



הלא נכריות נחשבנו לו כי" 31:15

"מכרנו ויאכל גם אכול את כספנו"

"Are we not considered by him as strangers? For he has sold us and even totally consumed our money." Yaakov Avinu wanted to convince Rochel and Leah that they must leave the house of their father, Lavan. Yaakov Avinu told his wives, Rochel and Leah, that Hakodosh Boruch Hu told him to return to the house of his parents. Additionally, there is nothing here, by Lavan, to stay for. Rochel and Leah respond that they are strangers at Lavan's house and they will listen to the word of Hashem. It sounds Chas V'sholom as if Rochel and Leah were only going to listen to Hashem because it worked out anyway. Wouldn't a more appropriate response have been to say that they will listen to Hashem's command – and it doesn't matter what the ramifications of listening would be? The following Divrei Torah will expound on this topic and support the P'shat offered in the closing paragraph.

וישכם לבן בבקר וינשק" 32:1 – ספורנו

"לבניו ולבנותיו ויברך אתהם, וילך וישב לבן למקומו" – "And Lavan awoke early in the morning; he kissed his sons and his daughters and blessed them; then Lavan went and returned to his place." Why did the Torah tell us that Lavan blessed his daughters and his grandsons? The Chachomim have taught us in Megilah 15a that even the blessing of a common person should not be denigrated (אל תהי ברכת הדיוט קלה בעיניך). Lavan was certainly a "common person" – and perhaps much lower than one, as he was exceedingly wicked. Nonetheless, the Torah is telling that even for someone like Lavan, his blessing can be effective when it is conferred with total sincerity. Lavan was blessing his children – and one blesses his children sincerely – and even his blessings worked when done with total sincerity.

ויעקב" 32:2 – ר' יוסף בן דוד מסרגוסה

"הלך לדרונו, ויפגעו בו מלאכי אלקים" – "And Yaakov went on his way, and angels of Hashem encountered him." The Malachei Elokim constantly roam the holy Land of Eretz Yisroel. Thus, as soon as Yaakov Avinu entered the holy Land, he encountered Malachei Elokim.

ויעקב הלך" 32:2 – ר' שלמה אשתרוק

"לדרונו, ויפגעו בו מלאכי אלקים" – The Posuk does not say, "ויפגע במלאכי אלקים" that Yaakov encountered Malachei Elokim, rather it says, "ויפגעו בו" – that they encountered him, meaning that they had

come to him in order to protect him, as the Posuk in Tehillim 91:11 says, "כי מלאכיו יצוה" – "For He will order His angels to guard you wherever you go."

ויעקב הלך לדרונו, 32:2 – אברבנאל

"ויפגעו בו מלאכי אלקים" – When Yaakov Avinu left the house of Lavan, he did not know that Eisav was on his way – looking to hunt him down. Eisav was still upset that Yaakov received the Brochos from Yitzchok and wanted to kill him. When Yaakov Avinu encountered the Malachei Elokim, he realized that they were coming to protect him. It was then that he realized that the Malachim were coming to protect him against Eisav, who was seeking to harm him.

כי מעט אשר היה" 30:30 – לקחת מוסר

"לפני ויפרץ לרב ויברך ד' אתך לרגלי, ועתה מתי" – "For the little that you had before I came has expanded substantially, for Hashem has blessed you with my coming, and now, when will I also do something for my own house." Yaakov first told Lavan that his house was blessed because Yaakov was there. Once Yaakov said that to Lavan, he feared that Lavan would not allow Yaakov to leave with his family, for that would take away the blessing he was Zoche to have as long as Yaakov was with him. It says in Bereishis Rabbah 21:6 that the word, "ועתה" is a reference to Teshuva. Thus, Yaakov Avinu was telling Lavan, "ועתה מתי אעשה" – when will I do Teshuva, meaning to tell Lavan that he himself needed to do Teshuva, and being that he was in a state of needing to do Teshuva, Lavan's house would not be blessed because of him – for he was no longer worthy. Thus, there was no reason for Lavan to stop him from leaving. We can also explain that Yaakov Avinu was saying that he needed to care for his, "בית", household – for his children. In order to raise them the proper way in Torah and Ma'asim Tovim, he needed to leave the house of Lavan. Yaakov Avinu would not be able to teach his children the proper path of Avodas Hashem while under the dominion of Lavan, and thus needed to leave.

