

Recognizing the Value of Man and Time

PARASHAT VAYETZE

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The torah tells us “vayeitze yaakov...” Yaakov was leaving be'er sheva and going to charan. So Rashi quotes the question in **Gemara in Chullin** which asks: where was the ladder that Yaakov saw in his dream, where was it located? So we know that Be'er Sheva is in the south, and Jerusalem is in the north. The bottom of the ladder was in Be'er Sheva, the middle was in Jerusalem, and the top part was in Beit El. Yaakov was walking from Beer Sheva and was going to Charan. During his trip he passed Jerusalem. But somehow it didn't register in him, he just passed it. And then, all of a sudden he gets to Charan and it dawned upon him what just happened. He passed Jerusalem and he didn't pray? So he decides he has to go back. So he starts going back and he gets to Beit El and Har Hamoriah came to him miraculously.

The **Ramban** says this is not true. That he went passed Yerushalayim and he didn't take advantage of it, so he had kevizat hederech to get back, he got back quicker than usual. The same thing happened to Eliezer. His journey was shortened, but his destination did not come to him.

The yesod is that a lot of times you are in a makom and there is so much opportunity to take advantage of the place to grow spiritually and the year passes by or you pass by this phase/place and you don't take advantage of it (Yeshiva). Yaakov recognized he missed his chance and got another opportunity. You always have to look at where you are now in my life. What could you take advantage of? You go in the real world, you don't have the chance you did in Yeshiva. Yaakov Avinu is a special case. We have to take advantage of our opportunities.

There is a chazal in **Gemara Chullin** that says that the angels on the ladder would go up the ladder, look at Shamayim, came back down, and wanted to kill Yaakov. Whats pshat? R' Shimon Ashrapola says that the kruvim had 4 faces to each angel (Yechezkel). One was the face of a little child, one of a more mature adult, one was a lion, and one was an eagle. The gemara says that the man was Yaakov. The angels went up to the shamayim and saw the keruvim. Then they came down and looked at Yaakov and they saw he was the same person. Yaakov de'illa and Yaakov de'tata. The angels saw that Yaakov avinu was not living up to what he was supposed to. Yaako avinu says “Achein yesh Hashem bemakom hazeh, ve anochee lo yadatee.” I knew “Achein”- about the aryeh, kruv and nesher.

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But “anochi lo yaadatee” yaakov didn’t know recognize how great he was, that his face was on the kruv.

We have to see how much we are worth. We are all Yaakov avinu. WE have tremendous potential but we sell ourselves short. We know there are those other faces on the kruv, but our face is right there too!

There are two pesukim: “Moshe Moshe” and “Avraham (pause) Avraham”. Why is there a pause by Avraham and not Moshe? Hashem was calling Moshe when Bnei Yisrael was in distress but not Avraham. R’ Chaim Veluzhun says the two Moshes were Moshe in shamayim and the actual Moshe. Moshe reached his potential. But Avraham had not reached it yet. There was a gap between the two Avrahams. Only part of our neshamas come down to this world. The guf is like a shoe, our body is like the shoe that encases the bottom of our neshama. Most of our neshama is in shamayim. A person who is more ruchniyus, doesn’t have much of an encasing over his neshama.

The **Ahavat Shalom** says that’s what the ladder is about, it is like man. A person sometimes doesn’t realize how great he is. Sometimes when a person feels low about himself, he has to realize that “roshe magiya shamayama”. But if a person has gayva, he has to realize that “sulam mutzav artza”.

There is so much people could do in their years in yeshiva. People rush through YU so they could graduate quicker. But then they reach the outside world and they have no more time to learn any more. You cant rush through life. Because once you reach your destination- then what? What are you going to do now. Slow down, take your time, take advantage of all the opportunities you have. Don’t lose your opportunities, they are here. Don’t pass Yerushalayim and then regret and want to go back. Don’t sell yourself short. But on the other hand, don’t be a baal gayva. Remember the ladder.