

# whY I Matter

בשבילי נברא העולם (סנהדרין לז)

Edited by Yedidye Hirtenfeld

כסלו י' - ט"ז תשע"ט

November 18 to 24 '18

Volume 20 #8

## Young Israel of Midwood

on the Web: [YIMidwood.Org](http://YIMidwood.Org)

1694 Ocean Avenue

Brooklyn NY 11230-5401

## Vayishlach

### וישלה

וישלה יעקב מלאכים לפניו אל-עשו אחיו  
ארצה שעיר שדה אדום

And Yaakov sent (heavenly messengers) malachim before him to Eisav his brother... (32:4) On this possuk the Medrash comments, "Rav Chamma ben Chanina said, '(We can understand why Yaakov merited to have heavenly messengers (malachim) assist him with the following logic) If five malachim appeared to Hagar (who was merely) the maid servant of Sarah, then it is certainly reasonable that they come to aid Yaakov who was a beloved family member. (Another proof) If Eliezer (who was merely) the servant of (Avraham's) family, merited malachim (when he went to look for a wife for Yitzchok) then it is certainly reasonable that they come to assist Yaakov who was a beloved family member.'" **Zera Shimshon** asks why does Rav Chamma ben Chanina bring two sources to explain why Yaakov merited malachim to assist him when he met Eisav? He answers that Hashem sent malachim to help Hagar and to help of Eliezer for two completely different reasons. The malachim that appeared to Hagar came to comfort her and to relief her from the humiliation that she suffered under Sarah. Hashem wanted to comfort her, even though that she deserved to be humiliated because she was very disrespectful to Sarah. The ones that traveled with Eliezer served an entirely different purpose. They went so that, in the event that Lavan and Besuail would object that Rivkah marry Yitzchok, they would convince them to change their mind until they would willingly agree with the shidduch. In actuality this wasn't so crucial. Firstly, Rivkah was willing

to marry Yitzchok even if her father and brother didn't agree (as Rashi writes). And secondly, even if she wouldn't consent to go, Eliezer had the choice of taking a shidduch from Anar, Eshkol, and Mammre. Even though it wasn't so crucial, Hashem still sent malachim to help him.

Yaakov hoped to gain these two very same things when he met with Eisav. Firstly, he wanted Eisav to stop humiliating him for taking the berochos and, secondly but more important, he wanted that Eisav will "scrap" his plan to kill him. [gooddvar Torah.com]

### Worrying about worry

"ויירא יעקב מאד ויצר לו" - יעקב הצטער  
מאד על ה"ויירא מאד", על זה שפחד מעשו  
למרות שהובטח לו "ושמרתיו בכל אשר  
תלך"...

[בשם החוזה מלובלין].

ויותר יעקב לבדו ויאבק איש עמו עד עלות  
השחר

### And Jacob was left alone (32:25)

**Rashi** relates that Jacob had gone back to retrieve some "small flasks" which he had inadvertently left behind. **Rabbi Isaac Luria** explains that Jacob was exceedingly careful with his possessions because every object found within a person's domain has spiritual significance and repercussions. Our physical possessions are no less important in our service of G-d than the spiritual gifts we are given. All of our assets, talents, and skills are to be utilized to the same end---to bring us closer to our Father in heaven. (Chidushei HoRim of Gur)

### "Yaakov was left 'levado' / alone . . ."

(32:25) The Midrash Rabbah states that this verse equates Yaakov's "aloneness" with Hashem's "aloneness." About Yaakov it says, "Yaakov was left 'levado' / alone," and about G-d it says, "Hashem 'levado' / alone will be exalted on that day." **R' Itamar Schwartz** (Yerushalayim) explains: G-d implanted the feeling of loneliness in man for a reason--so that he will search for G-d and make Him his "companion." G-d, too, is "lonely" in that He is waiting for man to search for Him. R' Schwartz adds: Most people who feel lonely try to mitigate this feeling by surrounding themselves with friends. One who automatically reacts this way, without thinking about why loneliness was

