

THE CHABAD WEEKLY

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Why Does Esau Hate Jacob?

In Genesis 33:4, the Torah tells us about a kiss: after thirty-four years in which Jacob had fled his brother's wrath, and in which Esau had never ceased plotting to kill him, Esau has a change of heart. Seeing Jacob approach, Esau runs to him, embraces him, and kisses him.

But the word *vayishakeihu*, "and he kissed him", has a line of dots above it, which is the Torah's way of telling us that this was not a normal kiss. What was abnormal about this kiss? Well, the Midrash cites two interpretations. One is that the Torah is telling us that it was not a true kiss—Esau was really trying to kill Jacob by biting his throat. The other interpretation is that Esau kissed Jacob with all his heart—that's what was abnormal about the kiss, since "we know that it is a cardinal law of reality that Esau hates Jacob."

Either way you look at it, the bottom line is that Esau hates Jacob. No matter what Jacob does, Esau hates him. If Jacob appeases him, gives him gifts, acts towards him like the brother he is, Esau hates him even more. But why? Why does Esau hate Jacob? But first we should ask: Why does Esau exist at all? Why is there evil in our world? Why is there hatred and darkness? What would be wrong with a world consisting only of goodness, love and light?

Evil exists because it is so much more powerful than good. Is there a lover in the world who loves with the intensity that a hater hates? Is there a light as bright as darkness is black? Has there ever been an act of kindness unleashed with the force and vigor contained in an act of cruelty?

That is why, say the Kabbalists, G-d created evil. Darkness exists so that it should be transformed into light, resulting in a luminance infinitely greater than light itself could ever yield. Cruelty is implanted in the heart of man so that we should tap its intensity to fuel acts of kindness infinitely more potent than kindness itself could ever produce. Evil exists to be exploited by goodness.

The soul of Esau knows this—that he exists solely to serve his younger brother. That no matter how ferociously he resists this truth, that ferociousness itself will ultimately be Jacob's. That's why Esau hates Jacob so much: because he knows that his hate is not his own. By Yanki Tauber, based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe - chabadonline.com

"And when he saw that he did not prevail against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh."(32:26) Jacob's struggle with Esau's angel represents the physical suffering of galut. When the angel of Esau injured Jacob's hip-joint, he injured his righteous descendants. In the words of the Midrash, "This is the generation of the *shmad*"--the cruel tortures inflicted by the Romans in Mishnaic times (1st and 2nd century ce) in their effort to eradicate the faith of Israel.

There were other generations in which the same and worse was done to us. We suffered all this and persevered, as alluded to by the verse, "And Jacob arrived, whole."(Nachmanides) - chabadonline.com

"These are the names of the chieftains [that came] of Esau, chieftain Magdiel, chieftain Iram; these are the chieftains of Esau."

(36:40-43). The present galut is referred to as "Galut Edom - the Edomite Exile," because the Romans - who brought about the present galut with their destruction of the Holy Temple - were mostly descendants of Edom. This galut is generally divided into two eras, governed by two kinds of chieftains-leaders, as mentioned in the verse cited:

The first is "Chieftain Magdiel." This name signifies, and is an expression of, "he magnified himself (*yitgadel*) above every god" (Daniel 11:36). In this first era of the Edomite galut, the Roman empire expanded throughout the world, seeking to overpower Judaism and to make it difficult for Jews to observe Torah and mitzvot. The second one is "Chieftain Iram." This name, the Midrash notes, is an expression of "he is destined to amass (*le'erom*) treasures for the royal Moshiach." This refers to the second era of the Edomite galut, the one close to the Messianic days. In that time Rome will cease to subdue Israel and will itself submit to holiness. Moreover, it will even assist Moshiach. Rome will be transformed to realize the sacred meaning of its name: Romi as an expression of *hitromemut* - exaltation, i.e., the exaltation of holiness. www.moshiach.com

YUD TES KISLEV

In connection with the celebration of Yud-Tes Kislev, the question is often asked: Why is it necessary to study Chassidus? Before Yud-Tes Kislev, and even after Yud-Tes Kislev, there were many fine Jews who have not delved into this study. Why is it so necessary?

