

# PARSHAS VAYEITZEI

## YadAvNow.com Weekly Video Series: Vayitzei

Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky

### The Effect of a Tzaddik on a Location

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### Vaporizing the Untenable to Assure the Perpetuity of Existence

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1. *Yaakov* leaves Beersheva to go to *Charan*.
2. *Chazal*: When a devoutly righteous person leaves a location, its splendor & beauty depart with him.
3. This is extrapolated from the words "Yaakov left Beersheva."
4. Although *Yitzchok* and *Rivka* remained, his absence made its mark.
5. He fathered the twelve tribes; his absence was more greatly felt.
6. Was it that the 12 tribes were only a consequence of *Yaakov's* dimension?
7. *Yaakov*: "Man of The Tent (of *Torah*)" was a personification of the *Torah*.
8. *Midrash*: *Avraham* was thrown into the fiery kiln: the heavenly angels objected to G-d's saving him.
9. "A man whose descendants are going to be evil how do you save him?"
10. G-d: He will have a grandson *Yaakov* in whose merit he will be saved.
11. Prophets: The house of *Yaakov* redeemed *Avraham*.
12. *Gemara*: "I've created an evil inclination; I've created *Torah* as its antidote."
13. *Midrash*: As long as the voice is the voice of *Yaakov*, the hands can not be the hands of *Esav*.
14. The counterbalance to *Esav* is *Yaakov*.
15. *Yaakov* will counter all of *Avraham's* evil descendants (*Yishmael*, *Edom*).
16. His absence was felt there because only he could counter the evil of *Esav*.

## Weekly Torah Commentary Series: Vayitzei



# PARSHAS VAYEITZEI

## Yaakov's Concern for G-d's Glory

*Torah:* "Yaakov simmered a stew, and Esav came in from the field and he was exhausted. Esav said to Yaakov, 'Pour into me, now, some of that very red stuff for I am exhausted.' Yaakov said, 'Sell, this day, your birthright to me.'" Esav was the firstborn (*bechor*) of his father *Yitzchak* and was thus naturally worthy of the birthright. If the birthright was rightfully Esav's, why did Yaakov want to take something that was not rightfully his?

*Rashi* citing *Chazal*: "Initially, the firstborn was meant to be the *Officiant of G-d (Kohen)* to do the service in the Temple. However, after Yaakov understood Esav's dimension of evil, he said, 'It is not appropriate that one who is so evil, to be the *Officiant of G-d.*' If Esav were truly worthy to be the *Kohen*, Yaakov would not have considered taking the birthright from him. However, since Esav was evil, it would be a disgrace to G-d to have such an *Officiant*, thus Yaakov chose to take the birthright when Esav was vulnerable and weak for the sake of G-d's Honor.

*Torah:* "Esav came in from the field and he was exhausted..."

*Chazal:* Esav was exhausted because on that day he had violated five cardinal sins.

*Midrash:* When Esav returned from the field in a fatigued state he saw his brother Yaakov cooking lentils with ash on his face. When seeing this, Esav asked Yaakov, "What happened?" Yaakov responded, "Our grandfather passed away." When Esav heard the words of Yaakov regarding his grandfather's passing, he was taken aback due to the tragic news and exclaimed, "There is no justice and there is no Judge!" He thus became a heretic.

Esav understood that Avraham was meant to live 180 years. If he passed away five years before his time, it was an indication that G-d had denied his grandfather five years that were rightfully his. Esav knew that his grandfather was devoutly righteous and deserving to live a full life. If G-d had taken these years from

such a righteous individual such as *Avraham*, it was an indication that there is no justice and no Judge! After *Yaakov* witnessed *Esav's* rejection of G-d, he understood at that moment that he was not qualified to be the *Kohen*. It was thus imperative for him to purchase the birthright from *Esav* not because *Yaakov* wanted the birthright for himself, but rather because it became clear how evil *Esav* was. It would be a desecration of G-d's name if he were to be the *Kohen*, due to the fact that he was the firstborn.

