



# Parshas Vayeitzei

# פרשת ויצא

## TABLE OF CONTENTS:

The Power Of Tefillah- Noam Steinmetz ('21).....	1
A Short Vort - Akiva Kra ('21).....	2
Yosef's Fire - Pinchus Cohen ('24).....	2
5 Minute Lomdus - Shimi Kaufman ('21) .....	3
The Elephant in the Room- Yisrael Dovid Rosenberg('23) .....	3
From The Editors' Desk .....	4
Chassidus On The Parsha - Yeshurin Sorscher ('21).....	6
Wisdom From the Haftorah - .....	6
Gedolim Glimpse: The Boyaner Rav- Meir Morell ('22) .....	7
Parsha Puzzlers .....	7
Halacha Hashavuh - Yosef Weiner ('23) .....	8

### The Power Of Tefillah

Noam Steinmetz ('21)

There was once a man who was very ill, who went to discuss his predicament with the Chazon Ish. On the way in to his meeting, he came across a Rav who frequently met with the Chazon Ish. The Rav asked him why he had come, to which the man responded by explaining his condition. The Rav told the man of a great doctor which he knew, and gave him his contact information. The man left to see the doctor immediately. When the Chazon Ish heard what had happened, he rebuked the Rav, shouting "this man had come to me seeking my *tefilos*! Why did you tell him to try other methods before coming to ask me to *daven*?"

In *Parshas Vayeitzei*, there is a *possuk* which states (29:17), "And the eyes of Leah were weak, and Rachel was beautiful of form and appearance." Rashi explains that the reason why the *possuk* states that Leah had weak eyes, was because she was crying over the fact that she was destined to marry the wicked Eisav. The *Medrash (Bereishis Rabbah 70:16)* points out that from here, we can see the incredible power of prayer. Through Leah's tears and prayers, she was able to reverse this decree.

The *Gemara* in *Kiddushin (29b)* tells the story of Rav Acha bar Yaakov coming to visit the town of the great *tzaddik* Abaye. In the town, there had been a demon who had been staying in the *beis medrash* and harming people. Seeing the opportunity in having a tremendous *tzaddik* visiting his neighborhood, Abaye instructed the people of the town not to invite Rav Acha bar Yaakov to their homes, so that he would be forced to sleep in the *beis medrash* where the demon was. That night, Rav Acha bar Yaakov encountered the demon, who had seven heads. He ran up to the *bimah* and began to *daven*.

Over the course of his *tefillah*, every time he would bow his head, one of the demon's heads would fall off, until the demon had been killed. The Maharsha asks a question on this baffling story: How could Abaye have placed Rav Acha bar Yaakov in such a dangerous situation? Doesn't the *Gemara* in *Ta'anis* (20b) learn from Yaakov Avinu (in next week's parsha) that we are not supposed to rely on miracles? The Maharsha answers that the power of *tefillah* is such that it is not considered a miracle. When one *davens* with sincerity, it is not a *neis* when they are answered; it is the natural order of the world that *tefillah* works.

### Yosef's Fire

*Pinchas Cohen (24)*

"After Rachel had borne Yosef, Yaakov said to Lavan, 'Send me and I shall go back to my place, to my homeland.'" (Bereishis 30:25)

Rashi on this *possuk* quotes a *possuk* in Ovadia: "And the house of Yaakov shall be a fire, and the house of Yosef a blaze, and the house of Eisav for stubble." (1:18). Now that Yosef was born, Yaakov felt secure to go back home, where he would undoubtedly meet Eisav.

The obvious question is, why was Yaakov only a flame, while Yosef was a blaze? Also, how would Yosef's birth help against Eisav, if Eisav's argument was that Yaakov tricked him out of his rightful *berachos*?

