



Adapted from the sefer חמין במוצאי שבת and חדוותא דזעיר אנפין collections of maamarim given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Seuda Shlishis and Melave Malka

### Melave Malka Parshas Toldos 5766

The section of *Tana D'vei Eliyahu* that we learned tonight deals with a central topic of this week's Parsha, Yaakov and Eisav.

“This can be compared to two men. One is hated by the king, and the other is hated by the governor. The man hated by the king tells the man hated by the governor, ‘You are fortunate, because if you travel to another state, you have hope, but wherever I will travel, I will be under the king’s authority.’”

Similarly, Hakadosh Baruch Hu himself hates Eisav, as it says (מלאכי א:ב-ג) וְאֶהְבֶּה אֶת יַעֲקֹב וְאֶשְׂנֵאתִי עִשָׂו - I loved Yaakov and I hated Eisav...”

At that time, מלאכי השרת will wish to sing before Hakadosh Baruch Hu, and they will not find him. They go to the ocean, to Har Sinai, and to Yerushalayim. Yeshayahu asks them, ‘Whom do you seek?’ They tell him, ‘We seek Hakadosh Baruch Hu’. Yeshayahu tells them, ‘He has just left Edom, as it says -

מִי זֶה בָּא מֵאֲדוֹם חֲמוּץ בְּגָדָיו מִבְּצָרָה זֶה הַדּוֹר בְּלִבוֹשׁוֹ צֹעָה בָּרֶב כְּחוֹ אֲנִי מְדַבֵּר  
בְּצִדְקָה רַב לְהוֹשִׁיעַ

Who is this coming from Edom, with soiled garments, from Bozrah, this one [Who was] stately in His apparel, girded with the greatness of His strength? "I speak with righteousness, great to save."

In the *Yalkut Shimoni* (ישעיהו רמז תק"ז), we find a Midrash that explains the last phrase of that *pasuk*.



[1]

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“In the future, ministers and prosecutors will attack Am Yisrael, and say before Hakadosh Baruch Hu, ‘Ribono Shel Olam, is there favoritism before you? If these (the nations) served idols, those (Am Yisrael) also serve idols. If these are guilty of *giluy arayos*, those are also guilty of *giluy arayos*. If these have spilled blood, those have also spilled blood. Why do these go down to *gehinnom* and those not?’

In the face of this prosecution the *malach* Michael, the defender of Am Yisrael will be silent. Because of his silence, Hakadosh Baruch Hu will say, ‘Michael, you are silent, and you aren’t defending my children? By your life, I will defend them. By your life, I will speak about them with *tzedakah* and save them. As it says, **אני מדבר בצדקה רב להושיע**.’

And with which *tzedakah*? With the *tzedakah* that they have done for me by receiving the Torah, for if they hadn’t, where would my *malchus* have been?”

We need to think about this Midrash. Clearly the prosecutors attacking Am Yisrael weren’t speaking about our lost brethren who don’t keep Torah and Mitzvos, for they are *tinokos she’nishbu* (like a child who was kidnapped and brought up without Torah education). Their prosecution certainly wouldn’t apply to them. Therefore, they must be speaking about Jews who *do* keep Torah and *mitzvos*.

If that is true, how can it be that *malachim* accuse frum Jews of those three terrible *aveiros*. Even if there were sometimes individuals who committed such acts, how can they accuse the entire community who certainly didn’t sin in that way? Why should the entire community be punished for the crimes of a few people?

The explanation is that even if frum Jews don’t actually do those three *aveiros*, the prosecutors accuse them of transgressing **אביזרייהו**, other *aveiros* that are related to those three terrible transgressions. For example, embarrassing someone is **אביזרייהו** of murder. We have to protect our mind and eyes from **אביזרייהו זערייות**, seeing forbidden sights, and thinking forbidden thoughts. Anger is **אביזרייהו** of *avodah zara*. These are just a few examples.

The nature and essence of Bnei Yisrael is *tov*. Therefore, when they are guilty of **אביזרייהו**, it is as serious as the actual *aveiros* committed by the nations of the world. Nonetheless, Hakadosh Baruch Hu defeats the



[2]

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accusations by declaring that, despite their wrongdoings, the *zechus* of *kabbalas ha'torah* is sufficient to defend them from the accusations of the prosecution.

The *klipah* of Eisav, extends the hands of Eisav into the houses of Yaakov's children. The *Zohar Hakadosh* tells us that Eisav is the *sitra achra*, and he brings anger, cruelty, and physical *taavos* into the hearts of Bnei Yisrael. However, we oppose him with the power of Yaakov Avinu's voice *הקול קול יעקב*, the power of Torah. That power enables us to defeat him. The Midrash Rabbah (איכה פתיחתות) explains the *pasuk* (בראשית כ"ז: כ"ב) *הקל קול יעקב והידיים ידי עשו* (בראשית כ"ז: כ"ב), as teaching us;

כל זמן שקולו של יעקב בבתי כנסיות ובבתי מדרשות, אין הידיים ידי עשו. וכל זמן שאין קולו מצפצף בבתי כנסיות ובבתי מדרשות, אין הידיים ידי עשו.

For as long as the voice of Yaakov is heard in shuls and *batei medrash*, the hands are not the hands of Eisav. However, when his voice does not sing out in the shuls and *batei medrash*, the hands are the hands of Eisav.

