

# Knesset Israel

## Your Beverlywood Shul

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### Parshat Vayishlach

#### By Rabbi Avraham Schefres

Got Spirituality? Want some? Spirituality is a big word with a definition that includes many details and sub definitions. Generally, it means recognizing Hashem's presence and His connection to the world. Spirituality is not merely a state of mind and so attaining it includes the combination of ritual (doing mitzvot) and the cognitive recognition of Hashem; we need both because one without the other amounts to an inadequate try in reaching this goal. Further proof of this is the fact that we embody the physical and spiritual; if we are to have the two living in harmony, we need to include both in our spiritual quest. In addition, we may want to realize that spirituality is continuously here, in our daily lives, and is waiting to be discovered. How is that?

In Vayishlach, we learn that Yaakov is afraid of having a confrontation with Eisav. He prays to Hashem and tries to broker a deal so he may avoid Eisav. He prepares for war by dividing his family just in case he cannot evade conflict. He further prepares gifts for Eisav to try to appease him and steer clear of battle. None of these strategies work as Yaakov has a confrontation with the angel of Eisav that lasted the night. At the end of the battle, the angel gives Yaakov a new name (Bereishit 32:28-29) which is later reaffirmed by Hashem himself (35:9-10). That name is Yisrael "because you have commanding power with (an angel of) Hashem and with men, and you prevailed." (32:29). Rashi explains that the new name suggests strength and triumph (35:10). Rabbenu Bachya parroted this same understanding (32:29). The Netziv, in Ha'amek Davar (Ibid) explains the name Yisrael to mean supernatural and Rabenu Bachaya (47:29) agrees that the name evokes the spiritual part in us. In other words, all clarifications of the name Yisrael point to higher connection with Hashem. Yet, Yaakov did not anticipate that this would be the outcome of his confrontation with Eisav, in fact, he tried to avoid it in any way he could.

We, Bnei Yisrael as the children of Yisrael (Yaakov), can learn from this that we can reach many levels of spirituality as our forefather Yaakov did; spirituality is around us even when we don't expect it to be and even if we try to avoid it. We may be strengthened by the fact that Yaakov did not only succeed in existing with G-dly beings but he triumphed, which means that we – his children – can do the same. It is always encouraging to know that we would triumph in what we want to do. We further learn from Yaakov that spirituality is here for us to reach, not only through mitzvot and quest for closeness with Hashem, but through every experience in our lives. May each of us have the power we need to pursue spirituality and reach it so we can truly enjoy harmony between our physical and spiritual self while on our journey in *olam hazeh*, this world.

### Shabbat Times

#### Erev Shabbat Nov 27, 2015 / 15 Kislev, 5776

Candle Lighting.....3:41 pm to 4:26 pm  
Mincha.....4:30 pm

#### Shabbat Day Nov 28, 2015 / 16 Kislev, 5776

Shacharit.....9:00 am  
Kiddush.....11:30 am  
Mincha.....4:25 pm  
Havdalah / Shabbat Ends.....5:27 pm

### Announcements

Minyan, breakfast and shiur with Rabbi Aryeh Lebowitz this Sunday morning. Please see flier on the back of the newsletter.

# **Knesset Israel Invites YOU**

## **Sunday Morning**

### **November 29**

### **To Spend A Little Time**

### **With A Torah Scholar**

## **Rabbi Aryeh Lebowitz**



**Please join us for a very special event this Sunday morning at Knesset Israel, featuring a shiur from world renowned visiting scholar, Rabbi Aryeh Lebowitz. Rabbi Lebowitz is the Rav of Beis Haknesses of North Woodmere in addition to being a Rebbe at DRS Yeshiva High School and Magid**

**Shiur and program director of Yeshivat Lev Shlomo. He is well known for his over 5,000 shiurim on Yutorah.org that have gained incredible popularity because of his astounding breadth of knowledge and clarity of presentation.**

**The program will begin with davening at 8 am sharp, followed by a breakfast and a 45 minute shiur.**

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