



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

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TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"L

Running From or Running To?

Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps, Director

"Yaakov left Be'er Sheva and he went to Charan." (28:10)

Parshas Vayitzei begins with Yaakov leaving his parent's home and setting out for Charan. It is striking to contrast the description of Yaakov's departure that is found in our Parsha with the description that is found in this week's Haftorah (Hoshea Ch. 12). While our Parsha states simply that Yaakov "left Be'er Sheva" and "went to Charan" – depicting a calm and orderly departure, the prophet Hoshea writes that Yaakov "fled" to the fields of Aram – implying a hurried and panicked exit.

Interestingly, if one looks back at last week's Parsha, there is a similar distinction between Rivka's instructions to Yaakov versus Yitzchak's. Rivka tells Yaakov that Esav intends to kill him and he should "flee" to Lavan's house (27:43). Yitzchak, on the other hand, not knowing that Esav plans to kill Yaakov, instructs Yaakov to "go" to Aram to find a wife from the daughters of Lavan.

Rav Mattisyahu Solomon explains that there were in fact two purposes to Yaakov traveling from his parents' home to the house of Lavan: one, to escape Esav and the second, to find a wife. The prophet, Hoshea, is describing the way Yaakov would have appeared to an observer – as a man fleeing his angry brother. The Torah, on the other hand, is revealing how Yaakov felt inside – calm and confident that it was Hashem's Will that he set out on the next stage of his life.

When Rav Elya Meir Bloch zt"l escaped from Europe to America in 1940, he looked to reestablish the Telshe Yeshiva in America, but encountered resistance. People questioned whether a newly landed refugee should be assuming a position of leadership so quickly. He responded that he is not a refugee – he is an agent of Hashem, sent to this place with a sacred mission. In support, he cited a verse in the Book of Shmuel I (20:22) where Yehonasan describes how he will signal to Dovid that he is in danger from King Shaul, and how upon seeing the signal, Dovid should "go – for Hashem has sent you!" He did not say, "Go – for you are in danger," rather, "Go – for Hashem is sending you to complete a mission somewhere else."

The perspective of Yaakov Avinu as he goes into exile has been with us throughout our history as our people have been expelled from numerous countries – only to rebound and rebuild to greater heights in our new places. As individuals, a person might need to leave a certain community or job due to a variety of circumstances. If we can shift our perspective to one like Yaakov's and view our situation as a directive to build and accomplish in our new place, not only will we feel better, but we will also be better equipped to fulfill the mission that Hashem intends for us in our new circumstances.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

Point to Ponder

A ladder was set earthward and its top reached heavenward; and behold, Angels of Hashem were ascending and descending on it (28:12).

The Angels ascended and looked at the images engraved in Heaven, which included Yaakov's image. And they descended and looked at the image of the person on the bottom. Those Angels wished to harm Yaakov because they were jealous of him. Immediately, 'Hashem was standing over him (Yaakov)' (28:13) to protect him (Chulin 91b and Rashi).

When Moshe ascended to Heaven to receive the Torah, the Angels were arguing with Moshe that he should not bring the Torah down to earth. Moshe argued, "Is there jealousy amongst you that necessitates a command regarding jealousy?" (Shabbos 89a)

The above Chazals seem contradictory. From Chazal in Chulin it seems that Angels do have jealousy. However, from the Chazal in Shabbos it seems that Angels are not jealous. How do we reconcile this?

TABLE TALK

Parsha Riddle

Where is a source in this week's parsha that one should not give more than a fifth of one's possessions to tzedakah?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What is the connection between Avraham's death and Esav?

Answer: Avraham died five years early so he would not have to witness Esav's evil.

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

In *parashas Vayeitzei* (29:26), Lavan justifies to Yaakov his substitution of Leah for Rachel by saying: "Such is not done in our place, to give the younger before the elder." Although it might not seem logical to derive a behavioral norm from the pagan scoundrel Lavan, particularly since Yaakov did not seem to have accepted such a norm, since he had proposed marriage to Rachel despite Leah having not yet married, R. Yisrael Isserlin is reported to have maintained that the fact that Yaakov did not respond to Lavan's justification is evidence that Lavan was actually correct (*Leket Yosher* p. 117), and many *halachic* authorities maintain that there is indeed a norm that siblings, or at least daughters, should marry in age order (*Rashbam Bava Basra* 120, *Bach YD* end of 244, *Shach ibid. s.k. 13*, *Taz ibid. siman* 208 s.k. 1).

Some authorities understand the norm to apply only when the two siblings have both found marriage partners and the issue is merely the order in which to schedule the weddings (*Biur Maharip to Shut. Mahari Mintz siman* 2 s.k. 12, *Igros Moshe EH* 2:1), but most understand that it applies even where the older sibling has not yet found a marriage partner. On the other hand, the consensus is that this norm is not strictly mandatory, but merely a matter of "etiquette and considerate behavior (*nimus v'derech erez*)," and it may accordingly be disregarded where there is a substantial argument for doing so, such as the presence of an opportunity to secure a particularly desirable marriage partner for a younger sister that will be lost if she waits for her older sister to marry first (*Maharsham* 3:136, *Shut. Beis David* 7, *Minchas Yitzchak* 8: 135, *Tzitz Eliezer* 22:52:4).

Some authorities maintain that the norm applies only to two sisters, but not to an older sister and a younger brother (*Maharsham ibid.*, and see *Avnei Chafetz* 25). Some consider whether the norm calls for deference only to a first-born sibling, or even to any older sibling (*Avnei Chafetz*). Some argue that the norm only directs a father who is providing dowries for his daughters to avoid marrying off his younger daughter before his older one, but is not applicable to children who marry on their own (*Beis Yechezkel*, cited in *Tzitz Eliezer*).

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I was not an obligation.
2. I am from Yaakov.
3. I am the third.
4. I am the first.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I was the first to thank.
2. I was a weeper.
3. I had half.
4. I was soft-eyed.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Kehuna/Temple Service (I was for the first, I ended up for the third, Watch your drinking, Esav rejected me.)

#2 Esav (I was made, I was red, I was not bald, I was a fielder.)

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Rabbi Eli Reingold,
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Greater Washington Community Kollel

**Chanukah
Celebration**

**Tuesday, Dec. 16 at 7:00pm
at SEHC 10900 Lockwood Dr.**

**Children's Entertainment from
Master Ventriloquist
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**Hot Chanukah Delights!
Donuts! Cotton Candy!**