

Vayetzei- Gen. 28:10- 32:1

יש יהוה במקום הזה ואנכי לא ידעתי

Yesh Adonai Ba-makom ha-zeh God is in this place
Va-anochi lo yadati And I did not know.

מה נורא המקום הזה

Mah Nora Hamakom Haze
How awesome is this place (Gen. 28:17-18)

Kedushat Levi: Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev

The line: **והנה מלאכי אלוקים עולים ויורדים בו**, "and behold G'd's angels were ascending and descending on that ladder," is the message that even exile has its positive aspects, as it enables numerous "sparks" that had previously "fallen" from the tree that we perceive as the *Shechinah*, to find their way back to their holy origin. At the same time, regrettably, the descent of the Jewish people into exile brings with it a parallel descent of some other "sparks" from the *Shechinah* into the ritually contaminated part of the universe. In our verse these "sparks" are referred to as **מלאכי אלוקים**, "Angels of the Divine." Presiding over all these happenings is G'd, **והנה ה' נצב עליו**, "and behold the Lord is standing above it;" this line also reassures Yaakov that wherever he may find himself he will not be alone, as G'd Himself accompanies him even in exile. Moses confirms this in psalms 91,15 when he says (quoting G'd) "I will be with him in distress." Seeing that the Lord is with us, our real "pain" or sorrow is really G'd's pain and sorrow.

As soon as G'd saw that Yaakov's concern was with His pain and sorrow, and how all this would impact on the foundation of the Jewish people and its development, He reassured him that he was the same G'd Who had looked after Avraham and Yitzchok, his respective grandfather and father. He assured him that this same piece of earth on which he was lying at this time, i.e. that he is so worried about, He, the Lord will give to him and to his descendants and that his descendants will spread out to all the corners of the earth. He continues to reassure Yaakov that during all the vicissitudes of history that his descendants would endure, He would always keep a benevolent eye on them. They will, in due course, return from exile to a brighter future.

והנה אנכי עמך ושומרתיך בכל אשר תלך

Hinei Anochi Imach, U'sh'marticha b'chol asher teileich
Right here am I with you, and I will keep you safe wherever you go (Gen. 28:15)