



To: parsha@groups.io  
From: cshulman@gmail.com

BS"D

## INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON VAYETZEI - 5781

**25th Anniversary** – [parsha@groups.io](mailto:parsha@groups.io) / [www.parsha.net](http://www.parsha.net) - in our 26th year! To receive this parsha sheet, go to <http://www.parsha.net> and click Subscribe or send a blank e-mail to [parsha+subscribe@groups.io](mailto:parsha+subscribe@groups.io). Please also copy me at [cshulman@gmail.com](mailto:cshulman@gmail.com). A complete archive of previous issues is now available at <http://www.parsha.net>. It is also fully searchable.

---

Sponsored in memory of  
**Chaim Yissachar z"l ben Yechiel Zaydel Dov**

---

Sponsored in honour of the birthday of  
**George Farkas**. With love from his family

---

Dedicated for a refuah shleimah to **Yisrael Yaakov ben Rut**

---

To sponsor a parsha sheet contact [cshulman@parsha.net](mailto:cshulman@parsha.net)  
(proceeds to tzedaka)

---

<http://www.artscroll.com/parashah.html> 1995

Parashah Talk Parshas Vayeitzei

Excerpt from **Darash Moshe**, by **RABBI MOSHE FEINSTEIN**, zt"l

Yaakov awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely Hashem is in this place and I did not know!" (28:16).

For what purpose did Yaakov mention this seemingly insignificant fact? Rashi explains that Yaakov's intent was: Had I known, I would not have slept in a holy place such as this. This is very difficult to understand. The Gemara tells us (Chullin 91b) that Hashem caused the sun to set early in order to cause Yaakov to sleep in this particular spot (Chullin 91b). The Talmud further teaches that the stones Yaakov had placed surrounding his head miraculously joined, forming one large stone. As the verse narrates, it was during this sleep that Yaakov merited receiving a prophecy from Hashem, as well as a promise of protection during his numerous travels. From all of these miraculous occurrences it should have been clear to Yaakov that it was the will of Hashem that he should sleep in this spot. Why, then, would Yaakov say that had he known of Hashem's presence he would have done otherwise?

The proper way to understand Yaakov's words is as follows. Yaakov thought that one is only considered to be serving Hashem when involved in spiritual pursuits such as tefillah and Torah study. Involvement in physical matters such as eating and sleeping, however, could not be considered serving Hashem, since they are not themselves mitzvos.

By performing miracles and causing Yaakov to sleep (a purely physical activity) on the future site of the Beis Hamikdash, Hashem sought to teach Yaakov that this is not the case. Hashem gave His Torah to human beings knowing that they are creations whose physical needs must be satisfied to facilitate their continuing ability to fulfill His commandments. It is His Divine will that these physical activities should be sanctified through their use as tools assisting people in their service of Hashem. In this way, these

activities can be raised to the level where they themselves become the fulfillment of Hashem's will.

It was this that Yaakov alluded to when he exclaimed "and I did not know." Yaakov exclaimed that prior to being taught this lesson, he did not know that a physical act such as sleeping could be sanctified to such a degree. Rashi (quoted above) explains that commensurate with Yaakov's prior understanding, had he known of the holiness of the site he would not have thought it proper to sleep there.

Taking note of this lesson, Yaakov said that the stone upon which he rested his head while sleeping should be a Beis Elokim. It was Yaakov's wish that the stone should serve as a reminder of the fact that a Beis Elokim is not only a place where one is involved in Torah and mitzvos. Even the seemingly mundane act of sleeping must be done with the proper intentions so that a sleeping place, too, can reach the level of Beis Elokim.

---

rav vayeitze last year From [jr@novell.com](mailto:jr@novell.com) Wed Jan 3 22:56:48 1996

### **Shiur HaRav on Parshas Vayeitze**

"And Yaakov continued on his way and met angels of G D. And when Yaakov saw them he said 'this is the camp of G D' and he called that place Machanaim." (Breishis 32:3)

The Rav (Rabbi Y.B. Soloveitchik z"l) analyzed the terms Machane (camp) and Machanayim (two camps) according to two different approaches.

1. Rashi interprets Machanayim as 2 Machanos two camps: one of Angels belonging to Chutz l'Aretz (outside the land of Israel) who escorted him to the border of Eretz Yisrael (the land of Israel), and the second consisting of Angels who were to escort him into Eretz Yisrael.
2. The Ramban raises the following question on Rashi's interpretation: at this time Yaakov was still quite far from reaching Eretz Yisrael. How could one of the camps refer to angels of Eretz Yisrael? The Ramban is therefore of the opinion that these groups of angels were sent to reassure Yaakov. Yaakov was traveling through danger, exposed to enemies lying in ambush for him. The purpose of showing him legions of angels was to reassure him that his "camp" will never be left alone. For wherever his camp may go and how hopelessly outnumbered they may appear to be, there will always be a second "camp" of Malachei Hashem that will protect the camp of Yaakov. Yaakov has the G Dly strength in his "camp" and need not fear the earthly powers of his enemies. Machanayim refers then to the camp that was traveling with Yaakov and to the heavenly camp, the angels of G D who were sent to protect him.

The Targum Yonasan Ben Uziel on this verse indicates that the term Machanayim means the Beis Hamikdash. The sanctity of the Beis Hamikdash and its surrounding areas, referred to as Kedushat Machanot, increases in gradations, each of which is called a "camp" since they correspond to the different camps which the Jewish people consisted of in their sojourn in the desert. As the Rambam states (Hilchos Beis Habechirah 7:11) "There were three camps in the desert, and correspondingly three camps throughout the generations." In other words, besides the obvious sanctity of the Mikdash, the Mikdash and its surrounding areas also contained a Kedushat Machane (sanctity by camp) that derived from the three camps in the desert:

- 1) Machane Yisrael (camp of Israel) which is all of Jerusalem outside of the Temple mount. (Jerusalem is not simply a city, but rather it is an integral part of the Mikdash for several Halachic parameters.
- 2) Machane Leviyah (camp of Levites) which is the Temple mount.
- 3) Machane Shechina (the Beis Hamikdash itself).

Let us examine this Kedushat Machane more closely. Chazal say that Avraham called the place of the Beis Hamikdash "Har" a mountain, Yitzchak referred to it as "Sadeh", a field, and Yaakov referred to it as "Bayis", a house. The term house implies that there is an owner of the house who controls access to his house. There must be a protocol for approaching and entering the Bayis.

A camp, however, particularly a military camp, has a greater sense of equality among its inhabitants. The general and the private live together under the same conditions. The private can more readily approach the general and speak with him because of the shared cramped and difficult conditions than he could under more normal conditions.

