

Pardes Yehuda

פרשת וישלח
תשע"ז
Parshas
Vayishlach 5777

Year 6 • #285

Weekly Torah insights translated and revised by Dovid Pinchas Rose, based on the Yiddish יהודה פארדס by Yehuda Zvulun Klitnick

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Yaakov was "heimish" with all kinds of angels

(לב ד) וַיִּשְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב מַלְאָכִים לְפָנָיו אֶל עֶשָׂו אַחִיו אֲרֻצָּה שְׂעִיר שָׂדֵה אֲדוֹם:
Yaakov sent angels ahead of him to his brother Esau, to the land of Seir, the field
of Edom. (32:4)

Our parshah opens the door to learning about the nature of malachim and their behaviour. מַלְאָכִים can mean "emissaries" or it can mean "heavenly angels". Rashi famously informs us that these were actually bona fide angels. מַלְאָכִים מְקֻשָׁים This seminal comment -- hinging on the unusual word "actually", "mamash" -- yields fascinating lessons. Let us see. At the end of the preceding Parsha Vayeitzei, we find וַיִּצְא וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא וַיִּצְא בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא (לב ב) וַיִּצְא וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא (לב ב) *Yaakov said when he saw them, "This is the camp of God," and he named the place Mahanaim.* (lit. 'two camps'). Rashi: One camp was comprised of malachim from outside Eretz Yisrael (chutz la'aretz) which accompanied Yaakov to that point [on the border]; the other camp arrived from Eretz Yisroel to escort him further on his way. Why two? Because malachim from inside and outside Eretz Yisroel may not cross into the other domain. Proof of this is the apparition known popularly as "Jacob's ladder" וַיִּצְא וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא וַיִּצְא בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא (לב ב) *a ladder set up on the ground and its top reached to heaven; and behold, angels of G-d were ascending and descending upon it.* (28:12) Again Rashi, extending the previous point: The angels who escorted him in the [Holy] Land do not go outside the Land, and they ascended to heaven, and the angels from outside the Holy Land descended to escort him. Yet our opening posuk does imply that he sent malachim from Eretz Yisroel to Chutz laAretz, (to Eisav) and we have said that they may not cross the border. --?-- In response, we learn that there are two categories of malachim -- one which are spawned from the mitzvot and *ma'asim tovim*/good deeds which a person performs, and which can escort him -- but only throughout the domain where the good deeds were performed. The other category are the constant, eternally-existing, [high-ranking, named (DPR)] malachim, such as Michael and Gavriel, who are authorized to travel anywhere they may be needed. They are not spawned from mitzvot and are termed *malachim mamash* -- the REAL angels, as it were. [With poetic license, we may term them "super-angels". (DPR)] Now Rashi's employing the term MAMASH is well understood, for the malachim he was referring to had no restrictions on their freedom of movement, or zone of operation, and thus Yaakov had leave to dispatch them to Chutz LaAretz, to Edom.

(לב ב) וַיִּצְא וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא וַיִּצְא בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא

Building on our new understanding: Consider this posuk:

וַיִּעֲקֹב הַלֵּךְ לְדָרְכוֹ וַיִּפְגְּעוּ בוּ מַלְאָכִי אֱלֹקִים: וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב כְּאֲשֶׁר רָאָם מִחֲנֵה אֱלֹקִים זֶה וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא מְהַנַּיִם: (לב ב-ג)

And Yaakov went on his way, and angels of Elokim met him. And Yaakov said when he saw them, "This is the camp of Elokim," and he named the place Mahanaim. Why specifically angels of Elokim, and not "regular" malachim? And again, what is the teaching of "two camps"? Based on our previous insight, the malachei Elokim were those "super-angels" who could transcend all geographical boundaries. And they were forged directly by Elokim, and did not stem from human mitzvot. So Yaakov's angels at this episode were truly of two camps: the "super-angels" and their mitzvah-spawned counterparts

(שמח זבולון תשע"ז)

Good is as good thinks and believes

וַיִּשְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב מַלְאָכִים לְפָנָיו אֶל עֶשָׂו אַחִיו אֲרֻצָּה שְׂעִיר שָׂדֵה אֲדוֹם:
And You said, 'I will surely do good with you' (32:13)

