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COMMUNITY PARASHA SHEET

VAYISHLACH

16th Kislev 5776
Shabbat begins: 15:43
Shabbat ends: 16:50



RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
DIRECTOR, TAL

Where Was Dina?

Yaakov was preparing for his encounter with Esav. He transferred the entire family across the river. Yet the Torah seems to miss out the mention of one person – Dina.

Rashi (32:23) commenting on the transfer, states that Dina was hidden by Yaakov in a box.

Yaakov didn't want Esav to set his eyes on his daughter, he was worried that they might end up together; he therefore hid her so Esav would never see her.

This would seem to be the right thing for Yaakov Hatsadik to have done. Yet our Chachamim fault Yaakov. Rashi mentions - for refusing to allow Dina to marry Esav in a permissible fashion, Dina was eventually taken in a forbidden fashion by Shechem.

We are told that had Yaakov allowed her to marry Esav, then perhaps she would have inspired him or future generations to be close to Hashem.

By not allowing Esav to meet Dina, Yaakov closed the door on his potential return via her influence.

This is an astounding Chazal and has perplexed many commentators.

Even granting the tremendous effect that a righteous wife can have on the most sinful husband, it is difficult to understand the drastic consequences of Yaakov's seemingly innocent act.

Why is it that Yaakov Avinu's actions which seem much warranted, given the situation, are faulted?


Let us first take a look at why specifically Dina could have had the right effect on Esav.

Rav Avraham Yitzchak Barzel, in his *Iyunei Rashi*, sights the Gemara Berachot (60a), which states that Dina was initially conceived as a male foetus.

Leah had prophetically foreseen that there would be 12 sons to Yaakov. She had already given birth to six. Bilha and Zilpa, Yaakov's concubines, already had two sons each, and Rachel only had one. If she were now to have a seventh son, that would mean that Rachel would have less than even the concubines. She therefore prayed to Hashem that He miraculously transform her foetus to a female and she indeed delivered a baby girl instead of another son.

brother was such a Rasha, and how sad it was that he was unable to give his daughter to him, he was happy.

I would like to suggest a further reason to this complex situation.

The night before Yaakov met Esav, he was attacked by Esav's arch angel. There was a wrestle between them the entire night. Esav's angel eventually yielded to Yaakov, and although Yaakov came out with an injury to his thigh (Shelah Hakadosh and Radak both say this was a hint to the fact that Dina would be abused), he was successful in defeat- 



Thus Dina was born through an outright miracle, a Heavenly Intervention. This Rav Barzel suggests, afforded her a degree of spiritual protection upon which Yaakov could have relied in the hope that she could positively influence Esav.

Yet we can still ask, was he really supposed to rely on the fact that maybe Esav would change through marrying his daughter, surely the risk was too high for his daughter. A further answer is given by the Netziv. He offers an interesting insight suggesting that Yaakov's fault was not the fact that he hid her in a box, but rather the *way* in which he hid her in the box.

His fault lay in the way in which he banged in the nails so to speak, with happiness. He was happy not to give his daughter to Esav. Rather than looking at the sad side that his



1. Why does the Torah detail the whole process of how Yaakov dealt with Esav?
2. Once Avraham's name was changed we are no longer allowed to call him by his previous name Avram (unless when learning those pesukim in the Torah) (17:5). Why then do we find that after Yaakov's name was changed to Yisrael (32:29) we can still call him by his previous name of Yaakov?
3. Was the hiding of Dina from Esav a correct thing to do?
4. Why did Rachel die and was buried on the way, not meriting to be buried in Ma'arat Hamachpela?
5. How many great people died in Parashat Vayishlach?

Answers On Page 3

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ing the angel and even receiving a blessing. Why is it that Esav's angel came to attack Yaakov now? Surely he had other previous times in Yaakov's life in which he could have attacked.

Our sages explain that this fight was a spiritual fight representing the war in the upper worlds. Nothing occurs in this world, unless it is first determined above.

Esav was about to meet Yaakov the next day, and the outcome was being determined in heaven. That outcome would depend on this fight. Yaakov won and hence the next day we find that Esav did not try to attack.

In fact when Esav finally meets Yaakov we are told, (33:4)"And Esav ran towards him (Yaakov) and he embraced him and fell upon his neck and he kissed him and they cried." Why did Esav kiss him, why did they weep? Is that what we were all expecting of a seemingly war monger intent on destroying his enemy?