*Torah*: *Moshe* did not participate in the building of the *Mishkan*.

*Chazal*: *Moshe* did not do so because he wanted to give the opportunity to every Jew to participate in the *mitzvah*. Had he participated in the building of the *Mishkan*, he could have denied them that merit. He thus chose to allow them to build the *Mishkan*, and he would complete what they would not do. Because of *Moshe's* concern for G-d's Glory, G-d reserved the privilege of erecting the *Mishkan* for *Moshe*, which was a task that only he could do. *Moshe* put G-d's glory before his own. Similarly, *Yaakov's* objective in life was only to bring about the greatest level of glory to G-d. He did not consider his own. It was only when he understood that *Esav's* essence was truly evil, he needed to purchase the birthright for the sake of G-d's glory.

*Chovos HaLevavos* in *Duties of the Heart* (in the Gate of Love): One comes to love G-d through the study of *Torah* and its dissemination to others. As it states in the first paragraph of the *Shema*: "You shall love G-d with all of your heart, all of your soul, and all of your possessions. You shall teach it to your children (students)..." *Yaakov* who had invested his life in the study of *Torah* as he is quantified by the *Torah* as "The perfect man who dwells in the tents (of *Torah*)" could not tolerate the fact that someone of *Esav's* level of depravity should be the Officiant of G-d. *Moshe*, being the ultimate disseminator of *Torah*, as he is referred to as "*Rabbeinu* (our teacher)" was one who loved G-d more than anyone else and was more concerned for His Honor.

## **Yitzchak's Quantification of his son Yaakov**

*Torah*: *Rivka*, the mother of *Yaakov*, through her prophetic vision, instructed him to go to his father *Yitzchak* and take the blessings that were rightfully his. In order for *Yaakov* to accomplish this task, he needed to present himself to his father as his brother

*Esav*. However, because *Esav* was a hairy man and *Yaakov* was smooth skinned, *Yaakov* was concerned that he would be discovered as deceiving his father. *Rivka* reassured him that he would not be discovered due to her prophecy. She thus took goats hides and placed them on his arms and neck so that he should not be detected.

*Torah*: When *Yaakov* presented himself to his father *Yitzchak* together with the delicacies that *Rivka* had prepared, *Yitzchak* asked him, "...Who are you, my son?" *Yaakov* responded, "It is I, *Esav* your firstborn; I have done as you told me; rise up please, sit and eat of my game so that your soul may bless me." *Yitzchak* said to his son, 'How is it that you were so quick to find, my son?' and *Yaakov* said, 'Because *Hashem* your G-d arranged it for me.'" Upon hearing *Yaakov's* response, *Yitzchak* asked that he come close so that he could feel him in order to confirm that in fact he was *Esav*.

*Torah*: "So *Yaakov* drew close to *Yitzchak* his father who felt him. He said, 'The voice is the voice of *Yaakov*, but the hands are the hands of *Esav*...so he blessed him.'" The reason *Yitzchak* suspected that this was not his son *Esav* was because *Esav* did not speak in a refined manner nor did he mention the name of G-d, as *Yaakov* had done.

*Midrash* in the introduction to *Eichah* explaining the words of our Patriarch *Yitzchak*, "The voice is the voice of *Yaakov*, and the hands are the hands of *Esav*..." *Midrash*: "The two greatest wise men of the nations of the world, *Bilaam* and *Gardi* were asked, 'When do we know that the Jewish people are vulnerable to destruction?' They answered, 'You must go to the synagogues to see if you hear the chirpings of children (studying *Torah*) and the study halls to see if the sound of *Torah* is heard (from the adults). If the children and adults are studying, they cannot be destroyed due to the blessing of *Yitzchak* who had said, 'When the voice is the voice of *Yaakov*, the hands cannot be the hands of *Esav*...' However, if there are no chirpings and the study halls are silent, then (G-d forbid) the hands will be the hands of *Esav*. Meaning, you can then destroy them.'"

