

And Yaakov settled in the land of his fathers' sojourning. (37:1)

The words "*vayeshev*," settled, and "*megurei*," sojourning, contrast with one another. One implies permanence, while the latter alludes to a temporary state. Indeed, this formulation catalyzes *Chazal* to suggest that after a long exile and numerous struggles, Yaakov finally wished to settle down, to live peacefully. Hashem sent the anguish of Yosef to disturb his efforts. Hashem told him, "Are the righteous not satisfied with what awaits them in *Olam Habah* that they expect to live at ease in *Olam Hazeih*?" In other words, the righteous have no right to demand tranquillity in this world.

We must attempt to reconcile ourselves with *Chazal's* statement. Yaakov literally went through a life of misery. He did not have a "good day." From the enmity of his brother, Eisav; to the deception of his father-in-law, Lavan; to losing his beloved Rachel; to the tragedy of his daughter, Dinah; to the near loss of his sons Yosef, Shimon, and Binyamin, Yaakov clearly suffered throughout his life. Was he not entitled to a little *menuchas ha'nefesh*, tranquillity and rest? Avraham had *Olam Hazeih*; he was wealthy, respected, and admired by all. Yitzchak also achieved prominence and material success. Why did Hashem criticize Yaakov for wanting to enjoy life? Is a positive experience in *Olam Hazeih* forbidden?

There is ostensibly no prohibition against enjoying the fruits of this world. Commerce is commendable as long as it is performed in accordance with *Torah* dictate. We are permitted any material benefits that we reap through methods that are above reproach. We are expected to utilize opportunities to enjoy a lifestyle of *Torah* and *avodas Hashem*, helping those institutions and individuals who are in need. Indeed, shortly before his death, the *Gaon M'Vilna* lamented that he was leaving a world where, for just a few coins, one can purchase a pair of *tzitzis*, for which he would merit *Olam Habah*. Therefore, what was inappropriate about Yaakov *Avinu's* request?

Horav Elchanan Sorotzkin, zl, observes that there is "sufficient" *Olam Hazeih* for everyone to enjoy. It is not as if we fear that a *tzaddik* might receive too much of This World. We may foster divergent attitudes, however, towards material possessions in This World. Avraham and Yitzchak were completely satisfied with their lots in *Olam Habah*. They viewed their portions in *Olam Hazeih* as nothing more than a medium for attaining eternity--no more, no less. Everything on this world, all the pleasures, benefits, and moments of joy and tranquillity had no value in their own right--only as a vehicle for *Olam Habah*. All their days they wandered from place to place, spreading the word of G-d. Even when Avraham remained in a place for an extended period of time, such as Chevron and Plishtim, the *Torah* views it only as a "sojourn." Yitzchak, who lived in *Eretz Yisrael* the entire time, is also described as a "*ger b'aretz*," a sojourner in the land. Their *Olam Hazeih* was intrinsically meaningless to them. Everything was oriented towards *Olam Habah*.

When Yaakov sought to settle in the land of his fathers' sojourning, *Chazal* sense that he was

attempting to transform his perspective from the attitude that his ancestors had embraced. He wanted to settle in the land, to benefit from *Olam Hazeih*, to relax in peaceful solitude--as an end in itself. He valued *Olam Hazeih* in its own right.

As a result of Yaakov's attitude towards *Olam Hazeih*, he was plagued with the anguish of Yosef. He distinguished Yosef from the rest of his sons by giving him a multi-colored garment, reflecting a tendency towards valuing the material. This catalyzed envy and enmity among the brothers. When one views material goods as nothing more than a medium for attaining spiritual rewards, there is no room for jealousy. Yaakov's act of attributing value to *Olam Hazeih* caused his later anguish.