

"And he encountered the place, and he lay there because the sun had set, and he took of the stones of the place and put under his head." (28:11)

The *Midrash* offers what seems to be contradicting explanations for the meaning of *ouenc gdphu* . It states that the word *gdphu* means to pray. Since this scene transpired in the evening, the *Midrash* says this alludes to Yaakov's instituting *Tefillas Arvis*. There is another *Midrash* which interprets this *pasuk* differently, "*He wanted to proceed and the whole world became like a wall in front of him.*" Perhaps we may suggest a relationship between these two *Midrashim*. They reflect the life of a Jew throughout *galus* (exile) and suggest the effective response one must offer. "*ouenc gdpuh*" - wherever the Jew turns, he meets a blank wall. Just when things seem to be going "his way," something stops him, denying success. How does one respond to the challenges which we confront in our daily endeavor? "*ouenc gdphu*" respond through prayer! Turn to Hashem, entreat Him through your prayers at times of darkness. Yaakov *Avinu* teaches us that a prayer from the heart can overcome any obstacle.