

# פרשת ויצא

This adaptation is dedicated  
in honor of my wife, Devorah.

"ויצא יעקב מבאר שבע וילך חרנה" (כח, י)  
"Yaakov departed from Beer-Sheba  
and went towards Haran."

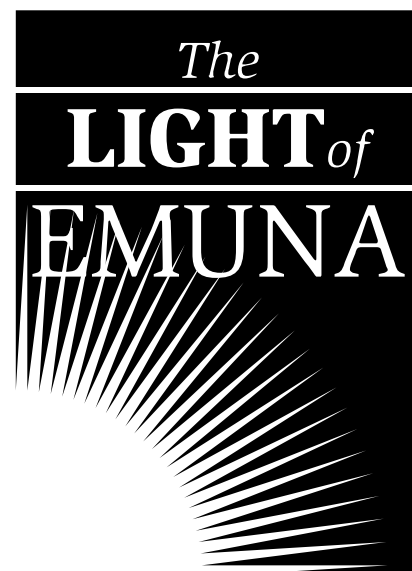
His departure was not voluntary – to marry is one of the obligations for which one is permitted to leave Eretz Yisroel. Yaakov's departure is described in four words (ויצא יעקב מבאר שבע) because he was destined to marry the four foremothers – Rachel, Leah, Bilhah and Zilpah. He married them through prophecy.

"אכן יש ד' במקום הזה ואנכי לא ידעתי" (כח, טז)  
"Surely Hashem is present in this place  
and I did not know!"

Did Yaakov Avinu not know that Hashem, Whose Glory fills the world, was everywhere? A person must realize that even when he is in a situation of concealment and it appears as if his whole world is collapsing around him – **Hashem is still with him, even the obscurity is from Hashem.** When a person acknowledges that Hashem is present, even in the gloom, and he accepts the situation with love – all judgments are sweetened and transformed into compassion – and the camouflage dissipates.<sup>1</sup>

Yaakov Avinu fled from Esau who wished to kill him. After fourteen years of learning Torah, day and night, he left the holy sanctuary of Torah and set out for Haran – a place of anger and difficulties (חרון from the language of אף or wrath). He encounters the setting sun, he is surrounded by wild beasts – he finds himself in a place of staggering concealment – and precisely there, Hashem reveals Himself and makes such

<sup>1</sup> ע"פ דברי הבעש"ט הקדוש



Based on Harav Menachem Azolai's "Ohr Ha'Emuna"

wonderful pledges: "Behold, I am with you; I will guard you wherever you go, and I will return you to this soil; for I will not forsake you ..."<sup>2</sup>

**Father, protect Your children. Father, do not forsake them. Father, love Your children.**

Yaakov Avinu shows us that even in the midst of abstruseness, even in the midst of tremendous darkness – Hashem is still to be found. Sometimes our suffering is so overwhelming, our wait is so very long, we are on the brink of despair, we fall to the lowest places – how do we fortify ourselves? How do we prevent ourselves from becoming broken?

We must remain aware that this is the way life is. Everyone undergoes this path. It is unavoidable. **Life is never-ending diligence.** It is not a limited tour. Everyone endures difficult periods in life – all for the purpose of revealing Hashem's Presence even then. Yaakov says, "and I did not know" – **I did not realize that even at the epitome of darkness – You are with me - with every single one of us, even with the most despicable sinner in the world.** When Yaakov Avinu disclosed this truth, he received such remarkable strength, such powerful *emuna* - that whatever happened to him subsequently did not break him.

<sup>2</sup> והנה אנכי עמך ושמרתיו בכל אשר תלך והשיבתיו אל האדמה הזאת כי לא אעזבך... (כח, טו)

He set out on his journey and Eliphaz, Esau's son, pursued him to kill him. In the end, he spared his life but robbed him of all of his money and wealth and left him in abject poverty. Yet, Yaakov remained steadfast in his *emuna* – he expressed no doubts against Hashem, Who had promised to “guard you wherever you go.” He reinforced his *emuna* that everything was from Hashem and everything was for the best, even if he did not understand how. In the merit of this *emuna* - he was able to survive for twenty years in the home of the most deceitful swindler, Lavan, and brought forth the holy foremothers and *shevatim* from the depths of the husks – to build the House of Yaakov, which encompasses all Jewish souls. We must learn from Yaakov Avinu that even when Hashem's actions seem incomprehensible – we must have *emuna* that all is for the best. During a challenge, when it appears as if the circumstances are not good (or even bad) – we must have *emuna* (without comprehension) that everything is for the best. In the merit of this *emuna* – all is transformed into good. From “evil” sprouts beneficial. In the darkness, in the gloom – **one thing is expected of us: that we never cease searching for Hashem.** We must maintain our *emuna* that Hashem is with us in the suffering, have *emuna* in Hashem's guarantee to Yaakov Avinu and all of his descendants – **“I will not forsake you.”**

We must incessantly anticipate the Redemption. **We must have *emuna* and *bitachon* that we too will ultimately merit, that our salvation will arrive.** This eagerness is so precious and treasured to Hashem that it itself brings the Redemption sooner.

