

As Yidden, we understand that when something is wrong, we must look inward, conducting a *cheshbon hanefesh*, reflecting on what needs to be improved. When the entire world experienced a pandemic and many other great calamities, the call of our Gedolim was: “we must look inside of ourselves and see what needs to be fixed”, because a Yid will always take it personally. The Chofetz Chaim famously remarked, “When an earthquake happens in China, HaShem is speaking directly to each of us.” For the unfaithful, it is just a stroke of bad luck that might come around every hundred years or so. If you can manage to get lucky and steer clear of it, you will be fine, but to actually look internally and fix something, *Vus eppes?* This has nothing to do with me. The proof is that it is happening to everyone.

For Eisav, his response to his downfall was that there must be something up with the *mazal*. If I already do need to blame it on someone, there is always the wife to blame it on, and for that there is an easy fix. I can just marry someone else and see what my new *mazal* can bring me.

As mentioned, Eisav is *shalom* (both

376) which aside from meaning perfection and completion, also means peace. The way of Eisav is to be at peace with himself, perfectly content with himself because he has no issues or imperfections that need to be addressed. Yaakov on the other hand stems from the word עִקֵּב *eikev* which means heel. The Yid looks at himself as a low imperfect person all the way at the bottom with so much to climb on any given day in order to reach the top. In the end, Yaakov perseveres and becomes יִשְׂרָאֵל *Yisroel*, which is the letters of לִי רֹאשׁ *Li rosh*-I am on top. As a result of constant introspection; always looking internally vs. externally, Yaakov is able to beat the Saar Shel Eisav, thus catapulting to the level of Yisroel.

When the *Umos Ha’olam* look at our success stories they become jealous. Instead of looking at what they themselves can do to improve, they try and break us down, therefore hating our successes and everything we stand for. But for the Yid, when success or a downfall is seen, the place to look is within, but never outside.

**Good Shabbos,
מרדכי אפפֿעל**

