

Vayishlach: When is Yaakov Vulnerable?

- Submitted by Nisson Shulman.

Drasha by Avi Mori Harav Moshe Yitzchok Shulman, zt"l. Yaakov is vulnerable, can be wounded by his enemies symbolized by Saro shel Esav, when he is separated from his children.

Here is a thought, briefly stated, which AVI MORI HARAV MOSHE YITZCHOK SHULMAN ZT"L, liked especially because of its lessons in Hinuch.

Yaakov recrossed Nahal Yabok for "pachim ketanim". People think that the contents of those "pachim" were not valuable. Indeed, Rashi himself indicates that tzadikim are concerned about little things too.

But - consider - what do we usually store in "pachim ketanim"? Don't we put the most valuable things we have, perhaps Jewels, money, gold, in small containers, and not in large crates or boxes?

Only when he went back for "pachim ketanim" did Yaakov wrestle with the angel, and did he come out limping, struck on the hip, the bones and sinews which support his entire body. And only when he crossed over again to his family, was he finally on the way to be healed.

The lesson is clear. When is Yaakov vulnerable? When can the enemy, symbolized by "saro shel Esav", have power to wound Yaakov? When he is separated from his children. Even the most valuable possessions, those which go into "pachim ketanim", are not worth the price Yaakov pays, for leaving his children. And only when he is reunited with them is he finally on the way to be healed. Only with his children can he become "Shalem" again.