לכבוד האי גברא וב'ב' הרוצים בעילום שמם  
על הסיוע שמושיטים לי בעין יפה  
להמשיך את הגליון עוד הפעם בשנה זו  
שיהיה לזכותם ולזכות כל משפחתם  
הקב"ה יברך אותם בכל מילי דמיטב  
מיט יידישע נחת בעושר ואושר ואריכות  
ימים בבריאות בזה ובבא עבגצב"ב

created, is missing the point and overlooking a gift that G-d has given him. (B'lvavi Mishkan Evneh)

**"When he [the angel] saw that he could not overcome him [Yaakov], he struck the socket of his hip; so Yaakov's hip-socket was dislocated as he wrestled with him."** (32:26) **R' Gershon**

**Ashkenazi** z"l (Austria; 1618-1693) cites the Zohar, which states that Yaakov's injury was a punishment for marrying two sisters. In light of this, R' Ashkenazi continues, we can understand the Gemara (Chullin 91a), which finds an allusion to Yaakov's injury in the verse (Yeshayah 9:7), "G-d sent a word for Yaakov; it befell Yisrael." That verse appears in a prophecy about the royal house of David; what is the connection between that subject and Yaakov's injury? R' Ashkenazi explains: The Gemara relates that some people questioned King David's legitimacy because he was a descendant of Ruth, a Moabite woman. When people mocked King David, he would ask them rhetorically, "Don't you also come from a prohibited marriage, i.e., from Yaakov who married two sisters?" In fact, Yaakov's marriage was not prohibited because the Torah had not yet been given, nor was Ruth prohibited from marrying a Jew. Thus, writes R' Ashkenazi, the people blessed Boaz upon his marriage to Ruth (Ruth 4:11), "May Hashem make the woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and like Leah, both of whom built up the House of Yisrael." They were acknowledging that just as Yaakov's marriage to two sisters was not prohibited, so Boaz's marriage to a female Moabite convert was not prohibited. This is the common denominator between Yaakov's injury and the royal house of King David. [Nevertheless, while Yaakov did not technically sin, he was held accountable to some degree for an act--marrying two sisters--which the Torah would later prohibit.] R'

Ashkenazi concludes: In this light we can understand, as well, why the Gemara points out that Yosef removed the gid ha'nasheh from the meat that he fed his brothers when they came to his home in Egypt (see Bereishit 43:16). The prohibition on eating the gid ha'nasheh recalls Yaakov's injury, which, in turn, demonstrates the legitimacy of King David. Yosef was not certain that his brothers had not yet recognized him, and he wanted to assure them that he was not challenging the right of Yehuda, the progenitor of King David, to lead the brothers. Therefore he removed the gid ha'nasheh, as if to say, "King David is no less legitimate than we are, coming as we do from two sisters." (Tiferet Ha'Gershuni)

ויאמר שלחני כי עלה השחר ויאמר לא אשלחך  
כי אם-ברכתני

**"And he said 'Let me go, for dawn has broken'..."** (32:27)

The Torah records the climactic confrontation between Yaakov and the angel of Eisav. Wrestling with Yaakov until dawn, the angel finally concedes to Yaakov's superiority. The angel requests that Yaakov release him "for dawn has broken". (32:27) Citing the Talmud, Rashi explains that the angel relates to Yaakov that it is his day to sing Hashem's praises as part of the heavenly chorus. (Ibid, Chullin 91a) The Maharsha cites another passage in the Talmud which appears to contradict Rashi's comments. The Talmud states that angels only recite their praises to Hashem at night, deferring to Bnei Yisroel who praise Hashem by day through prayer. Therefore, asks the Maharsha, how could the angel tell Yaakov that it is his day to sing praises to Hashem if angels only sing at night? (Chagiga 12b) Since Bnei Yisroel are Hashem's primary representatives, the chariot for His "Shechina" – "Divine presence", their daily prayer takes precedence over the songs of the angels. Prior to the existence of "Yisroel", the angels served as the chariot for the Shechina, and as such, praised Hashem during the day. Yaakov's wrestling the angel into submission marks the onset of his transformation from Yaakov to Yisroel and the supplanting of the angels as Hashem's primary representatives with Bnei Yisroel. The angel concedes this exchange of