The *Mayanah Shel Torah*, Rav Alexander Zusha Friedman, says that if Eisav tried to assert that he had

good reason to be upset at Yaakov, as he had committed an injustice toward him, then Yaakov would not necessarily have a good response. Only Yosef could respond to such an accusation. Yosef would retort, "My brothers did even worse to me, and yet I resisted the temptation to take revenge on them. Furthermore, I repaid them with kindness, in apprehension that their act was righteous in that it was executing *Hashem's* vast plan." Yosef's brothers sold him, which is far less justifiable, yet he did not convict them for their maltreatment. Eisav should learn from his nephew that even though the *berachos* rightfully belonged to Eisav, if *Hashem* had wanted otherwise, he should not dispute *Hashem's* plan.

(Needless to say, however, the *shevatim* were not showing virtue with their actions; they were still incorrect. *Hashem* would have found a different way to fulfill His agenda if they had not done it. (See the *Rambam* in *Hilchos Teshuvah* 6:5 and *Ramban* on Bereishis 15:14 for a discussion of how Divine justice and providence can be reconciled -- Ed.)

In conclusion, we can learn a huge lesson from this story. Yosef should serve as an exemplar for all of us. We are all frequently indignant. Perhaps our feelings are fallacious, and should be reconsidered. After all, we know that everything that *Hashem* does is for our benefit. So, if something objectionable happens, we should always remember that it is in fact an asset, it is *Hashem* personally doing each and every one of us an act of kindness, even if we do not perceive it that way at the present moment.

### A SHORT VORT

*Akiva Kra (21)*

"וְשָׁבְתִי בְּשָׁלוֹם אֶל-בֵּית אָבִי וְהָיָה ה' לִי לְאֱלֹהִים:" - "And if I return safe to my father's house—the LORD shall be my God."

This statement by Yaakov Avinu seems extremely strange. Yaakov, one of our *Avos* (fathers), would decide his God based off of the success of one journey? Love for *Hashem* isn't supposed to be conditional! One answer is that Yaakov didn't actually mean he would switch his God if he didn't have a successful journey. Rather, he was saying that if he wasn't kept safe, and got mixed up with the ways of dangerous people around him, he had a chance of becoming a person who doesn't act as if "The Lord [is his] G-d." This is an important lesson. Yaakov realizes that who he is with and what he does on his journey will play a major role in his belief of God. The *Rambam* in *Hilchos Deiyyos* (6:1) writes that people are naturally pulled after their surrounding environment; Yaakov understood this, and understood that there was a chance that his journey through the world would have unseemly results for his religiosity. This is why he says "If I return safe"; if he doesn't integrate with the society around him, he will return with his belief in *Hashem*.

May we all be able to not get caught up in things that can take away from our connection with *Hashem*, and to surround ourselves with positive influences.

## 5 Minute Lomdus

*Shimi Kaufman (21)*

וַלְבָן הָלַךְ לְגַזֵּז אֶת-צֹאֵנוּ וַתִּגְנֹב רָחֵל אֶת-הַתְּרָפִים אֲשֶׁר לְאָבִיהָ: - *And Lavan went to shear his sheep, and Rachel stole her father's idols (Bereishis 31:19)*

**Q.** In regards to the *issur* of *gezeilah* (theft), we generally assume that the punishment can be avoided by being *menatek* (rectifying) the *issur*, that is, returning the stolen object. The *halacha* is that if the victim of the theft seizes his object back from the thief before he has a chance to return it himself, we do not administer punishment for the theft, since at the end of the day, the *issur* was rectified. This would appear to be at odds with a similar *halacha* by *shiluach haken*, the *mitzvah* to send away the mother bird before taking her eggs. If one took the eggs without sending the mother away, he may come back later and send her away afterwards. However, if he returns to find that the mother has already left the nest, he is unable to rectify his sin, and he receives *malkos* (lashes). Why is it that theft is considered rectified if the owner takes the stolen property back on their own, while *shiluach haken* is not considered rectified if the mother bird left on her own?

