

Unintended Consequences of *Mituk Hadin*, Definition of *Sechel* and *Emmes*

Biblical Prooftext:

וישלח יעקב מלאכים לפניו אל עשו אחיו ארצה שעיר שדה אדום ויצו אותם לאמור כה תאמרון לאדוני לעשו וגו' עם לבן גרתי ואחר עד עתה ויהי לי שור וחמור צאן ועבד ושפחה ואשלחה להגיד לאדוני למצוא חן בעיניך

And Jacob sent messengers to Esau his brother, to the land of Seir, the fields of Edom, and commanded them saying "this shall ye say to my master to Esau...I have sojourned with Laban and tarried until now and I have accumulated oxen, sheep, servants, and maidservants and I am sending ahead to inform my master to find favor in his eyes"

The Degel is going to investigate the dual meaning of the word messengers as apostles or angels and begins with the classical commentator Rashi. The problem is they appeared to Esau as humans, as did the angels sent to Abraham to announce the birth of a son. This elision between human and angelic for the word *ish* and *malach* allows for the interpretations to conflict.

ספר דגל מחנה אפרים - פרשת וישלח ד"ה וישלח

Section A: Rashi insists on the real nature of angels, not merely messengers, using the term *Mamesh*

Rashi insists that they were angels in fact...

Because of Jacob's high level of intuitive spirituality, he could see through these men and see angels dressed up as men.

וישלח יעקב מלאכים לפניו אל עשו אחיו ארצה שעיר שדה אדום ויצו אותם לאמור כה תאמרון לאדוני לעשו וגו' עם לבן גרתי ואחר עד עתה ויהי לי שור וחמור צאן ועבד ושפחה ואשלחה להגיד לאדוני למצוא חן בעיניך. ופירש רש"י ז"ל וישלח יעקב מלאכים, מלאכים ממש. ותחלה נבאר על פי פשוטו מנא ליה לרש"י שהיו מלאכים ממש כי בפסוק נראה תיבת לפניו מיותר ומזה מדייק רש"י שהיו מלאכים ממש וידוע כשבאים לעולם הגשמי הם מתלבשים ומתגשמים באוריא דהאי עלמא וזה שיעור הפסוק מלאכים היינו הוא הכיר בהם שהם מלאכים אף שהיו מלובשים כדמות אנשים לגודל רוחניותו ומדריגתו אבל לפני עשו היו אנשים ומזה נראה שהיו מלאכים ממש וקל להבין

Jacob's exalted spiritual acuity allows him to see beyond the flesh and the mirage of the human form to discern these beings were angelic not human. He then launches into a mystical exposition about upper worlds and lower worlds and Jacob's discovery of a spiritual path we must imitate, that of connecting the lower worlds to the higher worlds in order to sweeten the hard judgments occurring when the two are split or divided.

Section B: We learn a spiritual path regarding how to operate within the lower world of *ASSIYA*/Action the world of Esau only once one is equipped with Jacob's ability to balance the higher archetypes and extend down *sechel* into the lower worlds.

We may use this as an instruction in our spiritual paths.

Referring back to the last Parsha where Jacob takes alights upon the angels accompanying him and he calls that place of meeting "*machanayim*" as I have expounded upon before (the idea of 2 camps meaning a vertical approach directed upwards and downwards depending upon his spiritual state).

“The Jacob went upon his way” which implies that all his efforts were to become a vehicle for the connecting letter vav or the sefirah of Tiferes, the middle pillar of the sefirotic array, that subtends and mediates the extremes of his father Isaac and grandfather Abraham or kindness and strict stern justice. So, when the verse states “and the angels of the Lord alighted upon him” it meant they touched him and affected him (and became incarnated in him?) so that he finally could integrate the extremes of his forefathers and hold them in balance (due to the angels representing their spiritual archetypes?). That is why the place was called *machanayim* (camps) in the plural so infer both spiritual archetypes were incarnated within him.

And only then, when both were reflected in his spiritual makeup did he finally send angels to Esau meaning the lower world of ASSIYA/Action.