The Kohen Gadol is called the watcher of the Beis Hamikdash, as it says in Zechariah (3:7) "And you [referring to the Kohen Gadol] will judge my House and watch my courtyards... The Kohen Gadol can invite his friends, i.e. the scholars and leaders of the generation into the home of Hashem. But what of the plain and simple Jew? How does he approach and enter the house of Hashem? Here is where the Machane concept comes in. The simple Jew approaches the Mikdash as a Machane. He, the lowly private, can enter the Mikdash and pour out his heart to the General himself without deference to the disparity between their "ranks".

"And I will meet with you there and speak to you from atop the Kapores between the two Kruvim..." (Shemos 25:22). The rendezvous of G D and Moshe Rabeinu took place in the Holy of Holies. What about the simple Jew? Where will he encounter G D? The Torah tells us (Shemos 42:43) that the altar in the Temple courtyard was the rendezvous for G D and Klal Yisrael. Any Jew could approach Hashem there.

Returning to our discussion, it is worth noting that it was Yaakov alone who recognized the Malachim as angels. To the rest of his entourage they appeared to be ordinary people. Yaakov said "This is the camp of G D" but he called the place Machanaim. By this he meant that each person, each Jew, has the ability to grow spiritually to the point where he too will recognize the angels as such. Machanaim two camps the earthly one which you see and the heavenly one which Hashem has provided to the Bnay Yisrael to protect them from their enemies. I, Yaakov, see them clearly and you, potentially, can see as well.

When Yaakov embarked on his journey to the house of Lavan, his impression of what the Mikdash was to be was that of a house, as he said "This is the house of G D..." (Breishis 28:17). The home of Hashem is exclusive; not all can enter. When he returned from Lavan, however, he saw the Mikdash as a camp where each Jew has the potential to raise himself to the level of seeing the angels of G D and to ally his own personal camp with the camp of G D.

(NB: When Avrohom went to the Akeida, he saw Mount Moriah from afar. He asked Eliezer and Yishmael what they saw; they saw nothing. He asked Yitzchak and Yitzchak saw a cloud of G D's glory over the mountain, as did Avrohom himself. In order to discern that there even is another camp beyond your own, one must be on a higher spiritual level. Avraham and Yitzchak reached that higher level and were able to see and distinguish the two camps while Eliezer and Yishmael had not and could not. This is similar to Yaakov, and his message to his children, that the level of spirituality one has achieved determines how much of the heavenly "camp" one is privileged to see.)

In summary, the Machane Elokim provided Yaakov with security and confidence to face his challengers as his camp included the Machane Elokim as well. Each and every Jew must strive to reach the spiritual level of perceiving the Machane Elokim that surrounds him.

(c) Dr. Israel Rivkin, Josh Rapps and Gershon Dubin. Permission to reprint and distribute, with this notice, is hereby granted. These summaries are based on notes taken by Dr. Rivkin at the weekly Moriah Shiur given by Moraynu V'Rabbeinu Harav Yosef Dov Halevi Soloveichik ZTL over many years.

---

From: "Seth Ness <ness@aecom.yu.edu>"

Date: 12/1/95 11:31am

Subject: Eiyanim Latorah vayeitzey

Enayim LaTorah Publication of Student Organization of Yeshiva University

Parashat Vayetzei

**The Twice Promised Land**

**by Rabbi Eli Baruch Shulman**

Ha'aretz Asher Ata Shocheiv Aleiha Lecha Etnena Ulezaracha  
The land on which you lie, to you will I give it and to your descendants..  
(28:13).

The Talmud (Chulin 91b) remarks, □ This teaches that G d folded the entire land of Israel and placed it underneath Yaakov, in order that it be easier for his descendants to conquer. □

We find a similar statement in the Talmud in regard to Avraham. G d said to Avraham:

Kum Hithaleich Ba'Aretz Lerkach Ulerachbah Ki Lecha Etnenah  
Arise, walk in the land through the length of it and the breadth of it; for I will give it to you (13:17)

The Talmud (Bava Batra 100a) rules that this was not a legal act of acquisition; rather: □ Out of affection for Avraham He told him so in order that it be easier for his descendants to conquer it □. (R' Eliezer, however, quotes this verse as a source for his view that walking the length and breadth of a piece of property is an actual act of acquisition.)

We might ask: Why does Avraham pave the way for his descendants by traversing the land, while Yaakov does so by having the land fold up under him as he sleeps on it?

(Parenthetically: Hashem later says to Avraham, "Lezarachah Natati et ha'Aretz Hazot" "To your seed I have given this land" (15:18). Rash"i, following the Midrash, explains that the verse uses the past tense since G d's promise is as good as done prophetic past tense. But R' Yossi in the Yerushalmi (Challah 2:1) uses the past tense of this verse to prove that the Jews were in possession of the land of Israel from the time of Avraham and that, therefore, even grain that grew before they entered the land was obligated in challah. Why does Rash"i reject this explanation? If one examines the discussion in the Yerushalmi one finds that R' Yossi's statement is advanced on behalf of R' Eliezer, who holds that grain that grows outside of the land of Israel is normally exempt from Challah. Not surprisingly, then, it is consistent with R' Eliezer's own view in Bava Batra that Avraham performed a legal act of acquisition by traveling the land its length and breadth; according to this view, the past tense of the verse indeed implies that Avraham was already in legal possession of the land Rash"i, however, follows the view of the Sages in Bava Batra that walking the length and breadth of a piece of land is not a legal act of acquisition; accordingly, he follows the Midrash and explains the past tense of the verse as being an example of the prophetic past tense.)

After receiving this promise Yaakov vows:

"Vechol Asher Titein Li Aser A'asrenu Lach"

And of all that You shall give me I will surely give a tenth (ma'aser) to You (28:22)

We find that Avraham (14:20) and Yitzchak (26:12, see Rash"i there) also gave

maaser; only Yaakov, however, makes a vow to do so. Why should this be so?

To answer these two questions we must preface several items of information:

The Talmud in Yevamot (82b) states that the obligations of terumah and ma'aser took effect only after the Jewish people took possession of the land of Israel. This happened twice; first, at the time of Yehoshua, and again at the time of Ezra, after their return from the Babylonian exile. The Rambam (Shmita 6:16) distinguishes between these two acts of acquisition; the first was accomplished through conquest, whereas the second was accomplished through chazaka (a form of legal acquisition). (See there the ramifications of this distinction.)

Furthermore, the Rambam (Terumot 1:26) rules that at the time of the Second Temple the obligations of terumah and maaser were only Rabbinic, because only a part of the people were settled on the land of Israel. On a Biblical level these obligations require that all of the Jewish people be living in the land of Israel. The source for this ruling seems to be the Yerushalmi in Shevi'it (6:1; see Resp. Beit Halevi 3:1) which records the view that, at the

time of Ezra, the people accepted the obligations terumah and maaser of their own accord, rather than as a Biblical obligation.