**A.** By theft, the definition of the *issur* is not the actual action of theft, but rather, in the fact that the owner no longer has their possessions. As a result, the action of theft is not what needs to be rectified, but rather, only the situation need be restored to how it was before. Thus, if the owner takes the stolen item back of their own accord, the effect of the theft is considered to be fixed, and no further rectification is required. However, neglecting *shiluach haken* is an *aveirah* due to the lack of an action of sending the mother bird away. As a result, if the mother bird left on her own, there is no way to retroactively do such an action of sending her away, and as such, there can be no restitution.

- Source: *Mishmeres Chayim Chelek I, "Gezeilah" 3*

## THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM: ANIMALS IN THE PARSHA

*Yisroel David Rosenberg (23)*

### Shear Madness

Sheep, in this week's *parsha* and beyond, give people a chance to pull the wool over the eyes of others. When sheep are involved, people are fooled and robbed.

When Lavan is off shearing his sheep, Yaakov takes his chance to sneak away with his family and all the woolly wealth he has gained in Lavan's employ in the previous years. Rachel also takes the opportunity to steal her father's *terafim*.

Later in *Sefer Bereishis*, in *Parshas Vayeishev*, Yehudah likewise is duped when he goes to shear his own sheep. Tamar hears that Yehudah is heading to Timnah for the occasion and disguises herself. She manages to wrest from Yehudah his ring and other possessions.

In *Sefer Shmuel*, when Dovid is on the run, he comes to Naval Hakarmeli, who is celebrating a sheep-shearing festival of his own. Though Dovid doesn't try to trick Naval, Naval manages to fool himself into thinking that Dovid is trying to rebel against the rightful king, and that to feed Dovid and his men would be a terrible mistake. And Naval eventually loses his wife, Avigayil, to Dovid, as well as his life.

Later in the same *sefer*, Avshalom invites all the sons of Dovid to attend yet another sheep-shearing festival. He did this to trick his brother Amnon into coming. He commits the ultimate act of evil, stealing Amnon's very life from him.

Perhaps the rowdy atmosphere of this sheep shearing festival is what sparks all these tricky situations. We can see that even what seem to be minor details, can emerge as patterns which tell us to pay close attention to what is coming next.

# FROM THE EDITORS' DESK

## ThanksLiving

This past week, as I was sitting in the MTA *beis medrash*, I overheard a baffling conversation between two *talmidim*. The pair were discussing how their respective families celebrate *Chanukah*, and one was bemoaning the fact that his parents still insisted on buying him presents each year. His friend, of course, expressed sympathy over this drastic plight, and wondered how these parents could be so cruel to their son as to submit him to such an ordeal. He then bragged that his own parents had not bought him presents for *Chanukah* since 5th grade, a fact which his friend met with a jealous groan.

Now, it is not my place to comment on the halachic validity of the practice of giving gifts on *Chanukah*, though I can only assume that the disappointment in this story was not due to potential violations of *chukas akkum*, the prohibition of imitating non-Jewish customs and practices. But still, the conversation bothered me all week: why on earth would it be upsetting to receive presents from one's parents?

After 21 long years of working for Lavan, Yaakov had built up something of a relationship with his uncle, despite the latter's occasional dishonesty and trickery. Yaakov had married two of Lavan's daughters, and he had settled to an extent in Lavan's household. The *pesukim* describe that the motivation for Yaakov's departure was due to a change in attitude from Lavan, as a result of slander of Yaakov from Lavan's sons. The *possuk* (*Bereishis* 31:1) says that Lavan's sons were claiming that all of Yaakov's wealth had been stolen from their father, and that he would only continue to rob and cheat if he remained in Charan. This *lashon hara*, while nasty, is not necessarily unexpected, especially coming from the line of Lavan Ha'Arami. However, a Rashi from earlier in the *parsha* gives a new perspective on this *possuk*, which makes it appear far more puzzling. Earlier (*Bereishis* 30:27), Lavan exclaimed to Yaakov that "*Hashem* has blessed me on your account". Rashi comments that before Yaakov came to Lavan's house, Lavan had not yet had sons, but once Yaakov came, he merited to have sons. In light of this, why would Lavan's sons try to slander Yaakov out of the house; by their father's own admission, their very existence was due to Yaakov's presence! This might be more understandable if Yaakov came to the house while Lavan's sons were already alive, but how could they speak negatively about Yaakov if they never would have been born without him?

