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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

### Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 4:09 - הדלקת נרות
- 4:27 - שקיעה
- 8:53 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:29 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:15 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 4:28 - שקיעה
- 5:10 - צאת הכוכבים
- 5:40 - צאת 72

### אגטען שבת!

#### Did you Know?

Our parsha tells us that Yaakov traveled to "Sukos" where he built a house for himself and sukos, or huts, for his animals. The Ohr HaChaim suggests that in his concern for the welfare of the animals, he created the concept of giving them shelter, something that had never been done before. Therefore, the town was named Sukos after the new invention. Others suggest that it was called Sukos because to Yaakov, this world was just a place he was passing through, and he didn't really dwell in it. Therefore, although he built himself a house, the sukos gave the place its name. The Targum Yonason explains that the "house" Yaakov built was a Bais Medrash, further cementing this concept of his priorities. Daf Yomi concluded Mesechta Baitza this week, and it ends by discussing what animals are domesticated versus wild. The discussion there revolves around when the domesticated animals come back to the city or to the corral. Those that return to the yishuv at night or in bad weather are called "baysos," or house-animals, while the ones that come back very rarely are wild animals. Perhaps the connection that Yaakov taught us is that although one has to go out to work, if his focus is returning to the Bais Medrash, he is considered part of the Torah household. If, unfortunately, he never steps foot into the Bais Medrash or gets involved in Torah, then he is an outsider, like the wild animals.

As heard from R' Yehuda Russak Shlit"a

### Thought of the week:

The opposite of bravery is not cowardice but conformity.

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הצילני נא מיד אחי מיד עשו כי ירא אנכי אותו פן יבוא והכני אם על בנים. (בראשית לביב)

**"Rescue me, I pray, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esav, for I fear him, that he will come and attack me -- mother and children alike."**

It seems odd that Yaakov, who firmly trusted in HaShem's guidance and protection, would be afraid of any man, especially when he was promised that he would return home safely. Further, what is the language "mother and child alike" (lit. mother upon the children) intended to convey?

The Daas Zekainim explains that while Yaakov had a personal promise of protection, his wives and children did not have such a covenant, since all he had was his stick at the time the promise was made. Others add that this prayer was not only for himself, but for generations of his descendants as well.

The Vilna Gaon says that Yaakov was asking for protection from his brother, and from Esav. That is to say, he was asking for Divine protection when Esav acted like the wicked man he was and tried to kill him, and also for the more dangerous times when Esav sought to act like a brother, and beckon to Yaakov with welcoming arms.

While we know that according to most sources a person cannot harm you unless it is Divinely decreed, we also know that "Hakol b'ydei Shomayim chutz m'yiras Shomayim, All is in the hands of Heaven except fear of Heaven." In other words, while HaShem decrees that a person will be rich or poor, smart or foolish, strong or weak, He leaves the determination of being a tzaddik or rasha to the individual.

The point here, is that Yaakov was not afraid of esav directly. Rather, he was deathly afraid of Esav acting like a brother throughout the generations, and creating closeness between their descendants. He feared his children and grandchildren would be seduced by the world of Esav and cease being true to the ideals of their forefather Yaakov.

This would also explain the phrase "aim al banim," mother upon children. We know that the Torah is called "Toras imecha, the law of your mother," because the mothers are typically the ones who inculcate their children with a love and respect for Torah and mitzvos from a young age. By destroying the spirituality of the mothers, Esav is ensuring the spiritual desolation of future generations as well.

Esav's essence is to view the world as hefker, where things happen by chance. His approach to life is one of superficiality, instead of deep reflection. When this becomes the attitude of a Jew, he no longer sees the hand of HaShem in the world and tends to stray.

It is up to us to reject the pressure to live like Esav, to constantly remain focused on recognizing and strengthening the presence of HaKadosh Boruch Hu in our lives, and to fight the angel of Esav ourselves. Then, as Yaakov was promised, we will all return safely home to our Father.

*A man traveling with his students saw a forest in which hundreds of workers were cutting trees. In the middle of the group was a giant tree, with thousands of branches. It was so large that several thousand people could sit in its shade.*

*The man asked one worker, "Why do you not cut down this tree?" The woodcutter replied, "Because it is useless! The branches are too knotty and crooked to make anything from them, and it can't be burned for fuel because its smoke is harmful. It is utterly worthless."*

*The teacher turned to his disciples and said, "Be like this tree. Don't seek to find favor with everyone and be "useful" or you may end up as furniture in someone's home or as a commodity in the market. Rather, remain true to your roots and you will be able to live and grow free. Then you can spread your branches and provide soothing shelter for many, many others."*

*That is where you will find true worth and usefulness.*