בעזהשי"ת

The Way of Emunah

Collected Thoughts
on the Weekly Parshah

From

Rabbi Meir Isamar Rosenbaum shlita

Vayishlach



The Way of Emunah

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Parshas Vayishlach

It is Permitted to Trouble an Angel to Save a Jew/He Asked For Future Generatons to be Saved Before Praying/Yaakov Avinu's Bitachon/Healed Through the Power of Emunah/Never Despair/Emunah Leads to Regret and Forgiveness/Pained by a Lack of Emunah/This Too Shall Pass/Asking for Goodness for Hashem's Honor/Using Every Moment for Torah Study is a Segulah for Parnassah/A Yoke on His Neck Yet Immersed in Torah/Hashem Doesn't Make a Person Change Locations for Parnassah/ He Did Not Want to Kill Him/He Gave Him the Possessions He Acquired Through Trickery/The Animals Didn't Want to Go to Esav/A Gift for the Master or for Esav

וַיִּשְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב מַלְאָכִים לְפָנָיו אֶל עֵשָׂו אָחִיו וגו' (לב, ד)

And Yaakov sent messengers in front of him to Esav his brother... (32:4)

It is Permitted to Trouble an Angel to Save a Jew:

Rashi said that these messengers were literal *malachim*. The Yid Hakadosh of Peshischa *zy"a* told his followers, "You should not wonder why Yaakov Avinu used actual angels to send a message to Esav, **as in order to save a Jew from Esav's hands, it is even permitted to trouble a *malach* from Shomayim!"**

He Asked For Future Generatons to be Saved Before Praying:

Sefer Ahavas Yisroel explains this *pasuk* by quoting the Bnei Yissochor's words (Kislev, Maamar 2, Ois 29) to explain the difference between "*ezra*" and "*yeshua*". "*Ezra*" refers to when Hashem

sends help to a person even before he prays and asks for it. "*Yeshua*" refers to when Hashem helps a person after he asks for it.

The words "*vayishlach Yaakov malachim"* have the same *gematriah* as the word "*ezras*". This is a hint that Yaakov Avinu looked with *ruach hakodesh* and saw that in future generations, there would be no one who could daven properly and ask for help for Klal Yisroel. **Therefore, he asked Hashem to send them His help even without their davening.**

Yaakov Avinu's Bitachon:

Rav Dovid of Kotzk *zy"a* (the son of the Kotzker Rebbe *zy"a*) notes that the word "*l'fanav*" (in front of him) seems to be unnecessary. He answers that this word actually indicates that Yaakov sent all the *malachim* away from him. He did not want them to accompany him because he trusted fully and solely in Hashem, and knew that He would help him without the need for any angels.

Healed Through the Power of Emunah:

This is based on the fundamental concept that if one believes and trusts in Hashem, then Hashem personally takes care of him. In this vein, the Baal Shem Tov Hakadosh *zy"a* stated that while it is true that Hashem created many medicines that cure various ailments, **if one genuinely trusts in Hashem, all he needs to do is drink a cup of water and make the blessing of Shehakol Nihiyeh B'dvaro, and this can serve as a medicine**

to cure any ailment or sickness.

Never Despair:

On this topic, it is related that a student of the Baal Shem Tov *zy"a* owned a large, expansive grocery store. One day, thieves broke in and stole most of his stock. He took his remaining stock and used it to open a smaller store. A short time later, thieves broke in again and stole most of what remained. Once again, he took whatever was left to open an even smaller store. This time, he also had to sell his wife's jewelry to stay in business. He was now making barely enough money to support his family.

A while later, this store too was robbed. He was now left with nothing.

The man took out a small loan and bought a little bit of merchandise, and he began to work as a poor peddler, traveling from town to town to sell wares or trade them for a chicken or some eggs.

The now poor man was walking with the little bit of merchandise he had when he was accosted by a bandit on a horse who stole everything he had. He was now literally penniless. He started to return home and began to cry. He remembered his former wealth and all the bad things that had happened to him, and he wept over the fact that he couldn't even feed his family.

Suddenly, he heard a loud noise. He looked back and saw that the bandit had fallen off his horse and was unable to get up. The horse then trampled and

killed him. He ran over and opened the thief's bags, and found not only everything he had taken from him that day, but also almost all the merchandise that had been stolen from him in the past. He thus returned home as wealthy as he had previously been.

