be aware of the dangers of being negatively influenced by them.

A CHANUKAH PROPHECY

It is interesting to note that the Tanach records that this prophecy took place on the twenty-fourth day of Kislev which would later become Erev Chanukah. The three themes of the prophecy are purifying the oil and the kashrut of the wine and other foods, the building of the Beit HaMikdash, and a war which will take place and Am Yisrael will emerge victorious. I would venture to say that these three areas relate to the accomplishments and victory of the Chashmonaim (they did not actually build the Beit HaMikdash for it was already standing, but they purified it of the impurity which the Greeks brought to it). Chaggai's prophecy can thus be viewed as an introduction to the miracle of Chanukah.

Chaggai was not the first prophet to warn of the dangers of too close contact with *reshaim*. King Yehoshafat, was one of the greatest *tzaddikim* who ever lived, was warned by the prophet not to engage in war together with the wicked Achav (see Divrei HaYamim II 19:2). Amatzia in fact hired troops from the people of Ephraim and the prophet instructs him to send them back claiming that he will lose if accompanied by these soldiers, and he will have greater success if he comes without them (see Divrei HaYamim II 25:5-8). The war may have been for purposes of fulfilling the mitzvah of conquering *Eretz Yisrael* which was taken by Aram, yet he is warned that if he wishes to emerge victorious he should rather go at it alone than together with a *rasha*.

I once heard from HaRav Nachum Pertzovitz zt"l the following story in which the *maskilim* tried to make a mockery of the Torah. They cynically tried to show what a true Jewish state would look like. According to the *maskilim*: the people would enter the battlefield and suddenly one soldier would declare: "I am exempt from fighting because I just got married." The next soldier says: "I am exempt because I just built a new house", and soon every soldier finds an exemption and in the end the Jewish nation is left with only two soldiers, who I believe were R' Yitzchak Elchanan Spektor and R' Yisrael Salanter. R' Yitzchak Elchanan begins by telling R' Yisrael: "*kevod harav* - I honor you with the first shot". R' Yisrael refuses wishing to give the honor to R' Yitzchak Elchanan. When R' Chaim heard this description, he smiled. This is precisely the way a Jewish army should be! An army comprised solely of *tzaddikim* is guaranteed to win. It is the quality rather than quantity of soldiers which is the key to victory. Avraham Avinu was greatly outnumbered in his war with Sodom, as were Matityahu and the Chashmonaim in their war against the Greeks, yet in both cases, as we know, in both cases the *tzaddikim* prevailed.

During the eight days of Chanukah we thank Hashem for having delivered "the strong into the hands of the weak and the many into the hands of the few." The key to victory is the *tzaddikim*, there is no need for the *reshaim* to join us. "Some with chariots and some with horses; but we, in the Name of Hashem, our G-d, call out". When we truly rely on Hashem, then we will see fulfillment of the *pasuk* "they slumped and fell but we arose and were invigorated" (Tehillim 20:8-9). Amen.

Staff Dvar Torah by Rav Yaacov Darmoni

"He struck the socket of his hip, so Yaakov's hip-socket was dislocated as he wrestled with him." (Bereishit 32:26).



We find in the Zohar that the term "*kaf yerecho*" "the socket of his hip" refers to supporters of Torah. The angel who waged a battle against Yaakov was none other than the minister of Esav. Esav was well aware that Yaakov merited this world and the Next World. Esav waged his battle knowing full well that the only way to win was to cause *bitul Torah* - wasting time when Torah should be studied, thereby without the "*hakol kol Yaakov*" "the voice is Yaakov's voice" (Bereishit 27:22) then "*hayadayim yedei Esav*" "the hands are Esav's hands" and he would emerge victorious.

Otherwise Esav had no chance of victory. Yaakov symbolizes Torah: "I have created the *yetzer hara* and I have created Torah as its antidote" (Kiddushin 30b - see commentary of Etz Yoseph: so long as a Jew involves himself in Torah, he will have the capacity to partake of the experiences of this world, he will not be unduly threatened by the *yetzer hara*). Torah is our strength and it gives us the power to defeat everything - when the voice is the voice of Yaakov then the hands will not be the hands of Esav.

Esav, however, tries to assert his power and authority whenever possible, specifically in one area that he considers his turf - the realm of the physical and the material. He is trying hard to harm supporters of Torah, hoping in that way to indirectly harm Yaakov. The Torah, however, tells us that while Esav may have successfully injured Yaakov's hip (the supporters of Torah), he did not succeed in inflicting his harm upon Yaakov (Torah itself) - Torah will always continue to flourish and the Jewish people will always be comprised of many great *talmidei chachamim* who devote many long hours to learning Torah.

The supporters themselves remain connected to Torah so long as they continue their support - this is their way of defeating Esav. However, the moment they cease their support, G-d forbid, they detach themselves from Yaakov. We find ourselves in the generation preceding the ultimate redemption and we are nearing the break of dawn marking the conclusion of this battle with the minister of Esav. Esav is fighting a fierce battle, it is therefore imperative that we fight back, to continue to support our holy Torah until the break of dawn when Yaakov will once again be *shalem* - whole - in body and soul, speedily in our day. Amen.

Student Dvar Torah by Aaron Rosenberg, Shana Alef - Hasmonean

We find in the fifth *aliyah* of this week's *sedra* the incident involving Dinah and Shechem ben Chamor. Shechem violated Dinah and then desired to take her as a wife. Chamor, Shechem's father approached Yaakov and his family on behalf of his son, asking for permission for Shechem to marry Dinah. The brothers cunningly agreed on condition that the entire town of Shechem undergoes brit milah. After a bit of convincing, the residents of the town agreed.