Seemingly, the statement of *Yitzchak* when he had said, "The voice is the voice of *Yaakov*..." is an observation that *Yitzchak* had made after hearing *Yaakov's* manner of expression and feeling his skin. *Yitzchak* was presented with an enigma, although *Yaakov* was presenting himself as *Esav*, his manner of speech was consistent with that

of *Yaakov*. He therefore wanted to feel his son to know if in fact it was *Esav*. After feeling the hairiness of his son, *Yitzchak* then believed that it was his son *Esav* who was hairy. It was at that time that *Yitzchak* had quantified *Yaakov* by saying, "The voice is the voice of *Yaakov*, but the hands are the hands of *Esav*."

*Chazal*: Although it was a statement of quantification of *Yaakov*, it is considered to be the equivalent of a blessing that *Yitzchak* had given to *Yaakov* and the Jewish people: "As long as the voice is the voice of *Yaakov*, the hands will not be the hands of *Esav*." Meaning, as long as the Jewish people are engaged in *Torah* study and prayer they will not be affected by *Esav*. If on the other hand the Jewish people are not utilizing their power of speech for *Torah* study and prayer, they will be vulnerable to the subjugation of *Esav*.

*Yaakov* understood that it was imperative for him to receive the blessing from his father *Yitzchak* because he appreciated the evilness of *Esav*. In addition, his mother had instructed him due to a prophetic communication that he should take the blessings that were rightfully his. *Yaakov* therefore took the initiative to disguise himself as *Esav* in order to receive the blessings. Despite the gravity of the situation and his initiative to disguise himself with the goats' hides, when *Yaakov* addressed his father, he did so in the most refined manner which was the way he would normally speak to his father. It was not the manner of expression of *Esav* who was less refined.

*Yaakov* said to *Yitzchak*, "...rise up please, sit..." Not only was his speech refined and respectful, he also chose to attribute the success of his trapping of game to G-d. As it states, *Yitzchak* asked him, "How is it that you were so quick?" *Yaakov* responded, "Because *Hashem* your G-d arranged it for me." *Yitzchak*'s quantification of *Yaakov*, "The voice is the voice of *Yaakov*..." was a result of something that was enigmatic. The voice was the voice of *Yaakov*, but the hands were the hands of *Esav*. If *Yaakov* wanted to conceal his true identity, why did he express himself as he normally would, rather than as *Esav*, thus risking being discovered?

*Yaakov* understood that he needed to take the initiative to receive the blessing from his father. However, the initiative which he took could not be contradictory to the dictates of the *Torah*. If he would have spoken in an unrefined manner to his father, it would have been a violation of the commandment of honoring one's father.

If he would have attributed the quickness of finding the game and preparing the delicacies to himself and not to G-d, it would have been an expression of heresy. Thus, in both instances he could not conceal who he was.

It is interesting to note that the Jewish people only merited the eternal blessing "The voice is the voice of *Yaakov*..." because *Yaakov* would not compromise his manner of speech to his father due to his dimension of faith in G-d despite the possibility of being discovered. He had expressed himself in an enigmatic manner, which was puzzling to *Yitzchak*, which could have caused him to be discovered. However, he was not. Rather, *Yitzchak* had quantified him by saying, "The voice is the voice of *Yaakov*..." Subsequently, *Yaakov* received the blessing that was rightfully his.

*Torah*: After *Avraham* had vanquished the four mighty kings who had taken *Lot* and the *Sodom* community captive, the king of *Sodom* had made demands upon *Avraham* saying, "Give me the people and the possessions shall be yours." *Avraham*'s response to the king of *Sodom* was, "I will not take from you as much as a thread or a bootstrap." *Avraham* refused the king of *Sodom* because he understood that if he were to accept anything from him, this heathen king would claim to the world, "I have made *Avraham* wealthy" which would have been a desecration of G-d's name. Therefore, although *Avraham* was the victor and could rightfully take what was his, he refused to take anything from the king of *Sodom* in order not to bring about a desecration of G-d's name.

