

SIMCHAT SHMUEL

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Parshat Vayishlach finds *Yaakov Avinu* as he is about to re-encounter his twin brother Eisav, and he is quite worried about that meeting. Before he goes to sleep that evening, he utters a tefilla, using language that should seem familiar to each of us.

וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֱלֹקֵי אָבִי אַבְרָהָם וֵאלֹקֵי אָבִי יִצְחָק ה' הָאֹמֵר אֵלַי שׁוּב לְאַרְצְךָ וּלְמוֹלַדְתְּךָ וְאֵיטִיבָה עִמָּךְ

Then Yaakov said, "G-d of my father Abraham and G-d of my father Yitzchak, Hashem, who said to me, 'Return to your native land and I will deal bountifully with you.'

Yaakov Avinu, at this moment of great personal crisis, employs very similar language as we, his descendants, do when we *daven* to this very day, invoking the merit of his father A*vraham* and grandfather *Yitzchak* before him(we of course add *Yaakov's* name as well).

Subsequently the *Torah* tells us:

וַיִּוָּתֵר יַעֲקֹב לְבַדּוֹ וַיֵּאָבֵק אִישׁ עִמּוֹ עַד עֲלוֹת הַשָּׁחַר

And Yaakov was left alone. And a man wrestled with him until the break of dawn.

Seemingly, Yaakov has uttered his tefila, entered into a deep contemplative state and internal struggle. He emerges from this dream -like experience, and he has received a new name-*Yisrael,* he has been injured and impaired in his leg, and this experience has an impact for his descendants for all eternity.

Yaakov* himself is physically changed, his identity is transformed, and there is an implication for all subsequent generations to refrain from eating from the *gid hanasheh.

Yaakov wakes from this deep meditative experience, and the impact is not only upon himself but reverberates for future generations.

How might this entire episode teach us about the goals of *tefila* and its impact and implication in each of our lives? **What is the experience of *tefila* really meant to be for each of us?**

Rabbi Avraham Schorr, *shlita,* shared the following story and insight:

A person might often question what impact do my tefilot have? I daven each day and it does not seem to change my station in life, the things I pray for do not seem to be coming to fruition, so why do we continue to daven three times each day?

I heard a powerful story. There was a family who was sitting shiva for a family member who had passed away after a long and difficult illness.The family and entire community offered so many heartfelt tefilot in the hope that the individual would recover, but ultimately, sadly he passed away.

A few weeks later, the family received a

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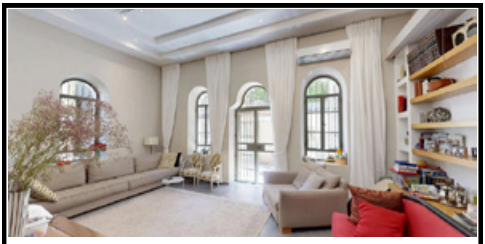
note of consolation from another family in the community whose young son was also facing a grim diagnosis. The family wrote that they had been told their son's prognosis was quite severe, but then he suddenly received miraculous news that he was completely cured of his illness. The family soon realized that their son had the identical full Hebrew name, including the mother's name, as the other family whose loved one had passed away. The second family offered that they hoped it might be a source of comfort, that perhaps the many tefilot uttered indeed had an impact and were a source of healing-sadly not for their dearly missed loved one, but for the second family's young son. Each tefila that a Jew offers does indeed have a lasting impact, sometimes beyond our own situation and circumstances. Every truly heartfelt tefila has a great purpose and implication, even if we personally do not immediately benefit from that tefila. A Jew must believe that every expression of faith, ultimately brings forth great results, even if we personally do not intuit that outcome.

Rav Kook zt'l *(as cited in the Sefer Mishnat HaRav, edited by Rav Moshe Zvi Nerya zt'l)* explained the transformative capacity inherent within the experience of *tefila.*

The difference between one who davens and one who does not daven is not simply that one individual sets aside time each day for tefila while the other one does not; rather, there is an existential difference. The worldview of these two individuals are completely different; those moments spent each day in tefila leave a lasting imprint on the entire day...

Yehi Ratzon, may each of us gain strength and the clarity to grasp the great gift of transformation and growth that is inherent within each and every *tefila.* ■



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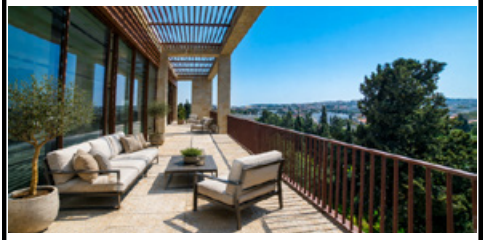
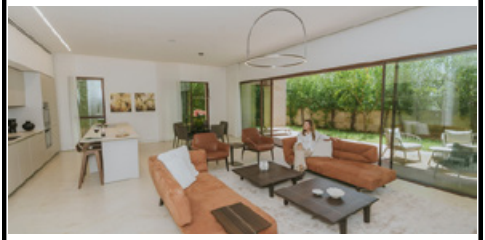


Breathtaking Penthouse in Talbieh, 360 sqm on one level, 80 sqm Sukkah terrace, high ceilings, panoramic views, enjoying 5-star hotel facilities.



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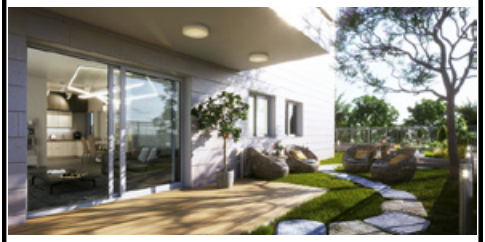

Private garden apartment in The Greek Colony, new boutique building, 118 sqm, 70 sqm garden, 4 rooms, safe room, 2 parking spots.

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