

HASHKAMA WEEKLY

פרשת וישלח
טו' כסלו תשפ"ו
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חכמה ב-AI תאמיין!

By Reb Gemini

Consider the following "Torah" thought, generated by Gemini: Did the AI get it right? Do you find it to be accurate? Or did the technology miss the boat?

Good Shabbos, Rabbosai. We look at Parshas Vayishlach and we see a gevaldige contrast. On one hand, we have the monumental, cosmic struggle of Yaakov Avinu wrestling with the Malach of Esav—a battle that the Medrash tells us shook the very foundations of the world. But right before this earth-shattering event, the Torah tells us, "And Yaakov was left alone" (Bereishis 32:25). Why was he alone? Rashi, bringing down the Gemara in Chullin (91a), teaches us that he went back for pachim ketanim—for small, earthen jugs. Imagine the scene! The family has crossed the ford of Yabbok, danger is lurking, Esav is approaching with four hundred men, and the heilige Yaakov goes back into the dark night... for what? For cheap pottery? The Gemara explains: "Tzaddikim cherish their money more than their bodies." Why? Because they do not stretch out their hands to steal. Their possessions are pure, attained with complete honesty, and therefore, they possess a spark of holiness that cannot be abandoned. Now, let us connect these two episodes, for nothing in the Torah is coincidental. It was davka because Yaakov went back for the pachim ketanim that he encountered the Malach. The masters of Mussar explain that the Angel of Esav represents the force of materialism and impurity in this world. How does a Yid defeat such a force? We might think we win only by sitting in the Beis Medrash with a Gemara. But the Torah is teaching us a deeper yesod: We defeat the Malach of Esav specifically when we deal with the "small jugs"—when we are involved in the mundane world of business and assets—and we treat those physical objects with the same yiras Shamayim (fear of Heaven) as a Sefer Torah. When Yaakov showed that even a clay pot is precious because it is honest and directed toward serving Hashem, he stripped the Malach of its power. The battle was won not just with physical strength, but with the spiritual integrity of valuing every single thing Hashem gives us. Practical Takeaway: This week, let us try to elevate the "mundane" aspects of our lives. When we deal with our finances, our work, or our possessions, let's pause and remember the pachim ketanim. Let us be scrupulous with honesty in the smallest matters, realizing that the way we handle our material assets is actually the front line of our spiritual battle.

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Shabbus Zmanim

מנחה 1:30 pm
הדלקה 4:10 pm
שകיעת השמש 4:28 pm
עלות השחר (16.1/72) 5:39/5:55 am
נץ החמה 7:07:07 am
7:15 am שחרית

Hot kiddush & Shiur after davening

ס"ז קראת שמע 8:51/9:27 am
ס"ז תפילה 9:50/10:14 am
חצצת היום 11:47:11 am
מנחה גדולה (30) 12:17:11 pm
מנחה קטנה (גר"א) 2:30:44 pm
פלג המנחה (גר"א) 3:29:06 pm
שקיעת 4:27 pm
צה"כ (50) 5:17 pm
5:19 pm מעריב (52)
צה"כ (60) 5:27 pm
זה"כ (72) 5:39 pm



Next Week's Zmanim

מנחה 1:30 pm
הדלקה 4:10 pm
שקיעת השמש 4:28 pm
7:15 am שחרית
שקיעת 4:28 pm
5:20 pm מעריב (52)

This Week's Riddle

Riddle: In this parsha, what pasuk has 8 words in a row ending with the letters yud-mem?

Answer: In Bereishis 32:15, the gifts of Yaakov to Esav are enumerated, with 8 words in a row ending with the letters yud-mem.



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משל ונמשל ב-אי תאמיין!

By Reb Gemini

Mashal: Morai V'Rabbosai, imagine a trusted minister appointed by the Melech (King) to transport a vast treasure of gold, diamonds, and rubies from one province to another. The minister commands a convoy of armored wagons, guarded by the King's elite soldiers. As they cross a turbulent river, a small, battered copper coin falls from one of the overflow sacks and tumbles into the mud. To the shock of the soldiers, the minister halts the entire convoy. He jumps down into the mire, ruining his fine silken robes, frantically searching for this singular, tarnished coin. The soldiers whisper, "Has the minister lost his mind? He is carrying millions in gold; why risk the schedule and dirty his uniform for a penny?" The minister stands up, clutching the coin, and declares: "You look at the value of the metal, but I look at the image stamped upon it. This coin belongs to the Melech. To leave even a penny of the King's property in the mud is a lack of hakarah (recognition) of who the Owner is. It is not about the copper; it is about the Crown." **Nimshal:** This week, in Parshas Vayishlach, we encounter a difficult pasuk. The Torah tells us, "Vayivaser Yaakov levado"—and Yaakov was left alone (Bereishis 32:25). Chazal in Maseches Chullin (91a) reveal that Yaakov Avinu went back across the Yabbok river for "pachim ketanim"—small, insignificant jugs. The Gemara concludes from here that "for Tzaddikim, their money is dearer to them than their bodies." On a superficial level, this sounds astonishing. Is a Tzaddik a miser? Chas v'shalom! The depth of the matter is that a person like Yaakov Avinu understands that every possession he has—down to the smallest clay jug—is a pikadon (deposit) from Hakadosh Baruch Hu. Yaakov understood that if Hashem entrusted him with these small jars, they contained a spark of holiness necessary for his Avodas Hashem. He did not see "stuff"; he saw resources provided by the Melech. To leave them behind would be to say that something in this world is devoid of spiritual purpose. It was precisely at that moment, when Yaakov showed such value for the physical world's potential for holiness, that the Sar (guardian angel) of Esav attacked. Esav represents the view that the physical world is for pleasure; Yaakov represents the truth that the physical world is for kedushah. **Practical Takeaway:** We live in a society of disposability, a world of shefa (abundance) where it is easy to discard the old and buy the new without a second thought. But as Yidden striving for a Torah life, we must internalize the lesson of the pachim ketanim. Everything we own—our homes, our cars, our money, even our office supplies—are tools given to us by Hashem to facilitate our Torah learning and our performance of Mitzvos. When we sit at the Shabbos table, the silverware is holy. When we drive our car to drive a child to Yeshiva or to do a Chesed, that car becomes a cheftza shel mitzvah (an object of a commandment). The lesson for us is to treat our possessions with the respect due to the King's treasury. We must not squander our resources on frivolity, but rather ask ourselves: "How can I use this 'small jug' to serve Hashem?" By elevating our material possessions, we defeat the kelipah of Esav and prepare ourselves for the ultimate redemption, bimhera byameinu, amen.

GOOD SHABBUS!