*Gemara* in Tractate *Chulin*: In the merit of *Avraham* not accepting as much as a "thread" from the king of *Sodom*, the Jewish people merited the *mitzvah* of *tzitzis* (fringes). In the merit of him not accepting as much as "a bootstrap" the Jewish people merited the *mitzvah* of *tefillin* (phylacteries). The *mitzvah* of *tzitzis* has special value because it represents all of the 613 *mitzvos*. When a Jew looks upon the *tzitzis*, he remembers all of the *mitzvos*. The *mitzvah* of *tefillin* is a sign through which the Jewish people identify as G-d's people. Because *Avraham* had the clarity to refuse something that was rightfully his for the sake of G-d's glory, the Jewish people merited infinitely precious *mitzvos*. It was only as a result of *Yaakov*'s faith and belief in G-d that he did not succumb to the concern that the blessing would not be his.

## Yaakov's Uncompromising Standard of Truth

*Torah:* Yaakov agreed to work for Lavan for the hand of Rachel for seven years. After he had completed the seven years of labor that he had pledged to Lavan for the sake of Rachel, Lavan deceived Yaakov into marrying Leah, the sister of Rachel. After Yaakov discovered that he had been deceived, he agreed to work for an additional seven years for the hand of Rachel.

*Torah:* "G-d saw that Leah was despised, so He opened her womb; but Rachel remained barren...." How could Yaakov, who was the most special of the Patriarchs despise Leah, his wife, who was devoutly righteous?

*Sforno:* It is because Yaakov had suspected that because Leah displayed signs of being barren, she agreed to her father's deception because she believed that no one else would marry her due to her barren state. Therefore, Yaakov despised her for this reason. In order to dispel Yaakov's suspicion regarding Leah, G-d performed a miracle and opened her womb, thus allowing her to conceive. As a result of seeing that G-d allowed her to conceive, Yaakov no longer despised Leah.

Although Leah was able to conceive and give birth to a son, her relationship with Yaakov remained difficult until she conceived their third son. As the verse states, "This time my husband will become attached to me for I have borne him three sons..." According to Sforno's explanation of the reason Yaakov despised Leah (due to her being barren) the birth of Reuven, their first son, should have dispelled his suspicion about Leah's intent of deception. However, we find that after her second son Shimon was born, Leah chose to call him Shimon because "G-d had heard my plight." We see from this that even after she gave birth to their first son, their relationship remained difficult. If so, what did Yaakov see in Leah that caused him to despise her to such degree?

The *Torah* quantifies Yaakov as the "Perfect man who dwelt in the tent (of *Torah*)." Meaning, Yaakov is the Patriarch who personifies *Torah*. He had dedicated his entire life to the continuous study of *Torah* and was thus imbued with *Torah* at the most advanced level.

*Gemara* in Tractate *Avodah Zorah*: Regarding G-d's daily schedule, "During the first three hours of the day, G-d studies *Torah* and during the second three hours of the day, He sits in judgment of the world..."

*Gemara:* If one prays the *Mussaf Amidah* of *Rosh Hashanah* as an individual, not within the context of a *minyan* (quorum of ten men), he should not do so during the first three hours of the day, because the most intense and exacting level of judgment occurs during this period of time. However, if one prays within the context of a *tzibur* (congregation), there is no need to be concerned. This is because of the special merit of the *tzibur*.

*Gemara:* "If G-d sits in judgment of the world during the second three hours of the day, why should one be concerned to pray the *Mussaf* service as an individual during the first three hours? When G-d studies *Torah* during the first three hours of the day, it is the most intense moment of judgment. However, the level of judgment that is unleashed during the second three hours of the day when He sits in judgment of the world is not as severe."

When G-d studies *Torah*, it is a moment of exactness and truth, as King Solomon states in *Proverbs*, "Acquire Truth and do not sell it." The *Torah* is unadulterated Truth. Because it is precise and exact, it is therefore a moment that G-d does not tolerate any degree of imperfection. There are no gray areas in *Torah*— something is either permitted or forbidden. Therefore, one is discouraged from praying the *Mussaf* service during the first three hours of the day on *Rosh Hashanah* outside of the context of a *minyan*.