ויגנוב יעקב את" 31:20 – דברי מהרי"א

"לב לבן הארמי, על בלי הגיד לו כי ברח הוא" – "Yaakov stole the heart of Lavan Ha'arami, for he did not tell him he was fleeing." In Parshas Shlach the Posuk says, "ויגד לפרעה" – "It was told to Paroah that the nation fled." How are we to understand this Posuk when Paroah himself sent Klal Yisroel? How could they tell Paroah that the

nation fled, as if to say they ran away, when Paroah sent them away? There is a difference between the word, "נס" and "בורח". "נס" means that one flees, and will not return to the place he left, while ברח means that one flees, but he doesn't know to where he is fleeing, and after time, he will end up back from he was originally. When Paroah sent Klal Yisroel out of Mitzrayim, Paroah assumed that Klal Yisroel were never going to return to Mitzrayim, as they left with a strong hand. However, the messenger told Paroah, "כי ברח העם" – that Klal Yisroel had fled in a way that it appeared that they did not know where they were going, and thus would one day return. When Paroah heard this, that they were ברח, which means that his original assessment of their never returning was incorrect, and that they would eventually return – at that point he decided to chase after them, for if they were going to return at some point in time, he may as well have them return immediately. Had Yaakov Avinu told Lavan that he was ברח from his father's home, that he would end up returning there, then Lavan would have watched Yaakov very carefully to ensure that he not leave him and return to his father's home. However, Yaakov tricked Lavan into thinking that he was "נס" – he fled his father's home with a clear trajectory as to where he was going, and never to return to his father's home. This gave Lavan the false sense of security that Yaakov was there to stay, and that he did not need to be on the alert to ensure that Yaakov did not leave.

ויאמר יעקב כאשר ראם" 32:3 – קול רם

"מחנה אלקים זה, ויקרא שם המקום ההוא מחנים" – The Ramban says that Yaakov Avinu was referring to the two מחנות, his camp and the camp of the Malachei Hashareis. Yaakov Avinu was equating the two, and saying that his Machaneh on earth was like the Machaneh of the Malchei Hashareis, in that they were all "מחנה אלקים" – camps of the Ribbono Shel Olam, all blessing Him and acknowledging His Unity, may He be blessed forever. The Ramban is telling us that Yaakov Avinu and his family were like Malachim, and one must always worry to ensure that he is on the proper path of Torah and Ma'asim Tovim. The Torah tells us that Yaakov Avinu was, "הלך לדרונו" – he was on his way – and nonetheless, he was still on the same level of Malachim.

ויפגעו בו מלאכי" 32:2,3 – אור החיים

אלקים. ויאמר יעקב כאשר ראם מחנה אלקים זה,

“וַיִּקְרָא שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא מַחֲנִים” – “And angles of Hashem encountered him. Yaakov said when he saw them: This is a G-dly camp! So he called the name of the place Machanoyim.” What does the Posuk mean when it says that “the Malachim of Hashem encountered him”? Why couldn't the Posuk have just said, “Yaakov saw the Malachim”? What is the Torah telling us when it says that “Yaakov said when he saw them: This is a G-dly camp”? What is the significance in Yaakov calling the place מחנים? The basic P'shat of this Posuk is: Since Hakodosh Boruch Hu sent these Malachim in the form of men, so that they would appear before Eisav, as we know this because they went to Eisav on behalf of Yaakov with a message for him (as stated in the Torah in the beginning of Parshas Vayishlach), the Torah first relates the incident that led Yaakov to realize that they were Malachim, not people. While the Malachim did appear as people, the way they came was not so. When a person comes to another one, they are seen from far away, and he keeps coming closer and closer until they actually meet. However, with these Malachim, the Torah is telling us, “וַיִּפְגְּעוּ” – that they emerged suddenly, they were in front of Yaakov in an instant, and were not visible like people are. Due to the sudden appearance of these “people”, Yaakov said when he saw them appear in this manner that this is “מַחֲנֵה אֱלֹהִים” – these are clearly not men, but are Malachim. Being that they were Malachim, Yaakov Avinu called the name of the place, “מַחֲנִים” which means two camps, as there were two camps here. One was comprised of his men, who together with him, would wage war against Eisav if necessary, and the second Machaneh was comprised of Malachim in the form of men, who came to provide Hashem's assistance to His beloved Yaakov – the one chosen by Hashem.