We must stand before Hashem with the genuine awareness that **only He is capable of helping us**, that we have nothing apart from Him. When we cast our entire burden upon the Creator of all Worlds - even when we cannot fathom a natural solution to our predicament, it is quickly demonstrated that we had upon Whom to rely.

Our impediment is that our *emuna* is weak. We perceive nature instead of Hashem. When months pass without improvement to an ill

loved-one, we watch them deteriorate and all of the “experts” despair – or, when our harmony at home begins to dissolve and several months of disunity ensue and the barriers between spouses develop into solid walls – nature cries out, “There is no resolution, be realistic, do not delude yourself, read the signs.” **Nature is very convincing. It is incumbent upon us to bolster our conviction in Hashem's abilities, we must dig deep to appreciate what the words “all-capable” mean.** A person deceives himself - he utters the words “with G-d's help it will be alright” but they are mere lip service - he dupes himself and his family into believing that he is already at peace with things, because he sees them as already beyond salvage ...

The only counsel is *chizuk* (propping ourselves). We must have *emuna* in salvation even when things are “hopeless.” In the depths of the heart of every Jew resides true *emuna* in the boundless capabilities of the Creator – we must connect to it. HKB”H calls to every person “be strong,” “do not despair,” “have *emuna* in Me,” “allow Me to help you,” “I am undergoing this dangerous trial with you” – “all to implant within you the most important detail, that ‘you are to know this day and take to your heart that Hashem is the only G-d, in the heaven above and the earth below, there is none other’<sup>3</sup> – you will witness that even at the depths of darkness, I am there with you and completely in charge and I can convert the darkness into great light, into a tower of light. Do not become despondent just as the ordeal is ending, hold on a little longer and it will all pass. Do not throw up your hands, do not cast Me away in your old age, and do not abandon your *emuna* or the hope that lies in the words ‘all-capable!’ You have held strong until now – stay strong for a few more days – it will complete you – **you will see that it was worthwhile.**”<sup>4</sup>

We must inspire complete and clear *emuna* that Hashem can send us miraculous deliverance at this very moment, despite the fact that we have

<sup>3</sup> וידעת היום והשבת אל לבבך כי ד' הוא האלקים בשמים ממעל ועל הארץ מתחת אין עוד (דברים ד, לט ותפילת "עלינו")  
<sup>4</sup> כי אתה עמדי ד'

prayed for this matter tens, hundreds or even thousands of times and have not yet been rescued. None of that means that, at this exact moment, He cannot save us.

**I have *emuna* in You, Master of the World, that You only do what is best for me. I am too insignificant to understand what benefit is hidden within each concealment, within each challenge that You test me with – but, I have *emuna* that I will yet see the great good that is secreted in every occurrence.**

Accepting submissively and willingly whatever befalls us is an extremely elevated level. The holy Baal Shem Tov once advised a student, who wished to attain both this world and the next world: Accept upon yourself to always be happy with your lot and satisfied with Hashem's conduct of your life in all matters.

A certain *tzaddik* was once stuck at home for several days to care for his sick wife. He had to wait on her, day and night, without respite. He could not take a break to learn and could not *daven* in *shul*. Yet, he served her with such exhilaration and such radiance – saying that his current mission, that was thrust upon him, left no room for doubt – it was clear that he was fulfilling Hashem's will. The Koznitzer Maggid *zt"l* said, **“Master of the World, I stand before you as an errand boy – send me wherever you choose.” The key is, “If this is Your will, Father – let it be so. And, if it is something else that You want – I too long for that.”**

As he stood at the *akeida*, Avraham Avinu did not even say one chapter of *Tehillim* to try to avert Hashem's decree – he displayed absolute self-nullification in favor of Heaven's desire - derived from his love and yearning to be encompassed in Hashem's pure will. Similarly, Dovid Hamelech accepted a painful life of being chased and wandering, without any complaints. As he fled from place to place he composed *Tehillim* and praise that are engraved permanently in Jewish prayer. He attained the status as the fourth leg of Hashem's chariot when Shimmy ben Gera insulted, vilified and cursed him with the vilest

profanities and he restrained himself and did not retort. To the contrary, he was pleased by it because it was Hashem's will.<sup>5</sup>

If a person were to only experience good, there would be no challenge to having *emuna* and *bitachon*. It is specifically when Hashem conceals Himself that we are tested. We tend to think that we will only be prosecuted in Heaven for our sins – the truth is that the primary charges that will be brought will be for our failure to accept Hashem's supervision with *emuna* and love. Why did we not express gratitude? Why were we so sad and seldom satisfied? These are serious claims against us. ***Emuna* and *bitachon* are Hashem's gratification.**