Perhaps the answer lies in a famous Chazal at the beginning of *Parshas Shemos*. The *possuk* states that after the death of Yosef's generation, a new king arose "who did not know Yosef". Rashi implicitly addresses the obvious question: how could any king of Mitzrayim not know of Yosef, the man who single-handedly saved Egypt from economic ruin? Rather, Rashi explains, the *possuk* means to say that this new king refused to acknowledge the good which Yosef had done for his nation. Rather than acting with gratitude towards his descendants, this new Pharaoh specifically sought to target the children of the man who saved his country from collapse. This Rashi, however, appears a bit "over the top" - it's one thing to not recognize the good which Yosef did, and another entirely to enslave his progeny!

It would appear that there is a deep psychological point buried within this Rashi, which can help explain our *parsha* as well. As a general rule, people do not want to feel dependent on others. As a result, people often view any expression of gratitude as a sign of weakness; this often results in the beneficiary acting with hostility towards the one who helped them. It was not enough for Pharaoh to simply ignore what Yosef had done for his people; he felt a sense of inadequacy due to his debt to the Jewish people, and as a result, he actively sought to harm them to get over those feelings.

The same was true of Lavan's sons. They could not abide by the fact that they owed their existence to Yaakov, and as a result, they looked to harm him and his livelihood, rather than live indebted. This idea can perhaps explain the conversation which began this article: we are so indisposed to being grateful that we prefer independence and resent kindness.

This instinct is most harmful when transferred to our *avodas Hashem*. By pure logic, it does not make sense for anyone who believes in *Hashem* to sin, purely based on how much He provides to us each day. But, this requires living life with a sense of humility and gratitude for *Hashem* for how much He provides us with. As a result, many people prefer not to consider the good provided to them from above, rather than be forced to

credit another Being for everything they have.

Our job as Jews is to be *Yehudim* - based on the name Yehudah, which Leah gives her son in this week's *parsha* based on the words "*hapa'am odeh es Hashem*" (this time, I will thank *Hashem*). We must overcome our natural inclination to shun gratitude, and instead appreciate the gifts in our lives provided by others and by *Hashem*.

Wishing everyone an amazing *Shabbos*,  
- Shimi Kaufman

### **How Could Yaakov Marry Two Sisters?**

At the beginning of next week's *parsha*, *Parshas Vayishlach*, Yaakov, after leaving Lavan's house, meets his foe, Eisav, his brother. At this meeting, Yaakov makes a seemingly out of place comment, that begs the famous question of Atticus Finch: "Relevancy, Your Honor?" Yaakov makes the offhanded comment through his messengers that "I stayed with Lavan and remained until now" (*Bereishis* 32:5). Rashi gives us two possible explanations for this message to Eisav. The first is that Yaakov was trying to assuage Eisav's anger, by telling him that the *berachos* which he stole did not come true, and he remained in the same economical status as in the past. As a result, Yaakov was arguing, he wouldn't really be worth Eisav's time. Rashi's second explanation is that the message served to tell Eisav that despite the fact that Yaakov put himself and lived in an impure environment, he remained just as observant as he had been when living in his father's house. The issue is, there is a clear *kashya* on this second explanation from this week's *parsha*. How could Yaakov claim that he kept all of the *mitzvos* when there are several examples to the contrary, specifically that he married two sisters, which is an *aveirah* from *Vayikra* 18:18?

