

Parashat Toldot
FINDING THE LIGHT WITHIN YOU
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*“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. Now the earth was unformed and void, **and darkness was upon the face of the deep**; and the spirit of God hovered over the face of the waters. And God said: 'Let there be light.' And there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.”*

The Zohar writes there were many worlds before the creation of our world. All these worlds were destroyed and only nothingness was left over. This nothingness was a mixture of dark and light. Hashem came to the world and said let there be light and immediately the nothingness was gone. Then G-d saw that the light was good and he separated the light from the darkness. But when did Hashem create the darkness? It seems that there already was a mixture of light and darkness in the world and he separated the light and darkness. Why did G-d have to create a new light? The Zohar says Hashem created a new light, a hidden light. The destruction of the previous world was because the light and the darkness got mixed together, truth and falsity were mixed together. Right became wrong and wrong became right. This is the case with the generations of Noach and of Sdom & Gemmorah. Every single person has some of that hidden light inside of their soul. Hashem creates all souls like this, all we need to do is peel off the dirt and the light will shine. In order for Hashem to make the world, he needed a light that wouldn't mix with the dark. G-d called the light “day” and darkness he called “night”. Why did he give them names? Because a name gives something importance. (A cat named Bruce who dies will give you more pain than some random cat).

Every day of creation Hashem separated something, he put things into very specific categories. Man was created on the sixth day. The creation process is a process that every single one of us has to go through. The passuk says that the average mans life is 70 years, each phase is 10 years. Every single day, starting with the first day, a person grows. The first thing a person has to do is to distinguish between light and darkness. As long as there is a mixture, its is considered “unformed and void ”. Our obligation is to define what is light and what is darkness in this world. As long as you fail to accomplish day one, you cannot move to the day two. A person who reaches the seventh day, no longer has a need to light an external light, a fire, because he already has a light. He cannot bring in something external. The foundation of every one of our lives starts with the first day, distinguishing between day

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and night. This is the problem between Yaakov and Eisav.

Parashat Toldot starts off “And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begot Isaac.” We already knew that Yitzchak was Avraham's son, this is to tell us that everything a Yitzchak had was from his father (spiritual DNA). There was a machloket between Yitzchak and Rivka. (Imagine you were going to have twins, you had a choice, you could have one tzaddik and one rasha or two that are in the mediocre. Yitzchak didn't mind having one tzaddik and one rasha. Rivka was happy if they were both mediocre.) “And the children struggled together within her; and she said: 'If it be so, wherefore do I live?' And she went to inquire of the LORD.” Rivka was confused, she didn't realize what was going on because when she passed by a holy place or a place of idol worship, the children in the womb would want to come out. The question is, why did Yitzchak want to leave the womb if he was learning with an angel in his mother's womb? Because you could be learning with an angel, but if the guy next to you is a rasha you should want to leave. Better to learn alone than to be sitting with an evil person. Sometimes we could learn certain things in college which we feel is crucial for our knowledge, but we have to be aware of who is around us, our surroundings.

Rivka went to ask Shem what was going on. He answered her that one of your children is a huge tzadik and one a huge rasha. But the good thing is that they are both clear in their paths, there is no confusion. When a person knows hes bad, then they could do teshuvah. If a person is confused and thinks that good is bad and bad is good, its very hard to do teshuvah. Yitzchak knew this, he saw the potential in Eisav. The problem was that Eisav had a brilliant mind but he couldn't control his body and desires. Avraham also saw potential, he saw the three Arabs and bowed down to them, he knew that they could be changed. Yitzchak saw the good in Eisav, he saw the potential. Yitzchak wanted to give Eisav the bracha because he knew that he has a huge potential and the bracha will flip him to the other side. The biggest turnarounds in kiruv are always the worst ones, because they know they are bad. Yitzchak didn't see a need to work on Yaakov because he was already in a good path. He needed to put all his effort into Eisav.

The yetzer hara is older than the yetzer hatov. Why? Because a child is born with the yetzer hara and gets the yetzer hatov when he/she is 13 years old. So Shem gave a bracha to Rivka “Two nations are in thy womb, and two peoples shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; **and the elder shall serve the younger.**” We typically think that the passuk means that Eisav will serve Yaakov, but it is even deeper than this. The passuk means that the yetzer hara will end up serving the yetzer hatov. Whats stronger, the yetzer hara or yetzer hatov?

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Obviously the yetzer hatov is stronger because the yetzer hara is given a 13 year head start over it. The yetzer hara is always getting more and more weapons but the yetzer hatov is staying basically the same. That is because we have a huge nuclear bomb called the Torah, you just have to uncover it.

One day Eisav comes home very tired. He just murdered Nimrod, he stole, raped and did every aveira imaginable. He tells Yaakov, give me something to eat, so Yaakov tells him to give over his birthright. At first glance, it seems like Yaakov took advantage of him. It looks like highway robbery. And Esau said: 'Behold, I am at the point to die; and what profit shall the birthright do to me?' Eisav answers Yaakov, thats all you want? I am going to die anyway, why do I need the birthright? Eisav embarrassed the birthright, he ate, drank, left, and didn't care about his birthright. Eisav tells Yaakov, i'm going to die anyway, why do I need the birthright? Typically, if you want to wake someone up to do teshuvah, remind them of the day of death. You are living for the next world, and you could die any moment so do teshuva. He went ahead and turned the whole light into darkness. He said, I'm going to die anyway, I might as well live it up and have fun. This was Eisav's outlook. He took the most important thing, the knowledge of our own mortality and flipped it around. He took the light and turned it into darkness. Eisav is the yetzer hara, and his whole power is to mix the dark and the light together. But when light and darkness is mixed, there is destruction. Everything in this world has a light and a darkness and our job is to separate the two. When you start to mix the two, that is when you have recipe for disaster. The biggest problem in our day and age is that society takes things that are wrong and turns them into right. (A girl who's parents are both converts, she goes off the derech. They take her and sit down in front of a rabbi. She says my parents rebelled against their parents, why cant I rebel against mine? This is the power of the Satan, you could take logic and use it for evil.)

Yaakov fights with Eisav's angel, and it says that there was a lot of dust in the air. What does this mean? The Satan has a power and it is to confuse a person. When there is confusion, one cannot tell between light and darkness, between good and bad. But it says that at the end of the night, the sun came up, the hidden light came up, Yaakov got clarity and the angel lost. How does a person attain clarity. Two Israeli soldiers in the desert (Avi and Eli), are both dying of thirst after three days of no water. Avi looks over a cliff and claims that he sees a lake, but Eli tells him its a mirage. Avi doesn't care, he thinks its so real that he wants to go down the mountain. Eli tries to figure out a way to stop him from going down. He tells Avi, look at the lake and tell me if you see the reflection of the sky in the lake. Avi sees that there is no reflection and he comes to the realization that it is a mirage. They stay on the top of the mountain and they are eventually saved. Had they gone down the mountain, the

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wouldn't have survived. What do we learn from this story? Any time you are about to do something, you have to ask yourself, do I see Hashem's reflection in this? What does Hashem say about this? If he wouldn't agree, then its a mirage. Deep down we know if something is wrong or right, we try to fool ourselves. You could make every excuse in the book that what your doing is right, but if its a mirage it will eventually lead to death. Avraham Avinu died the day Eisav sold his birthright. Eisav should have picked up the message, he should have become inspired to do good. But, unfortunately, he did the opposite. Let us pursue the light and strive to attain the utmost clarity in our lives to always do the will of Hashem. Amen.