Outraged at the terrible affront to their sister's honor, Shimon and Levi entered the town on the third day following the brit milah and proceeded to kill every male in the city and loot its possessions. The Torah tells us that Yaakov was not pleased with the actions of his sons.

We find many years later another act involving descendants of these two tribes. Parshat Balak concludes with Zimri, the *nasi* of the tribe of Shimon, publicly cohabiting with a Midianite woman - Cozbi. Pinchas, a descendant of Levi, witnessed this act and smote Zimri and Cozbi. What happened? Shimon and Levi were originally on the same side and now we find them on opposite teams. Zimri was punished while Pinchas was rewarded with the Kehuna.

In the incident involving Shechem and Dinah, Shimon and Levi were each driven by their character trait of zealotry. Zealotry, however, is only appropriate if it is *leShem Shamayim*. Watching the development of each tribe and their descendants gives us a clear picture whether their zealotry was truly *leShem Shamayim*, were they really upset at the affront to Hashem's honor, or were they concerned with family honor?

Pinchas, a descendant of Levi, shows us that Levi's motives were truly *leShem Shamayim* - he stood up where no other man was willing to. We also find the tribe of Levi's zealotry for Hashem's sake in the *chet haegel* when they unanimously rallied around Moshe Rabenu's call of "whoever is for G-d, come with me!". In the Chanukah story it was the Chashmonaim, descendants of Levi, who stood up and fought the Greeks in a heroic fashion. Zimri's behavior leaves us suspicious of Shimon's motives in his zealous fight against the people of Shechem.

What practical lesson can we derive from here?

We all have our character traits and tendencies which can be channeled to good or negative use. If a person has a strong desire for food, he can either let it control him, or he can control it. Why not use it as a drive for achieving goals? Why not say to yourself: "If I finish what I need to do in the next hour then I will reward myself with an ice cream!"

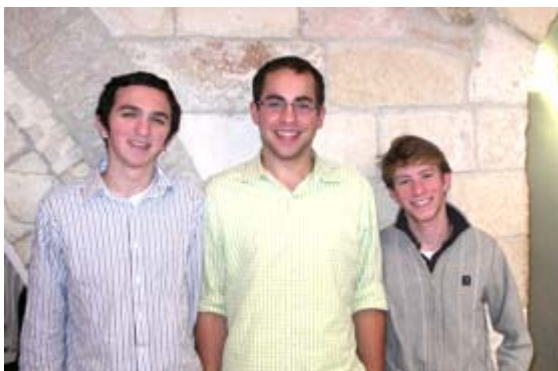
Did you ever feel lazy? Did you ever feel that you can't be bothered to get up and move? If you can't be bothered to move, why park yourself in a Beit Midrash and be productive with minimal physical effort. Having trouble concentrating? Rather than giving up, why not be aware of this and rather than forcing yourself to learn for one hour straight, break it down into four units of fifteen minutes each and learn a different subject in each of those fifteen minutes - perhaps mishnayot, then Tanach, halacha, then mussar.

We all have our strengths and weaknesses, we all are "addicted" and can't control our desire to things. Rather than giving in to these flaws and using them wrongly why not use these drives to make our lives more productive and thereby achieve a closer relationship with Hashem?

Visitor Log, Mazal Tov's, Tehillim List

Announcements from the Yeshiva

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).



RAMAZ students 5770

Joshua Nass, NY

Ari Berkowitz, NY

Gabriel Felder, Connecticut

Mazal Tov

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh wishes a Mazal Tov to:

- Daniel Neiman (5765) on his engagement to Leah Weinberg.
- Joshua Gold (5767) on his engagement to Gabrielle Graber.
- Rav Yaakov (Jeffrey, 5750-51, Staff) and Karen Thaler on the Bar Mitzva of their son, Zevi.
- Zev Herskovits (5767) on his [engagement](#) to Enny Kadoch.
- Matt Faigen (5767-68) on his engagement to Elyssa Brent.
- Gidon (5762-63) and Abigail Domnitz on making Aliyah.
- James (5762) and Sarah Proops on the birth of a baby boy.
- Etan (5760-61) and Nechama Tannenbaum on the birth of a baby boy.

Visitors

The following people visited/learned in the Yeshiva:

- Mr. Moshe Kranzler, Director of Admissions at Yeshiva University
- Rabbi Elly Storch - Assistant Principal of DRS/HALB. Rabbi Storch addressed our students
- Rabbi Steven Moskowitz - Director of Student Activities at HAFTR and Great Neck Synagogue high school youth director. Rabbi Moskowitz addressed our students
- Rabbi Sholom Jensen, Youth Leader at the Great Neck Synagogue works with Rabbi Moskowitz and was our Shabbat guest.
- Rabbi Zvi Zimmerman - Mashgiach Ruchani of Skokie Yeshiva addressed the students

- Samuel Bienenfeld (5767-68)
- Rabbi Steven Thaler (5751)
- Doron Luder (5769)

Baruch Dayan Emet

Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh regrets to inform you on the passing of:

- The grandfather of Raphael Glickman (5769-70)
- Regina Mansdorf, the grandmother of Elie Mansdorf (5764-65).

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 Zanvel 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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