The Ramban explains that the *Avos* only kept the 613 *mitzvos* when they were in *Eretz Yisroel*, but now that Yaakov left, he was able to marry two sisters despite it being against the *Torah*. This explanation could not work with Rashi, because he explains that Yaakov kept the 613 *mitzvos* while in Lavan's house, outside of *Eretz Yisroel*. Another view sometimes taken by commentators is that since Rachel and Leah converted, they were considered like newborn babies, and therefore severed the connection to their families and were considered as if they were no longer siblings. This explanation has several issues that would need to be addressed in order for it to remain a viable answer. First, since this is all before the giving of the *Torah* at *Har Sinai*, all anyone was actually obligated in was the seven *mitzvos bnei Noach*. Although the *Avos* were stringent and kept the entire *Torah*, there is no evidence that such a commitment required any official conversion on the part of the *Avos'* spouses. Additionally, the psychological damages of marrying two sisters would appear to be relevant even without the specific *mitzvah* forbidding it. Thus, an additional explanation is required.

Perhaps an explanation could be that despite the fact that the *Avos* wanted to be *machmir* for the entire *Torah*, they could not contradict the *mitzvos* or *chumros* that were already imposed on the entire world in order to fulfill those *mitzvos*. This would be one explanation why Avraham waited until 99 to give himself a *bris*, since he was unable to draw blood from himself, even if it would be for a *mitzvah*; since an *issur* of making a wound applied to everyone, it was *assur* for Avraham to do so until expressly commanded by *Hashem*. This could perhaps also serve as the explanation for why Yaakov married two sisters. Yaakov made a promise to Rachel that he would marry her, so when he was tricked into marrying Leah first, to back out on his commitment would be a violation of breaking one's word, a violation for all people. Thus, Yaakov's requirement to keep his promise trumped his voluntary desire to keep all the *mitzvos*. It is important for us to take note of the care that the *Torah* provides for the feelings of others, that even prior to the Jewish people receiving the *Torah*, there was still a law to ensure that people do not deceive others so that everyone could treat each other with proper respect.

- *Shabbat Shalom*,  
*Yisroel Hochman*

## CHASIDUS ON THE PARSHA

*Yeshurun Sorscher ('21)*

In this week's *parsha*, we see that Yaakov transitions from his fathers house to Charan, where he eventually finds his intended, Rachel. On his way to meet his future wife, Yaakov stops to learn at the *yeshiva* of Shem and Eiver for 14 years. The *Noam Elimelech* writes that this journey can teach us many lessons about *avodas Hashem*. The *Rebbe* says that in life, we are often working on ourselves, and with time we progress from rung to rung on life's ladder. After a victory, the normal response is to feel good about ourselves and our accomplishments; we did the hard work, and we deserve the honor that comes with it! Similarly, Yaakov was going from a place where he was victorious in his efforts - he had just learned in *yeshiva* for 14 years! He was on top of the world in spiritual accomplishments, and he was headed for even more greatness throughout his life. Yet the *Rebbe* beautifully comments that when Yaakov was on his way to the next stage in his life, he stopped and prayed to God. He took a moment to reflect and thank *Hashem* for all the good that he had. He could have thought that it was all his work, and forgotten that God runs the world. Instead, he realized that all that he was able to accomplish was only because *Hashem* helped him out. This is an extremely powerful lesson which can change our entire worldview. When we are faced with a challenge we have an incredible ally, *Hashem*, who wants to help us grow to all that we can be. All we have to do is recognize that our strength comes from him and ask for his assistance. May we all merit to see the hand of *Hashem* in our lives!

## WISDOM FROM THE HAFTORAH

קחו עמכם דברים ושובו אל ה' אמרו אליו כל תשא עון וקה טוב ונשלמה פרים שפתינו.

“Take words with you, and return to Hashem; say to Him, ‘forgive all guilt, and take what is good, and we will pay for the korbanos we owe with our lips.’” (Hoshea 14:2)

What does the *navi* mean when he instructs the Jewish people to “take words” with them in their *teshuvah*?