The Yerushalmi finds a source for this in the verse in Nechemiah (10:1ff),  
□ And because of all this we make a covenant and write it... that we shall bring the first portion of our dough and our terumah... and the maaser of our land... □

In the light of the above, we can answer our first question by suggesting that when the Talmud in Bava Batra states that Avraham was told to traverse the land of Israel in order to pave the way for his descendants, the reference is to his descendants the time of the first acquisition of the land of Israel. As the Ramba"m writes, this acquisition was accomplished through conquest. Furthermore, it was only completed at the close of the seven years of division in which the boundaries of the tribes were laid out. Avraham's travels throughout the land prefigured the campaign to conquer the land and the laying down of its boundaries. But when the Talmud in Chulin states that God collapsed the entire land under Yaakov in order to make it easier for his descendants, the reference is to his descendants at the time of the second acquisition of the land of Israel. As the Ramba"m writes, that acquisition was accomplished through chazaka. Likewise, Yaakov's laying on the land was an act of chazaka, as we find bedding down on a piece of property is, under certain circumstances, an effective chazaka (hatzoat matzot; see Hil. Zechiyah u'Matanah, 2:4. Cf. Tzofnat Paaneach al HaTorah, Breishit 28). Accordingly, we find an answer to our second question; we understand why Yaakov's giving of maaser was preceded by a vow, whereas Avraham and Yitzchak gave maaser without a vow. As the Yerushalmi in Sheviit states, at the time of the second acquisition the Jews did not automatically become obligated in terumah and maaser; they made a covenant and obligated themselves. Likewise Yaakov, whose actions portended theirs, undertook a vow and obligated himself.

---

from: Rabbi Yissocher Frand <ryfrand@torah.org>

reply-to: do-not-reply@torah.org

to: ravfrand@torah.org

date: Nov 25, 2020, 4:43 PM

subject: **Rav Frand - Inspiration Without Action**

Dedicated to the speedy recovery of Mordechai ben Chaya

Parshas Vayeitzei

These divrei Torah were adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissocher Frand's Commuter Chavrusah Series on the weekly portion:

#1182 – Chasan Going To Work During Sheva Brochos / Leaving Chasunah Early. Good Shabbos!

Inspiration Quickly Dissipates If One Delays Taking Concrete Action

Inspiration Without Action

After Yaakov Avinu put his head on the rocks and had his famous dream of the ladder with the Angels ascending and descending, the pasuk says "And he took the rock that he placed beneath his head and he set it up as a matzevah (pillar). [Bereshis 28:18] The Ramban notes that by reading the pesukim we get the impression that Yaakov arose and he made the matzevah right there where he had been sleeping. The Ramban says, however, that this is not true. Rather, Yaakov took the rock upon which his head had been resting, and transported it with him to Luz, and that is where he erected his matzevah.

The question is why did Yaakov need to carry the rock all the way to Luz? There is no doubt that he could have found other rocks in Luz with which to build a matzevah. It is not like rocks are such a rare commodity in the Middle East!

This teaches us something that we have probably all experienced. When a person is inspired to do something, it is best to latch onto it right then and there. If a person hesitates, the inspiration often dissipates. A person may be momentarily inspired, but unless he acts upon the inspiration right away, with the passage of time the inspiration will evaporate. Yaakov Avinu was

afraid of this. He was afraid that by the time he reached Luz, he would be less inspired, he would procrastinate, and the act of establishing a lasting token to his inspiration of the moment would never come to fruition. In order to make sure that this would not be the case, Yaakov immediately began the process by schlepping the rock with him at all times until he was ready to establish it as a permanent testimony to his dream.

Human beings become inspired, but with the passage of time they tend to rationalize, or get too lazy, or whatever it may be. When inspiration occurs, people need to act on the inspiration immediately. If "immediately" is impossible, then at least take symbolic action to make sure that it will eventually get done. This is what Yaakov did by carrying the rock with him from the moment he woke up from his dream until he arrived in Luz. A Difficult-To-Translate Pasuk Addresses A Difficult-To-Understand Concept

In my opinion, the most difficult pasuk in the parsha to translate is Bereshis Perek 30 Pasuk 8. Leah had children and Rochel did not have children.

Following the path she saw from Sarah Imenu, Rochel gave her maidservant to her husband. At least Rochel should have a child through her maidservant so that vicariously she should be able to have children. The pasuk reads (following the birth of Dan): "She conceived again and Bilhah, Rochel's maidservant, bore a second son to Yaakov." [Bereshis 30:7] The next pasuk explains the name Rochel gave to this son: "...Naftulei Elokim niftalti im acho-see, gam yacholtee..." and concludes "...and she called his name Naftali." This is such a difficult pasuk! What do the words Naftulei Elokim niftalti mean? And what is the explanation of im acho-see, gam yacholtee?

Art Scroll translates: "Sacred schemes have I maneuvered to equal my sister, and I have also prevailed." According to this translation "Naftulei Elokim" means "sacred schemes." I believe this translation is from Rashi. Rashi here struggles to explain this pasuk: "Menachem ibn Saruk explained it in the entry (in his dictionary) "attachments from the Omnipresent I have become attached to my sister, (I intertwined, I became adhered to my sister)." Rashi gives his own interpretation – based on the expression "Ikesh u'pesaltol" ([Devorim 32:5]); this implies some crookedness – "I beseeched with many beseechments and turnings to the Omnipresent to be equal to my sister."

This has always been a difficult pasuk, at least for me. This year I saw the Malbim on this pasuk. The Malbim not only says a beautiful interpretation, but he says something which we all have to bear in mind from time to time. The Malbim, a master of the Hebrew language, explains the word Naftulei – like Menachem ben Saruk explains it – as relating to an attachment or seal (from the expression Tzamid pasil [Bamidbar 19:15] which means an attached covering).

Rochel says "The matter between my sister and me—why she had children and not I—is a matter which has been hermetically sealed by the Ribono shel Olam (Naftulei Elokim). This is an inaccessible mystery, sealed from the eyes of human beings. But Gam Yacholtee. But because of that I was able to persevere and I accepted my suffering with joy, for the L-rd is righteous and His Judgements are just.

The Malbim is saying that Rochel was asking the question that has bothered mankind from the beginning of time—why is there such a thing as Tzadik v'Rah lo (a righteous person who suffers) v'Rasha v'Tov lo (and a wicked person who prospers)? This is not fair! I was supposed to marry Yaakov. My father is a crook! He switched me for Leah. I knew this was going to happen and I had all sorts of plans with my future husband that we should not let this happen. And then, I let the "other" wedding go through and Yaakov married Leah. I was the righteous party here—and now she should have the children and not me? Not only does Leah have children, but Bilhah and Zilpah have children. Everyone has children except for me! IT'S NOT FAIR! It is more than 'not fair'. It is incomprehensible. It does not make sense!

