



HaRav Shaul Israeli zt"l  
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# HEMDAT YAMIM

## Parashat HaShavua

Vayishlach, 16 Kislev 5779

### An Angel of a Man

Harav Yosef Carmel

Last week we discussed different possibilities raised in *midrashim* and commentaries about who Yaakov's "brothers," who took part in the tense interactions between Yaakov and Lavan, were. This week we will humbly raise another possibility, which also connects those events to the events of *Parashat Vayishlach*.

We will remember that Lavan pursued Yaakov with the intention to cause physical harm but left kissing his daughters and grandchildren, after making a pact with Yaakov. What was the cause of the change of heart in Lavan? It is possible to claim that Hashem's appearance before Lavan, instructing him to not harm Yaakov, was behind the change. However, given that Lavan was far from a G-d-fearer, it is surprising that this would change his attitude.

We will suggest that another event, which is alluded to at the end of ch. 31 and finds more detailed expression in ch. 32, actually had an impact on Lavan. "Yaakov went along his way, and he was met by *malachei Elokim*. Yaakov said when he saw them: 'This is an encampment of Hashem,' and he called the place *Machanayim*" (Bereishit 32:2-3). Immediately thereafter, we have the opening *pasuk* of our *parasha*, in which Yaakov sent *malachim* to Eisav.

The expression "Yaakov went along his way" indicates that while he had already been on the path since leaving Lavan's house, now Yaakov was not running, but walking (i.e., travelling normally). This is because he met *malachei Elokim*. We venture to say that these were not angels but hundreds of men, capable of fighting, among other things, who were waiting 20 years for this moment. They were disciples of Avraham and Yitzchak, who were very disappointed when Yaakov, who could have been their leader, as the mentor of those who serve Hashem, had to temporarily abdicate his leadership role so that he could flee Eisav by running to Charan.

We point out that Ibn Ezra translates *malachim* in this context as messengers or agents, not as angels. These were agents who did that which was correct in the eyes of Hashem. They came just at the right time, when Yaakov was meeting Lavan, and they gave Yaakov the confidence that he would be able to survive the tensions with Lavan. They also were those who changed Lavan's mind, as he saw that Yaakov was no longer an easy target. These were the "brothers" of Yaakov who took part in the ceremonious eating with Lavan. The pact with Lavan was no longer entered into with Lavan being the stronger party. These *malachim* were the ones that Yaakov used to send to Eisav and the ones who made it possible to prepare for war if necessary with him.

Peace is possible primarily when one goes into the situation from a position of power, so that the other side realizes that war is not worthwhile for them. May Hashem bless His nation with peace!

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Those who fell in wars for our homeland. May Hashem avenge their blood!



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# Ask the Rabbi

by Rav Daniel Mann

## Greeting before *Davening*

**Question:** The Mishna Berura rules that one may not go over to his friend's place in *shul* before *davening*. As the *shul's* rabbi, is there a *heter* for me to go over to a new congregant to make him feel welcome and comfortable with our *tefilla*?

**Answer:** After discussing the halacha in general, we will examine if and how it can be different for a rabbi.

The *gemara* (Berachot 14a) forbids greeting someone with "Shalom" before *Shacharit*. It then asks from the *mishna* which allows, at times, greeting someone even during *Kri'at Shema* and its *berachot*. The *gemara* answers that the problem is when you go specially to his place to greet; if one chances upon him, it is permitted (see Rashi, ad loc.). The Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chayim 89:2) describes the case of not going out of his way as one in which he went to see to something that needed attention, and in the course of going there, greeted his friend.

The Shulchan Aruch (ibid.) cites room for leniency once one has recited *Birchot Hashachar*. While most *Acharonim* severely limit this leniency (see Taz ad loc. 2), Ishei Yisrael cites some who are lenient to greet without saying "Shalom" after *Birchot Hashachar*.

The Magen Avraham (89:7, accepted by the Mishna Berura 89:12) says that once one has cause to be near his friend's house, he may continue on to his house to greet him. A few *Acharonim* (including the Pri Megadim (89, Eshel Avraham 7), accepted by the Mishna Berura (89:9)) say that it is forbidden to go from his place in *shul* to his friend's place. Why don't these two rulings contradict each other? Is it permitted to go several feet out of one's way for this purpose or not? I believe the following distinction explains the matter. If one legitimately went quite a distance to the point that he is near his friend's house, going a few more feet to greet him is "called for" and permitted. If one is in *shul* and the natural thing is for him to *daven*, going over to someone else first is inappropriate. Therefore, one should not leave his place in *shul* or detour noticeably on his way there (Piskei Teshuvot 89:150 is lenient on detouring).