RABBI YARON JACOBS

All In The Details

In the entire book of *Bereishis* – the longest of the five books of the *Torah* – there are a grand Total of three *Mitzvos!* The first is key to the continuing existence of the Human race – the positive commandment of *P'ru UR'vu*-to procreate, found in *Parshas Bereishis*. The second is key to the continuing existence of the Jewish People – the positive commandment of *Bris Milah*-to circumcise all males on the eighth day from their birth, found in *Parshas Lech Lecha*. The third *Mitzvah*, found in this week's Parsha, *Vayishlach*, is the negative commandment forbidding the consumption of *Gid Hanashe* – the Sciatic nerve in all kosher wild and domesticated animals. The Torah Tells us that Yaakov, after coming face-to-face and wrestling with an angel, is left limping on his thigh, and as the Torah itself puts it (*Bereishis* 32:33) "Consequently, to this day, the children of Israel may not eat the sciatic nerve (of an animal)... because (the angel) touched the joint of Yaakov's hip at the sciatic nerve".

Rashi, noting that above the words (written in our Sefer Torah) "and he kissed him" are dots, gives two differing explanations. The first is to show that Esav didn't kiss him with his whole heart. It was a kiss, but his heart was not fully pro this action.

Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, however explains it otherwise. He states that "it is a given law that Esav hates Yaakov. But at this time his mercy was aroused and he kissed him with all his whole heart". According to Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, it is known that Esav hates Yaakov, but there are times including this one, where his love and affection are aroused.

Furthermore our Sages ask why was Esav crying?

The Chatam Sofer notes that when Esav saw the righteous Yaakov, his entire family and the wealth he amassed he came to a realisation that perhaps his ways were wrong. After all a man can be righteous, fulfil Hashem's will and live a good life. He wondered if all the years that had passed

had been to waste - it is for this reason that he cried?

Perhaps our sages fault Yaakov for not allowing Esav to see Dina, for the setting was ripe. Esav's emotions were moved, he was crying at the lack of fulfilling his potential. He kissed his brother, (according to Rashbi) full heartedly. This was the time to act. Had he have seen Dina and wanted to marry her, then she would have had the perfect stand to build on, she could have built on these emotions and taken off from there.

Life is full of trials and tribulations, yet we are all blessed at some time in our history in this world to see the spark of Hashem. The question is do we initiate and eternalise that spark, do we work from there, or do we let it float by us and continue our lives as if nothing happened.

Let us work to build on the positive energies we receive, on the good times, on the times we clearly see Hashem in our lives and build a strong foundation and future Amen.

Rashbam, amongst other commentators, stresses that this *Mitzvah* is more than just a reminder that Yaakov's sciatic nerve was injured. It is "as a reminder of the Strength of Yaakov, and the miracle that the Holy One, Blessed be He did for him that he did not die (at the angel's hand)". Now, there are many miracles that G-d performed for our forefathers, and they faced many instances of adversity, so why is it that this specific case is marked with a

must trust in G-d that we will never be destroyed. He watches over us and He will send us our salvation. The hint to this, says the *Sefer Hachinuch*, is from the fact that the angel with whom Yaakov fought was the guardian angel of *Eisav* (Midrash). This angel wanted to uproot Yaakov and his offspring from the world, yet all he was able to do was dislocate his leg. So too the offspring of *Eisav* (and the other nations) will try to destroy us, and cause us pain on the way, but G-d will save us.

The question that we are left with, however, is even if it was important to mark this specific occurrence with a *mitzvah*, why mark it with a *mitzvah* that is so specific and narrow? Most *mitzvos* that remind us of something are broad and all-encompassing. For example the *mitzvos* of the Seder night all promote feelings of freedom. The laws of Shabbos promote a rest from the mundane. The scope of the *mitzvah* of *Gid Hanashe* however is so small. A specific part of a small sinew that is only forbidden in animals (as opposed to birds). Why?

