

Vayitzei – Meir Cooper (*reprinted*)

י כסלו תשע"ז – 10<sup>th</sup> December 2016 – שבת פ' ויצא

Our Parsha heralds a new era in Yaakov's life commencing with his dramatic exit from Beer Sheva on his way to Haran and the household of Lavan, Rivka's brother. Yaakov realized that to be able to withstand the adverse and alien winds blowing from Lavan and his household, he must first immunize himself, by spending fourteen years learning in the Yeshiva of Shem and Aver. Subsequently in his dream Hashem promised He would accompany him and not forsake him until his return to his homeland which is Israel. This would seem to imply that Hashem's support would only last till Yaakov's return.

The question which immediately presents itself is, can Am Yisrael survive even for one moment without Hashem's constant and unwavering supervision and support!

Rav Mendele from Vishnitz recounted how on one occasion a Hassid came to Rav Levi Yitzchok from Berditchev very downcast at having lost all his wealth in an unsuccessful transaction. He now had to face his creditors and even worse the prospect that he may not be able to marry off his daughter in the absence of a suitable dowry.

Rav Levi Yitzchok told him to purchase a long-term lottery ticket and promised him that his number would come up in due course. The Hassid was not altogether assuaged because this would not solve the most pressing issue, that of his unmarried daughter. Rav Levi Yitzchok told him not to worry, and as we say in Ivrit "hakol yihey beseder" - all will be in order.

The Hassid duly purchased his lottery ticket. On his way home he stayed at a local inn. At about the same time a government Minister on his travels lodged for the night at the same inn. He had a dream in which he was advised that there was an anonymous Jew staying at his inn, and that he possessed a lottery ticket which was destined to win.

The following morning the Minister sent his aide to seek out the Hassid who was duly identified. He offered him the opportunity to exchange his ticket with that of the Minister and he would add a few gold roubles for his troubles. The Hassid of course was not prepared under any circumstance to let go of his ticket even when the stakes had risen to one thousand gold roubles. At this point the Minister became exasperated and ordered his aides to extract the ticket from the Hassid by force. The Minister did not consider himself a bad man and kept his part of the bargain by exchanging his ticket with that of the Hassid and adding one thousand gold roubles as previously offered.

The Hassid returned to his town and was now able to marry off his daughter in due pomp and ceremony. As may be anticipated a blessing from Rav Levi is never to be taken lightly and in due course the Hassid's newly acquired ticket hit the jackpot and the Hassid was restored to his previous wealth and more!

The events of this narrative, Rav Mendele concluded, explain the promise of Hashem to Yaacov that he would not forsake him till he returned to his homeland. The full extent of Hashem's guardianship could only be fulfilled in Eretz Yisrael, but notwithstanding, Hashem would not forsake Yaakov whilst in the galut, before he returned to his permanent home of Eretz Yisrael. In the same way the Hassid received bridging finance in order to make the wedding of his daughter and to attend to the necessary finances before being granted his full wealth.

*The narrative is taken from Rav Zevin's Sefer – Sipurei Hassidim*