



OD YOSEF HAI NEWSLETTER

ROSH YESHIVAH AND COMMUNITY RABBI
DAYAN ABRAHAM DAVID SHLI"TA

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Thoughts on VAYISHLACH Year 24

by Dayan Abraham David

Yaacov sends messages to Esav to let him know of his return home. But he seems to give an explanation of his history, '*Ko tomorrow leAdone, leEsav ko amor avdecha Yaacov im lavan garti veachar ad ata*', thus shall you say to my lord, to Esav, so said your servant Jacob: I have sojourned with Lavan and have lingered until now. He reaches out to Esav with great *kavod* and calls himself Esav's servant. He describes his possessions, '*Vayhe li shor vaChamor etc*'. Rashi explains that he was trying to convince Esav not to hate him for taking the berachot from his father Yitzhak, since none of the berachot were fulfilled. '*Im Lavan garti*', I have only been a sojourner with Lavan and have not become a prince there or owned property and land. And although my father blessed me to be a leader and to benefit from the fat of the land, '*Mital hashamayim uMishmane ha'aretz*', from the dew of the heavens and from the fatness of the land, I only own herds, flock and servants which is

not part of his blessings. He even stresses the fact that he is under Esav, '*Avdecha Yaacov*', and not over him. Even though we do understand Yaacov's fear and his reaching out to make peace with Esav, it would seem that it was at the expense of belittling the berachot of Yitzhak as not being effective. We could answer that if we look back at the berachot of Yitzhak we find that after he had blessed Yaacov, when Esav cried before him, he added that even though he had made Yaacov a prince over Esav, but when Yaacov would go down spiritually then Esav would be on top. '*Kasher tarid vufarakta ulo me-al tzavarecha*', that when he will go down (spiritually) you will remove his yoke from upon your neck and be above him. Yaacov was now telling Esav that since he had been with Lavan for so long he had been influenced by him and he was spiritually affected by Lavan's deviousness and that is why he had not benefited by the beracha of Yitzhak and he was '*tarid*', he had gone down. Esav was now master and *Yaakov avdecha*, nothing was taken away from him, so there was no reason to hate him. He was in no way belittling his father's beracha. This would not fit

in with the second Midrash Rashi brings '*Taryag mitzvot shamarti*'. Even though I have lived with Lavan I have kept the mitzvot, '*garti*', which has the same numerical value as 613 seems to depict Yaacov as boasting to Esav about his having kept mitzvot.

From the pasuk, '*Raeti panecha kirot pene Elokim*', the Talmud in Sota deduces that one is allowed to flatter a rasha as Yaacov did to Esav telling him: seeing you is like seeing the face of a '*malach*', if it is to save himself otherwise one is not allowed to flatter a wicked person. Rav Levi argues that Yaacov was not really flattering Esav his praise was a warning to Esav. He gives an analogy to a person who finds himself in the house of someone who intends to kill him. He is given his last meal. He compliments his potential killer for the tasty dish saying it reminds him of the food he was used to eating at the king's table. The killer becomes alarmed at his connection with the king and does not dare kill him. This is what Yaacov had indicated to Esav that he was familiar with angels '*melachim*' to warn off Esav and to impress upon Esav his special relationship with G-d and this would fit in with the Midrash of '*taryag mitzvot shamarti*', his special relationship because of the mitzvot he kept. Our Rabbis teach us that in our dealings with the world of Esav we should make them mindful of our special relationship with G-d through Torah and mitzvot.

We could explain the two explanations in Rashi of '*garti*' and

'*Taryag mitzvot shamarti*' are really the '*macloket*' in the Talmud between the Chachamim and Rav Levi we have mentioned.

TORAH GEMS

This Parasha explains in great detail Ya'akov Avinu's encounter with Esav his brother after 20 years. The fear he had of Esav's hatred for him and how he tried to save himself and his family. But our Rabbis in the Midrash throw a deeper insight into this. As the Ramban explains: Ya'akov had prepared a way forward for the encounters of his descendants with those of Esav and an indication to the future of our people among the nations of Esav. Ya'akov, even though he had been promised by G-d that he would be cared for and protected, did not rely on his righteousness but feared that he might have sinned or been influenced by Lavan's wickedness and was no longer worthy. As the pasuk says: '*Katonti Mikoi Hachasadim*', I am not worthy of all the kindnesses. He therefore prepared himself in three ways. '*Doron*' – gifts, '*Tefillah*' – prayers and '*Milchamah*' – war. Our Rabbis led our people in this way throughout the exile. Bribing their way with presents and gifts and of course with fasting and prayer and, as a last resort, preparing for war and