וַיִּקְבַּע הַלֵּךְ” 74:17 – בראשית רבה
“לִדְרוֹנוֹ וַיִּפְגְּעוּ בּוֹ מַלְאֲכֵי אֱלֹהִים” – How many Malachim were circling and dancing before Yaakov Avinu at the time of his entrance into the Land of Eretz Yisroel? Rav Huna said in the name of Rav Eivu: Six hundred thousand Malachim were circling and dancing before Yaakov Avinu at the time of his entrance into the Land of Eretz Yisroel. This is as the Posuk says, “מַחֲנֵה אֱלֹהִים”, and the Shechinah does not rest in a group less than six hundred thousand – thus it must be that there were six hundred thousand

Malachim. The Rabbonon say that there were one million and two hundred thousand Malachim, as the Posuk says that Yaakov called the place, “מַחֲנִים” – which is two camps. If one camp is six hundred thousand, then two camps would be 1,200,000.

הלא נכריות נחשבנו לו” 31:15 – קול רם
“כִּי מִכְרָנוּ וַיֹּאכַל גַּם אָכַל אֶת כֶּסֶפֵנוּ” – Yaakov Avinu wanted to convince Rochel and Leah that they must leave the house of their father, Lavan. They responded to him: “Are we not considered by him as strangers? For he has sold us and even totally consumed our money.” Yaakov Avinu told his wives, Rochel and Leah, that Hakodosh Boruch Hu told him to return to the house of his parents. Additionally, there is nothing here, by Lavan, to stay for. How are we to understand these words of Yaakov Avinu? Wasn't it enough that Hakodosh Boruch Hu said that they should return to Yitzchok and Rivkah? Even if staying would mean that they would inherit or receive in some way an abundance of riches – what's the difference? It still shouldn't be done – for the command of Hashem was to leave! Maybe we could explain that Yaakov Avinu was trying to make it even easier to leave – and yes – no matter what they were leaving behind they should be doing so because Hakodosh Boruch Hu said so, but it is even easier for they were not really leaving anything behind. However, why did Rochel and Leah respond that they are willing to leave because they are indeed strangers, and are not leaving anything behind – they should have said that we will go because it is the command of Hashem? There is a great lesson for us to learn from these words. In truth, every Mitzvah that we are to perform is not really a great test for us, for it is really easy for us to perform every Mitzvah. The real truth is that there is never any loss when one performs the Mitzvos of the Torah. The Gemara in Beitzah 16a tells us that one's sustenance for the years is decided on Rosh Hashanah, and certainly Hakodosh Boruch Hu has it prepared for the person to gain it in a manner consistent with the Torah Hakdosha. One who has true Emunah in Hakodosh Boruch Hu knows that he will absolutely not lose anything by performing a Mitzvah. Although there is a façade the Yetzer Hara creates that makes it look like one will be losing by performing Mitzvos – in truth, it is nothing more than a façade, and nothing

is lost. Leah and Rochel were saying that they had full Emunah in Hakodosh Boruch Hu, and thus knew that no matter what it may have looked like, in truth they would lose nothing by following the command of Hashem. One has to imbue this message into his children, that being a G-d fearing Yid and following the Mitzvos is not difficult at all – rather it is quite easy. One has to get into the mode that whatever the command of Hashem is – that is what is good, and not following the command of Hashem will actually have a negative impact on the person – not just spiritually, but even physically.

Now we can understand the response of Rochel Imeinu and Leah Imeinu. Certainly, they would have listened to the command of Hakodosh Boruch Hu, even if in theory they would deem their listening to be harmful to them. However, that is the point the Torah is teaching us – that they never thought that the word of Hakodosh Boruch Hu could be harmful to them. One who has true Emunah understands that everything is from Hakodosh Boruch Hu is good, and certainly that which He commands one to do is for his good. If one has the attitude that it is difficult to listen and heed the command of Hashem for he is giving up much by doing so, then every time, it is a struggle to listen. It becomes even more of a struggle for the children – as they see their parents struggle with it – even if the parents are successful, they think its too hard and turn away from it.

We need to instill within ourselves and our children complete Emunah in Hakodosh Boruch Hu – and if it is a command of Hashem – it is so easy for us to do – for it is truly good for us. Yaakov and his family were by Lavan for many years, which generally has a detrimental effect upon people to live in such a toxic environment. Nonetheless, Yaakov and his family had complete Emunah in Hakodosh Boruch Hu. Hakodosh Boruch Hu told them to leave – and it was easy to leave. They said they are leaving nothing behind – for all that Hakodosh Boruch Hu does is for good – and one is not lacking anything due to his following Rotzon Hashem. May we be Zoche to live our lives in this manner – to always be excited to do Rotzon Hashem, in all situations and in all circumstances – for it is good for us – and doing so will never cause us any harm.