



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

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TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

An Angel of Many Names

Presented by Rabbi Zechariah Schwartz, Kollel Adjunct

Our Parsha begins as Yaakov prepares for his fateful meeting with Esav. Shortly before the meeting finally takes place, Yaakov is attacked by an angel, whom our Sages identify as the angel representing Esav. An epic battle ensues, with Yaakov ultimately emerging as the victor. In the aftermath of this struggle, a mysterious exchange occurs between Yaakov and the angel, wherein Yaakov asks the angel for his name, and the angel responds cryptically saying, "Why do you ask my name?" Rashi explains that the angel meant to convey that the name of an angel constantly changes in accordance with whatever new mission it is charged with by Hashem.

What is interesting, however, is that the angel of Esav is synonymous with the Satan and the *Yetzer Hara* (Evil Inclination) – an angel whose mission seems to remain consistent. What then does it mean that this angel's mission and name constantly change?

Rabbi Shimshon Pincus explains that the *Yetzer Hara* is indeed constantly changing – with each generation having its own unique version. Once upon a time, the *Yetzer Hara* of idol worship had a firm grip on the world. Then suddenly, it disappeared, but a new *Yetzer Hara* took its place. In recent history, it has taken the form of "enlightenment," communism, and other movements, all bent on eradicating Torah and spirituality from the world. At the core of it all, however, it remains the same *Yetzer Hara*, the same angel of Esav, only with a new face and new tactics.

It's easy for us to look back at previous generations and wonder how they could have been so attracted to movements and temptations that proved to be empty and false. What is critical for us to understand, however, is that the same *Yetzer Hara* is at work in our generation as well. The only difference is that it has taken on a new identity that is appealing and attractive *to us*. Only if we realize this and understand that all of the distractions that take us away from our real purpose in life are really just the same *Yetzer Hara* that has been at work for thousands of years; then we can be succeed in overcoming it, just like Yaakov did so many years ago.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Yaakov put the maids and their children first, Leah and her children behind them, and Rochel last. (33, 2)

The further back, the more dear to Yaakov. (Rashi)

This was seemingly an attempt by Yaakov to save those most dear to him.

If a non-Jew approaches a group of Jews and says that they must hand over a specific Jew to be killed or he will kill all of them - they are forbidden to hand over the Jew, and must allow themselves to be killed. (Yerushalmi Terumos 8, 4)

Yaakov was quite aware of Esav's intentions, as Yaakov said, "If Esav attacks one camp, to kill them, the other camp will escape." (32, 9) If so, how could Yaakov expose certain members of his family to the danger of Esav?

Parsha Riddle

What does this week's haftorah have in common with the haftorah of Mincha on Yom Kippur?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

Where is a source in this week's parsha that one should not give more than a fifth of one's possessions to tzedakah?

Answer: Aser A'sarenu (28:22). The word 'Aser' means a tenth and 'A'sarenu' also means a tenth; which is equivalent to one fifth (Baal HaTurim).

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

From our archives

At the end of parashas Vayishlach, the Torah repeatedly identifies Esav with the nation of Edom. Later in the Torah, Jews are prohibited from marrying Edomites, until "the third generation" [counting from their conversion] (Devarim 29:8-9).

The Rambam asserts that subsequent to the Assyrian king Sancheirev's "shuffling" and "mixing" of "all the nations," Edom, as well as the other nations whose members Jews are prohibited to marry, no longer exist as identifiable peoples, and the marriage prohibitions have therefore become moot: "When a convert converts anywhere in contemporary times, whether he is an Edomite, an Egyptian, an Ammonite, a Moabite, a Kushite, or any other nation, both males and females are permitted to enter the congregation immediately" (Hilchos Isurei Biah 12:25, and see Shulchan Aruch EH 4:10).

Some medieval authorities are unsure of whether the "shuffling" of Sancheirev extended to Edom. The idea that Edom may have been an exception is based on various Talmudic passages identifying Rome of the Talmudic period (many centuries subsequent to Sancheirev), oppressors of the Jews and destroyers of the Second Temple, with Edom (Sefer Yerei'im Amud Arayos #43). R. Yaakov Emden goes even further, ruling that the prohibition against marrying Edomites extends to Italian converts, since at least some Italians are actual (genealogical) descendants of Edom, and even those who are not may nevertheless fall under the prohibition insofar as they have assimilated and adopted the Edomite identity (Shut. She'eilas Yaavetz 1:46). Similarly, R. Meshulam Roth suggests that perhaps we should not accept German converts, due to various traditional associations of Germany with Edom and Rome (Shut. Kol Mevasser 2:42).

Despite the above, the normative consensus seems to follow the Rambam that the prohibition against marrying Edomites is currently obsolete (see Shut. Shevet Ha'Levi 5:149).

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I?

1. I came from a donkey, but I am not one.
2. I am shoulder, but not below the neck.
3. I caused circumcision.
4. I am a city.

#2 WHO AM I?

1. I robbed Yaakov.
2. You must wipe out my son.
3. I was Esav's first.
4. I had Taiman.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Maariv (I was not an obligation, I am from Yaakov, I am the third, I am the first.)

#2 Leah (I was the first to thank, I was a weeper, I had half, I was soft-eyed.)

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