ויש עוד בזה לאלוה מילין איך שמרומז בפסוקים אלו מוסר השכל להורות הדרך אשר נלך בה כל ימינו וגם רש"י רימז ענין עמוק בתיבת ממש כאשר נבאר בסייעתא דשמיא, ויקושר פסוקים אלו עם הסיום של הפסוקים מסדר הקודם ויפגעו בו מלאכי אלקים וגו' ויקרא שם המקום ההוא מחנים על פי מה שאמרתי כבר על ויעקב הלך לדרכו והיינו שכל השתדלות פעולותיו היה שיהיה מרכבה לבחינת וא"ו שהוא תפארת עמודא דאמצעייתא כלול משניהם ממידת אברהם ויצחק שהוא חסד וגבורה והוא שאמר ויפגעו בו מלאכי אלקים היינו שכך עלתה בידו שנפגעו בו והיה כלול בו מלאכי אלקים היינו בחינת ב' אבות אברהם ויצחק ולכך ויקרא שם המקום ההוא מחנים על שם שני מדות הנ"ל וכשזכה לזה שנכלל בו גם מידת חסד וגבורה אז וישלח יעקב מלאכים לפניו אל עשו אחיו עשו היינו עולם עשיה

(For it is known that the soul is a section of the divine above and was placed within the body of man in the lower world of ASSIYA/Action in order to connect the lower world back to its root, each thing to its own unique source.

For this is the entire purpose of the ZADDIK who serves the divine, to connect and unify the world of ASSIYA/Action with the supernal world and to nullify/negate/dissolve all the husks in the world of AASIYA/Action thereby “sweetening all the harsh judgments”.

So too in general for all “Israelites are Zaddikim” and also need to connect themselves to Torah or at the very least Talmidei Chachamim to prevent drowning in the world of ASSIYA/Action whether it be thought or deed, in their business of daily or nightly activity.

For this is needed a connection with either Torah or *Talmidei Chachachim* leaders of the generation in order to elevate them so that they will not be left behind below.

שידוע שהגשמה היא חלק אלקי ממעל וניתן בגוף האדם בעולם העשיה שיקשר כל העולם העשיה לשורשו כל דבר לשורש שלו וזה כל פעולת הצדיק העובד את ה' לקשר וליחד העולם עשיה אל עולם העליון לשורשו ולבטל כל הקליפות שבעולם העשיה ובה נמתקין כל הדינים, ודרך כלל כל ישראל צדיקים הם וצריכים לקשר עצמם בתורה או לתלמיד חכם בכדי שלא יטבעו ח"ו בעניני העולם העשיה הזה או במעשה או במחשבה בעסקם בו יומם ולילה לזה צריכים התקשרות או בתורה או על כל פנים לתלמידי חכמים ראשי הדור בכדי להעלותם שלא ישארו שם ח"ו,

Section C: How to operate and elevate things from a lower state to a higher state

There are many details how to elevate every particular matter for there are three actors: the thinker, the thought and the process of thinking.

Maskil=thinker=the person who wishes to understand and become en-wisened about a subject.

Muskal=subject matter=object of desire, of content of matter to be studied

Sechel=faculty of reasoning=used to get from the subject of thought to the object matter studied.

ויש בזה פרטי דברים איך להעלות כל דבר לשורשו כי יש ג' בחינות משכיל מושכל שכל, משכיל היינו האדם הרוצה להבין ולהשכיל איזה דבר, מושכל היינו אותו הדבר שרוצים להשכיל אותו, ושכל היינו שבו משכילין מה שרוצים להשכיל

Section D: The claim that the faculty of reasoning/sechel is Divine

Now the *sechel*/faculty is the source of divinity which is this archetypal wisdom (chochma)
So that when he introduces his own faculty of reasoning to understand an object, he is in fact introducing the source of the divine into that matter.

והשכל הוא שורש אלקות שהוא החכמה העליונה וכשהוא מכניס השכל שלו בכל דבר שהוא עושה אזי מכניס שורש אלוקות באותו דבר ובוזה הוא מעלה הדבר לשורשו

Reb Hershy:

When you consciously apply your awareness to things in this world, when you use your Sechel properly and fully, (which is to say, when you become conscious of the Godlike qualities in whatever it is you're observing at that moment) not only do you understand things, but you connect the thing you're understanding with its source in God. And because this triad is a Chokhmah, it is also of necessity a Hesed because it's all one, it's all good, it's purposeful and neat and interdependent and One and connected to the source which is, of course, Good and Kind and Compassionate and Giving.

Section E: an example in the Talmud of this operating system:

The Degel goes out of his way now to explain how his system explains miracles.