Rochel asks – how can I withstand this phenomenon? She says "Naftulei Elokim" – I came to the conclusion that there are some things in life that are so sealed that human beings cannot hope to understand them. Because of that, I have faith that the Ribono shel Olam knows what He is doing and that He has a calculation behind this, and therefore I accept it. That is why "Im

Achosee gam yacholtee” – I was able to persevere in my rivalry with my sister.

Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzatto (Ramcha”l) writes in the Daas Tevunos, “Whatever the Master Blessed be He does is certainly ultimately for the good. Whether He gives a person wealth or poverty, it is all to take corrective actions in this world (L’saken tikunim b’Olam). There are certain things in the world that need to be corrected. When people suffer troubles for what seems to be for absolutely no reason at all, somehow the purpose is “L’saken tikunim b’Olam”. This is what the great master of Kabbalah, Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzatto writes.

How is this a “correction for the world”? We may never understand because it is Naftulei Elokim. This has been hidden and sealed by the Ribono shel Olam. Only at the end of days, perhaps then we will begin to understand it.

Lavan Crosses Yaakov’s Red Line by Calling Him a Thief

Yaakov works for Lavan for many years. Lavan tried to steal him blind.

Finally, Yaakov is given a message from the Ribono shel Olam that it was time to leave so he told his wives, “We need to get out of here!” Yaakov leaves with his family. Lavan realizes that his terafim (idols) are missing and chases after Yaakov. Lavan catches up with him and accuses him: “Why did you steal my gods?”

Finally, Yaakov gets angry at his father-in-law and lets him have it: “...What is my transgression? What is my sin, that you have pursued me? When you rummaged through all my things, what did you find of all your household objects? Set it here before my brethren and your brethren, and let them decide between the two of us.” [Bereshis 31:36-37] He goes on to movingly describe his own devotion and dedication to his job in the employment of Lavan, and how Lavan took every opportunity to detrimentally switch his wages and steal from him.

Think about this. Lavan has been cheating Yaakov and giving him a hard time for twenty-plus years. On the night of Yaakov’s wedding, Lavan switches daughters on him. Yaakov woke up the next morning and it does not say he lost his temper. All the years that Lavan swindled his son-in-law, it never says that Yaakov got angry at him or expressed resentment. Here, at the end of the parsha, finally “Va’Yichar Yaakov” (Yaakov became angry). If it would have been you or me, we would say this is a buildup of twenty years of frustration. It was the straw that broke the camel’s back, and Yaakov finally lets his father-in-law have it, like he should have done twenty years earlier.

But that is you and me—that is not Yaakov. Why, over here, does Yaakov finally get angry and let loose with a long shmooze which Lavan clearly deserved a long time prior to this incident? Why here? Why now?

Rav Yosef Salant, in his sefer Be’er Yosef, makes a beautiful observation. Until now, it was personal – between me (Yaakov) and you (Lavan). The switching of the daughters, the financial trickery—this was all personal and Yaakov was prepared to deal with it on his own. “But when you bring all of your men and you accuse me of ‘Why did you take my gods?’ you are calling me a thief in front of all of these people! This is a Chilul Hashem! The Gentiles will think – ‘Yaakov is a Ganaff’. Here I draw the line. This is it!”

Yaakov protests that this is an accusation which goes to the heart of his personality. “I am Mr. Emes L’Yaakov. I will not tolerate this Chilul HaShem you are falsely creating by accusing me of stealing from you.” Therefore, here he explodes in anger and sets the record straight. “There is one thing I am not. I am not a thief!”

Transcribed by David Twersky; Jerusalem DavidATwersky@gmail.com  
Technical Assistance by Dovid Hoffman; Baltimore, MD  
dhoffman@torah.org

This week’s write-up is adapted from the hashkafa portion of Rabbi Yissochar Frand’s Commuter Chavrusah Series on the weekly Torah portion. A complete catalogue can be ordered from the Yad Yechiel Institute, PO Box 511, Owings Mills MD 21117-0511. Call (410) 358-0416 or e-mail tapes@yadyechiel.org or visit <http://www.yadyechiel.org/> for further information.

---

Shabbat B'Shabbato Parshat Vayeitzei (28 November 1998) SHABBAT ZOMET is an extract from SHABBAT B'SHABBATO, published by the Zomet Institute of Alon Shevut, Israel, under the auspices of the National Religious Party. Translated by: Moshe Goldberg

**"LET THERE BE NO FAULT IN MY OFFSPRING"**

by **Rabbi Naftali Bar Ilan**, member of the Rabbinical Office, Rechovot

Yaacov made a vow on his way from Be'er Sheva to Charan: "The Almighty will be a G d for me" [Bereishit 28:21]. As Rashi explains, his prayer was, "Let me be worthy of His name from beginning to end, let there be no fault in my offspring." This was years before he had any children, but he already prayed that his children would continue in his path. And in the end, Yaacov achieved what his father and grandfather did not. As far as Avraham was concerned, Yitzchak was the only one who continued his way. Similarly, for Yitzchak, only Yaacov continued on the righteous path. Yaacov himself is not sure of his sons, asking, "Is there some fault among you? Is there anybody who does not stand with me in following G d?" [Rambam, Hilchot Keriyat Shema 1:4]. The reply is: "Hear, Yisrael that is, hear us, our father Yisrael our G d is one. And he replied, Blessed is the honor of His kingdom for ever." [Rambam, ibid]. This desire, to pass on the yoke of heaven to all his children, without any exception, is Yaacov's guiding principle throughout his life. At his first meeting with Yosef, after 22 years of separation, he didn't fall over him and kiss him, but he "recited the Shema" [Rashi, Breishit 46:29]. In spite of the fact that his sons had told him that Yosef had been killed by an animal, he still feared that they had a hand in his death, acting in a way more befitting Esav than Yaacov. When he saw that Yosef was indeed still alive, he cried out, "Shema Yisrael I am happy that all my children follow the path of G d." But Yaacov is concerned not only with his own children but with all of mankind. That is how Rashi interprets the first verse of Keriyat Shema: "G d, who is only ours for now and not the G d of all the nations, will in the future be a single G d, as is written, 'Then will I change the nations to speak clear language, that they will all call out in the name of G d' [Tzefania 3:9], and it is written, 'On that day, G d will be one and His name will be one' [Zechariya 14:9]." [Devarim 6:4]. The mitzva of "Love your G d" is not concerned only with the Jew himself and his family, but is interpreted to mean, "Cause Him to be loved by all mankind, as was your father Avraham, as is written, 'and the souls which he made in Chevron' [Bereishit 12:5]" [Sifri, Devarim 6:8]. Rabbi A.Y. Kook wrote in "Teudat Yisrael U'Leumi'uto" as follows: "It would be a mistake to leave nationalistic feelings in their natural state, in terms of materialistic desires, related to nothing more than the needs of life. It is necessary in addition to this to attempt to understand and to explain how our nationalistic feelings are related to the lofty goal of love for all mankind. This is our ultimate goal and desire." Yaacov's great vision, from the time he escaped all alone to Aram, and from then on, was that there should be no fault not only in him and his children, but in all of mankind as well.

