

WHAT'S GOING ON?

- **Summer Machane** applications are OPEN!!! To apply, please go to bauk.org/camps. For more information, please email camps@bauk.org.

- **Israel Machane** applications are OPEN NOW! Head to bauk.org/israel for details of how to apply.

- **Student Bet Midrash** is taking a break over Winter Machane, but will be back in January! Email Chana at chinuch@bauk.org for more details or if you have any questions.

- Sign up for our **Mega Siyum in memory of Marc Weinberg** now! Part 1 of the Siyum aims to complete Tanach by Winter Machane. All welcome to join at bitly.com/megasiyum. For more information contact chinuch@bauk.org.

- Bnei Akiva are proud to send a delegation of Bogrim on **March of the Living UK's** 10th anniversary trip including a trip to Bergen-Belsen. Sign up at marchoftheliving.org.uk. For further information email mazkir@bauk.org.

- To get involved with your local sviva please contact Zoe at svivot@bauk.org. If you have a

child attending sviva, please ensure that you have completed the **medical form** at bauk.org/bnei-akiva-svivot-medical-form-5780.

- **2019 marks the 80th birthday of BAUK!** Keep an eye out for events in your local community! For information on our '80for80' campaign and to set up a standing order head to bauk.org/bachad.

- Sign up now for **Mas Chaver** for 5780! To apply head to bauk.org/mas-chaver.

- Be sure to like our **Facebook page (Bnei Akiva UK)** and follow our **Instagram (bneiakivauk)** to get regular updates with what is going on in the Tnuva.

- Visit bauk.org/feedback for contact details for all Mazkirut members and to leave any general feedback!

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. What is the difficulty with Yaakov's prayer? (See **Tur HaAroch on 32:11**)
2. Why was Yaakov's name changed? (See **Rashi on 32:29**)

SHABBAT SHALOM!!!

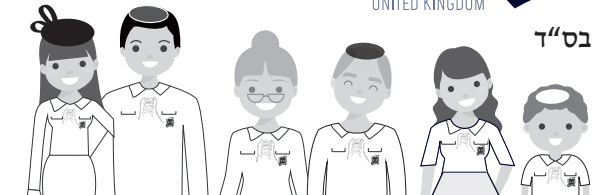
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ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כלמלאכתך,
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SHABBAT LASHEM

THE VOICE OF BNEI AKIVA UK

PARASHAT VAYISHLACH
16TH KISLEV 5780
13TH & 14TH DECEMBER 2019
VOLUME 30 ISSUE 13



בס"ד



SEEKING PEACE SHOSHANA COHEN SHEVET AVICHAI

At the beginning of this week's parasha, we find Yaakov preparing to meet Esav after years of separation. The pasuk tells us that Yaakov sent messengers to his brother (Bereishit, 32:4). Rashi, quoting the Bereishit Rabbah, explains that these messengers were not human beings, but were literally "malachim" – angels. The last time Yaakov and Esav were together, Esav threatened to murder his twin (Bereishit, 27:41). Yaakov was worried that this reunion would result in war; he sends angels ahead of him to greet Esav with a message of peace: "I send this message to my master in order to find favour in his eyes" (Bereishit, 32:6).

These are not the only angels in this week's parasha. The night before Yaakov and Esav finally meet, Yaakov "was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until dawn" (Bereishit, 32:25). Rashi, quoting the midrash, explains that the "man" in the pasuk refers to the angel of Esav.

The Midrash places angels into this narrative to draw out a contrast between Yaakov and Esav. Throughout Midrashic sources, Chazal repeatedly highlight differences between the two brothers that are more subtle in the pesukim themselves. The contrast is clear: Yaakov sends angels to Esav, and Esav sends an angel back. But Yaakov sends angels to make peace. Esav's angel fights.

The opening pasuk of this parasha is echoed by another pasuk found in Parashat Chukat in Sefer Bamidbar. In this parasha, "Yaakov sent messengers" (Bereishit, 32:4) to make peace with Esav.

In that parasha, in the context of going to war against the Amorites, "Bnei Yisrael sent messengers" (Bamidbar, 21:21) to make peace with their enemy. The Bamidbar Rabbah explains that Hashem did not explicitly command the Jewish people to try and make peace. However, they did so anyway. And this wasn't just a decision made by Moshe; the pasuk emphasises that "Yisrael", the people, sent these messengers.