When Moshe Rabeinu discovered that the Jews in *Mitzrayim* were talking about his killing of the Egyptian (Shemos 2:14), he said, “Now, the matter is known.” The *Chofetz Chaim* explains that every sin creates a corresponding destructive angel that prosecutes against the sinner. However, until a person sins verbally, those angels are not granted mouths of their own. Once a person speaks *lashon hara* or other inappropriate speech, those angels are granted the right to speak in the Heavenly Court. Thus, when the Jews spoke negatively of Moshe, he declared that now, these angels would have the right to prosecute them.

The negative power of harmful speech is directly contrasted with the positive power of holy speech. When Yaakov gives Yosef his inheritance, he includes the extra portion of land which he took from the Emorites “with his sword (חרב) and his bow (קשת)” *Bereishis* 48:22). Onkelos translates the words “sword” and “bow” as meaning “prayer” and “request” respectively. Yaakov conquered the land not through his physical might, but through spiritual means.

HaRav Yaakov Moshe Twerski *shlit”a* suggested that this is the meaning of the *possuk* in our *haftorah* - if we expect our *teshuvah* to be accepted, we must first “take our words” with us, and make sure that we do not create Heavenly prosecutors who will hinder our efforts at repentance. Rav Twerski further suggested that the end of the *possuk*, where we are told to ask *Hashem* to “take good”, is also related to this idea: the word ( “קח” take) is spelled with the *roshei teivos* (first letters) of the words קשת and חרב, Yaakov’s two weapons of prayer. We ask *Hashem* to take into consideration our “קח טוב”, that is, the efforts we make to improve the quality of our speech. Only once we make sure to guard our mouths and use them for holiness can we expect to do proper *teshuvah*.

## GEDOLIM GLIMPSE: THE BOYANER RAV

*Meir Morell ('22)*



Rabbi Yitzchok Friedman, the "*Pachad Yitzchok*" (1850 – 1917), was the eldest son of Rabbi Avrohom Yaakov Friedman, the first Sadigura Rebbe, and his wife Miriam. He was the grandson of Rabbi Yisroel of Ruzhin, founder of the Ruzhiner dynasty. At the age of 15 he married Malka Twersky, daughter of Rabbi Yochanan Twersky, the Rach-mastrivka Rebbe. They had four sons and one daughter.

Upon the death of his father in 1883, Reb Yitzchok and his younger brother, Reb Yisrael, assumed joint leadership of their father's *chassidim*. Although they were content with this arrangement, many of the Sadigura *chassidim* preferred to have one *rebbe*, and in 1887, the brothers agreed to draw lots to determine who would stay in Sadigura and who would move out. The lots fell to Rav Yisrael to remain as the second Sadigerer Rebbe, while Rav Yitzchok moved to the neighboring town of Boiany (Boyan) and established his court there, becoming the first Boyaner Rebbe.

Under the leadership of Rav Yitzchok, Boyaner *chassidim* flourished. The town of Boyan became a Chasidic center. Boyaner communities were established in neighboring towns, and in Yerushalayim, Tiveria, and Tzefas. The Rebbe encouraged one of his wealthy *chassidim*, Dov Ber Horenstein, who was childless, to build houses in Yerushalayim as a memorial for himself; thus, the neighborhood of Batei Horenstein was founded near what is now Geulah.

The Boyaner Rebbe was known for his piety and humility. However, he presented a regal face to the public, and lived in a palatial home. This dichotomy was emblematic of the Ruzhiner tradition founded by his grandfather, Rav Yisroel Ruzhiner. The *Rebbe* was revered by his *chassidim*, and formed close relationships with them. He was also known for his *Torah* knowledge and his love for the Land of Israel. He inherited the title of *nasi* (president) of *Kolel Vohlin* in the Land of Israel from his father, with responsibility for coordinating all funds sent for the welfare of the Orthodox community living there.