---

<http://www.tzemachdovid.org/thepracticaltorah/vayeitzei.shtml>

THE PRACTICAL TORAH

BY RABBI MICHAEL TAUBES

Parshas VaYeiitzei: Ma'aser Kesafim

No definitive Halacha LeMa'aseh conclusions should be applied to practical situations based on any of these Shiurim.

When Yaakov Avinu, while running away from his brother Eisav, awakens after dreaming about the Malachim ascending and descending the ladder, he davens to Hashem, and vows that if Hashem will provide for his needs and see that he will return safely to his father's home, he will give Hashem one tenth of whatever he has (Bereishis 28:20-22). In the Da'as Zekeinim MiBa'alei HaTosafos (Ibid. Pasuk 20 s.v. Im), a Midrash is cited which indicates that Yaakov at that time instituted that one should give away one tenth of one's money to Tzedakah. Although the Torah itself clearly

presents elsewhere the Mitzvah to support the poor by giving Tzedakah (VaYikra 25:35, Devarim 15:7 8), no guidelines are given as to specifically how much money or what percentage of one's income must be given to Tzedakah in order to properly fulfill this Mitzvah. The idea of giving one tenth of one's agricultural produce to the poor is indeed documented in the Torah (Devarim 26:12); this is known as Ma'aser Ani, which was given in years three and six of the seven year Shemittah cycle. No other mention, however, of a requirement to give specifically one tenth of anything to the poor is found in the Torah.

Based upon a Posuk in Mishlei (3:9), however, the Yerushalmi in Peiah (Perek 1 Halacha 1, 3b) implies that one is required to give Ma'aser Ani, a tithe of one tenth to the poor, from all of one's possessions, not just from agricultural produce. This view is cited by the Mordechai, in his commentary on the Gemara in Bava Kamma (Siman 192, 53b in the Rif), where it is presented as a source for the Mitzvah to give Ma'aser Kesafim. Another source is found in the commentary of Tosafos on the Gemara in Taanis (9a) which expounds upon a Posuk later in the Torah (Devarim 14:22) that contains the seemingly extraneous double use of a word in relationship to tithes (A'ser Ta'aser). Tosafos (Ibid. s.v. A'ser) cites a statement in the Sifrei (which is not found in our current standard editions) that extrapolates from this entire expression that there are indeed two tithes which must actually be given. The first is the one tenth to be separated from one's agricultural produce, the second is the one tenth to be given to the poor from any other potential source of income, such as business or other capital gains that one may have. This too, then, is a source for the Mitzvah of Ma'aser Kesafim. It is worth noting that this same idea appears in the Yalkut Shimoni in Parshas Re'eih (Remez 493) and in the Midrash Tanchuma (Ibid. Ot 18), where it is mentioned that this gift of one tenth of one's business income should be given specifically to those who are involved in Torah study.

The implication of the above sources is that the obligation to give Ma'aser Kesafim to the poor is rooted in the Torah, a view which seems to be accepted by the Shaloh (Shnei Luchos HaBris on Maseches Megillah, Inyan Tzedakah U'Maaser, s.v. U'Mekol Makom), among others. Most other Poskim, however, do not consider this to be a Torah based obligation. The Maharil, for example (Sheilos U'Teshuvos Maharil Siman 54, 56), writes clearly that the Mitzvah of Ma'aser Kesafim is MideRabbanan, and he consequently allows for certain leniencies in this obligation. The Chavos Yair too (Sheilos U'Teshuvos Chavos Yair Siman 224), in a lengthy Teshuvah where he discusses, among other things, what exactly is considered income and how to treat business expenses in this regard, likewise quotes an opinion that the obligation of Ma'aser Kesafim is MideRabbanan, and that the Pesukim mentioned above are just a remez, a hint to the idea in the Torah. He notes there as well that the aforementioned Yalkut Shimoni (Ibid.) writes specifically that the Posuk in the Torah is only a remez. The Aruch HaShulchan (Yoreh Deah Siman 249 Sif 2) likewise writes that the requirement to give one tenth of one's money to the poor is only MideRabbanan, and it is merely hinted at by the Posuk in this Parsha (Bereishis Ibid. Pasuk 22) referred to above; the Ma'aser actually required by the Torah relates only to one's agricultural products, and is given to the poor only once every three years.

Still other authorities rule that giving Ma'aser Kesafim to the poor is required neither by the Torah nor by the Rabbanan, but is rather a Minhag, a proper custom. This position is articulated by the Bach, in his commentary on the Tur (Yoreh Deah Siman 331 s.v. Av), when he discusses what type of Tzedakah may be given with Ma'aser Kesafim money, as opposed to Ma'aser Ani money, and is agreed to by Rav Yaakov Emden (Sheilos U'Teshuvos Sheilas Ya'avatz Chelek 1 Siman 6) who, quoting the above cited Posuk in this Parsha (Ibid.), writes that giving Ma'aser money to the poor is a Middas Chassidus, an act of piety learned from Yaakov Avinu; he then proves that there is no actual obligation, even on the level of a Mitzvah MideRabbanan. In an earlier Teshuvah (Ibid. Siman 1), Rav Yaakov Emden quotes from his father the Chacham Tzvi that the Bach's position is correct, and he himself brings proofs to his father's view in a subsequent Teshuvah (Ibid. Siman 3).

The Chavos Yair, in the aforementioned Teshuvah (Ibid.), agrees to this position himself as well; this seems to be the majority view. The Pischei Teshuvah (Yoreh Deah Ibid. Sif Katan 12) notes that this position that giving Ma'aser Kesafim is only a Minhag was actually presented much earlier by the Maharam of Rothenburg. He then adds, however, that some hold that although it is only a Minhag, once one has observed the Minhag, he shouldn't stop doing so except in a situation of great need. Some of the above quoted Poskim discuss how many times one must observe this practice before it is considered that he has permanently adopted the Minhag.