This question was put to Reb Lazer, a chassid of the Alter Rebbe who had journeyed from Eretz Yisrael to study Chassidus. He had been living in Jerusalem, married to the daughter of a wealthy man who provided for his daily expenses. He was instructed by the leading spiritual lights of the Holy Land. Nevertheless, once when one of the Alter Rebbe's chassidim visiting the Holy Land conveyed a teaching from his master, Reb Lazer was struck by the depth and power of the concept. "Where did you hear this?" he asked the visitor.

And upon hearing that the source of the teaching was the Alter Rebbe who lived in Liadi, Reb Lazer packed his bags and set out on the road. He had to hear more teachings like this. It was not an easy journey. He suffered many losses and even broke his leg. But when he arrived in Liadi, he felt that it had been worth it. The teachings the Rebbe delivered were living Torah, words of spiritual fire. When he was asked why he journeyed to Liadi, he would reply: "The answer is the same. It's the question that is different." And he would explain: "When I was studying Torah in Jerusalem, I had a difficulty. There I was living in the holy city, spending my days solely in prayer and study, without any concern with material things. 'How is it possible,' I would question, 'that G-d could give me ample reward for the holy life that I was leading?' I would answer: 'He is omnipotent. There is nothing beyond His capacity.'

"Today, after being exposed to the teachings of Chassidus, I have gained a new appreciation of what spirituality really means. And I have a question: 'How can G-d stomach to listen to the prayers and study of such a materially oriented person as myself?' To which I give the same answer: 'He is omnipotent. There is nothing beyond His capacity.' "The transition from my first conception to the present was worth all the difficulties of the journey from Eretz Yisrael." By Rabbi Eliyahu Tauger-

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THE CHAZAN DOES NOT WEAR A TALLIT FOR MINCHA OR MAARIV - NEITHER ON WEEKDAYS, SHABBAT AND FESTIVALS, OR ROSH HASHANA. YAHRZEIT OF THE MEZRITCHER MAGGID, TUESDAY, PARSHAT VAYEISHEV 5533 (1772). HE IS INTERRED IN ANIPOLI. THE ALTER REBBE WAS RELEASED FROM HIS FIRST IMPRISONMENT, KISLEV 19, TUESDAY, PARSHAT VAYEISHEV 5559 (1798) TOWARDS EVENING. FROM THE ALTER REBBE'S LETTER: THIS INDEED MUST BE MADE KNOWN, THAT ON THE DAY G-D MADE FOR US, THE 19TH OF KISLEV, TUESDAY (THE DAY ON WHICH "IT WAS GOOD" WAS SAID TWICE IN TORAH YAHRZEIT OF OUR HOLY TEACHER WHOSE SOUL IS IN EDEN, WHILE I WAS READING IN THE BOOK OF TEHILLIM THE VERSE "HE REDEEMED MY SOUL IN PEACE," BEFORE BEGINNING THE FOLLOWING VERSE, I EMERGED IN PEACE BY (THE ACT OF) THE G-D OF PEACE. A DAY OF FARBRENGEN AND GOOD RESOLUTIONS TOWARDS ESTABLISHING TIMES TO STUDY THE REVEALED TORAH AND CHASSIDUS PUBLICLY, AND IN BOLSTERING THE WAYS OF CHASSIDIM IN TRUE FRIENDSHIP. IT IS CUSTOMARY TO APPORTION VOLUMES FOR THE STUDY OF THE TALMUD, ACCORDING TO THE PROCEDURE SET OUT IN IGERET HAKODESH "HOCHEI'ACH TOCHI'ACH" . IN LUBAVITCH, SINCE THE YEAR 5663 (1902-03) THIS ALLOCATION WAS MADE ON TEVET 24, YAHRZEIT OF THE ALTER REBBE, THERE NOT BEING TIME ON KISLEV 19. (FROM REBBE'S HAYOM YOM, KISLEV 19).

Do not repent. Repentance means to stop being bad and to become good. But your essential being is always good. The bad is only the outside. So instead of repenting, return. Return to the essential self and to what is rightfully yours.

-Bringing Heaven Down to Earth