It might be enough to do other mitzvot as and when they arise. But shalom is different. Regarding peace, says the Midrash, one should "seek shalom in one's place and pursue it in other places" (Bamidbar Rabbah, 19:27). This idea is also expressed in Pirkei Avot: "Hillel said: be a student of Aharon, loving peace and pursuing peace" (1:12). When it comes to shalom, it is not enough to sit passively. We are expected to actively search for it.

Angels appeared in last week's parasha too, in Yaakov's dream of "a ladder standing on the ground, with its head reaching the heavens, and behold angels of God were going up and down it" (Bereishit, 28:12). The Kli Yakar comments on the symbolism of this dream. He explains that the ladder in the dream represents the connection between earth and heaven and the impact they can have on each other. Rashi questions why the pasuk mentions the angels going up before they came down. Based on this Kli Yakar, we can suggest this shows our actions go up - ascend to heaven - and that causes a Divine response. Hashem treats us according to the way we act. If we want Hashem to give us peace, we need to act accordingly, we need to run after it with all our energy and effort.

SHOSHANA WILL BE A MADRICHAN ON GIMMEL WINTER MACHANE 5780

London	In: 15:36 Out: 16:50	Oxford	In: 15:36 Out: 16:54	Leeds	In: 15:26 Out: 16:48
Manchester	In: 15:31 Out: 16:52	Bristol	In: 15:43 Out: 17:00	Liverpool	In: 15:34 Out: 16:55
Cambridge	In: 15:28 Out: 16:47	Birmingham	In: 15:35 Out: 16:54	Jerusalem	In: 16:03 Out: 17:20

VAYISHLACH 5780: DISPROPORTIONATE RESPONSE?

RAV JOEL KENIGSBERG | RAV SHALIACH



It seems like a case of things going from bad to worse. After the shocking story of Dinah's abduction by Shechem, it was only natural for her brothers to feel outraged. It's understandable that

they had to act, but the response appears to be a little disproportionate.

Shimon and Levi, incensed by the injustice that had been done, went and killed the entire male population of the city of Shechem. It was an act of such unbridled rage that their own father cursed them for it. Years later, in Parashat Vayechi, when Yaakov blesses his sons before his death, Shimon and Levi are singled out for a stinging rebuke:

שמעון ולוי אחים כלי חמס
תכרתיהם: בסדום אל תבא
נפש בקהלם אל תחד
כבדי כי באפים הרגו איש
ובצנעם עקרו שור: ארו אפם כי קשתה
אחלקם ביעקב ואפיצם בישראל:

"Shimon and Levi are a pair; Their weapons are tools of lawlessness. Let not my person be included in their council, let not my being be counted in their assembly. For when angry they slay men, and when pleased they maim oxen. Cursed be their anger so fierce, and their wrath so relentless. I will divide them in Jacob, Scatter them in Israel." (Bereishit 49:5-7)

Because of their rage, so dangerous when let loose, these two brothers would not receive an independent inheritance in the land of Israel. Rather, they were punished by being permanently in some form of exile, where they would be split amongst the nation. Yet more than just a punishment, Rashi points out that they were scattered in order to be

"scribes and teachers". Shimon and Levi were to go from city to city to be the teachers of Torah amongst the Jewish people.

But why? Surely the two tribes who couldn't control their anger were not the ones to be entrusted with the education of the next generation?

The answer, explains Rav Yaakov Kamenetsky, is that when Shimon and Levi reacted to what had happened with Dina they didn't just display an unrelinquished anger. They showed something else. They displayed a deep concern for their sister. They showed how much they cared. They demonstrated that they couldn't just sit idly by as if nothing had happened. They showed a deep understanding of the mutual responsibility of Am Yisrael.

True, the way they reacted raised questions. Yaakov himself was far from

approving of the course of action that they took. But the fact that they did act was what set them apart from the rest of their brothers. It's not by coincidence that only Shimon and Levi are referred to explicitly in the text as "אחי דינה" – Dinah's brothers. Only they displayed the brotherly love that made them worthy of the title.

The task of teaching Torah is not an easy one. It could only be given to someone with a sense of mission, with a burning desire to help and with a sincere concern for the welfare of every Jew. There was room for correction, but Shimon and Levi showed that they fit the bill. May we all be imbued with the same passion, the same drive and the same courage. And may we channel all our emotions for the greater good of Am Yisrael.

