



From the desk of  
**MORDECHAI MALKA**  
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עיר התורה שקרובה אליך

## Office of the Rabbinate of Elad, Rosh HaAyin and Herzelia

Religious Court of Elad \* Batei Hora'ah \* Religious Services \* Marriage Licensing \* Kashrut \* Mikvaot \* Eiruvim

### TORAT

### Parashat Vayetzei

### HAMELECH

#### On the Way

Mefarshim ask why two verbs appear in the opening verse: and he left... and he went...

Numerous answers have been offered. We will suggest one as well. Some people travel from place to place, only focusing upon their destination. They have a purpose in mind and if they feel that they have not succeeded in their purpose, they feel that their trip was a waste of time and effort.

Yaakov Avinu knew that Hashem arranges a person's footsteps. Yes, we are to have goals and do things for a purpose. At the same time, we must place full trust in Hashem and when the unexpected occurs, we are to make the most out of it and try to figure out what mitzvah we can do in these unexpected circumstances.

This can explain the double wording in the opening verse. Yes, Yaakov was on his way to Charan. At the same time, each step of the journey was an opportunity not to be missed.

#### Maximize the Moment

Ben Yehoyada (Berachot 3a) points out that travelers are referred to in the Talmud in two ways. Some are *mehalchei derech*, others are *ovrei derech*. What is the difference? Reb Yosi was a *mehalech*. He understood that with each step he took, he had a mission to fulfill. People who do not think too much, go on the road and are *ovrei derech*; they focus only upon their

destination and they pass right by so many opportunities.

When things do not go as planned, we must realize, that things are going *exactly* as planned. It is just that we are not the planners; *He* is. And it's all for the best. Like the man who got a thorn stuck in his foot and missed his boat ride. He began shouting and cursing until the boat sank. Only then did he realize to thank Hashem for sending the thorn to save his life. (Gm. Nidah 31a)

#### Of Donkeys and Kings

Dr. Bernhard was one of the best doctors in Eastern Europe. He was once called to the deathbed of a Polish count, but he got there too late. "Did I travel for naught?" he thought to himself.

The way home, he travelled through Lelov and the Rebbe's daughter was deathly ill. Dr. Bernhard healed her and the Lelover Rebbe blessed him that he should do teshuvah and that would bring Hashem much nachas.

Dr. Bernhard thought hard. How he thought he was going to heal the count and instead his travels brought him to Lelov.

The Rebbe continued and told him about Shaul Hamelech who went looking for lost donkeys and decided to visit the local *navi* who would explain to him the real purpose of his journey. Hashem had told Shmuel the day before that a



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Benjaminite will show up at his door and he will become the savior and king. Indeed, when Shaul came to Shmuel, Shmuel took him aside and informed him of his *tafkid*. As the saying goes: Shaul went looking for donkeys and found kingship.

And this happens to all of us. We think we go somewhere for a certain reason and Hashem has something totally different in mind for us.

Dr. Bernhard took the message to heart and became the tsaddik R' Chaim Dovid of Petrikov.

### ***Shehakol Niyeh Bidvaro***

Reb Velvel of Zitimir would say in the name of the Baal Shem Tov that sometimes people travel thousands of miles on business and their thoughts are quite different from those of their Creator. They believe that they are going to earn money, while Hashem has other things in mind. He could need them to say a *Berachah* – *shehakol niyeh bidvaro* – just in that certain place. Without the monetary incentive, they never would have gone there.

Sometimes people go places and exert great effort, and it is not for their own *tikun* but for someone else's. Maybe their *shamash* needs a certain *tikun* in a certain place.

Reb Moshe Avraham of Baranovitch (father of the Nesivos Shalom) was involved in arranging for sales of forests for wood chopping. He was once asked to evaluate a certain forest which was quite a distance away. When he arrived, the place was coated in snow and there was no way that he

could make the evaluation. What did he do? He said, "Hashem must have brought me here for a reason!"

At that, he took a cup of water, said *shehakol* with *kavanah*, and went home.

### **Better Than Diamonds**

Everyone knows the story of the Tenth Man – a man who worked in diamonds in Czarist Russia. He was on his way to work one morning when a fellow Jew cried, "Ah tzenter!" He wanted a *minyan* for he had *Yahrzeit*. Our diamond dealer looked at his watch. He was still early. So he went in to complete the *minyan*. But he was only the fourth! Mr. Yahrzeit went out to get six more "tzenter"s. How annoying! But once he entered the shteeble, he wasn't leaving so fast. He took out a *tehillim* to keep himself busy.

Finally ten men, probably Jewish assembled. Mr. Diamond was expecting a *mishnah*, a *kaddish* and to be on his way, only a half-hour late. But Mr. Yahrzeit had something else in mind. He started at Mizmor Shir and was going to daven the whole *shacharis* with his precious *minyan* he had worked so hard to create. Mr. Diamond gritted his teeth but decided, if I'm here, I'm here. I'm not going to ruin his *minyan*.

But all the while, he was glancing at the door, maybe an eleventh man will come and I'll head out to work. When the *minyan* finally finished, Mr. Diamond makes his way towards his office. He sees a friend running towards him screaming frantically, "Run for your life! The Bolsheviks took



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over the diamond industry! The first thing they did was to finish off every Yid in sight!"

Now Mr. Diamond felt that his decision to stay for the *minyán* saved his life.

### A Sefer for Tanchum

Rav Mendelson was the Rosh Hayeshiva of Yeshivat Imrei Binah. After *Shacharit*, he usually took questions, but one day, he had an important meeting to attend with a government official, connected to his yeshiva's budget.

He quickly returned home, had a bite to eat, and prepared his necessary documents. Then he remembered a certain *bachur* in the *yeshiva*, Tanchum, had asked him for the source of something he had quoted. Tanchum had found the words to be very inspiring and he wanted to see them inside. The Rosh Hayeshiva had planned on going straight from the meeting to the yeshiva, so he had wanted to take with him this sefer for Tanchum.

The taxi was honking. The Rosh Yeshiva went towards the elevator and then remembered: The sefer for Tanchum! I have to go back to get it! He turned around and re-entered his apartment and "Pow!" a loud noise was heard from outside and all the lights went out. He retrieved the sefer, but power was out, so he could not use the elevator. He went down the stairs, entered the taxi and arrived at the meeting on time. It took several hours to get power back in the neighborhood. If not for Tanchum's sefer, he would have been stuck in the elevator for who-knows-how-long.

We must appreciate forgetfulness, and see it as part of Hashem's plan for our best.

### Mrs. Hershel's 25<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary Present

Hershel was a punctual fellow. He never came late, but also not too early. Everything was calculated. In 1960, he travelled to Detroit and returned to the airport a half an hour early for his return flight. He saw a distraught Yerushalmi Yid and offered assistance. The Yerushalmi said that he could not find his wallet, maybe he left it in the hotel. Hershel said, "I have some time to spare. Come, let's take a taxi and look for it."

They got to the hotel and found the wallet, but then they had to return to the airport and got stuck in traffic. Hershel really wanted to catch this flight. After all, tonight was his 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary and the kids were planning something special.

But... he missed the flight. Instead of calling home right away (this is before everyone had a cellphone), he decided to wait a few hours. When he finally called, his wife was caught by surprise. "What?! You're still alive?!" she screamed in disbelief. "A few hours ago, we heard that your plane exploded!"

Follow Hashem's plan and appreciate delays!

**Have a successful journey, each step of the way!**

**Shabbat Shalom!**

**Mordechai Malka**