Yaakov was the Patriarch who is the embodiment of *Torah*, which is synonymous with unadulterated truth. He had dedicated his life to developing himself in the path of *Torah* so that he could be qualified to father the twelve tribes of Israel within a context of *Torah*, which is uncompromising truth. Yaakov understood that Lavan was deceitful and evil. He took every opportunity to deceive, cheat, and mislead Yaakov during his entire stay with him. When Yaakov realized that Leah was complicit in her father's deception, he believed that she also possessed his characteristic of deceitfulness. If he were to father the twelve tribes with Leah as the Matriarch, there would be a spiritual deficiency within the Jewish people. They would not be able to achieve and advance in *Torah* because of their own deficiency of truth.

*Gemara:* "I (G-d) created the evil inclination and the *Torah* as its antidote." It is only when the *Torah* is understood and processed within the context of truth

is it able to subdue the evil inclination. Without the aspect of truth, the Jewish people would be vulnerable to spiritual failure due to their evil inclination. The *Torah*, because it would be considered deficient, would not be able to quell the machinations of the evil inclination.

The fact that *Leah* displayed the characteristic of deceitfulness caused *Yaakov* to despise her because it was the antithesis of who the Jewish people were meant to be. In order to dispel *Yaakov's* negative perception of *Leah*, G-d performed a miracle which allowed her to conceive. The purpose of the miracle was to reveal that *Leah* was in fact worthy of being the Matriarch. However, after the birth of their first child, it is possible that the miracle was performed on *Yaakov's* behalf and not *Leah's*. After *Leah* gave birth to their forth son, it was clear that she had received a greater portion of the tribes than what was given to each of *Yaakov's* wives. This was to dispel any concern that *Yaakov* had regarding her character. *Leah* was devoutly righteous and without fault.

*Gemara* in Tractate *Sanhedrin*: It is a *mitzvah* to reach a compromise. If a judge is able to mediate between the two parties to come to an agreement, he should do so. This was the characteristic of *Aaron*. In contrast, *Moshe* never mediated between two parties to reach a compromise but rather his position was that the verdict needed to be absolute justice.

The *Gemara* describes *Moshe's* position of justice as "Even if it was meant that a mountain should be pierced, the truth of justice must prevail." Because of *Moshe's* uncompromising standard of truth, he merited to be the conduit to receive the *Torah* on behalf of the Jewish people and be its repository. Similarly, *Yaakov*, being the Patriarch who personifies the *Torah*, maintained a standard of truth that was uncompromising. Thus, realizing that *Leah*, who was meant to be the future Matriarch, had compromised in this area, he despised her.

## The Miraculous Survival of Yaakov

*Torah*: After *Yaakov* received the blessing from his father *Yitzchak*, *Esav* vowed to kill his brother. As the verse states, "Now *Esav* harbored hatred towards *Yaakov* because of the blessing...*Esav* thought, May the days of mourning for my father draw near, then I will kill my brother *Yaakov*." When *Rivka* became aware of *Esav's* intent she said to *Yaakov*, "....So now my son,

heed my voice and arise; flee to my brother *Lavan*, to *Charan* and remain with him a short while until your brother's wrath subsides." *Yaakov* thus fled to the community of *Lavan* to escape from his brother *Esav*.

*Yitzchak* told *Yaakov* that he should go to the house of *Lavan* and take one of his daughters as a wife, who would be the future Matriarch of the Jewish people. Just as *Eliezer* was given great wealth by his master *Avraham* to find a wife for *Yitzchok* and to negotiate for the hand of *Rivka*, so too was *Yaakov* given great wealth to be able to negotiate with *Lavan* for his future wife. If *Yaakov* had gone with such great wealth, why did he agree to work for the hand of *Rachel* for seven years? He should have negotiated with *Lavan* as *Eliezer* had done and leave immediately.