At the beginning of World War I, the Russian army occupied Boyan, and the Jewish neighborhood was completely destroyed. The Boyaner Rebbe and his family fled to Vienna. In 1916, the *Rebbe* became deathly ill, but recovered and continued to lead his flock. On March 11th, 1917 (17 Adar 5677), he suddenly took ill again, called for his wife and children to part from each of them individually, and then began singing a *niggun* of *deveikus* (attachment to God). While he was singing, his soul left him. He was buried in the Vienna Jewish cemetery in a special *ohel*.

## PARSHA PUZZLERS

Submit your answers to [shemakoleinu@yuhsb.org](mailto:shemakoleinu@yuhsb.org) along with your name and cell phone number to be entered into a raffle at the end of the sefer! 1 answer = 1 entry!

(Hint: Use the commentaries in the Mekraos Gedolos Chumashim, along with the Toldos Aharon on the side to find relevant Gemaras and Midrashim)

1. What is unique about how this week's *parsha* is written in the *Sefer Torah*? Give two explanations for this discrepancy.
2. Where in this week's *parsha* do we see a source not to make a wedding on *chol hamoed*?
3. Why did Leah and Rachel both want the *dudaim* flowers which Reuven picked? Give three explanations.

## HALACHA HASHAVUAH

Yosef Weiner (23)

At the outset of this week's *parsha*, Yaakov falls asleep and dreams his famous vision of the ladder ascending to *shamayim*. Thus, it is an appropriate time to discuss the recitation of the *shema* and the *berachah* of "*Hamapil*" before going to sleep.

The status of interruptions after the recitation of "*Hampil*" would seem to be predicated upon the *machlokes* regarding how to classify the *berachah* in the first place. The *Chayei Adam* is of the opinion that the *berachah* of *Hamapil* is a *birchas hashevach*, a *berachah* which praises *Hashem* creating the phenomenon of sleep. According to him, interrupting in between reciting *Hamapil* and going to sleep is not problematic, as the *berachah* celebrates sleep in general, and not one's personal sleep (35:4). However, the *Mishnah Berurah* believes that it is a *birchas hanehenin*, a *berachah* regarding the personal benefit of sleep. He bases his opinion on the language of the *berachah*, which is in the first person (*Biyur Halachah* 239 d"h *Samuch Lamitaso*). Thus, the *Mishnah Berurah* writes that even reciting a *shehakol* on a cup of water is forbidden, as it would be an interruption between the *berachah* and one's sleep (239:4). Consequently, it seems that whether it is permitted to interrupt after *Hamapil* depends on this *machlokes*. If it is a *birchas hashevech*, then it is permitted, but if it is a *birchas hanehenin*, then interpretations are forbidden.

However, the *berachah* of *Hampil* is recited in conjunction with the *Shema*. The Rama writes that one should not eat, drink, or speak after reciting the *Shema* that precedes going to bed (239:1). This *halachah* is learned from the line in Tehillim "אמרו בלבבכם על משכבכם ודמו סלה," which the *Gemara* interprets as "אמרו בלבבכם" say the *Shema*, which contains the word "*bilvavchem*" - "על משכבכם" on your beds, as you are going to sleep "ודמו סלה" and remain silent afterwards (*Berachos 4b*). Even those who view *Hamapil* as a *birchas hashevach* agrees that once someone recites the *Shema*, they should not converse before sleep. Therefore, regardless of whether *Hamapil* is a *birchas hashevach* or a *birchas hanehenin*, talking after the recitation of the *Shema* is forbidden.

