

Shabbat Spice

PARSHAT VAYETZEI



From Where Does My Help Come?

By Romina Hematian

In this week's Parsha, Vayetzei, it talks about how Yakov Avinu was on his way to Charan to find a wife. He was put in tough situations, but still didn't give up his faith in Hashem.

Parsha Vayetzei relates to one of the 15 songs of the Shir Mahalot; Tehilim Perek 121. This is a special Perek for many reasons. It is said while one is wanting *shidduch*, troublesome times, and most importantly for constant protection. It starts off by saying, "Where will my help come from? My help is from Hashem." What exactly does this mean?

We recognize that our salvation in all areas comes from Hashem alone. Every person has been stuck between a rock and a hard place at some point in their lives. In times of difficulty, embarrassment, and disappointing situations. We see here that Yakov Avinu is our inspiration for us to move forward.

It is stated in the Midrash that Yakov Avinu was on the way to Charan in search for a wife and said Tehilim 121 while on the way. He was commanded by his parents to leave Ber Sheva, and go to Charan, (because he was running away from his brother Eisav.) and go find a *shidduch* for himself. Elifaz (Eisav's grandson) was sent to kill him. Since he grew up in Yakov's house, he had mercy on him.

In order to obey his father's request and spare Yaakov's life at the same time, he decided instead to rob him of all his money. Yaakov stood on the road destitute and alone. Knowing his brother was hunting him down and not having a penny to his name to find a *shidduch*, he looked up to Hashem and recited the following from Perek 121:

"Sbir Lama'alot, Esau enai el be'arim - I shall raise my eyes to the mountains." We turn to our parents, teacher or guide for inspiration. "Me'ayin yavo ezri? Ezri meim Hashem - Where will my help come from? My help is from Hashem."

From where will I find a *shidduch*? when Eliezer went to find a *shidduch* for Yitzchak, he came with only ten laden camels. Rabbi Chanina said that Yitzchak sent Yaakov empty handed in order that Eisav would not chase after him for his money. Rabbi Yehoshua said that Yitzchak sent him with money and jewelry, but Elifaz stole it all from him. Yaakov then said to himself, "What? will I lose my faith in my Creator? Of course not! I will not lose faith in my Creator! Instead, have Emunah that he will provide me with my help. Even from nothing."

Yaakov Avinu faced adversity and reached deep into his past, to his parents who were mountains in *emunah*, who taught him to turn to Hashem even in the most impossible situations. May we merit to continue in his ways.

Shabbat Shalom!

CANDLE LIGHTING 4:10PM | SHABBAT ENDS 5:18PM

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Finding Hashem in Your Darkest Hour

By Rachie Dilamani

Since the beginning of Sefer Bereshit, we have learned about different characters who play key roles in our history. The Torah teaches us the stories of Adam, Noach, Avraham, Yitzchak, and now Yaakov. Yaakov, we learn, is to be the father of the 12 tribes. Every Jew belongs to one of these 12 tribes and every tribe has its own role. In the times of the Bet Hamikdash, each tribe was given their own portion of land and each tribe had its own function in society. While each tribe is uniquely different, there is something they all have in common, and that is Yaakov.

Why is it Yaakov that is the father of the 12 tribes that make up the Jewish nation? Rabbi Sacks asks this question in an article he wrote on this week's *parsha*. He explains that at the beginning of this week's *parsha* Yaakov is running away from his brother who has threatened to kill him.

At this point in the story, he is in a place far from home, he is alone, and his life is in danger. Despite the difficult situation he is in, he is able to find Hashem in this place. Rabbi Sacks writes: *“Abraham gave Jews the courage to challenge the idols of the age. Isaac gave them the capacity for self-sacrifice. Moses taught them to be passionate fighters for justice. But Jacob gave them the knowledge that precisely when you feel most alone, G-d is still with you, giving you the courage to hope and the strength to dream.”*

In Rabbi Sacks' article, he quotes a singer who says, *“There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in.”* He then writes that, *“The broken heart lets in the light of G-d, and becomes the gate of heaven.”*

In our darkest hour, we are never alone; just as Yaakov wasn't alone on his journey to Lavan's home. Hashem was with Yaakov just like He is with each one of us, guiding us and lifting us up when we need it most.

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