We learn from this story that one should never despair. This person's mazal seemed to be bad. He was robbed again and again, and left with nothing. Even in such a situation, one should not give up because Hashem can revert matters to their original state in an instant. Therefore, one should continue to daven to Him, no matter how bad things seem, and one should never give up.

Emunah Leads to Regret and Forgiveness:

One who believes and trusts in Hashem and knows that He guides every aspect of the world will recognize that even occurrences that seem bad were orchestrated by Him. Nothing happens on its own. Rather, everything is sent by Hashem for an exact reason. One who knows this fact will accept whatever suffering he endures with love, and will merit having all his sins forgiven.

This concept is seen in the words of the Toldos Yaakov Yosef (Parshas Beshalach). He cites the Gemara (Eruvin 16B) that says: "If one goes four days without any *yissurim* (suffering), he has received his world (to come) in this world. What is the definition of *yissurim*? If one sticks his hand in his pocket to take out three coins and he pulls out

two."

He quotes the Baal Shem Tov Hakadosh *zy"a* as asking that the point of suffering is to atone for one's sins. If so, how could such a small measure of discomfort serve as an atonement?

The Besht answers that if one genuinely believes in Hashem and recognizes that everything that occurs comes from Him, even a small discomfort will be enough for him to realize that the *middas hadin* has been aroused against him. This will lead him to regret his sinful ways and to do *teshuva*. This will be enough to grant him forgiveness.

Sefer Agra D'Pirka (Ois 124) writes: "One shouldn't think that anything is coincidental or caused by any natural reason. Rather, everything is part of Hashem's Divine Providence. Regarding people who think that things that occur are coincidences, the pasuk states (in the *tochacha* in Vayikroh 27:28): 'And if you walk with me with happenstance…'

"**I have a tradition that if someone is enduring any type of pain or suffering, he should think about and say the words of the *pasuk*** (Tehillim 25:18): **'See my affliction and my toil, and forgive all my sins.'** There are numerous sins that even teshuva and Yom Kippur cannot atone for. Therefore, Hashem sends small forms of suffering to atone for these sins. This is as Chazal say that if one pulls out two coins instead of three, it is considered *yissurim*. But it only works if one recognizes that everything that occurs is Hashem's will."

Pained by a Lack of Emunah:

A *chasid* sadly told his Rebbe, the Tzemach Tzedek of Lubavitch *zy"a,* that heretical thoughts sometimes entered his mind. He asked the Rebbe what he should do about it, and the Tzemach Tzedek replied, "Why does this bother you?"

"What do you mean?" the man said. "I'm a Jew!"

The Tzemach Tzedek then said, "Since having these thoughts bothers you so much, it is a clear sign that you really do believe in Hashem."

This Too Shall Pass:

During times of pain and suffering, it is a tremendous encouragement for a person to remind himself that "this too shall pass." One should remember that Hashem changes matters very quickly, and good times are certainly coming.

The Ben Ish Chai (Sefer Od Yosef Chai, Parshas Tzav) relates the story of a king who told a wise man to give him an item as a item that would serve two purposes. He wanted it to make him happy during bad times and to make him sad during happy times.

The wise man made him a ring with three letters on it – "*gimmel, zayin, yud*. This was meant to be an acronym for "*gam zeh ya'avor*", this too shall pass. In a time of sadness, the king could look at it and be reminded that the pain would pass soon, and in a good time, he would remember not to become too haughty because he would know that this too would not last forever.

Asking for Goodness for Hashem's Honor:

While one must accept suffering with love, one may still daven to Hashem and ask Him to remove the problem immediately. Rav Moshe of Savrin *zy"a* (quoted in Sefer Likutei Shoshanim) related that he was present in the home of Rav Boruch of Mezhibuzh *zy"a* when Rav Boruch's young daughter got very ill. Rav Boruch said, "Dovid Hamelech said (Tehillim 86:12): 'I will thank You Hashem, my G-d, with my entire heart, and I will honor Your name forever because Your great kindness is upon me and You saved my soul from the depths."

He then said, "This verse contains both the name of 'Havaya', which symbolizes Divine compassion, and Elokim, which symbolizes His *middah* of strict judgment. Hashem, I also thank You, both in times when You treat me with the *middah* of compassion and when You treat me with the *middah* of judgment. But I also want to show Your glory to everyone, and not everyone will be able to see it while You are treating me with *middas hadin.* Therefore, I ask You to heal my daughter so that everyone will see Your glory and honor You."