The earth Nachum Ish Gamzu finds in place of the jewels inside the box he's carrying on behalf of the Jews to Caesar is now connected by Nachum's perception; his Sechel, to its source. At its source, Earth, Dust, Dreck is connected no differently than diamonds to the Source, right? What difference does it make, it's all Good.

Nachum looking kindly upon the earth in the casket; Nachum acknowledging its basic Godliness, understanding it with his non-judgmental Sechel brought about a miracle.

The earth was connecting to its source via *Hesed* into Chokhmah and vice versa into Abraham and into his Life Narrative.

וכמו שאיתא בגמרא (תענית כ"א.) אצל נחום איש גם זו שזה היה מידתו שבכל דבר שהיה עושה ושאיירע לו היה מכניס השכל העליון היינו החסד כי החכמה הוא שורש החסד כידוע על כן כשאירע לו שגנבו מאתו אבנים טובות שהוליך לבי קיסר והניחו עפר במקומו אמר גם זו לטובה והיינו שהיה יודע שעפר הוא גם כן מן הד' יסודות אף שהוא יסוד התחתון אף על פי כן יש בו שורש אלוקות והיה מכניס עם השכל שלו שדבוק לשכל העליון בחינת חסד שבו שהוא שורש אלוקות שיש בו שהוא יכול להפך ולשנות כל הטבעים ואז נמתקו כל הדינים והוא שרימז לו אליהו ז"ל דלמא מעפרא דאברהם הוא, היינו שמצא החסד שבו שהוא שורש אלוקות שיכול להפוך כל הטבעים וזהו מידתו של אברהם שהיה מידת החסד וזהו מעפרא דאברהם,

has nothing to do with theodicy nor the eventual outcome turning out for the best, rather that even this dirt is also from the 4 basic ingredients of this lower world of ASSIYA/Action albeit from the very bottom of the hierarchical list nevertheless it has its source in the divine.

This mental move of injecting his *sechel* (meaning the divine source within him) into the object of discovery, the dirt, he had in fact connected the *sechel* elyon, the higher *sechel* which is *chessed* to the source of *chessed* in *chochma*.

This in turn miraculously transforms the lowest levels of ASSIYA/Action or dirt, into the highest diamonds, meaning he has learned to sweeten the harsh judgments of the lower world by connecting them to the source of *sechel*, *chessed*.

This is the archetype of Abraham/*Chessed* (and why the text called it the dust of Abraham)

It is the connection semantically between sechel and sechel elyon that allows for the connection and down chaining and unification of the divine with the lower levels, in the classical Lurianic myth. The

yichudim and zivugim are performed by the adept in his worship. What the Degel does is to locate the moment Jacob understood that his sechel was operating this way with the interaction with the angels representing archetypes that he had to integrate from the extreme right and left to produce the fully harmonized balanced middle pillar of the sefirotic tree that allows for the shefa to come down.

SECTION F: New perspective for Jacob, to descend as Zaddik to rectify through his own sechel

Now we can return to the text when **Jacob sends angels...**mamesh..real ones

After the prior meeting at Machanayim, where he had incarnated the archetype of Abraham/Chessed Only then is he able to **send angels**, real ones, meaning "*maskil, muskal and sechel*" he really sent his thoughts meaning *sechel* or the higher divine source of his thoughts, to **Esau his brother**, meaning to the world of ASSIYA/Action to rectify it, wherever he was located, for he too was there and stuck to him/lower world like a brother, **The land of Seir**, likewise, where the tikkun was needed to nullify the husks in the world of ASSIYA/Action. **Fields of Edom** i.e. harsh judgments (as in Zohar) to sweeten them. **And he commanded them** meaning he connected his thought processes together in a single purpose **Go speak to my lord Esau**, meaning to connect to the source of the divine which remains present even down here in the world of ASSIYA/Action i.e. to connect the source of the divine that is present in the world of ASSIYA/Action in every detail and fragment of this world, to reconnect it to its divine source though his agency would he inject into it the source of godliness that was latent in it- by his thoughts and his sechel which he is attached to in the higher world.