Lashon HaKodesh sometimes doubles a verb for emphasis or to add a shade of meaning, calling for explication. To explain the doubled, intensive expression "good, I will do good", we recall the dictum **WHATEVER HASHEM DOES IS ONLY FOR A PERSON'S BENEFIT** (Brochos 60b), which underlies much of our sifrei mussar. If a Yid truly believes with every fibre of his being that whatever the Oibershter does for him is for his ultimate good, even though he may fail to perceive it at the moment, then ipso facto things WILL go well for him. Parsing our posuk: וַיִּשְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב מַלְאָכִים לְפָנָיו אֶל עֶשָׂו אַחִיו אֲרֻצָּה שְׂעִיר שָׂדֵה אֲדוֹם: וַיִּשְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב מַלְאָכִים לְפָנָיו אֶל עֶשָׂו אַחִיו אֲרֻצָּה שְׂעִיר שָׂדֵה אֲדוֹם: וַיִּשְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב מַלְאָכִים לְפָנָיו אֶל עֶשָׂו אַחִיו אֲרֻצָּה שְׂעִיר שָׂדֵה אֲדוֹם: "If you say -- and mean it -- and confirm the truth of, the הטוב, -- then I will guarantee that things will go really well for you, in the merit of your unshakeable trust, אֶיִסְיֵיב עִמָּךְ. [A similar thought has been ascribed to the Tzemach Tzedek of Lubavitch, and has become a constant theme among Chabad chassidim: טראכט גוט, ס'וועט זיין גוט: "Think good things, and things will be good" (DPR)] (דברי ישראל מאדוויץ)

Tefillin at night? Only for Yaakov Avinu!

וַיִּשְׁלַח יַעֲקֹב מַלְאָכִים לְפָנָיו אֶל עֶשָׂו אַחִיו אֲרֻצָּה שְׂעִיר שָׂדֵה אֲדוֹם:
Yaakov was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until the break of dawn. (32:25)

The Reishis Chachma (שער הקדושה פרק ו) teaches, somewhat unexpectedly: "The man sought to kill Yaakov, but had not the power to do so because Yaakov Avinu was wearing tefillin on his head and arm and tzitzis on his garment, since he saw that he could not prevail against him לו לא יכל לו. We know that the Patriarchs observed all of the mitzvot, in all of their halachic details. So it is hard to reconcile Yaakov's wearing tefillin during the nocturnal wrestling match, with an explicit injunction in Shulchan Aruch: - אסור להניח: "It is forbidden to wear tefillin at night lest one forget and fall asleep in them." The fear is that a sleeper will perforce lose awareness of the holy tefillin, and may come to harm. True, if one were wearing tefillin when night fell, he may continue doing so (שם) but he may not don them at night. (This applies to an ordinary person, again lest he actually fall asleep.) But there are two reasons why this rule did not apply to Yaakov:

1. *he lay down in that place* (בראשית כח יא)

Rashi explains: the word *הוא* is a restrictive expression, meaning that *only* in that place did he lie down, but during the fourteen years that he spent in the house of Eber, he did not lie down at night, because he was engaged in Torah study.

2. The Medrash teaches in a similar vein:

כאן שכב אבל כל עשרים שנה שעמד בביתו של לָבָן לא שכב (בראשית רבה סח יא) *Here he lay down, but for the entire twenty years he spent in Lavan's house, he never did so.* We see that for extended periods, Yaakov Avinu was able to suppress the urge for sleep. Hence, he was permitted to don and wear tefillin at night, since there was no danger of his falling asleep in them. So when he encountered the angel in wrestling, the tefillin served to protect him and save his life.

(בית ישראל השלם למוח"ז האדמו"ר ממאטטערסדארף זצוק"ל)

Achosid once heard from his Holy Rebbe, the Saba Kadisha, Avrohom Yaakov of Sadigura, son of the Heliger Rishiner Rebbe זצ"ל that "A person should not exploit the merits of his distinguished lineage ("zechus avos"), but rather reap the benefits of his own personal attainments." The Rebbe continued with a story about not relying on one's merits for his livelihood:

AYid from Eretz Yisroel, known for his Torah learning and Yiras Shomayim, had three daughters to marry off. In those days, being from Eretz Yisroel carried much prestige, but this gentleman resolved not to promote his cause on that basis. As he left home to raise wedding funds, he kissed the mezuzah and swore that he would not reveal his distinguished origin to anyone other than a tzaddik. When he arrived in Sadigura to make his appeals for funds, the Heiliger Rishiner Rebbe himself donated six valuable coins and referred him to his mechtutan, Rav Dovid of Zablitov, who also contributed six coins and referred him in turn to Rav Meir miPremishlan. Arriving in Premishlan on a Tuesday, he encountered an obstacle: the gabbai refused to admit him to Rav Meir's chamber, because he had no money to give to the tzaddik as the customary *pidyon nefesh*. He tried again to gain admittance on Wednesday and Thursday, but was rebuffed, and took to sitting in wait the entire day in the shul.