power when he informs Yaakov that he will be called "Yisroel" for he has "striven with the Divine (i.e. an angel) and with man, and overcome". (32:29 see Rashi) When Hashem actually confers upon Yaakov the appellation "Yisroel", the verse states "vaya'al alav Elokim" – "Hashem ascended from upon him". (35:13) The Midrash comments that this verse is the basis for the expression "The patriarchs are the chariots for the Shechina", for they bear His glory, and through them Hashem displays His sovereignty. (Midrash Rabbah 82:6, Ramban ibid) It is at this juncture that Hashem calls Yaakov "El" – "Divine being", for the entity of Klal Yisroel is finally actualized and his new position in creation is realized. (Megilla 18a) Consequently, there is no contradiction between the two Talmudic statements. Prior to Yaakov's transformation, the angels sang their praises during the day, as is reflected by the request of the angel of Eisav. After the transformation they were delegated to recite praises only at night. [Rabbi Zweig on the Parsha]

### Hashem saves us

הצילני נא מיד אחי מיד עשו" - אמר לפניו:  
רבונו של עולם, עשה לו לעשו הרשע זמם כדי  
שלא תהא לו נחת רוח שלמה. ומה זמם עשה  
לו הקב"ה לעשו? אמר ר' חמא בר חנינא: אלו  
בני ברבריה ובני גרמניה, שאדומים מתייראין  
מהם...

[בראשית רבה, ע"ה, ט']

על-כן לא-יאכלו בני-ישראל את-גיד הנשה  
אשר על-כף הירך עד היום הזה כי נגע בכף  
ירך יעקב בגיד הנשה

**"Therefore Bnei Yisrael do not eat the Gid Ha'nasheh / displaced sinew on the hip-socket to this day, because he struck Yaakov's hip-socket on the displaced sinew."** (32:33) **R' David ben Zimra** z"l (Radvaz; late 1400s-late 1500s; Chief Rabbi of Egypt) writes: According to the Peshat, this Mitzvah hints to us, Yaakov's descendants, that we will suffer at the hands of the nations, especially the descendants of Esav, but we will never be wiped out. The angel who fought with Yaakov was the guardian angel of Esav, and he wanted to eradicate Yaakov and his children. He was unable to do so, so he tried to maim Yaakov. Then (verse 32), "The sun rose for him as he passed Penuel, and he was limping on his hip." Similarly, though the nations of the

world may harm us, in the end we will see the fulfillment of the verse (Malachi 3:20), "For you who revere My Name, a sun of righteousness will shine forth, with healing on its wings." (Metzudat David)

**"Therefore Bnei Yisrael are not to eat the gid ha'nasheh / displaced sinew on the hip-socket to this day, because he struck Yaakov's hip-socket on the displaced sinew."** (32:33) **R' David ben Shmuel Hakochavi** z"l (Spain and Provence; died approx. 1330) writes: This law teaches us two lessons: **(1)** That we should distance ourselves from that from which our forefathers distanced themselves. **(2)** That we should use the occasion of eating to recall what befell our forefather Yaakov. (Migdal David: Azhara 183)

**Therefore Bnei Yisrael are not to eat the gid ha'nasheh on the hip socket to this day, because he struck Yaakov's hip socket on the gid ha'nasheh** (32:33) **R' Samson Raphael Hirsch** z"l (Germany; 1808-1888) observes: The fact that this is being immortalized in a law of the Torah is only understandable if some fundamental lesson is connected with it. What is that lesson? Yaakov's successful fight with the angel assures us that the spirit of Esav will not be able to conquer Yaakov throughout the long ages of darkness on earth. Nevertheless, Esav will be able to hamstring Yaakov, to prevent him from standing firmly on both feet. This lack of stability is a necessary factor in ultimately opening Esav's eyes. If Yaakov stood firmly, as Esav stood at the head of his 400 men [see verse 7], the fact that Yaakov cannot be conquered would never show the Finger of G-d in history. Therefore, the descendants of Yaakov (who just because of their material weakness are "Yisrael," the sign of the sole conquering power, G-d) are not to eat the gid ha'nasheh. Whenever we sit down to a meal, R' Hirsch continues, the admonition from this story of our wanderings comes to us. We are not to feel as if we are less enduring through the ages because we are not armed with the sword as Esav is. Our strength lies in other, higher factors which cannot be weakened by Esav. (The Hirsch Chumash)