ב בסוף הסדר הקודם שיעקב זכה שנכלל בו גם כן מידת אברהם שהוא החסד כנ"ל אז וישלח חוזהו יש לומר גם כן פירוש הפסוקים אחר שכתו יעקב מלאכים ממש ממ"ש ראשי תיבות מ'שכיל מ'ושכל ש'כל היינו ששלח המחשבות שלו שהוא השכל כנ"ל, אל עשו אחיו היינו לתקן כל דבר של העולם העשייה במקום שהוא שם ודבוק עמו כאח, ארצה שעיר היינו ששם צריך תיקון לבטל הקליפות שיש בעולם עשייה, שדה אדום היינו דינים כדאיתא בזה"ק (ח"ג, קל"ה. רצ"ב. ועיין עוד ח"ב כ:): וצריך להמתקן, ויצו אותם היינו שהיה מחבר ומקשר המחשבות בצוותא חדא כה תאמרון לאדני לעשו היינו לשורש אדני שיש בעולם העשייה והיינו לקשר שורש אלוקות שיש בעולם העשייה בכל דבר ודבר שיקושר לשורשו על ידו שהיה מכניס בו השורש אלוקות שבו כנ"ל על ידי מחשבותיו ושכלו שהוא דבוק בעולם העליון,

His unique function as a Zaddik was his ability to be down here in the world of ASSIYA/Action yet, through his sechel...this faculty sourced in the divine, he becomes the connector and transport vehicle- the vav- to fulfill the manifestation of the source latent in the lower worlds.

I have sojourned with Laban, initially I had stayed in the world of Teshuva whose function is to whiten the sins of Israel, for the soul lives in a supernal world but afterwards (it descends into lower worlds) **until now** meaning I had to bring it down (extend) even to this world, and **I have acquired oxen and cattle** representing the husks (as mentioned in Tikkunei Zohar) and God has helped me to nullify them and I came close to holiness on the contrary they became my advocates **so I have sent to tell my lord** meaning I have sent my thoughts and my *sechel* to tell, meaning to extend down and bind my lord meaning all matters of this lowly world of ASSIYA/Action to its source in divinity **even though my lord has everything** meaning he has the potential to connect to the highest source which is his sechel. **May it find favor in your eyes** meaning to find the *midah* of *chessed* in every matter which is the archetype of Abraham which is also incarnated within it.

עם לבן גרתי היינו שהיה בתחלה מגורי בעולם התשובה שהוא מלבין עונותיהם של ישראל כי הנשמה היה דר בעולם העליון ואחר עד עתה היינו שאני צריך להמשיך גם לעולם עשייה, וזהו ויהי לי שור וחמור וגו' שהם ענייני קליפות כנזכר בתיקונים ועזר לי השי"ת שבטלתי אותן וקרבתני לקדושה שאדרבה הם מלמדים סנגוריא עלי, ואשלחה להגיד לאדני היינו ששלחתי המחשבות והשכל להגיד היינו להמשיך ולקשר לאדני היינו כל דבר מעולם עשייה לשורש אלוקותו ואדני שיש בו הכל על ידי החסד שהוא השכל כנ"ל, וזהו למצוא חן בעיניך היינו למצוא, מידת החסד בכל דבר כנ"ל שזהו מידת אברהם שהיה בו גם כן כנ"ל

Section G: Unintended Consequences, The Angels report Esau is coming with 400 men

Reb Hershey

The Degel ends with the Angels returning to Jacob. Jacob has sent his thoughts out into Assiya/Action to spread conscious awareness and bridge all the chasms, so everything can connect to the source etc. It's all happened; it was a great success, everything went according to plan.

Now the angels tell him, " You sent us to Assiya to do a job. We done it. Ok. Now, Assiya is on its way back to you with 400 men."

"You stuck the Alef to him, now he's coming right back at you with his Ta"v - You, Jacob are going to become such a Big Emmes like you wouldn't believe!"

And the angels returned to Jacob meaning that they fulfilled their mission and they said "we came to your brother to Esau (the world of AAIYA/Action) and he too is coming to meet you and 400 men with him! Meaning that which you accomplished by injecting the aleph (*alufo shel olam* =the singularity of the divine) into every matter down here (world of ASSIYA/Action) correspondingly the tav of the word Emmes is coming back to meet you (tav numerically =400) in order to connect (t the middle letter of the word Emmes) with the mem, making the word Emmes which then will sweeten the hard judgments...

וישובו המלאכים אל יעקב היינו שכך עלתה בידו ויאמרו באנו אל אחיך אל עשו היינו לעולם עשיה וגם הולך לקראתך וארבע מאות איש עמו היינו בזה שהמשכת והכנסת אל"ף היינו אלופו של עולם בכל דבר בזה ממילא הת' של אמת שהוא ארבע מאות הולך לקראתך לקשור עם המ"ם ויעשה אותיות אמת ואז נמתקין כל הדינים והמשכיל יבין

Reb Hershey

Jacob send out the Alef; alufo shel olam - God awareness. So, what comes back at his is the Tav of awareness. Jacob's Alef rushes to meet the returning Tav. Now, guess where they meet?

