

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM RABBI YITZI

לרפואה שלימה ליוסף יצחק בן ברכה

PARSHAS VAYISHLACH

Yaakov vs. Yisrael

In this week's Parsha, Vayishlach, we read how Yaakov fights with an angel and wins. The angel tells him that he also will be called Yisrael "because you struggled with Hashem (s angel) and with men, and prevailed." Later in our Parsha, Hashem tells Yaakov that his name will now be Yisrael. He goes on to be called by both names, sometimes Yisrael and other times Yaakov.

These are the names we are called by, Bnei Yisrael, the Children of Israel and Bais Yaakov, the House of Jacob.

What is the significance of these names? Why keep both names? If Yisrael is so special, why keep Yaakov?

As Jews we have a constant inner struggle. On one hand, there is being a part of this physical world, with all the hardships and pleasures that go with it. On the other, there is our ability to rise above it all and be one with Hashem.

Our name Yaakov, which means heel, is the part of us that deals with this world. Yaakov also means to trick, being clever, because it is our mission to transform this world into a

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Godly place. Since this world is a world of lies and corruption, we must be clever not to be taken by its allure. Yisrael is our ability to rise above it all. Above both physical and spiritual realms (which are both creations) and connect with our essence, our Neshama,

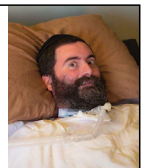
which is actually a part of Hashem, and not subject to the deceit of Creation.

While Yisrael sounds nice, it doesn't affect the change we are meant to accomplish in the world. Yet it is necessary for us to go there from time to time, to rejuvenate and remind ourselves of our purpose. Yaakov is the part of us that transforms this world, which can only be done by taking part in it.

On a personal level, our lives are full of pain and struggles. It is there that we accomplish our primary purpose. Our struggles have meaning, and our suffering is accomplishing amazing things. It is hard to see it this way. That is when we need to connect with Hashem, rise above and rejuvenate. From time to time, we need to let go and allow Hashem to take over.

It is time for our struggles to end. May Hashem send Moshiach and put an end to this dark exile. May it happen soon.

Despite facing one of life's most difficult challenges, Rabbi Yitzi Hurwitz continues to spread joy and faith to thousands around the globe. Diagnosed in 2012 with ALS, Rabbi Yitzi is now 95% paralyzed and no longer able to speak or breath on his own. Thanks to the miracle of technology, Rabbi Yitzi continues to spread his wisdom through his eyes, focusing on each and every letter of these Torah articles. Rabbi Yitzi, his wife Dina and their seven children are the Rebbe's Shluchim to Temecula, California.



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