והוא עבר לפנייהם וישתחו ארצה שבע פעמים  
עד-גשתו עד-אחייו

**“And he (Yaacov) bowed down (to Eisav) seven times...”** (33:3-4)

**Rashi** says that when Eisav saw how much honor Yaacov was giving him, his compassion for Yaacov poured forth. The **Ohr Yahal** explains that even though Yaacov might have been able to defeat Eisav, he felt it would be a bigger victory to have Eisav love him. (This way, everyone was a winner.) Real victories are thought out, not just the first impulse that comes to us!! (Rabbi Chaim Flom)

**Then he himself went on ahead of them and bowed earthward seven times until he reached his brother** (33:3)

The Torah never says that Yaakov bowed down to Esav, notes **R' Shimon Schwab**, ztza"l. Yaakov just bowed, and since he always had Hashem before his eyes, in his own view he was merely bowing before G-d. If Esav misunderstood, that was Esav's problem. Chazal teach that this Parasha is our primer on how to relate to our gentile masters. Some people say that it is our "Galus mentality" which leads us to bow down. If they only knew that we were merely imitating Yaakov, bowing before Hashem's will, and letting the bystanders think what they may! (Selected Writings)

וירץ עשו לקראתו ויחבקהו ויפל על-צוארו  
וישקהו ויבכו

**And Esav ran to meet him, and embraced him** (33:4) When a small flame is brought close to a burning torch, the smaller fire is nullified within the larger one. So too was it with Yakov and Esav. Yakov was the great light, whereas Esav contained tiny, hidden sparks of holiness. When Esav spotted Yakov these sparks were aroused, prompting him to run over and be nullified in the greater holiness. (Torah Chaim)

ויצג שם מזבח ויקרא לו קל אלקי ישראל

This week's parashah describes the momentous confrontation between Yaakov and Esav when the former returned to Eretz Yisrael after 20 years with Lavan. **R' Yitzchak Isaac Sher** z"l (1875-1951; rosh yeshiva of the Slobodka Yeshiva in Lithuania and Bnei Brak) observes that this parashah provides a glimpse of Yaakov's greatness and the contrast between him and Esav. Also, it

teaches the lofty heights that a human being is capable of reaching. He explains: We read (33:20), **“He [Yaakov] set up an altar there and proclaimed, ‘Kel, the Kel of Israel’.**” The literal translation of this verse suggests that Yaakov called G-d, “the G-d of Israel.” However, Rashi z"l quotes the Gemara (Megillah 18a) which reads the verse differently: “He called him ‘El’ - The G-d of Israel.” In other words, “He called Yaakov, ‘El.’ Who called him that? The G-d of Israel called him that.” Needless to say, G-d was not ascribing divinity to Yaakov. Rather, the title “El” means that Yaakov had perfected his tzelem Elokim / Divine image. He had accomplished what man was put in this world to accomplish. He was as close to godliness as a person ever can be. Yaakov had attained extremely high spiritual levels even earlier. When Yaakov was fleeing to Lavan's home, Yaakov dreamt of a ladder on which malachim were ascending and descending. Midrash Rabbah records that the malachim were going back and forth between the human Yaakov and an image of Yaakov that was “engraved” on G-d's “throne,” comparing the two. The engraving of Yaakov's image on G-d's throne is meant to teach us what man is capable of achieving. We can only imagine how hard Yaakov worked on himself to attain that level. In contrast, we don't find that Esav worked on himself at all. At birth, he was named, “Esav,” which comes from the word meaning “complete.” Just as Esav appeared physically complete at birth, so he represents those people who view themselves as spiritually complete, having no need to work on themselves. Such a person stands in sharp contrast to the ideal human represented by Yaakov. (Lekket Sichot Mussar)

ויצב יעקב מצבה על-קברתה הוא מצבת  
קברת-רחל עד-היום

**An Eternal Monument. "...the same is the pillar of Rachel's grave to this day.** (35:20) The text does not read "the same is the pillar of Rachel to this day," for Rachel for herself didn't need a monument. "One does not rear monuments to the righteous, for their words are their memorial." Righteous men and women don't need pillars of stone to perpetuate their memory. Thus, the pillar that