escape; *'Vehaya Hamachne Hanishar Lefletah'*, and while one camp made war, the other could escape. Ya'akov Avinu, through his prayers and preparations, had set the way for the future; that when one nation would oppress us or attempt to destroy us others would open their doors and give us refuge. And sometimes even those nations who have hated us would have a change of heart at the last moment as Esav did with Ya'akov when G-d stirred mercy in his heart and he hugged and kissed Ya'akov and cried. As the pasuk says, *'Vayechabkehu Vayishakehu Vayibchu'*, and he hugged him, and he kissed him and they cried. Even though it is accepted that *'Esav Soneh et Ya'akov'*, and Esav hates Ya'akov, yet at times he is stirred temporarily by mercy. But then we need the other prayer of Ya'akov *'Hezeleni Na Miyad Achi Miyad Esav'*, save me from Esav, when he comes even as a brother and tries to draw me to his ways and embraces me with assimilation. When Esav offers to accompany Yaacov on the way, Yaacov politely refuses with the excuse that he does not want to delay Esav since he cannot keep up with his pace but in fact it was because he feared Esav's influence on his children. When Ya'akov

struggled with the Malach, the spiritual representative of Esav, it says *'Vaye'aveck Ish Imo'*, the Ramban explains it as, dust arose up in their struggle to signify that in the battle with Esav and his descendants, the battle lines can become blurred as Esav throws up dust to confuse us and tries to hurt *'yerech'* Ya'akov, the supporters of Torah. But Ya'akov holds out and overcomes him – the Emet of Ya'akov, the Torah, will shine through the dust and the warmth of its light will bring a cure. For this is the only way forward in our struggle with Esav.

STORIES OF TZADDIKIM

Rabbi Shimon Shkop a renowned Rosh Yeshiva before the 2nd World War was in London and went to comfort a mourner. While he was in the Shiva someone borrowed a pen from him. At that time a fountain pen was a very expensive item. The person who borrowed forgot to give it back to him. He could have asked for it back but he felt that it would be an offence to the mourners that somebody was sitting there and thinking about his pen while their minds were busy with their tragedy. So he didn't ask for it back.

Shabbat Shalom

HALACHOT - Tzedaka

1. It is a positive commandment of the Torah to give 'zedaka', charity, to the poor. A person who sees a poor and needy person and turns away from him and does not give him charity transgresses a negative command. A person does not lose from giving 'zedaka' but gains protection and blessings 'zedaka tatsil mimavef'.

2. Every person is obliged to give charity according to his means even a poor person who is allowed to accept zedaka and has a little of his own should give zedaka.

3. We are obliged to give a poor person all his needs, that is, if he is a person who is ashamed and does not go around collecting from door to door. But a normal 'Ani' who goes around we are only obliged to give a small amount. But we must make sure he has accommodation and enough for two meals. There should be in every town or community appointed people who take care of this.

**We have a regular Youth
Minyan organised by
Jason Ibrahim and David Douer
followed by a kiddush**

***Mazal tov to
Nissim and Joanna Nissim
on the birth of their son.
Mazal tov to all the family.***

***This Parasha Sheet is
Dedicated to the Beloved
Memory of
Eliyahu Meir
Ben Yaacov Hai David ה"ר
By his children and Family
His Yarseit this year falls on
Shabat***

***Avot vu banim is one and a half
hours after Shabbat
Please try to attend***

***If you wish to sponsor a
Kiddush
Please contact
Nathaniel Bendayan 07825
871749
For Seuda Shlishit
or to rent the
Nancy Reuben Hall
for a Simcha
Please contact
Yanki David 07725 408724***

SHABBAT TIMES

Shabbat commences	3:46 pm
Shabbat terminates	4:57 pm
Mincha Erev Shabbat	3:30 pm
Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat	
Shacharit	8:30 am
Mincha on Shabbat followed by Seuda Shlishit & Arbit	3:25 pm
Shacharit Weekdays	6:50 am
Shacharit Sundays	7:00 am
Mincha	1:30 pm
Arbit	7:30 pm

