

**A PARASHA THOUGHT**

**A Lesson In Rest**

GUEST CONTRIBUTOR  
RABBI MOSHE KIBEL

*Vayishkav bamakom hahu-* And he (Yaakov) lay down in that place. Yaakov was on his way to Lavan's house to get married, but he took a detour and stopped in *yeshivas Shem v'Ever* for 14 years to learn. Reb Yaakov Kamanetsky says that Yaakov was obviously an accomplished *Talmid Chacham* already. He was 63 years old at this time, and had learned for 15 years by Avraham *Avinu*, and the rest of the time by his father Yitzchak. Why was there now a need for him to stop off and learn for 14 years by Shem and Ever? Reb Yaakov answers that the Torah that he learned by the *Avos* was different than the Torah he learned by Shem and Ever. The home of the *Avos* was a sheltered environment. In such a home it is easy to remain a *tzaddik*. Shem and Ever, on the other hand, were exposed to the *Mabul* (flood) and *Dor Haflagah* (generation of dispersion), and still remained *tzaddikim*. Now that Yaakov was going out into the world to be around Lavan, he had to learn by Shem and Ever to find out how to remain a *tzaddik* while going out into the world.

The question still remains, though, what exactly did Yaakov learn by Shem and Ever that he did not learn by Yitzchak that would enable him to go out into the world?

Rabbi Reisman says the only information that we have about Yaakov's time in *Yeshivas Shem v'Ever* is what Rashi tells us - that for those 14 years Yaakov never went to sleep in a bed. He would learn the whole day, and when tired he would rest his head on the *shtender* for a few minutes, and then get back to learning.

Why the change? Why is it that when he was by Yitzchak would he go to sleep in bed, but not so by *Yeshivas Shem v'Ever*.

When Yaakov was by his father's house, his job was to learn. He would sleep in a bed at night to make sure that he would get a good night's sleep, and be well rested for *Yeshivah* the next day. At *Yeshivas Shem v'Ever* he had to prepare himself for going out into the world where he would be working all day. At the end of the workday, one is exhausted. He gets home and then he has to help the kids with homework. Afterwards, one wants to collapse into bed. *Yeshivas Shem v'Ever* taught Yaakov, that even when going out into the world, you have to push yourself to learn, even when exhausted. 🌟

**THE RABBI WAS ASKED ON THE PARASHA**

THIS WEEK WITH  
RABBI DOVID SPETNER

Q) Rashi quotes the Gemara in *Chullin* that when Yaakov reached Charan he realized that he had passed the place where his ancestors had prayed (the future *Beis Hamikdash*) without praying and he decided to return to that spot. What is the significance of Yaakov *davening* where his fathers *davened*? Don't we *daven* anywhere?

A) The Midrash *Tanchuma* in *parashas Kedoshim* quotes a *passuk* in *Yechezkel* that refers to *Eretz Yisrael* as the umbilical cord of the world. The Midrash goes on to say that *Eretz Yisrael* is in the middle of the world, *Yerushalayim* is in the middle of *Eretz Yisrael*, the *Beis Hamikdash* is in the middle of *Yerushalayim*, the *Heichal* is in the middle of the *Beis Hamikdash*, the *Aron* is in the middle of the *Heichal* and the *Foundation Stone* is before the *Aron* from where the world was founded. The metaphor of an umbilical cord is to symbolize that the physical world is nourished from the spiritual world, but it does not happen equally all over the world. There are places where the pipeline to the spiritual world is clearer and stronger. This is why Yaakov referred to that spot as the *Gate of Heaven*. Certainly, our

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## THE RABBI WAS ASKED ON THE PARASHA

CONTINUED

prayers can be heard anywhere, but there are places on Earth where the pipeline is clearer. Yaakov had a tradition from his fathers that the clearest pipeline for prayer was in that spot. He therefore desired to go back there to offer his prayers before embarking on his years of exile. 🕍

Something always bugged you about the upcoming parasha (or last week's)? Ask! If you would like to submit a question on the parasha, please email it to [parasha@cincykollel.org](mailto:parasha@cincykollel.org). Questions will be selected to address at the discretion of the Rabbi who is answering that week. Questions may be edited for brevity/clarity.