Nevertheless, the original *machlokes* regarding the nature of the *berachah* of *Hamapil* still affects many scenarios. For example, if someone used the lavatory, the *Chazon Ish*, who is of the opinion that it is a *birchas hanehenin*, writes that one should not recite the *berachah* of *asher yatzar* (*Dinim Vihanagos 8:8*). However, the *Pri Hasadeh* writes that one should recite *asher yatzar* (Vol.1 93). This is also the opinion of the *Hisorirus Teshuva*, but he adds that an individual should repeat the *Shema* and the other assorted prayers for protection afterwards (Vol 1. 128). The *Makor Chaim* writes that if someone forgot to say *maariv*, count the *omer*, or recite *kiddush levanah*, they may do so even after reciting *Hamapil* and *Shema* (239:1). The *Be'er Moshe*, who reasons that *Hamapil* is a *birchas hashevach*, writes that for an important matter, like displaying honor to one's parents, speaking is permitted (1:63). This is also the opinion of Rabbi Yitzchak Yosef (*Yalkut Yosef* Vol. 3 665) . However, as previously noted, the *Mishnah Berurah* holds that one cannot even recite a *berachah* on water after saying *Hamapil* as he is of the opinion that *Hamapil* is a *birchas hanehenin* (M.B. 239:4).

As far as a woman's obligation in the recitation of *Hamapil* and *Shema*, the *Magen Avrohom* writes that in his time, it was not the practice for women to say *Hamapil* and *krias Shema*, as it is a *mitzvas aseh shehazeman grama* (time bound positive *mitzvah*), from which women are exempt (239:2). However, the *Eliya Rabah* writes that women should recite *Hamapil* and *krias Shema* (239:4) as they also need the protection that comes from reciting it. Furthermore, the *Chofetz Chaim* (*Shaar Hatziyun* 239:16) and the *Aruch Hashulchan* (239:6) write that nowadays women have the custom to recite *krias Shema* and *Hamapil*, and the *Aruch Hashulchan* writes that it would seem that they are obligated to do so.

## Parsha Summary

On his way to Be'er Sheva, Yaakov stops for the night at a mountain. On the mountain, he dreams of angels going up and down a ladder, symbolizing the angels coming to protect him in his travels. As he awakens, Yaakov realizes that he is standing in a holy place; indeed, that mountain was **Har Hamori-ah**, the future site of the *Beis Hamikdash*. Yaakov arrives in Charan and encounters a group of shepherds unable to remove a large rock from atop the communal well. Yaakov sees Lavan's daughter, Rachel, and immediately lifts the rock for her. Yaakov agrees to work for Lavan as a shepherd for seven years in exchange for Rachel's hand in marriage. At the end of seven years, however, Lavan swaps Rachel for her older sister, Leah, claiming that the *minhag* of the land was not to allow the younger daughter to marry before the older. Yaakov is forced to work another seven years to marry Rachel. Rachel remains barren and unable to have children, but Yaakov has ten children with Leah and the sisters' two maids, Bilhah and Zilpah. Finally, Rachel has a son, Yosef. Yaakov approaches Lavan, whom he has now worked for for 21 years, and requests a change in the terms of their agreement. Lavan continually tries to swindle Yaakov out of fair pay by reserving only certain obscure types of sheep for him, but *Hashem* causes all sheep born to belong to those categories. Finally, Yaakov decides to flee Lavan's house with his family. Lavan tracks them down, but eventually comes to peace with Yaakov, and the two part ways.

**Rosh Yeshiva:** Rabbi Michael Taubes

**Head of School:** Rabbi Joshua Kahn

**Associate Principal:** Rabbi Shimon Schenker

**Rabbinic Advisor:** Rabbi Baruch Pesach Mendelson

**Editors in Chief:** Yisroel Hochman, Shimi Kaufman

**Head Writer:** Yeshurin Sorscher

**Assistant Head Writer:** Yosef Flamenbaum

**Executive Editors:** Yitzchak Hagler, Meir Morell

**Distribution Manager:** Noam Steinmetz

# !!! שבת שלום !!!

*This Publication contains Torah matters and should be treated accordingly.*

*To receive Shema Koleinu in your community, or to sponsor a week of Shema Koleinu, please email [shemakoleinu@yuhsb.org](mailto:shemakoleinu@yuhsb.org)*