One of the issues which depends upon whether giving Ma'aser Kesafim is an actual Mitzvah (from the Torah or from the Rabbanan) or whether it is simply a Minhag is the question of to whom one is required to give Ma'aser Kesafim money. The Shulchan Aruch (Yoreh Deah Siman 249 Sif 1) writes that one must support the poor by giving them as much as they need, keeping in mind how much he can afford; giving one tenth is considered the average contribution, while one who wishes to be generous should give one fifth, as suggested by the Gemara in Kesubos (50a). The Ramo (Ibid.) adds, though, that Ma'aser Kesafim money must be used specifically to be given to the poor, and not for any other Mitzvah or to assist any other worthwhile cause. The Shach (Ibid. Sif Katan 3) quotes those who disagree and say that expenses for a Mitzvah which one otherwise would not have done may be paid for with one's Ma'aser money. The view of the Ramo (Ibid.) is most likely based on there being a strong connection between Ma'aser Kesafim and Ma'aser Ani; the latter had to be given to poor people and not used even for Mitzvos. The view of the other Poskim probably is that since giving Ma'aser Kesafim is simply a Minhag, its rules do not necessarily parallel those of the Mitzvah to give Ma'aser Ani. The Chasam Sofer (Sheilos U'Teshuvos Chasam Sofer Chelek Yoreh Deah Siman 232) makes this very distinction; in his previous Teshuvah (Ibid. Siman 231) he suggests that if when one first decides to undertake the practice of giving Ma'aser Kesafim, one has in mind specifically that he would like to use the money to pay for other Mitzvos or to support other charitable causes and not just give it to the poor, he may do so.

In terms of how to calculate one's income for the purpose of determining how much the one tenth is that he must give away, Rav Moshe Feinstein (Sheilos U'Teshuvos Igros Moshe Yoreh Deah Chelek 1 Siman 143) writes that money which is held back from one's paycheck for withholding taxes is considered as if it was never his, and thus is not viewed as part of his income; Ma'aser Kesafim need not be deducted from that portion of one's salary. This is unlike money which one actually has, but uses to pay for sales tax and the like, which is nevertheless considered part of one's income. He also discusses how to treat household expenses, such as funds needed for child support, in terms of whether such money is subject to Ma'aser Kesafim. Rav Yosef Karo, in one of his Teshuvos (Sheilos U'Teshuvos Avkas Rochel Siman 3), seems to rule that funds spent on all essential household needs are not subject to the requirement of Ma'aser Kesafim, but it is questionable as to whether or not this view is accepted; Rav Ovadyah Yosef (Sheilos U'Teshuvos Yechaveh Da'as Chelek 3 Siman 76 Ot 4) discusses this matter, quoting numerous opinions. It is worth noting that the Chofetz Chaim, in his treatise entitled Ahavas Chessed (Inyan Ma'aser Kesafim, Perek 18 Ot 2), offers specific guidelines as to how to properly observe the practice of giving Ma'aser Kesafim, including recommendations that one keep written records in a notebook about how much he gives to Tzedakah, as well as that one should take a reckoning of one's income and one's Tzedakah contributions once or twice a year. He adds later (Ibid. Perek 20 Ot 6) that one who is careful about giving Ma'aser Kesafim is treated as though Hashem Himself were his partner in business.

---

from: **Rabbi Yochanan Zweig** <genesis@torah.org>  
to: [rabbizweig@torah.org](mailto:rabbizweig@torah.org) date: Nov 26, 2020, 5:10 PM  
subject: Rabbi Zweig on the Parsha - Brothers in Arms  
Dedicated to the speedy recovery of Mordechai ben Chaya

## Parshas Vayeitzei Brothers in Arms

And Yaakov said to his brothers, 'Gather stones!'... (31:46)  
After spending twenty years in Charan, Yaakov flees with his family to Eretz Yisroel. Lavan pursues Yaakov with the intention of killing him{1}. However, Hashem intervenes and warns Lavan not to harm Yaakov{2}. When he confronts Yaakov, Lavan proposes a treaty. Among the terms of the treaty a landmark is designated on the border between Canaan and Aram which both parties agree not to cross with hostile intentions{3}. The verse records "Yaakov said to his brothers 'Gather stones!' So they gathered stones for a mound upon which they ate a meal{4}." The commentaries disagree as to who the "brothers" of Yaakov are and what eating upon this mound signifies. The Ramban understands that the brothers are Lavan's companions and the meal is part of the covenant, signaling mutual acceptance of the pact{5}. However, Rashi maintains that the brothers are, in fact, Yaakov's children, and that they are referred to as "brothers" because they stand by Yaakov in battle and times of distress{6}. The meal, therefore, signifies Yaakov staking his claim to the area past the Aramean border{7}.

The bond between children and parents is even closer than that between siblings. How does the Torah's referring to Yaakov's children as his "brothers" reflect their commitment to their father in battle? What insight into the parent-child relationship is the Torah offering?

Commensurate to the responsibility a parent expects his child to assume, is the independence which the parent must be willing to allow his child to acquire. Parents must allow their children the freedom to stand on their own. Not given this freedom, a child will perceive himself as completely subordinate in his position vis-à-vis his parents, for they have always been his caretakers and providers. Consequently, he will never be in the proper state of mind to assume the mantle of responsibility required by his parents.

Rashi is explaining that Yaakov does not call his children "brothers" because they go to battle with him, rather, to assure that they would be able to go to battle with him. A child has a greater commitment to his parent than to his sibling. However, this does not ensure that he will be more effective in performing the task required. A child who views his parents as his protectors, will be ineffective in their defense. By Yaakov giving his children a sense of equality, he brings forth from within them a new level of responsibility which would be required in dire straits.

1. Yerushalmi, Pe'ah 1:1 2.31:24 3.31:44 4.31:46 5. Ibid 6. Ibid 7. Seichel Tov

## Working With Confidence

"And he said, 'Look, the day is still long...' (29:7)

This week's parsha chronicles Yaakov's ascent as Patriarch of the Jewish people in the land of Aram. In Parshas Ki Savo, we encounter the precept of "bikurim" – "the first fruit"; coupled with his gift of first fruits, a Jewish farmer is obligated to relate a short synopsis of Jewish history which begins with Yaakov's subjection to the deceitful Lavan. He declares "Arami oveid avi veyeiared mitzraymah" – "An Aramean attempted to destroy my father and he (Yaakov) descended to Egypt{1}." Why are our experiences in Aram critical to our heritage? Furthermore, why does the Torah juxtapose our Aramean experience with our descent to Egypt?