My ancestor the *Meor Einayim zy"l* wrote (ישמח לב ליקוטים), that *Eisav*, who is the *sitra achra*, wants to rule and לעקוב, to prevent us from doing good. The voice of Torah foils his plans. The *pasuk* *וידו אווזת בעקב עשו* describes this. Yaakov Avinu, who represents Torah, holds back the *sitra achra* and prevents it from controlling us.

I heard a story relating to אביוזריהו דעבודה זרה from the Gaon Rav Shneur Kotler zt"l. He heard it from his father the Gaon Hagadol Rav Aharon Kotler zt"l.

Once, one of Rav Aharon's best *talmidim* approached him and tearfully revealed something that was torturing him. Recently, thoughts of *kefirah* (denial of the Torah) were repeatedly entering his mind. Those thoughts were so disturbing that they prevented him from learning Torah and *davening*. He didn't know why he was being plagued by these thoughts and had found no way to rid himself of them. The Rosh Yeshiva promised to try to come up with a plan to help his *talmid*.

That week, Rav Aharon met the Kupishnitzer Rebbe zt"l, and told him about this *talmid* who had always been immersed in Torah, and now, for apparently no reason at all, suffered from thoughts of *kefirah*. The Rebbe



[3]

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told Rav Aharon to ask the boy how he determined the correct time when he needed to set his watch.

When Rav Aharon returned to the Yeshivah, he summoned the *talmid*, and told him that he discussed the problem with the Kupishnitzer Rebbe, and that the Rebbe told him to ask how he set his watch to the correct time. The question startled the *talmid* who said that he recently began to synchronize his watch with the bells that rang the hour in a nearby church.

The *talmid* immediately discontinued that practice and was no longer disturbed by thoughts of *kefirah*.

This story teaches us how far the power of Eisav's *tumah* can reach. Even in our generation, we need to take care to avoid having any contact whatsoever with anything that doesn't come from a source of *tahara*.

I heard another *chidush* related to thoughts of *Avodah Zarah* from the Gerrer Rebbe, the *Beis Yisrael zy" a*. In the year תשל"ה, the Rebbe instructed me to contact a *bachur* who was learning in *chutz la'aretz* and had begun to draw close to *chasidus*. The young man wanted to find someone who could address his questions and advise him. I formed a *keshet* with him and we exchanged letters over an extended period.

The Rebbe made an effort to read some of the letters, and to react and comment as was his custom. Once, the young man wrote me a letter describing the situation of his close friend, a *bachur* who was known for his exceptional *hasmada* and *yiras shamayim*. One day, he noticed that his friend was suffering from anguish and depression. When he asked what was troubling him, the friend revealed that for no reason he could identify, he was plagued by thoughts of *kefirah*.

The *bachur* couldn't come up with a solution for his problem and had stopped learning and *davening* because he felt that someone whose mind was filled with such impure thoughts, wasn't fit to learn and keep *mitzvos*. He asked his friend to write a letter describing the situation, and asking for the guidance of the *Beis Yisrael*.

I went in to the Rebbe in the pre-dawn hours, and told him about the letter. As the Rebbe listened to the description of the young man's suffering, his face reflected his empathy for the *bachur's* pain. He then



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asked me to bring a *Maseches Shabbos*. When I brought it, he turned to a line on דף קי"ט: ט: and asked me to read it.

”אמר רבי חייא בר אבא אמר רבי יוחנן, כל העונה אמן יהא שמיה רבא מברך בכל כחו, אפילו יש בו שמץ של עבודה זרה מוחלין לו”

“Rav Chiya bar Abba said in the name of R. Yochanan, whoever answers ‘*Amen Y’hei Shmei Rabba Mevorach*’ with all of his strength, is forgiven even if there is a trace of *avodah zara* in him.”

When I finished reading, the Rebbe asked me what lesson we can learn from the Gemara. I answered that we see the tremendous power of answering *Amen Y’hei Shmei Rabba* with all your strength, for it enables even someone with a connection to *Avodah Zara* to be forgiven.

The Rebbe told me, “I see another great, important lesson. The Gemara teaches us that even someone with a trace of *Avodah Zara* is capable not only of answering *Amen Y’hei Shmei Rabba*, but of doing so with all his strength! (which means all his *kavanah*). This Gemara is a source of strength and encouragement for anyone who suffers from such thoughts. Now go and write to him that he should gather his strength and continue to learn with *simchah*. He shouldn’t let those thoughts bring him to sadness and prevent him from serving Hashem.

Even if he continues to have thoughts of *Avodah Zara*, he must know that he is nevertheless able to answer אמן with all his strength. Eventually, in the merit of his ongoing *avodah b’simchah* everything will return to its place.”

And so, it was. That *bachur* continued his *avodah* and succeeded beautifully.

This message should go out to every Jew. We must correct our ways, eliminating any connection to אביזרייהו of those three *aveiros* that *Eisav* manages to slip into the hearts and minds of every Jew. At the same time, we must remember that even someone who has fallen and sinned, hasn’t lost his strength, and that he can, and must, continue to learn and *daven* with *dveikus* and to answer *Amen Y’hei Shmei Rabba* with all of his strength. The power of Torah will enable him to “grab the ankle of *Eisav*” and prevent *Eisav* from influencing him and controlling his life.

אבי"ר



[5]

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