A man in Beis Medrash, a tailor by trade, noticed something out of the ordinary about the transient and started asking questions about whence he came [the customary topic of discussion with a newcomer], but he deflected the questioning. The tailor invited him to stay with him as a guest and the man readily agreed. The household members also readily noticed the man's refinement and gentility, and felt privileged to have a guest like that. They treated him to their best hospitality, in all respects. The *seudas shabbos kodesh balaila* was graced by the visitor's lilting *zemiros* and exalted *divrei torah*. The host sent word to his friends that they should join him to get a rare glimpse of an uplifting *shabbos tisch*. Many came, and the scene was repeated during the afternoon *seudah*. Later during that *Shabbos*, something remarkable occurred. Rav Meir'l announced that he perceived the holy air of Eretz Yisroel in the vicinity and dispatched his gabbai to locate an Eretz-Yisroel'dike Yid, who was surely nearby. He returned with no results. Sunday morning, Rav Meir'l raised the stakes: "Go find the man from Eretz Yisroel, or else I will punish you severely!" The hapless gabbai shook from fright and ran off to the marketplace where the wagon drivers congregated. His presence caused a bit of a stir. He told the drivers, who knew everyone's comings and goings, that he feared the Rebbe's wrath should he fail to locate an Eretz Yisroel'dike Yid who was surely in town. A chasid overheard the exchange and chimed in, "Haven't you heard about last *Shabbos* in the tailor's house? There was a distinguished guest there who

conducted two exalted *seudos*, with many in attendance. He stubbornly hid his identity, but I'll wager he is the one you are seeking." The gabbai, by now desperate to find his man, set off for the tailor's house and asked if the guest were still there. A mere glimpse of the guest sitting at the table was enough to send the gabbai into a fainting swoon. When he was revived, he fell at the man's feet and begged forgiveness for having tormented him the previous week in the Rebbe's reception room. He extended a few valuable coins to mend any bad feelings, and the visitor forgave him on the spot -- and admitted that he hailed from Eretz Yisroel. When things calmed down, the gabbai informed the Yid that Rav Meir'l was summoning him to come forthwith. Rav Meir greeted him with a warm "Sholom aleichem" and embrace. "*Boruch Hashem we have met with each other. I have actually been waiting for you a long time. Your standing in shomayim is very high because you have foresworn taking advantage of your Yerushalmi heritage. I was made an agent for you and when your girls were born, I began amassing funds sufficient to cover all of their wedding expenses. The money is here in this box, and I wish you Mazal Tov -- in advance of all three shidduchim!*"

The Sadigurer Rebbe concluded by stressing that because the Yid refused to take advantage of any special merits, he was helped directly by Shomayim.

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כ"א כסלו תשט"ז
saw the passing of Admor Rav Yochanon Perlow זצ"ל, the youngest son of the Ohr Yisroel of Stolin. In commemoration of the *yahrtzeit*, we offer a story of Gilui Eliyahu.

Before the War, the Rebbe was once traveling by train from Dubnow to Loitzk with his devoted gabbai Reb Lipa Margolios, when he complained of illness. Lipa was desperate to obtain medical attention for the Rebbe, but they were, after all, on a train. At the next station, on steps an army officer carrying a black bag, who noticed Lipa's agitation, and asked him what was bothering him. "My Rebbe is feeling ill and there is no doctor around!" "Not to worry, my friend; in the army, I have learned how to treat and heal people." He went over the Rebbe, examined him, and in a short while the Rebbe reported feeling fine. The Rebbe asked Lipa if he had thanked the "doctor" for his services, but he had not, and started searching high and low for the gentleman. He was nowhere to be found. Years later, at a *Melava Malka*, after singing the *Eliahu HaNavi* verses, the Rebbe told the *kehilla* to wash, while he went outside with Lipa for a stroll. They encountered an elderly Jew, wearing a gartel, who wished them "A gute voch, my children," to which the Rebbe reciprocated. The Yid vanished as quickly as he had appeared. To Lipa's innocent query, the Rebbe responded: "That was the same army officer who brought me back to health on the train that day." Lipa realized that he had personally merited to see *Eliyahu HaNavi*.

STORY OF THE WEEK:
Rav Meir'l Premishlaner's hachnosas kallah for three sisters starts when they are born

Parshas Vayishlach 5777, #285

Our editor, Mr. Rose לן חן ז"ל is reachable at davidrose10@gmail.com, and is available for Anglo-Judaica editorial assignments. A publication of *Seforim World*. 1000's of *seforim*: new and old; 4403 16 Ave. Brooklyn N.Y. 11204 U.S.A. 718 438 8414 718 633 5500 -www.seforimworld.com or seforim@gmail.com - hours 11-7:30 Subscriptions: pardesyehuda1@gmail.com - hours 11-7:30. Gilyon is available by email or on Ladaat, or www.parshasheets.com or www.seforimworld.com. For sale rare *sefer Hespel* on Chafetz Chaim in Hungary \$500. Handwritten *Tzedaka* ledger of Rav Henkin 1924, all *rabbanim* worldwide, \$7000. 2 *Kesuvos* filled in by Reb Moshe Feinstein זי"ל \$500 Letter from Reb Yaakov Emdin to Reb Moshe Chagiz \$85000. 57 page manuscript from Reb Mendel Meshklav Talmid of Vilna Gaon \$100,000. Collection of *Chidushei Torah* 7 letters *Chazon Ish*, 2 Reb Mayer Simcha, Rogotchof, Brisk, Reb Elchanan, Reb Baruch Ber total of 42 letters \$125,000. Many more for sale.