*Midrash*: Initially *Yaakov* had been given great wealth by his father *Yitzchak* in order to attain a wife. However, on his way to *Charan*, he was confronted by *Elifaz*, the son of *Esav*. He was sent by his father to kill *Yaakov*. When *Elifaz* came upon *Yaakov*, he said to him, "I must kill you so that I may fulfill the *mitzvah* of honoring one's parent. Since my father *Esav* has sent me to kill you, I must do so." *Yaakov* said to him, "You had learned under the tutelage of your grandfather *Yitzchak* the principle, 'One who is impoverished is the equivalent of one who is dead.' Therefore, take all of my wealth and you would have fulfilled your father's dictate." *Yaakov* was thus left destitute, as is indicated from the verse, which states, "With my walking stick I crossed the Jordan." Because *Yaakov* had relinquished the wealth that his parents had given him, he needed to work for *Lavan* for many years for the hand of *Rachel*.

*Elifaz* returned to his father *Esav* and informed him that although *Yaakov* was still alive and well in *Charan*, he had taken all of his wealth and thus left him destitute, which was the equivalent of being dead. Seemingly, *Esav* should have not been satisfied with *Elifaz's* explanation of why he did not kill *Yaakov*. If so, why did *Esav*, who had vowed to kill *Yaakov* for receiving the blessing, not journey to the house of *Lavan* and kill *Yaakov*? In addition, understanding the nature of *Lavan* who was evil, *Esav* knew that if he decided to pursue *Yaakov* to kill him, *Lavan* would not interfere. Why did *Esav* allow *Yaakov* to remain in the house of *Lavan* for many years undisturbed and unharmed?

*Torah*: After *Esav* had discovered that *Yaakov* had taken the blessings, "*Esav* said to his father, 'Have you but one

blessing, Father? Bless me too...’ *Yitzchak* answered, ‘By the sword you shall live, but your brother you shall serve; yet it shall be that when you are aggrieved, you may cast off his yoke from upon your neck.’”

*Rashi* citing *Chazal*: “When you are aggrieved” can mean, “When Israel will neglect the *Torah*, and you will be pained over the blessings that you did not receive, you will be able to cast his yoke from upon your neck.” Meaning, *Esav* is only subordinated to *Yaakov* as long as he maintains his level of spirituality through the observance of the *Torah* and its *mitzvos*. If he should become spiritually diminished, the blessing that was given to *Yaakov* would be nullified, and *Esav* would gain the upper hand and dominate *Yaakov*.

*Esav* was fully aware that *Yaakov* had come to the house of *Lavan* in an impoverished state. He would thus be forced to remain in an environment that was devoid of spirituality and exposed to a person who personified evil and depravity for an extended period. *Esav* believed that with time *Yaakov*’s dimension of spirituality would erode and be diminished thus rendering him unfit and unworthy of the blessing of their father *Yitzchak*. Therefore, there was no need for him to pursue *Yaakov* to kill him, because it was inevitable that *Esav* in time would regain the blessings of his birthright.

*Torah*: *Yaakov* was not only not diminished by the evil to which he was exposed and maintained his spiritual persona, but he also advanced. Perhaps one could attribute this to the fact that he was the Patriarch who personified *Torah*, and it was due to his continuous *Torah* study that he was not affected and diminished by the evil environment in the community of *Lavan*.

*Chazal*: Although *Yaakov* had dedicated his entire life to the study of *Torah*, prior to *Yaakov*’s departure to go to the house of *Lavan*, he had spent fourteen years studying *Torah* in the *Yeshivah* of *Aver*. *Yaakov*, understanding the evil influences that existed in *Charan*, needed to fortify himself so as not to be affected by remaining there for a prolonged period of time. In addition, *Yaakov* had received a guarantee from G-d that He would safeguard and protect him in the physical and spiritual and return him to his father’s household intact.