Upon Yaakov's arrival in Aram, the Torah relates a seemingly unnecessary incident concerning the Aramean practice of retiring early to water their flock. Yaakov chides them concerning their work ethic, saying "If these are not your sheep, then you are negligent in your responsibilities to your employers, and if they are yours, then you are lazy{2}." It would appear that Yaakov is behaving rather presumptuously for a stranger in a new city. Why does the Torah deem it necessary to recount this incident? The Torah describes Lavan as a "ramai" – "confidence man", rather than a thief. Since this was a prevalent quality in the region, the letters of the word "Aram" and "ramai" are the same{3}. A ramai preys upon the basic human desire to gain something for nothing; he takes advantage of his victims by leading them to believe that they are getting the better part of a deal. Once the victims realize that they have been fooled, it is too late and they have only themselves to blame.

The basic quality which predisposes a person to becoming a ramai is not necessary evil. In order to be a successful ramai, a person must possess an inordinate degree of sensitivity, allowing him to perceive the needs and desires of his fellow man. A ramai uses his keen sensitivity to the disadvantage of his victims. It is this predisposition which our Patriarch Avraham and our Matriarchs Sarah, Rivka, Rachel and Leah, all of Aramean descent, incorporate into Bnei Yisroel, and which provides Bnei Yisroel with the sensitivity to perform chesed – acts of kindness, the very fabric of our nation, in the correct manner. True chesed stems from the ability to recognize the needs and feelings of the recipient. The danger that accompanies this trait is the ability to take advantage of one's fellow man. The antidote to this potential threat is offered in the historical synopsis recited by the Jewish farmer.

After recording our Aramean experience, which was critical for it incorporated into Bnei Yisroel the sensitivities inherent in the region, the Torah recounts our descent into slavery. A slave is, by very definition, a person whose existence hinges upon his substantiating himself through his work. Creating a strong work ethic which demands we substantiate everything that is given to us was the only manner to safeguard us from using our new-found talents in a malevolent manner. Ingraining into the very being of the Jewish people that we will accept only those gains for which we have worked, and revile benefiting from others undeservedly, was a necessary progression to prevent the nation from becoming the tricksters and confidence men of society. Yaakov is aware of the "ramai" quality inherent in the people of Aram. Seeing the shepherds lounging around the well in the middle of the day reflects this trait, which, if used malevolently breeds laziness and encourages a person to seek short-cuts in the manner of his livelihood. What he is teaching them when he enters the city is that by improving their work ethic they can utilize this quality in the greatest possible manner, being sensitive to the needs of others.

1. Devarim 26:1, See Rashi verse 5 2.29:2,7, See Rashi verse 4 3. See Rashi 29:12, 29:18

Rabbi Zweig on the Parsha © 2020 by Torah.org. Torah.org: The Judaism Site Project  
Genesis, Inc. 2833 Smith Ave., Suite 225  
Baltimore, MD 21209

fw from hamelaket@gmail.com

from: Torah in Action /Shema Yisrael <parsha@torahinaction.com>

subject: Peninim on the Torah by Rabbi A. Leib Scheinbaum

**Shema Yisrael Torah Network**

**Peninim on the Torah - Parshas**

**פרשת ויצא תשפ"א**

**ויאהב יעקב את רחל ... והיה בעיניו כימים אחדים באהבתו אתה**

**Yaakov loved Rachel ... and they seemed to him a few days because of his love for her. (29:18,20)**

*Targum Onkeles* translates *va'yahav*, and (he) loved... *u'r'chein*, and (Yaakov) was sympathetic towards (Rachel). The accepted translation of *ahavah* is love. *Onkeles* seems to equate love with *rachamanus*, compassion/sympathy. *Horav Gamliel Rabinowitz, Shlita*, explains that true love is derived from compassion/empathy. Furthermore, one whose love is not founded in sympathy loves only himself. He does not really love the other person. The well-known aphorism from the *Kotzker Rebbe, zl*, comes into play here. A *chassid* once remarked to the *Rebbe* that he loved fish. The *Rebbe* countered that veritably he loved himself, and fish satisfied him. If he truly loved fish, he would not eat them, since he was causing them to die for his satisfaction. The *Avos*, Patriarchs, loved others due to their sympathetic feelings towards them. Thus, their *ahavah* was founded in *rachmanus*.

To better understand this, I quote from *Horav S. R. Hirsch's* commentary to *Bereishis* 43:14, *V'Keil Shakai, yitein lachem rachamim lifnei ha'ish*; "And G-d, *Shakai*, grant you sympathy, in the presence of the Man." He explains the term *rechein*, sympathy, as derived from *rechem*, womb. Familial love: parents to children, children to parents, and children to each other – is founded on the notion of the common womb from which they come. People confuse *rachamim*, sympathy with *rachamanus*, pity/compassion. This is an error, since pity is a far lower feeling than *rachamim*, sympathy. *Rav Hirsch* asks: "Which is rarer, which enables man more: to be moved to pity at another's sorrow, or to be moved to joy at their happiness? Very few people do not feel pity concerning their fellow's adversity, but how many also feel abundant joy when that same fellow wins the lottery and now has greater wealth than they have?"

*Rachamim* is derived from *rechem*, womb. One cares for another, because he feels a sense of oneness, of having emerged from the same womb. Thus, their relationship is of true empathy. As a parent is overjoyed with his/her child's success, so, too, is a friend filled with happiness when his/her friend is successful. This is true love, focused on the other, not simply on oneself.

**ויהי בבוקר והנה היא לאה**

**And it was, in the morning, that behold it was Leah. (29:25)**

Yaakov Avinu was acutely aware of Lavan's corrupt nature. He made it a point to spell out clearly, *b'Rachel bitcha ha'ketanah*, he wanted to marry Rachel, Lavan's younger daughter. Not trusting Lavan to adhere to his word, Yaakov made up *simanim*, signs, which would signal to him whether Lavan had, in fact, made a switch. Rachel, however, was uncomfortable with the notion that her sister would be humiliated. So, she shared the *simanim* with her. She was certain that Yaakov would agree that it was wrong to allow Leah to be so shamelessly treated. Therefore, she did not ask, she acted.

Rachel's extraordinary act of *vitur*, concession, yielded her right to marry Yaakov, which would transfer the position of First Matriarch to her sister, Leah. One would think that Rachel's act of *vitur* cost her nobly. This cannot be further from the truth. Rachel was originally an *akarah*, barren woman. It is only due to her acquiescence in allowing Leah to take her place that Hashem blessed her with her son, Yosef. Furthermore, because of the *z'chus*, merit, of her *vitur*, Hashem allowed *Klal Yisrael* to return to the Holy Land. Rachel *Imeinu* gave our nation hope, all due to her special *z'chus* of *vitur*.