### Save the Date!

**Nov. 29th** – Men's Kollel

Chanukah Event,

**Nov. 30th** – Chanukah Kollel  
family mystery drive II.



## A SHINING EXAMPLE

Mordechai Solten awoke in the middle of the night not feeling well at all. Worst of all was that pain in his chest. Was it what he had for dinner? Mrs. Solten immediately called Lakewood Hatzalah and to their surprise there was a team at their house in under a minute. Not only that – they had what was then the gold standard of portable heart monitor/defibrillators, the Lifepak 12. The Hatzalah emergency volunteers hooked up Mordechai to the monitor, and were able to see immediately that his heart was going into cardiac arrest before their eyes. With the Lifepak 12 already attached, they began shocks immediately and were able to bring him back to consciousness and jumpstart his heart immediately. On the way to the hospital the Hatzalah volunteers recounted how they happened to be at the Soltens' doorstep so quickly with just the equipment they needed. "I received a call this morning from a relative who was in the Catskills whose child had not been doing well and seemed to be a serious situation. The child's doctor wanted the boy taken to Children's Hospital of Philadelphia with medical escort. So, I rounded up some volunteers from Lakewood and went off to the Catskills, taking with us the new

## A BA'AL HATURIM FOR YOU

The Midrash *Tanchuma* brings that in the dream that Yaakov has in our parasha of angels ascending and descending a ladder, G-d was showing the length of the future exiles of the Jewish people. Angels representing each of the different nations that would subjugate the Jewish people were shown to Yaakov to climb the number of rungs on the ladder corresponding to the number of years of power over the Jewish people. Once it reached that point, the angel would fall off the ladder. The angel representing Rome, though, continued to climb beyond where Yaakov could see and he cried out to Hashem, "Is there no end?" To this G-d responded that even Rome would meet its downfall. Baal Haturim finds a hint to this midrash in the words of the *passuk*. The words "*Olim v'yordim bo,*" meaning "they [the angels] were going up and down upon it," is the same numerical value as the names of the nations represented by the angels, *Bavel, Madai, Yavan, and Romi* (Babylonia, Mede, Greece, and Rome). 🕍

Lifepak 12 just in case. By the time we got the boy to Philadelphia it was already quite late and we still had to get home! After our driver missed the exit we wanted, we groaned that this long trip was getting longer. But just when we pulled into Lakewood from Route 9 your call came in from just off County Line Rd. We were right here! So we pulled up when we did, with just what we needed!" 🕍

## THE LEGENDARY GOLEM OF PRAGUE (PART IV)

RABBI NOSSON WIGGINS

There are a number of historical errors found in *Niflaos Maharal* as follows: 1) *Niflaos Maharal* records the year of the Maharal's arrival in Prague as 1572, while the Maharal's student, the renowned historian Rabbi Dovid Ganz, in his *Tzemach Dovid* records that the Maharal arrived in Prague in 1573 (not the worst of mistakes). 2) *Niflaos Maharal* records that the Holy Roman Emperor and King of Bohemia at the time was Rudolph II and the Maharal was famously granted an audience with him in 1573. However, Roman historical records and encyclopedias record that in 1573 Maximilian II was the Holy Roman Emperor and King of Bohemia, and, as both *Tzemach Dovid* and Czech records write, the Maharal only met Rudolph in the Prague Castle in 1592 (quite a discrepancy). 3) The book records that the Maharal had a debate with Cardinal Johan Sylvester about the blood libel issue. Cardinal Sylvester never existed in Prague in the 16<sup>th</sup> century nor did he exist in the history of cardinals in general.

These inconsistencies seem to suggest that *Niflaos Maharal* was not authored by the Maharal's son-in-law Rabbi Yitzchak Katz as Rabbi Yudl Rosenberg claims. Rather, Rabbi Yudl Rosenberg, with his brilliant and creative mind, invented these stories to provide kosher reading material for his fellow Jews of Poland. However, the nail in the coffin is a phenomenal piece of evidence in which Rabbi Yudl Rosenberg himself essentially admits that he was the originator of *Niflaos Maharal*.

To be continued... 🕍