It is clear that *Esav* understood and appreciated the surroundings and environment to which *Yaakov* would be exposed in *Charan*. It was without a doubt in *Esav*’s mind that *Yaakov* would not be able to survive

spiritually in *Charan*, thus forfeiting the blessing of his father. Thus, he did not need to pursue and kill him in the house of *Lavan*.

King *David* in *Psalms*: “The beginning of wisdom is the fear of heaven...” Since *Yaakov* was the embodiment of *Torah*, he had the sufficient level of fear of heaven and reverence of G-d to understand that in order to be able to survive his sojourning in the house of *Lavan* without being spiritually scathed, he needed to take every possible initiative to insulate himself and his family from the evil of that society.

## Good and Evil on Equal Footing

*Torah*: *Yaakov* our Patriarch had a prophetic dream when he had slept on the Temple Mount. He had seen angels ascending and descending a ladder that extended into heaven. Each of the angels that ascended and descended the ladder represented the archangels of the various civilizations that were going to enslave the Jewish people in the future.

*Midrash*: “*Rav Shmuel Bar Nachman* says, ‘These are the angels of the nations of the world. *Yaakov* was shown the archangel of Babylon. He ascended 70 rungs of the ladder and then he descended (indicating that the Babylonian exile was going to be 70 years). *Yaakov* was then shown the archangel of Persia, which ascended 52 rungs before descending. The archangel of the Greeks ascended 100 rungs and then descended. However, when *Yaakov* saw the archangel of the Edomites (*Esav/Rome*) it continued to ascend without any indication of descending. *Yaakov*, upon seeing this, was frightened. He said to G-d, ‘Is it possible that this angel will ascend without ever descending? G-d responded, ‘My servant *Yaakov*, do not fear. Even if you will see him (the archangel of *Edom*) ascending up to the point that is next to Me, from there I will bring him down.’ As it is written, If they rise like an eagle and perch among the stars, from there I (G-d) will bring them down.’” The *Midrash* is saying that the archangel of Edom, which is a personification of evil, is able to ascend to a point that he can associate himself with G-d. Why would G-d allow this to take place?

*Gemara* in Tractate *Yomah*: The inclination of idolatry was such an overwhelming force at one time that it ravaged and destroyed the Jewish people. One of the sins that had caused the destruction of the First Temple,

was the sin of idolatry. It was even more overwhelming than the sexual drive. The Men of the High Assembly, fasted for thirty days so that G-d should reveal to them the evil inclination for idolatry so that it could be destroyed. After thirty days they had witnessed a fiery lion exiting from the Holy of Holies. They took this fiery lion that was the representation of the inclination for idolatry and removed it from existence.

It is interesting to note that the Holy of Holies, the location of G-d's presence, should be the location from which the inclination for idolatry should exit. Seemingly, this intense impure force has relevance to the most holy.

In order to maintain the context of choice in the world, G-d needs to have good and evil exist in an even plane so that each one should be a counterbalance for the other. If the representation of good would be initially established at a level that would be superior and more advanced than evil, humanity would be compelled to do good, thus rendering choice irrelevant. Therefore, in order to maintain the counterbalance, there needs

to be a representation of good as well as evil at the same advanced spiritual level. Thus, the fiery lion that represented idolatry emanated from the Holy of Holies. *Yaakov*, being the representation of good, and *Esav*, of evil, needed to immerge from their mother's womb simultaneously so that good and evil should exist on an equal footing.

We recite the verse in our prayers: "The saviors will ascend Mount Zion to judge *Esav's* mountain, and the kingdom will be *Hashem's*. Then *Hashem* will be King over all the world, on that day G-d will be One and His Name will be One." Meaning, at the end of time, regardless of the degree of evil that will exist in the world, G-d will vanquish the representation of *Esav* from existence. This will thus endow mankind with a level of clarity to be able to recognize and fully appreciate G-d in every aspect of creation. However, before that will take place, G-d allows the archangel of *Edom* to ascend to His level, to be on par with the Jewish people.



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