One should not think that Leah was any different. She, too, conceded. When she was pregnant with her daughter, Dinah, it was not originally Dinah. Leah knew that she was pregnant, and she knew that it was a boy. She prayed to Hashem to switch fetuses with Rachel (who was pregnant with a girl). She pleaded with Hashem that her sister be blessed with two sons; otherwise, she would have fewer sons than the maidservant wives, Bilhah and Zilpah. As a result, her daughter Dinah, who had been impregnated by Shechem, gave birth to a little girl who was shunned by her family and later sold to an Egyptian priest by the name of Potifar. Yes, Osnas *bas* Potifar ended up marrying Yosef, thus allowing her grandmother's act of *vitur* to come full-circle.

*Vitur* can be life-saving. *Horav Michel David Rozovsky, zl*, was *Rav* of Grodno. When he died in 1935, he left over two sons who were both brilliant scholars: *Horav Yehoshua Heshel, zl*, and his younger brother, *Horav Shmuel, zl*. Both were Torah giants who were capable of succeeding their father in the *rabbanus*, rabbinical leadership, of Grodno. The family of the deceased naturally wanted the older brother to assume his father's position, while the community was more enamored with the younger *Rav Shmuel*. When observant Jews are locked in debate and a solution to their issue eludes them, they seek the counsel of a *gadol*, Torah giant, who will offer a resolution. Thus, the two sides agreed to present their query to the *gadol hador*, preeminent leader of the generation, *Horav Chaim Ozer Grodzenski, zl*. The appointment was set for a week later at 10:00 a.m.

*Rav Shmuel* was aware of the meeting. On the designated day, he arrived at *Rav Chaim Ozer's* home at 8:00 a.m. He said that he did not want to waste the *Rav's* time. Therefore, it was not necessary to decide concerning the *rabbanus* of Grodno. He absolutely refused to assume the position which he felt should go to his older brother. He left no room for discussion. When the disputants arrived at the home of *Rav Chaim Ozer*, the *Rav* informed them that the decision had been made for them: *Rav Yehoshua Heshel* would be their next *Rav*.

It should have worked out. *Rav Yehoshua Heshel* was a brilliant *talmid chacham*. *Rav Shmuel*, however, had a certain way about him that caused the members of the community to gravitate to him – at the expense of his brother. *Rav Shmuel* felt that if he would leave, the community would take a more positive attitude toward his brother. Thus, without asking or telling, he performed the *Goral HaGra*. (This is a unique procedure attributed to the *Gaon, zl, m'Vilna*, which involves opening a *Chumash* to a random page, counting seven *parshiyos* and then seven *pesukim*. This is carried out only by holy people, who not only know what they are doing, but also how to interpret its message.) The *pasuk* that he discovered was: *Lecha Lecha*, “Go for yourself, from your land, from your relatives, and from your father's house to the land that I will show you” (*Bereishis* 12:1). *Rav Shmuel* viewed this as a portent to leave Grodno and set sail for *Eretz Yisrael*.

Without fanfare, he immediately left, together with *Horav Zalmen Rotberg, zl* (son-in-law of *Rav Meir Karelitz, zl*). He arrived in the Holy Land alone, an orphan with no money, no family, but nonetheless, happy in his decision not to involve himself in *machlokes*, controversy. Eventually, he was asked to give a *shiur* in the nascent *Ponovezh Yeshivah*, where he became the premier *maggid shiur* of his day. Sadly, a few years after his arrival in *Eretz Yisrael*, World War II broke out and, among the multitudes of our brothers and sisters who were murdered by the accursed Nazis, was the Jewish community of Grodno, together with their beloved *Rav*. The only survivor of the *Rozovsky* family was *Rav Shmuel* who was saved in the merit of his *vitur*, concern for the feelings of his older brother. His acquiescence to leave a community where he was well-known, loved and respected, to go to a place where he was an unknown, with nothing and no one, took extraordinary courage, faith and resolution. He merited to establish thousands of *talmidim*, students, who themselves have transmitted Torah to many more. The Torah world is in his debt. They are all fruits of *Rav Shmuel's vatranus*.

*Horav Chaim Kreisworth, zl*, would relate his personal story in which his *vatranus* catalyzed the merit that saved his life. He was a young boy when his parents sent him away to *yeshivah*, which was quite distant from his home. The *yeshivah* had neither a dormitory nor a kitchen, thus relegating students to sleep wherever they could and eat “days.” This means that on a daily basis, kind-hearted members of the community opened their homes and shared their meager meals with the boys. As a young student, *Rav Kreisworth* slept beneath a fruit stand in the market, and he had to walk four kilometers to the home where he received his meal. It took seven years before he was able to arrange a home near the *yeshivah* which provided him with a meal. Now, he was now able to sleep in the *ezras nashim*, women's section, of the local *shul*.

The first day of the new *z'man*, semester, a new student, whose vision was clearly challenged asked *Rav Chaim* where he could find a place to sleep and eat. The future *gadol* told him, “You will sleep in the *ezras nashim* and eat at the home of a member of the community who lives across the street from the *yeshivah*. He had relinquished his “bed and breakfast” to a boy who had difficulty seeing and would, therefore, neither be able to walk the four kilometers nor sleep beneath the fruit stand. *Rav Chaim* was back where he started.

Years passed, and the Nazis invaded the town. They went into the *shul* and rounded up the students. They had a list of names. As soon as they called a name, the student came forward and was shot, his body thrown from the window. On the first floor, the remaining students recited *Tehillim* and *Vidui*, Confession, knowing the fate that awaited them. They called out, “Kreisworth, Chaim!” As *Rav Chaim* walked upstairs, he prayed to Hashem, “*Ribono Shel Olam*, only You know what I did for the student whose eyesight was poor. Please, remember my act of *vitur* and allow me to live.”

As soon as he concluded his prayer, one of the guards asked him, “Do you have parents?” *Rav Chaim* answered, “Yes.” “I, too, have parents,” the guard said. “I am certain that, just as my parents would want me to live, your parents also want you to live. I will shoot my gun into the air, and you will “fall” out of the window and lay among the dead bodies. When it is safe to get up, leave and run away. This is your chance to save yourself!”

Three hundred *yeshivah* students were murdered that day. *Rav Kreisworth* was the only survivor, all in the merit of *vitur*. He thought that he was doing a favor to another student who could not fend for himself. Instead, that student was the cause of his continued life. We never know that when we think we are helping someone else, we are actually helping ourselves.

ותאמר אל יעקב הבה לי בנים ... ויחר אף יעקב ברחל ויאמר התחת אלקים אנכי  
**She said to Yaakov ... “Give me children” ... Yaakov's anger flared up at Rachel and he said, “Am I in the place of G-d?” (30:1,2)**

*Rachel Imeinu* pleaded with *Yaakov Avinu* to grant her children. *Chazal (Midrash Rabbah 71:7)* explain that she was asking that he pray on her behalf as his father, *Yitzchak Avinu*, had prayed on behalf of his mother,

