

He stepped near and rolled the stone from the mouth of the well. (29:10)

Rashi teaches that Yaakov *Avinu* was able to roll the stone off the well with the same ease as one removes a stopper from a bottle opening. Are *Chazal* that impressed with Yaakov's physical strength that they feel it is a necessary lesson to impart to us? Are we that interested in our Patriarch's physical prowess? Furthermore, in *Tefillas Geshem*, we say, *Yichad lev v'gal even mi'pi be'er mayim... Baavuro al timna mayim*, "He dedicated his heart and rolled a stone off the mouth of a well of water... For his sake, do not hold water back!" What merit does Yaakov's physical strength serve for us? Last, if Yaakov *Avinu* had truly been that strong, why did he not employ his strength to -- once and for all -- put Eisav in his place? Why did he shirk from Elifaz when he came at his father's behest to eliminate Yaakov?

Horav Meir Chadash, zl, explains that our Patriarch was, indeed, a very strong man, but this strength was used only in pursuit of his *avodas Hashem*, service to the Almighty. He deferred his opportunity to be with his father, and chose instead to escape to Charan, because he did not want to chance a confrontation with Eisav. He was prepared to give away all of his money to Elifaz, rather than to battle with him. He used his strength only for such a noble purpose as providing *chesed*, kindness, enabling the people to draw water from the well. He used his strength to overcome his strong desire to put Lavan in his place, when he had the opportunity to avenge his honor. He demonstrated his strength by not resorting to bloodshed, instead seeking avenues of compromise. The merit that Yaakov used his physical advantage only for spiritual goals is what stands on our behalf. Our Patriarch understood that everything which is placed at our disposal is not for our personal advantage, but for the purpose of enabling us to help others and to further our own spiritual development.