Bang in the middle they come smashing together face to face inside the alphabet with the Mem stuck right in between right in the middle to cushion them like a crash-barrier and stop them overshooting. And there you have it folks, a brand-new word formulated by Jacob's Derech - it's called Emmes.

This new path of emmes is the path of Jacob which is a dialectical path, and the righteous so-called pious approach comes back to hit him in the face of being in the real world facing his doppelganger brother as he did with the angel in the dark mysterious nocturnal battle.

Becoming ISRAEL means integrating that dark ESAU side, the husks, as we are told the gematria of *Yisroel = Yaakov + hasatan*.

Thus a new definition of *Emmes* or truth means seeing the mirror image of oneself, embracing and integrating this dark energy, the 400 men coming towards you, as informed by the so-called angels, those who have nurtured you and whom you thought you had mastered the balance between *chesed* and *din*, now you learn the truth which is beyond good and evil.

Jacob has learned the truth to its innermost. *Emmes le'amito* is often the opposite of surface emmes. *Emmes le'amito* requires the combination of *sechel*, *maskil* and *muskal*, the integration of the knower the knowledge and the object of knowledge using the faculty of *daas* (used elsewhere throughout the Degel) or the intimate/ experiential. There is no deeper intimate

knowledge for instance than that of making love. In the mutual interpenetration of the bodies, something akin to a gnosis is felt between the lovers, when the body soul and psyche are all in unison. I think that is what the Degel is getting at when he speaks of emmes. The truth to its innermost, *Emmes le'amito*, is achieved when the surface truth is penetrated by the experiential involvement of subject-object and technique.

Jacob finally realizes this and becomes Israel when seeing the brother Esau no longer as the enemy, the reviled, the character defects he must at all cost avoid, rather as *bi adoni* the realization that these archetypes must be integrated within me, not banished and suppressed. The *Mituk hadin* is no longer defined in the classical Lurianic way as "going up to sweeten the harsh judgments" rather those denim, those negative repressed darker elements of the Self, must be re-integrated to fuel the total personality of Israel.

Reb Hershey:

...and when Yaakov gets התרשלות when he can't be bothered chasing after his internal Esau to embrace him, or when he gets scared of it, or when he thinks there no profit in it for him to do so.... well there you are with Er and Onan.

וישב יעקב בארץ מגורי אביו בארץ כנען

Jacob just wants to live in serenity. He doesn't want to go chase Esau to the Land of Seir to make nice with him.

What do you do; do you struggle to integrate the asshole or just choose to live in serenity, isolated from your dark side, inside your own bubble rejecting the other bubble?

The Torah tells us: Er, Judah's firstborn, was evil in God's eyes (spilling his seed rather than impregnating Tamar who represents the Shechina begging us to get her together with her lover).

Rashi explains that Er feared ruining his wife's beauty through pregnancy, and so withheld making her pregnant.

According to Izbicy, Jacob had the same fault, it was just that in him it concerned his worship of God; a desire to avoid any blemish to the beauty of his worship. But when a fault like this takes root and flourishes in a person it eventually evolves into a substantial sin; one of his descendants will act it out in a physical, not spiritual way. Jacob's desire to live in serenity; wanting to protect himself against uncertainty and gray-areas, leads to Er.

Onan took the different path, for his actions came about because he saw that his father's intention in arranging the Levirate marriage was only for him to bear a child with the widow to preserve the name of his dead brother. The offspring of the YIBUM - levirate marriage is seen as a perpetuation of the deceased brother's name. The stated intent of the levirate law is to provide an heir so that the deceased brother's name 'will not be obliterated from Israel', (Deut. 25:6). He didn't like that at all, for it would only benefit his dead brother, not him, and he was very resentful.

According to Izbicy: Jacob had the same fault. And we find this kind of behavior even among the greatest and saintliest people; Spiritual Onanism concerns itself solely with 'Glory to the Self'. Who wants to integrate the dark side when you can live in sweet goodness to kingdom come?

Yeah, so the Degel has this epiphany for Yaakov, where, as you say, the dialectic path which led him down the frum highway got him plastered by the twelve wheeler mack-truck angel.