However, there are several arguments to allow you, the *shul's* *rav*, to greet someone when you think it will be meaningful. One is need based. The Mishna Berura (89:10) says that one may greet a violent person before *Shacharit* to avoid enmity. On the other hand, he does not permit this for every legitimate need; he writes there that one should not go to greet his father or *rebbe*. Perhaps the distinction is that normally, these important people do not need or want one's greeting specifically before *davening*. In contrast, if someone will be affected positively by the rabbi's approaching him right away, this is likely sufficient need. Furthermore, if the problem is to not see to your needs first but to your relationship with Hashem, then your greeting to another Jew to further his relationship with Hashem should be permitted.

Additionally, the Eshel Avraham (Butchatch) suggests that it is only problematic to go greet someone in his place, but it is fine in a public place like a *shul*. Although most *poskim* reject this idea, a similar idea may be more widely acceptable. Part of the job of many rabbis is to deal with issues and help matters run nicely throughout the *shul*. Therefore, one can look at such a rabbi's "domain" as throughout the *shul*, so that he is never really leaving his domain whenever he greets someone within the *shul*. Thus, there are ample halachic grounds to allow you greet and especially enquire if you can be helpful. It is certainly worthwhile, especially since it is easy, to first recite *Birchot Hashachar* and to avoid using "*Shalom (Aleichem)*."

This being said, a rabbi should consider carefully not only the positive but also the negative impact of potentially appearing talkative before (and/or during) *davening*. Others with less noble intentions might follow his lead, and it becomes harder to preach quiet. You are best equipped to make the local determination and find the right balance.

**Do not hesitate to ask any question about Jewish life, Jewish tradition or Jewish law.**

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# Ein Ayah

(from the writings of Harav Avraham Yitzchak Hakohen Kook, z.t.l.)

## The Wisdom of Creation and Connecting between Its Parts

(condensed from Ein Ayah, Shabbat 8:1, 3)

**Gemara:** Nothing that Hashem created in His world was for naught. ... He created: a fly [to heal one who was stung by] a wasp; a mosquito for [one who was bitten by] a snake; a snake for [one who is afflicted by] boils; and a *samamit* for [one who was bitten by] a scorpion.

**Ein Ayah:** The totality of creation was created with wisdom, for a lofty divine purpose, which is far greater than the creation itself. Indeed it is normal that the purpose of something of value is more significant than the means that enabled it to come to fruition.

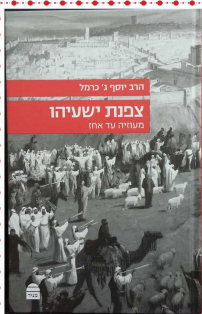
Similarly, divine wisdom is found in the depth of the smallest details of a subset of the creation. There is no need to attribute anything to something that needed to be for a reason outside of the framework of the general divine wisdom that relates to the details. While we may see cause and effect relationships that connect one occurrence to another, it is that the seemingly necessary connection was actually designed as part of the divine wisdom. A lofty intellectual, moral matter is a partner in all such existence. Therefore, there is not even a small thing that has no purpose that can be related to the power of creation other than to the elements of divine wisdom and mercy. This is what the *gemara* means by saying that nothing was created for naught. "How great are those things that You made; You made them all with wisdom; the world is filled with Your possessions" (Tehillim 104:24).

Related things are connected by means of belonging to a unified broad category of objects. The fly and the wasp are sufficiently part of one category so that one provides the antidote to the damaging power of the other. Sometimes the lower realm is connected to the upper realm of the creation of a species.

A mosquito is a most tiny creature which is at the bottom of the hierarchy of living things. The *gemara* speaks of it being something that ingests but does not eliminate in a normal manner. In contrast, a snake was created at the highest rung of the animal world, just that it lost from its stature due to its involvement in the sin of Adam and Chava. The low and the high are connected to take away from the danger presented by one of them.

