

לילוי נשמת חנה סורא בת משה אהרן א"ה

*Preparation of this week's Hamaayan
was cut short by the passing of the editor's
mother. Please enjoy this abbreviated issue
L'ilui Nishmat Chana Sura bat Moshe Aharon a"h.*

**"Yaakov became very frightened, and it distressed
him ..." (32:8)**

Rashi z"l writes: "He was frightened that he might be killed, and he was distressed that he might have to kill *Acheirim* / others."

R' Uri Cherki *shlita* (rabbi and educator in Yerushalayim) explains: Yaakov's fear of killing Esav arose from his awareness that there was some good in Esav; therefore, Yaakov was reluctant to save himself if it meant taking Esav's life. Perhaps *Rashi* alludes to Yaakov's concern about the good hidden within Esav when he uses the noun "*Acheirim*," the same word that the *Gemara* (*Horiot* 13b) uses to refer to the Sage of the Mishnah Rabbi Meir. That sage was a relative of the Roman Caesar Nero, meaning that he, like the Romans in general, was a descendant of Esav. (The fact that Esav could have a descendant such as Rabbi Meir is evidence that there was a spark of goodness within him.)

How did *Hashem* respond to Yaakov's reluctance? He sent Esav's guardian angel to attack Yaakov (32:25), forcing Yaakov to fight whether he wanted to or not. Only after confronting that representative of Esav's evil did Yaakov deserve to be called "Yisrael" (32:29), and only then was he ready to re-enter and settle in *Eretz Yisrael*. Notably, after defeating Esav's guardian angel, Yaakov was even able to hug and kiss Esav (33:4). From a position of strength, Yaakov was allowed love his nemesis.
(*Nipagesh Ba'parashah*)

Shabbat

We read (*Tehilim* 68:12), "The Master issued a declaration; they herald a mighty host." *Midrash Tehilim* comments: Rabbi Yose ben Chanina says that just as a person bangs a hammer on a rock causing sparks to scatter in all directions, so the Torah says (*Shmot* 20:8), "Remember the *Shabbat* day to sanctify it," but the Jewish People honor it with food, drink, and clean clothes. Not only that, they welcome *Shabbat* with *Shirim* and *Zemirot* (two words for songs), as it is written (*Tehilim* 92:1), "*Mizmor shir* for the *Shabbat* day." [Until here from the *Midrash*]

R' Eliezer Ben-Zion Brok z"l (1904-1985; founder and *Rosh Yeshiva* of the Novardok-Bet Yosef Yeshiva in Yerushalayim) explains: The *Midrash* is commenting on the fact that the first phrase in the verse in *Tehilim* has a singular verb ("The Master issued a declaration") while the second phrase has a plural verb ("They herald a mighty host"). The *Midrash* resolves this anomaly by observing that what appears to be one *Mitzvah* ("Remember the *Shabbat* day to sanctify it") actually has many aspects: eating, drinking, wearing clean clothes, and singing *Zemirot*. If one holds a hammer but does not hit a rock, he will produce no sparks. On the other hand, the harder one hits the rock, the more sparks he will produce. Similarly, if one does not delve into the *Mitzvot*, he will never discover how deep they are. But, if one does delve into them, he will discover many, many layers to them--like the "large army" referred to in the verse.

R' Brok notes: We are accustomed to stopping work on Friday afternoon, either out of habit or because we are afraid of transgressing *Shabbat* even inadvertently. However, there is a much loftier and deeper reason for stopping work and preparing for *Shabbat*--namely, because we are running to welcome the "*Shabbat Queen*." The *Gemara* (*Shabbat* 119a) describes how some of the Sages would welcome *Shabbat* and, based on those descriptions, R' Moshe ben Maimon z"l (*Rambam*; 1135-1204) codifies the following *Halachah*: "It is a *Mitzvah* for one to wash his face, hands, and feet with warm water on *Erev Shabbat*, wrap himself in *Tzitzit*, and sit with great seriousness awaiting the arrival of *Shabbat*--as if one were awaiting a king's arrival."

How unfortunate it is if one's *Shabbat* preparations are limited to stopping work, R' Brok adds. On the other hand, how fortunate we are and how good is our lot that we are able to receive *Shabbat* properly!

(*Hegyonei Mussar*, Pamphlet I, p.23)

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