

# עדת אש קודש

## Adass Aish Kodesh



*We offer the following from the Rov Shlita's vast library of past articles. The Rav will be lifting his pen to write new articles in the very near future... We all wish him strength and healing at this tragic time and hope he will be blessed to lead us all for many years to come with only simchos and nachas.*

Nov 2007

### LOOKING PAIN THROUGH THE WINDOW OF LIFE

**Harav Y. Reuven Rubin Shlita**

I am slowly beginning to appreciate that as the pendulum of time sweeps through its arc one's body begins to show some wear and tear. It just bothers me that when life's wake-up calls arrive it's never convenient. Last week I was getting into my car to go to shul to daven. Now, one of the gifts Yeshiva never bestowed upon me was a passion for physical exercise, so it could be said that I lack a certain gracefulness in my body movements. There I was manoeuvring my frame into the car in my usual jaunty way. I sat myself behind the wheel, put one leg in, then the other. No, wait; actually the second one didn't really get there as planned. I somehow twisted the said appendage and wrenched my knee. "Ouch" sort of describes my reaction to the setback. I cried out, then rubbed my leg, praying that it would just be a passing bump, but no such luck. Not only was my knee throbbing; the entirety of my leg seemed to be howling its excruciating hurt. Tears sprang to my eyes. I couldn't move in any way. I was alone, and in truth, sincerely distressed. For the next fifteen minutes or so, here was this pain-ridden image, and all the while I had a certain dialogue going on with Hashem where I did Teshuva at every level I know of. Boruch Hashem, after the initial shock to my system my body recovered enough strength to allow me to emerge gingerly from behind the wheel. I say "gingerly" because I quickly realized that with every new movement I was presenting my body with new opportunities for the ache to intensify. I limped back into my house, wounded, feeling sorry for myself, and wondering how I could positively exploit this painful experience.

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You may laugh, but trust me, this is very much part of the experience that I call my life. You see, I am called upon to speak all the time; I am also one that writes the odd column or two. So, everything that happens to me becomes potential material for future articles and speeches.

As the horrendous ache subsided I began to think of another Yidel who had a bad leg, and how his injury taught great lessons for all generations. I speak of course of Yaakov Avinu who wrestled with an angel and was injured in his hip socket. Now, my steering wheel is nowhere as dangerous as Esau's angel, unless, that is, you have seen the way I drive, but I still thought of what our ancestor's wounding was meant to teach us. Yaakov had gone back for some small items in the dead of night; he fights the mysterious "stranger" who we are told was the essence of Esau, his wicked brother. He fights and the dust of their scuffle rises to the heavens, and then, just as day is about to break, the angel, seeing he can't overcome the righteous soul, wounds him. Yaakov limps and then he "Lifted his eyes and saw Esau coming."

Yaakov's life is our example. We often get bogged down in the seeming minutiae of life, but when seen in a certain light they become vital. We can't leave them behind whilst we make our way forward, and so we return to sort them out. Then we encounter the forces of what can be only described as Satan's darkness; we wrestle, tumble about, even roll in the dust of what is our lowest point. However, if we are focused, if we accept that all life's difficulties are sent to refine us, then we can win the day. As the darkness of night slips away, just before the rising of the sun, we may feel most vulnerable, we may be wounded and cry out in pain....but if we look up, if we see Hashem, then even if we are in the company of Esau our prayers will be answered. We often limp along, the darkness of our personal life seems to delay us in the dust, yet the wound can be healed if we look up in prayer to Hashem.

In Vayeishev we see Yaakov "settled in the land where his father had sojourned". Our Sages tell us that Yaakov felt he had earned a quiet life. He had fought with Lavan and with Esau, he had been cheated and wounded, yet throughout it all he had been true in his trust of Hashem. So he sought to rest now and see some Yiddisher nachas. Instead, a new and more complicated trial was about to be unleashed. There would be tumult amongst his children and his special son Joseph would become lost.

Seems we can never rest, we can never think: now is a time where I can revel in my past victories. Life is about reaching, stretching, growing; if not you might as well be sleeping. We have to go through each passage of life with a keen understanding that Hashem is sending us new opportunities to gain greater spirituality.

To read the open letter written by the Rov's Daughter about the Rebitzen Z"l please follow this link  
<http://bit.ly/ourrebitzen>

We are in the process of putting together a book about the Rebitzen Z"l, to share your stories and anecdotes please write to us at [memories@aishkodesh.co.uk](mailto:memories@aishkodesh.co.uk)

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