Snakes have qualities that connect them to boils (see Bereishit Rabba 20:4), and snakes are able to relieve some of the suffering from boils. The *samamit* relates to the scorpion as being opposites. The scorpion causes damage without doing so purposely, but its poison is expelled as it walks. The *samamit* waits and plans for a long time to trap its prey.

Things are so connected in manners that show great wisdom, which shows the spreading of light of wisdom into all aspects of creation. Since there are so many connections, which employ so much wisdom, it is not possible to say that something was done for naught.



### Tzofnat Yeshayahu- Rabbi Yosef Carmel

The Prophet Yeshayahu performed in one of the most stormy and dramatic periods of the Israeli nation's life, a period of anticipation for the Messiah that was broken by a terrible earthquake, and also caused a spiritual and political upheaval. The light at the end of the tunnel shone again only in the days of Chizkiyah.

"Tzofnat Yeshayahu – from Uziya to Ahaz" introduces us to three kings who stood at this crossroad in our nation's history: Uziya, a king who sought God but was stricken with leprosy because of his sin; Yotam, the most righteous king in the history of our people; And Ahaz, the king who knew God but did not believe in His providence.

In his commentary on the prophecies of Yeshayahu, Rabbi Yosef Carmel, Head of the Eretz Hemdah-Gazit rabbinical court and a disciple of Rabbi Shaul Israeli zt"l, clings to the words of Hazal, our sages, and to the commentaries of the Rishonim, the great Jewish scholars of the middle ages, and offers a fascinating way to study Tanach. This reading attempts to explain the Divine Plan in this difficult period and to clarify fundamental issues in faith. Tzofnat Yeshayahu reveals to the reader the meaning of the prophecies in the context of the prophet's generation and their relevance to our generation.

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# P'ninat Mishpat

## Enforcing Security Responsibilities

(based on ruling 77077 of the Eretz Hemdah-Gazit Rabbinical Courts)

**Case:** The plaintiff (=pl) owns a business that operates in an industrial zone adjacent to a *yishuv* (=def). Because the army does not provide all of the necessary security, *def* accepted upon itself to include the business in their patrols and overall responsibility. For more than a year, *def's Ravshatz* (officer in charge of internal security) was lax in implementing this responsibility despite *pl's* requests. This is especially true on Shabbat, when guardsmen sometimes limit their efforts out of concern of violating Shabbat. *Pl* is suing to have clear security guidelines, which must be carried out, written up. *Pl* also demands 1000 shekels for legal expenses, as this adjudication should not have been necessary. *Def* does not argue the facts presented by *pl* and is willing, with *beit din's* help, to arrive at a memorandum that spells out guidelines for their responsibilities looking forward.

**Ruling:** *Beit din* determines that *def* does have a natural obligation to provide security for *pl*. The *gemara* (Bava Batra 7b-8a) rules that the members of a city are obligated to contribute to the security of other members and that a minority can even force a majority to do so (see Shulchan Aruch, Choshen Mishpat 163:1). In the State of Israel, the army/police are responsible for security. However, when they do not provide all of the necessary security, the responsibility returns to the local community. This applies both to the residential population and to the businesses that fall under its general jurisdiction.

The *Ravshatz*, an employee of *def*, is the one who is obligated to carry out this responsibility. *Def's* security council, with *pl's* participation, will determine what physical provisions (e.g., cameras, road access) need to be provided. Their findings will be binding and must be implemented. Regarding patrolling, members of the civilian patrol will make two visits to the site every night. This should be written so that members of the community should not think that doing so is just a favor for *pl*. *Def* will be responsible for opening and closing the gate that accesses *pl*. *Pl's* alarm system should be hooked up to the *Ravshatz*, so that he can respond if there is infiltration.

As a new *Ravshatz* is being chosen, candidates should be made aware of these decisions, and their readiness to carry them out must be a condition for their appointment. The rabbi of the *yishuv* is to make a ruling about the type of steps that should be taken on Shabbat.

In their claim sheet, *pl* demanded payment from *def* for their past laxness, but they did not repeat this during the hearing. The latter is appropriate because payment would be for damages, and there has been no indication that there have been damages (time spent by *pl* is not considered damage). Since both sides acted responsibly during the adjudication, there will be no reimbursement for time spent (see Shut HaRivash 475)

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