



TORAH 4 TEENS

BY TEENS

NCSY ISRAEL



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MADRICH



AMICHAH GOLDSTEIN
9TH GRADE, MODI'IN

GUARDING THE MIND: YAAKOV'S STONES

The Lubavitcher Rebbe asks: Why did the stones surround only Yaakov's head and not his entire body?

Quoting Rashi, the Rebbe explains using a verse from Tehillim - "גִּיעַ כַּפִּיךָ כִּי תַאכֹּל" - which teaches that a person must use his *hands* to work, but must protect his *mind*.

This teaches us that while hard work is important, we must not allow it to dominate our thoughts or distract us from our connection with Hashem. Yaakov was about to face years of intense labor in Lavan's house, and he needed to remain spiritually strong.

That is why the stones protected his head - symbolizing the need to guard our thoughts, values, and spiritual clarity. When we keep our minds focused on holiness and purpose, our actions naturally follow. The Rebbe reminds us that true success is not only working hard, but keeping our minds centered on what truly matters.

THE LADDER OF CONNECTION

At the beginning of the parsha, we read about Yaakov's dream of a ladder standing on the ground and reaching the heavens, with angels going up and down. Hashem then promises Yaakov that his children will inherit the land.

The dream is clearly meaningful to Yaakov, but the symbolism of the ladder and the angels is not immediately clear. One explanation is that the ladder represents the connection between the person on the ground, Yaakov, and Hashem above. The angels moving up and down symbolize the ongoing relationship between the physical and the spiritual.

A ladder can only stand if it has a firm base. So too, our connection to Hashem can only be fully realized through the **Land of Israel**. Hashem's promise teaches Yaakov that the land beneath him, Eretz Yisrael, will be inherited by him and his descendants, and that this land is the foundation for a deep, lasting connection with Hashem. ■

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