## PRESSERS BAKERY

1720 Avenue M  
Shabsi & Judy Klein 375-5088

=====  
Come Join the  
Young Israel of Midwood  
**Morning Kollel**  
Monday through Friday 9:30 to 12:00  
**MorningKollel.com**  
=====

Dedicated by Dr. Meir & Shandee Fuchs  
in loving memory of  
**Sam & Helen Fuchs**  
(Shmuel Moshe & Chanah ז"ל)  
=====

### MODERN DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY INC.

שומר שבת  
1412 Bayridge Ave (69th St)  
5205 New Utrecht Avenue  
1726 Ocean Avenue (Aves. L-M)  
Tel: 718-837-LAB2 (5222)

To reserve the newly renovated  
**YIM Banquet hall**  
Contact  
**Shuie Horowitz @ 718 252 5726**  
ysandf@aol.com

You can pay all your debts to  
The **Young Israel of Midwood**  
via **Credit Card**  
go to **YIMidwood.org**

**Y.I.M FREE LOAN FUND**  
CALL MICHAEL STEIN 917-612-8829

Yaakov set up was intended only as "the pillar of Rachel's grave," marking the site of the grave so that those of her descendants who might wish to visit the grave and pray there might know where it is. (Wellsprings of Torah)

ויגוע יצחק וימת ויאסף אל-עמיו זקן ושבוע  
ימים ויקברו אותו עשו ויעקב בניו

**And Yitzchak expired and died** (35:29) In the case of Avraham it says, "And die did Avraham" (i.e., the name Avraham is mentioned after the word "die"). **R' Moshe Feinstein** z"l explained that even after Avraham died, he was alive for his descendants, even for Yishmael, who had repented. Not so when Yitzchak died; in Esav's mind, he, and all he represented, was forgotten. (Darash Moshe)

ויקח עשו את-נשיו ואת-בנותיו ואת  
כל-נפשות ביתו ואת-מקנהו ואת-כל-בהמתו  
ואת-כל-קנינו אשר רכש בארץ כנען וילך אל  
ארץ מפני יעקב אחיו

In our parashah, Yaakov meets Esav for the first time in more than 20 years. Near the end of the parashah, we read, **“Esav took his wives, his sons, his daughters, and all the members of his household--his**

**livestock and all his animals, and all the wealth he had acquired in the land of Canaan--and went to a land because of his brother Yaakov.**" (36:6) **R' Chaim Palagi** z"l (1788-1868; rabbi of Izmir, Turkey) writes, perhaps quoting a midrash: Yaakov reasoned, "The wicked are never satiated in their desire for money." What did he do, therefore? He placed all of his wealth on one side and [a deed to] Eretz Yisrael on the other side, and he offered Esav a choice. Whereupon, Esav went to the Ishmaelites for advice. They said, "The Canaanites, the Prizites, etc. also claim the land. Take the money, and Yaakov will be left with nothing." Esav did so, whereupon Yaakov said, "Now leave my land." Esav did so, and as a reward, his descendants received the Roman Empire. R' Palagi continues: In this light we may understand the verse (Yeshayah 58:14), "Then [i.e., if you honor Shabbat] you shall be granted pleasure with Hashem and I shall mount you astride the heights of the world; and I will provide you the heritage of your forefather Yaakov." Why is Eretz Yisrael called, "the heritage of [our] forefather Yaakov" rather than the heritage of Avraham or Yitzchak? Because it was due to the special efforts of Yaakov Avinu that Eretz Yisrael was preserved for us and for no one else. (Artzot Ha'chaim)

