

Parshat Yayishlach
Melton at Shearith Israel, December 5, 2011
JSI at Akiba Academy, December 6, 2011

A) Sefer Breishit, chapter 32, verses 4 - 9

Sefer Mei haShiloach, volume two
Parshat Vayishlach

“And Ya’acov sent messengers before him” – We find the following in the midrash (Midrash Raba parsha 75): “He is there minding his own business and you go and send messengers to him!” The midrash does not mean to say that Ya’acov acted improperly. Rather the matter is to be understood on the basis of what I said on the passage in the Talmud Tractate Brachot page 7 concerning the statement that “the service of Torah is greater than its study”: The yearning and prayer for God may He be blessed is boundless, whereas study has boundaries; that is why the service of Torah is greater than its study. Therefore, even though Ya’acov understood that he would suffer from Esav, he also understood that unbounded positive things would grow from this matter in the longer run, and that is why he was unable to refrain from sending to him.

Sefer Mei haShiloach, volume one
Likutay haShas, Tractate Brachot

Page 7b “Said Rabbi Yochanan: The service of Torah is greater than its study, as it says (Sefer Melachim II, 3:11) ‘Here is Elisha ben Shafat, who poured water on the hands of Eliahu’. That is to say, the prayers that one offers for his deeds that they may be successful, that is what is greater than the deed itself. That is what it means when it says ‘who poured water on the hands of Eliahu’ – that he would also pray that Eliahu would succeed. That is the service that is greater than the study, for the study has boundaries whereas the yearning and the prayer to God may He be blessed is without boundaries.

Sefer Risesay Leila, Rabbi Tzadok haCohen M’Lublin
Section 52, dibur hamatchil uvakriat

But when their connection to words of Torah became weakened, even though such a weakening is a descent, it is for the purpose of ascent and the greater acquisition of words of Torah that comes afterward ... And indeed this weakening is not called a weakening at all, because it is for the purpose of ascent, and everything is defined in light of its effect ...

The heart [must] search and struggle with the words of the Torah and in order to attain God may He be blessed. The 50th gate which is hidden in this world is the gate of wisdom so fixed in a man’s heart such that it could never be weakened. And this level of revelation is impossible. And from the perspective of this world this is exactly the way it is supposed to be, as it says:

'One does not fully grasp words of Torah until he has first stumbled over them' (Tractate Gitin 43a). And seven times a righteous person will fall and pick himself up – the falling is for the sake of picking himself up. Just like it says in Tractate Brachot (page 5a) that 'three precious gifts were given etc and all of them are through suffering'. Now suffering is the opposite of good; rather such is the way of this world that only when there is darkness at the outset is their light afterward, and that is why there is evil in this world....

And through the attainment of this gate of wisdom ... one may understand the existence of evil in the world, which is always prior to good as we find in this world which is a corridor to the next world. ...

For as long as there is the existence of evil, if God would enlighten their eyes to understand the root of this existence, they would be liable God forbid to cling to evil as it was at the time of the generation of the flood ... at which time God may He be blessed showed them enlightenment as in the next world to attain an understanding of the root of existence in this world, and through this they understood how the root of the existence of evil is itself part of the truth of God may He be blessed – for there is none other than Him – and they followed the dictates of their own hearts and after their passions, thinking that they are not really separating themselves from God may He be blessed, for everything is from God may He be blessed. ...

And Moshe had to send Yehoshua his servant who was called the 'guardian of the figs' to arrange the benches in the beit midrash (Midrash Raba parshat Pinchas) and serve for words of Torah. And our rabbis may their memory be a blessing have said in Tractate Brachot page 7b: 'the service of Torah is greater than its study'. I heard that the study is bounded, how much he can accomplish, whereas the service refers to the desire and the love of the one who serves because of which he serves and makes great efforts to establish the tent of Torah, and that has no boundaries ... Leah actually gave birth to the tribes whereas Rachel all her days desired and yearned to give birth to the tribes but actually only gave birth to two. But the passion and the yearning is greater than the actualization, and that is why she is called the mainstay of the home.

"Life begins at the end of your comfort zone." Neale Donald Walsch

Come to the edge.

No, we will fall.

Come to the edge.

No, we will fall.

They came to the edge.

He pushed them, and they flew.

Guillaume Apollinaire