Does Hashem not deserve our acceptance of His actions with humility, even if we do not understand? When we visit a human doctor, we trust him – we allow him to pluck, stick and cut – without even a hint of appreciation. We cannot understand Heaven's calculations. **The chasm between Creator and created is immense.**

Often in life, when we think we are viewing the end – it is really the beginning. We think that we are finished – give Hashem a chance to sort things out, maintain constant *bitachon*. Hashem desires and awaits our *tefillos*. **Prayer works, it helps – we need only wait patiently.** We must continue to pray, cry and do good deeds and have *emuna* that whatever happens in the interim is for the best – **and continue to *daven*.**

Rashi tells us that Yaakov Avinu went to sleep because the sun set prematurely. He did not become dejected. He prayed. The Gemara says that the meaning of “he encountered the place”<sup>6</sup> is that he *davened*. Rochel Imeinu never gave up *davening* for children. Leah Imeinu never gave up *davening* for a righteous husband – to the point that her eyes were tender from praying so hard to not marry Esau. **All of their destinies were altered by their *tefillos*.**

<sup>5</sup>

החיד"א

<sup>6</sup>

ויפגע במקום (כח, יא) – ברכות כו:

**Moreinu Harav:** “He encountered the place” – the place is *shemona esrei*. When we reach *shemona esrei* we have arrived at the proper place – the place of salvation, the treasury. Where are we running? We must say each word slowly and deliberately – we are in the chamber of the King. We should, at least occasionally, say it for twenty minutes – one minute per *bracha*. The *brachos* contain health and cures, income and wealth, *teshuvah* and everything else! If we pray slowly we will witness salvation. What is our rush? Only the *chazzan* has to finish quickly – we can take our time. **Hashem awaits our tefillos – He wishes to give us everything – He simply waits for us to daven, with concentration, with broken hearts.**

We say רפאנו and we draw down healing for all Jews – only You Hashem are the faithful Healer.

Do the doctors care about us? Even the best ones are more concerned about their own careers. But Hashem is the faithful and compassionate Healer. He does not need our money, honor or a promotion. We can receive all of the cures – **we are fated for miracles – we need only ask.**

We must *daven* incessantly – but we must add “do what is best in Your eyes” to the end of every request. “Only You know what is truly best.”

We must always remember that no *tefilla* is ever lost – they are stored in Hashem’s treasury and He utilizes them when they are best applied.

**Emuna in the G-d Who is filled with compassion fills us with calm, serenity, and the strength needed to meet all challenges.**

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## תפילה

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**Master of the World!** Help me remember that all of the good things that happen to me are Your doing – everything that proceeds well for me, whatever I manage to accomplish, all of the positive words that I hear, all of the vitality, enthusiasm in Your service - are all gifts from You and I must thank You ceaselessly. Master of the World – You are so good to me.

**Master of the World!** Help me remember that when a problem suddenly arises, when a worry unexpectedly pops into my heart and I wonder what will be and how I will avoid the situation and how I have no strength to deal with this misfortune – help me, Father, to remember that “negative” occurrences are also from You and, rather than worry, I should lift my head and ask You, Father, for help. Every moment of worry is a moment in which I forget You, G-d forbid. For, when I remember and raise my head and ask for aid – I am immediately soothed, as if I took an anti-depressant, without the negative side-effects – there is only benefit and we can take as much of Your medication as we want.

**Master of the World!** Help me have sincere *emuna* that You are all-capable, that You can transform darkness into light. So often I find myself telling others these calming words – but I do not genuinely have *emuna* that they can transpire. I focus on nature – can I repeat these comforting words to the relatives of a terminally ill patient, G-d forbid? I fixate on the fact that we rarely witness miracles in these cases. Help me, Father, to understand when we must come to terms with events and when we must fight them – and what I must say in these difficult situations.

**Master of the World!** I desire to be a regular in Your home. I wish to walk with You, hand-in-hand, and to never forget You, even momentarily. I wish to never cease thanking You – because it is so gratifying to recognize that nothing is owed to us – that it is all unearned gifts from You, father.

**Have an awesome, uplifting and wonderful Shabbos,**

דוֹב

Notice: The foregoing is based on my limited understanding of the Parsha Sheet, *Ohr Ha'Emuna*, disseminated by Harav Menachem Azolai *Shlita* and is not a complete or exact adaptation of *Ohr Ha'Emuna* and is not necessarily even a reliable interpretation of the ideas presented therein. *Ohr Ha'Emuna* is published in Hebrew; in translation, accuracy is always compromised. Rav Azolai has not reviewed this material - any inaccuracies, omissions or confusion should be attributed exclusively to me. I still hope you enjoy and it provides some *chizuk*. Thank you Mordi Blass for your help with some of the Hebrew expressions.

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