

## PARSHAS VAYEITZEI – CHANGING OF THE GUARDS – YAAKOV CHAIM HEPNER

*“And he [Yaakov] dreamt, and behold a ladder was set earthward and its top reached heavenward, and behold angels of G-d were ascending and descending upon it.” (Bereishis 28:12)*

**Rashi** explains that the angels ascending and descending in Yaakov’s vision were in actual fact exchanging places. Until now, Yaakov had always been accompanied by Malochim who safeguarded him while he was inside Eretz Yisroel. Now, these Malochim returned to the heavens, and were replaced by a new set of Malochim, who would protect him during his sojourn in Chutz Lo’oretz.

**Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits**, in his **Sefer Israel in the Torah**, pointed out that a parallel event occurred at the end of the Sedra. As Yaakov finally made his way back to Eretz Yisroel, angels of Eretz Yisroel reappeared to accompany him once more. The Posuk says:

*“And Yaakov went on his way and angels of G-d encountered him. Yaakov said when he saw them “This is a camp of G-d!” He called the name of that place ‘Machanayim’.” (Bereishis 32:2-3).*

**Rashi** explains that the word ‘Machanayim’ is a dual plural, meaning ‘double camp’. Yaakov was referring to the two camps of Malochim who were with him at the time; those from Chutz Lo’oretz who had not yet departed and those of Eretz Yisroel who had just arrived.

This is difficult to understand. Why was it necessary to have two different groups of Malochim, one specific to Eretz Yisroel and the other specific to Chutz Lo’oretz? Why couldn’t one set of Malochim escort Yaakov, irrespective of his geographical whereabouts?

The **Shaarei Aharon** (quoting the Sefer **Midreshei Torah**) explains that people living in Eretz Yisroel merit a unique level of Divine protection. Thus, when Yaakov resided in Eretz Yisroel he was watched over by one group of Malochim, who afforded him a greater degree of security. Once he departed for Chutz Lo’oretz however, they were substituted with different Malochim, whose lower standards of protection were fitting for outside Eretz Yisroel.

The Sefer **Ohel Tziporah** suggests a different idea: He begins by quoting a famous question; if Chazal tell us (Yumo 28b) that the Avos kept the entire Torah, how could Yaakov Ovinu have married two sisters (Rochel and Leah), something explicitly forbidden in the Torah? One answer is that the Avos only kept the Torah in the holier location of Eretz Yisroel, while in Chutz Lo’oretz they did not. When Yaakov married Rochel and Leah, it was in Padan Aram, outside of Eretz Yisroel.

This being the case, while Yaakov was in Eretz Yisroel, he did not need so much protection from angels, as he was already safeguarded through the merit of keeping Torah and Mitzvos. When going to Chutz Lo’oretz though, he would no longer retain this merit. Thus, Hashem sent special Malochim to watch over him until he would recover the higher level of protection by returning to Eretz Yisroel.