He concluded, "Chazal say (Brachos 54A) that one must bless Hashem for the bad just like one blesses Him for the good. However, this only applies in regard to one's personal relationship with Hashem. **One can only prove his greatness to the entire world if His kindness is revealed!"**

Using Every Moment for

Torah Study is a Segulah for Parnassah:

A *chasid* once told the Ostrovtza Rov *zy"a* that he had received a store as an inheritance from his father. When his father was alive, the store had been full of customers at all hours, but now he sits there all day, and no one comes in.

The Rov asked him, "What do you do when you are alone in the store?"

The man answered, "I read a newspaper."

The Rov then told him, "Now I understand. Your father used every free moment to learn Torah. Whenever there were no customers, he would open a Chumash or Mishnayos, or he would say Tehillim. The yeitzer hara didn't like that, so he sent him a lot of customers to disturb his learning. However, the yeitzer hara doesn't mind if you read a newspaper, so it doesn't send you customers."

A Yoke on His Neck Yet Immersed in Torah:

The Kobriner Rebbe once raised his eyes towards Heaven and said, "*Malach, malach*, it doesn't take much strength to be an angel in Heaven. You don't need to eat, drink, raise children, or work for a living. Try coming down to this world, where you have to work, eat, drink, and raise children. Let's see if you remain a malach. If you can do that, then you have something to be proud of."

Hashem Doesn't Make a Person Change Locations

for Parnassah:

The Maharash of Lubavitch *zy"a* had a *chasid* who worked as a silversmith and watchmaker. This *chasid* was from the city of Polatz, but he moved to Vilodmir. When he came to see the Maharash, the Rebbe asked him if he set aside time for Torah study. The chasid answered, "I learn by myself for an hour a day. I also have to spend time preparing for *Kriyas Hatorah* because no one else in town knows how to *lein* besides me. In fact, there are only two other people who know how to get an *Aliyah*, and one of them is the Rov."

He explained that the residents of Vilodmir were simple, unlearned people. Many of them had been Cantonists who had served in the Czar's army for many years and barely knew anything about Yiddishkeit. The majority of them didn't even know how to daven. All they did in shul was answer "Amen" to the chazan.

The Rebbe asked, "Why did you move there? Polatz is a city full of scholars and righteous Jews. Why did you move to a city full of ignorant people?"

The chasid answered, "Of course, it was hard for me to leave a city full of Torah and move to a city that has none. But I needed to move there for *parnassah* reasons, as I have a lot more customers there who want to purchase and repair watches and silver items. Before I moved, I consulted with the Rebbe, and you gave me your blessing that I would succeed there. Boruch Hashem, that blessing has been fulfilled."

The Rebbe said, "You are mistaken. I didn't give you a blessing to have material success in Vilodmir. One who believes in Hashem must know that you should never move from a city full of Torah to one that is empty of Torah for financial reasons. Your mistake was that you thought your job and the source of your livelihood is that you are a silversmith and watchmaker. In reality, a Jew's job is to serve Hashem and learn His Torah. The reason Hashem sent you to Vilodmir was to positively influence the simple, unlearned Jews there and teach them about Yiddishkeit. **This is in accordance with the teaching of the Besht Hakadosh *zy"a* that Hashem would send a Jewish soul to this world for 70 or 80 years simply to help a fellow Jew with his *gashmius*, and all the more so to help someone with his ruchnius.**

"If one moves from one place to another for *parnassah* reasons, he is a person with very little *emunah*. Hashem can provide parnassah anywhere, so why should one move?

"When I gave you my blessing, it was that you should succeed in positively influencing the Jews of Vilodmir. Since you haven't even tried, there's no way that my *bracha* could work."

וַיִּירָא יַעֲקֹב מְאֹד וַיֵּצֶר לוֹ וַיַּחַץ אֶת הָעָם אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ וגו' (לב, ח)

And Yaakov was very scared, and he was distressed; and he divided the people who were with him... (32:8)

He Did Not Want to Kill Him:

Rashi says that he was scared that he might get killed, and he was distressed that he might kill someone else. This leads to the question of why he was distressed that he might kill Esav or one of his men, as the halacha is that if someone is coming to kill you, it is permitted to kill him first.

