

SIMCHAT SHMUEL

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Our *Sedra, Parshat Vayeitzei* opens with *Yaakov* departing from *Be'er Sheva* toward *Charan*, in order to flee from the potential danger he faced at the hands of *Eisav*, following *Yaakov's* masquerade, pretending to be *Eisav*, and receiving the *bracha* from *Yitzchak*.

The Torah tells us:

וַיִּפְגַּע בַּמָּקוֹם וַיָּלֶן שָׁם כִּי־בָא הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וַיִּקַּח מֵאַבְנֵי הַמָּקוֹם וַיָּשֶׂם מְרַאֲשֹׁתָיו וַיִּשְׁכַּב בַּמָּקוֹם הַהוּא

*He came upon the place and stopped there for the night, for the sun had set. He took from the **stones** of that place, and placed it under his head and lay down in that place.*

The ***Midrash*** in ***Breisheet Rabba***, offers an interesting interpretation of this *pasuk:*

Rav Nechemia Amar- Natal gimmel avanim- Rav Nechemia said he took 3 stones.

The chasidic work, ***Pardes Yosef,*** authored by **Rav Yosef Pacanowski *hy'd*** ***(as cited in Iturei Torah),*** who perished in the Lodz Ghetto, interpreted our *midrash* as follows:

"Perhaps the three stones mean that Yaakov rested upon the three foundational ideas, the three pillars that sustain the world: Torah, Avoda, and Gemilut Chasadim. HaKadosh Baruch Hu, orchestrated that he should rest upon three stones, to instill within Yaakov Avinu's conscience, that these three fundamentals will sustain him, his descendants, and the entire world."

Just a few verses later we read:

וַיַּשְׁכֵּם יַעֲקֹב בַּבֹּקֶר וַיִּקַּח אֶת־הָאֶבֶן אֲשֶׁר־שָׂם מְרַאֲשֹׁתָיו וַיָּשֶׂם אֹתָהּ מַצֵּבָה וַיִּצֹק שֶׁמֶן עַל־רֹאשָׁהּ:

*Early in the morning, Yaakov took the **stone** that he had put under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on the top of it.*

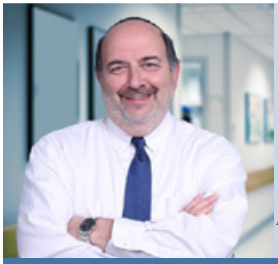
The ***Rashbam***, sees no contradiction between our two verses:

He took from the stones- he took one of the stones lying around in that location, as testified to in the subsequent verse, when the Torah speaks of את האבן, *"the stone."*

The *Gemara* in *Chulin* however, explains the apparent contradiction between these two verses pertaining to this incident.

It is written: "And he took from the stones of the place, *and placed them under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep" (Breisheet 28:11).* ***And (a few verses later) it is also written:*** *"And Yaakov rose up early in the morning,* ***and he took the stone*** *that he had placed under his head, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it" (Breisheet 28:18). The first verse indicates that Yaakov took several stones, whereas the latter verse indicates that he took only one stone.*

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Rabbi Yitzchak says: *This* ***teaches that all those stones gathered to one place and each one said:*** *Let* ***this righteous man place his head upon me.*** *And it was* ***taught: And all of them were absorbed into one*** *large rock.*

According to our *gemara,* the many stones super-naturally merged together to become one stone, upon which *Yaakov Avinu would* rest his head at this sacred place.

The *Ohalei Yaakov*, Rebbe Yaakov Friedman of Husiyatin, *zy'a*, was one of the great religious personalities of the pre-state *Yishuv* and early years of *Medinat Yisrael* .The Rebbe of *Husiyatin,* was fortunate to make *aliya* from Poland, just ahead of the Nazi onslaught, settling in *Tel Aviv* in 1938, where he lived until his passing in 1957. Within the Rebbe's beautiful teachings we not only find depth and inspiration, but are often given a glimpse of this very challenging period in Jewish History.

The *Rebbe sees* within our verse and the *Gemara's* interpretation of our verse, a powerful message which is as relevant today as it was when the Rebbe shared these words in 1947.

The stones coming together as one is a message and allusion to the future. As the Jewish People gather from all corners of the Earth and return to make Aliya to Eretz Yisrael, Am Yisrael will need to unite and come together to take action. It is not enough for us to say Mashiach has not yet arrived, and therefore we await his arrival and he will take us forth, rather we must first come together and take action, and then that will hasten our full redemption. The stones coming together and becoming one stone, teaches us that it not simply enough for us to gather together from across the globe, rather the key to our success and ultimate redemption is to come together and become one united entity-Shalom and Achdut-Peace and Unity among the Jewish People will ultimately fix the entire world.

The Rebbe's powerful insight continues to ring loud and clear, nearly eighty years later. Now, perhaps more than ever, there is a need for the Jewish People to unite and come together as one, as we secure our future here in *Artzeinu Hakedosha.*

Yehi Ratzon, May each of us heed these beautiful teachings from the *Pardes Yosef,* and the Rebbe of Husiyatin *zt'l,* and may we merit to see that unity, built upon *Torah, Avoda* and *Gemilut Chasadim,* bring us to ultimate redemption and tranquility for the entire world. ■