One of the most fundamental teachings of the *Baal Shem Tov* (*BESHT*) was his understanding of *Hashgocho Protis* – Divine Providence, the principal that G-d is constantly interacting with the world and influencing what happens here on Earth. The *BESHT* taught that the degree of G-d's interaction with the world was not at all superficial. G-d's involves himself to such a degree that He influences even the smallest of things – even a blade of grass, or a leaf falling from a tree,

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commandment? After all, the incident doesn't seem to be one of the most dangerous situations recorded in the Torah. The *Sefer Hachinuch* provides an answer. He says that the underlying reason for this *mitzvah* is that it should be a comfort to the Jewish People. Even though we suffer terrible troubles from the nations amongst whom we are exiled, and chiefly from the descendants of *Eisav*, nevertheless we

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because everything in creation is an essential part of fulfilling G-d's ultimate goal. There are differences in G-d's influence over various levels of creation, and it should come as no surprise that His interaction with

the Jewish People is the most intense. After all, it is through the Jewish People's keeping of the *Torah* and it's *Mitzvos* that does the most to achieve the fulfillment of G-d's plans for the Universe. That's what it means to be His chosen people.

We could infer that it is for this that this reason that G-d decided to express his providence over the Jewish People with such a technical, specific mitzvah. Since the *mitzvah* is supposed to remind us that He is constantly watching and guiding us, down to the smallest detail, it is only befitting that the *mitzvah* itself is a very specific and detailed one.



HALACHA
RABBI DOV LEVY
KOLLEL NETZACH YISRAEL

Tevilat Keillim

Tevilat Kelim/Immersing New Vessels

Vessels and utensils used for food purchased from a Non-Jew must be immersed in a Mikveh before use. This is a Biblical commandment in many cases and Rabbinical in others, and therefore one makes a Beracha before fulfilling this Mitzvah.

Which vessels does it apply

to?

Biblically one is commanded to immerse metal vessels. Rabbinically vessels made of materials which can be melted and remoulded must also be immersed. The prime example of this is glass. This does not apply to materials which do not fit into these two categories.

What if the Non-Jew never used the vessel?

The purpose of the immersion is to ready the vessel for use under Jewish ownership. The new status of the vessel requires a higher level of sanctity, attained by tevilla. This applies even if the vessel is brand new and completely unused, as long as it was owned at some stage by a Non-Jew.



STORIES OF OUR
CHACHAMIM

Rav Mordechai
Eliyahu zt'l

The wife of Rav Yitzchak Kaduri (the late chief sefardi kabalist) told over that one time she arrived at the home of Rav Mordechai Eliyahu, and saw him learning with a man dressed in white who had an extremely impressive appearance. Since she did not want to disturb their learning, she decided to return the next day. When she returned the next day, she told the rav that she came the day before but didn't want to disturb his learning with the man in his room. The rav asked surprisedly, "you saw him?" she answered "yes, why is the rav surprised?", "if so", he answered "you merited to see Beniyahu ben Yehoyada!"

So should I immerse my new bike before use?

No, this obligation only applies to vessels used for food. The exact criteria will be discussed further.

Is it good enough to wash it thoroughly in the sink before use?

No, one must immerse it in a Mikveh or fresh spring which is halachically suitable for human tevillah.

Esav says he has a lot (33:9) while Yaakov says he has everything (33:11). In life we can have the view that we deserving nothing and then we will be grateful for everything that we have or we can expect things coming to us and therefore are happy with a lot but want more.



1. The Ramban (introduction to Parashat Vayishlach and 33:15) explains that it is to teach us in exile how to deal with the goyim as seen in how Yaakov dealt with Esav. Great Jewish representatives would specially learn this parasha before travelling to Rome on behalf of the Jews.

2. Really we should only call him Yisrael. However, since the pesukim themselves afterwards still call him Yaakov we therefore see that this is permitted. This is not the case with Avraham and therefore Avram is no longer his permitted name.

3. Rashi (32:23) seems to say it was incorrect as Dina could have potentially influenced Esav to be good. Others say that of course she should have been hidden from this rasha. However, the wrongdoing was in the way he went about it being overzealous to hide her.

4. Rashi (31:32) brings that since Yaakov cursed anyone who had stolen the terafim from Lavan, and it had been Rachel, she therefore died on the journey. Rashi (30:15) brings another reason. When Rachel gave up her night with Yaakov in exchange for the Dudoim, since she put down the importance of being with Yaakov she did not merit to be buried next to him.

5. Devora, Rivka's nurse (35:8) and hidden here is also Rivka's death (Rashi). Rachel (35:19) and Yitzchak's death (35:29).

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Mazal Tov!

- Yoni & Aurelie Conway on the brit on their son David Yosef.
- Eddie Kashi & Amy Menashe on their forthcoming wedding this weekend

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The TAL Team together with the entire community wish Rabbi Tawil and his family Mazal Tov on the birth of a new baby boy.

May they merit to bring him up in health success and happiness.

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Tovim – Amen



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