Shabbat Shalom!

**THEY SHOWED
A DEEP
UNDERSTANDING
OF THE MUTUAL
RESPONSIBILITY OF
AM YISRAEL**

A TASTE FROM THE ARCHIVES: VAYISHLACH 5772

RAV ILAN GOLDMAN | RAV SHALIACH 5770-5773

THE BIRTH OF HOPE

Many of the younger readers of Shabbat Lashem will be familiar with a series of bestselling books that made their way to the screen, which tell the story of a young wizard who was destined to fight the leader of the dark side. This boy when only a baby already succeeded in his first confrontation. The structure of 'a boy vs a powerful leader of the dark side' is an ongoing theme when reading in between the lines in our current Parshiot. As can be expected, in the Torah it appears in less detail and has far greater depth than those in the bestselling fairy tales.

At the point when Yaakov is introducing his family to Esav, each wife steps forward with her children following behind her. The one exception is Rachel. Her son, Yosef, stands in front of her. Rashi points out that there was an element of protection on Yosef's part. How can this young child protect his mother from the fierce warrior, Esav?

A more surprising example is at Yosef's birth. Yaakov escaped Israel to flee from his brother Esav. It is odd that the moment Yaakov chooses to return to the Land of Israel is the moment Yosef was born. It seems as though there was something about his birth that enabled Yaakov to finally confront his brother. To understand this we must return to that fateful moment when Yaakov received the blessing from Yitzchak.

When Yitzchak and Esav had realised that Yaakov received the bracha instead of Esav, Yitzchak claimed that he could not bless Esav for he had given the entire bracha to Yaakov. However, when Yaakov was about to leave, we find that Yitzchak did have another bracha to give. The content of the first bracha was materialistic and the content of the second was spiritual. Yitzchak's original plan was that both his sons would be part of Am Yisrael. Esav would be the physical leader and Yaakov the spiritual. Now Yaakov was destined to carry out both aspects of Am Yisrael. Therefore, he receives another name. From then on, Yaakov represented his earthly mission and Yisrael the sacred. Leah was fitting for his Yisrael side and Rachel for his Yaakov side. From Yisrael and Leah came Yehuda and from Yaakov and Rachel came Yosef.

The prophet Ovadia teaches how Yosef was the fulfillment of Yaakov's materialistic side, and thus the one who was capable of confronting Esav. וְהָיָה בֵּית־יַעֲקֹב אֵשׁ וְבֵית יוֹסֵף לְהָבֵה וְבֵית עֵשָׂו לְקֵשׁ - "and the house of Yaakov shall be a fire, and the house of Yosef a flame, and the house of Esav straw" (Ovadia 1:18). Between Yaakov and Esav, Esav was naturally the physical one and Yaakov was the yeshiva bocher. The first bracha was seemingly not appropriate for Yaakov. Only upon the birth of Yosef does he feel that he can begin to fulfil his earthly destiny. Yosef had the attributes of Esav. He too was a man of this world. However, unlike Esav he was a righteous man.

Rachel's descendants, in particular Yosef, were therefore the ones most fitting to confront Esav and lay the foundations of the materialistic side of Am Yisrael. We also find Shaul, from the tribe of Binyamin, was commanded to kill Amalek, the descendants of Esav, and was the king prior to David from the Tribe of Yehuda, who laid the foundations of the kingdom. So too Mashiach ben Yosef comes prior to Mashiach ben David. The Vilna Gaon identified his time as the beginning of the era of Mashiach ben Yosef. Indeed soon after his time, Am Yisrael began returning home and establishing the materialistic side of what was to become the state of Israel. Today we can identify our era as nearing towards the end of the successful materialistic establishment and therefore we are ready to move on to the next stage - the spiritual establishment. It is our job as the current generation of Am Yisrael to recognise and fulfil the contents of the second bracha, which Yitzchak gave to Yaakov, and build the spiritual foundations of Am Yisrael in Eretz Yisrael.

THIS ARTICLE WAS FIRST PRODUCED IN SHABBAT LASHEM VOLUME 18 ISSUE 8, 10TH DECEMBER 2011 AND WAS REPRINTED IN PEROT HAILAN.

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