Sifrei Mussar explain this with a *moshol* of a king who had an advisor who was an expert astrologer. The king loved this man and honored him so much that the other advisors got jealous. They libeled him to the king and claimed that he was a rebel. The king summoned him, but did not inform him why he was being called. When he came, the king said, "Can you look at the stars and tell me when you will die?"

The man realized that the king was angry with him, and it seemed like he wanted to kill him. He pretended to examine the stars, and he then said, "I see that I will die one day before the king dies."

Of course, the king ruled that the advisor should stay alive, and he ordered his guards to protect him and ensure that nothing bad happened to him.

The *nimshol* is that, as the Gemara says (Sotah 13A), Rivkah Imeinu saw with prophecy that Yaakov and Esav would die on the same day. Therefore, Yaakov didn't want to kill Esav, because he knew that would mean that he would die that day as well.

וַיָּלֶן שָׁם בַּלַּיְלָה הַהוּא וַיִּקַּח מִן הַבָּא בְיָדוֹ מִנְחָה לְעֵשָׂו וגו' (לב, יד)

And he slept there on that night, and he took from what came into his hand a present for Esav... (32:14)

He Gave Him the Possessions He Acquired Through Trickery:

The Ramban (Parshas Vayeitzei) writes that the first sheep Yaakov acquired came into his hands through trickery. As is stated in the *pesukim*, when Lavan designated the spotted sheep for him, he showed the pregnant mother sheep a stick with spots on it, etc. Then an angel came to him and said, "Look at all the spotted sheep!" From then on, he didn't need to engage in trickery anymore, as it was orchestrated in Shomayim that he should obtain a lot of sheep.

The Kesav Sofer writes that he sent the sheep he acquired through trickery to Esav as a present. Even though he had not done anything wrong in acquiring them, as is stated (Tehillim 18:27): "With a crooked one, you deal crookedly", still and all, he did not want to derive benefit from them. He sent them all to Esav, and he kept all the ones he got as a result of Hashem's *bracha* for himself.

This is hinted at in the words: "And he took from what came into his hands." This indicates that he gave Esav the animals that he forcibly took.

The Animals Didn't Want to Go to Esav:

The Sifsei Tzadik explains this *pasuk* by citing the Medrash (Bamidbor Rabbah 23:9) that says that

describes what occurred during the debate between Eliyahu Hanavi and the prophets of the *ba'al* on Har Hacarmel. Eliyahu took two cows and said that they each would take one, and whichever one Hashem chose would prove who was correct. He told the prophets of the *ba'al* to choose which cow they wanted. They chose one, but it refused to budge. The many false prophets could not get it to move an inch. The cow then opened its mouth and said, "My friend and I were born from the same mother and grew up together. Why do I have to go to anger my Creator while he gets to be sacrificed for Him?"

Eliyahu Hanavi said, "Just like the name of Hashem will be sanctified through my cow, it will also be sanctified by you."

The cow said, "I won't move until you take me and hand me over to them."

Accordingly, the *pasuk* says that Yaakov gave Esav the animals that came into his hands. These animals had the merit of being part of Yaakov's herd. They didn't want to go to Esav. They would only agree to go if Yaakov literally took them by the hand and handed them over.

וְאָמַרְתָּ לְעַבְדְּךָ לְיַעֲקֹב מִנְחָה הִוא שְׁלוּחָה לַאדֹנִי לְעֵשָׂו וגו' (לב, יט)

You shall say, "To your servant Yaakov, it is a gift sent to my master, to Esav..." (32:19)

A Gift for the Master or for Esav:

It is related that Rav Moshe Midner *zt"l* once sent one of his distinguished relatives to his Rebbe, the Bais Avrohom of Slonim *zy"a*. He paid the man's travel expenses and told him that when he returned, he should tell him a *maamar* that he heard from the Rebbe.

When the man came back, he said that the Rebbe explained this verse as follows:

"It is a gift sent to my master, to Esav." Everything a Jew is a gift. It might be a gift to our Master, or it might be a gift to Esav. If one does the proper things, it is a gift to Hashem. If one does improper things, it is a gift to Esav.

Rav Moshe said, "The Rebbe sent this *maamar* just for me. The *siman* of this is that the first letters of the words '*minchah hu sheluchah'* spell my name 'Moshe.'"



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