**Esav... went to a land because of Yaakov his brother** (36:6) Rashi writes (on verse 7): Esav traveled far away from Yaakov because he was embarrassed at having sold the birthright. **R' Yisrael Yaakov Lubchansky** hy"d observes: Esav sold the birthright when he was fifteen years old. In our verse, he was at least 100 years old. Such is the effect of one foolish act; it may continue to embarrass a person almost a century later. (Ikvei Yisrael) **A similar thought:** The patriarch Avram was 99 years old when his name was changed to Avraham. Yaakov was almost 98 when he received the name Yisrael (in our parashah). In contrast, Esav was only fifteen when he was given the name Edom. Moreover, he was given that name because of one improper remark (25:30 - "Pour into me now some of that very adom/red stuff"). In short, one must work a lifetime to

earn a good name, but one foolish act in one's youth can assure a person a bad name. (Rabbi Shlomo Katz of Hamaayan heard from R' Raphael Mendlowitz)

ואלה שמות אלופי עשו למשפחתם למקמתם  
בשמתם אלוף תמנע אלוף עלוה אלוף יתת אלוף  
אהליבמה אלוף אלה אלוף פינן אלוף קנז אלוף  
תימן אלוף מבצר אלוף מגדיאל אלוף עירם  
אלה אלופי אדום למשבתם בארץ אחזתם הוא  
עשו אבי אדום

**These are the generations of Esav, who is Edom... these are the names of Esav's chieftains... chieftain Magdiel, chieftain Iram** (36:1, 40, 43) The present exile is referred to as the Exile of Edom because the Romans, who brought about the exile with their destruction of the Holy Temple, were mostly descendants of Edom. This exile is generally divided into two eras, governed by the above two kinds of leaders: Chieftain Magdiel (lit., "he magnifies himself above every god"): In this first era, the Roman empire expanded throughout the world, seeking to overpower Judaism and make it difficult for Jews to observe Torah and mitzvot. Chieftain Iram (from the Hebrew "to amass [treasures for the royal Moshiach]"): This second era is the one close to the Messianic Era, when Rome will cease to subdue Israel, submitting to holiness and even assisting Moshiach. Rome will then realize the literal and sacred meaning of its name, which is related to the word "hisromemus" (exaltation). (The Rebbe)

This letter was written by R' **Shimshon David Pinkus** z"l (rabbi of Ofakim, Israel; died 2001) in response to a question by a reader of R' Pinkus' Torah commentary. I received your letter, and I am very grateful to you that you read the book Tiferet Torah. It is a great merit for an author when Torah scholars read his works. Regarding Yosef [this reference will be returned to below] There is no question that the kinyan / method of acquisition by which Yisrael acquired the Land and will acquire it again in the future is the kinyan of "kibbush" / conquest. This is an effective method of kinyan, and the complaints of the nations of the world [against Israel] will not arise from the method of acquisition used, for those nations also obtained their lands by conquest. Think about it!

The nations of the world say [to us] "You are thieves!" But is there any nation which has been living in its current land since the generation of the Tower of Bavel [when the nations of the world were first formed] All nations obtained their lands by conquest from one another. What then is their complaint? They are asking, "Is it right [for Yisrael to conquer land] It is understandable that we [the nations] should do so. After all, we [the nations] are the heirs of Esav who received the blessing (Bereishit 27:40), 'You shall live by your sword,' and of Yishmael, who was blessed with the words (Bereishit 16:12), 'He shall be a wild man.' But you are righteous! How can you do such a thing?" This is why the Torah goes to lengths to defend our actions by relating that Hashem created the world and gave Eretz Yisrael to the nation of His choosing Our honesty is demonstrated by Yosef He could have kept the Egyptians' land for himself [when they gave it in exchange for food] but he did not do so. He acted as if he did not exist and gave everything to Pharaoh. . . .

Signed with respect and friendship,  
**Shimshon David Pinkus**

**Hatzolo** (718 or 212)  
387-1750 or 230-1000  
**Flatbush Shomrim** (718) 338-9797  
**Chaveirim** (718) 431-8181

Please go ahead  
COPY AND DISTRIBUTE

Keep this free publication going!  
To **SPONSOR** dedicate an issue or to  
advertise please call Cellular  
732 803 2719 or 718 677 7781

Also you can receive\* the

**wh Y I Matter**

weekly

free via eMail just for the asking  
**yedidye@att.net**

If you have a good Dvar Torah  
on any Parsha  
Please be kind enough to  
send it to me via eMail  
and IY"H B"N I'll have it Published next time  
around