

Erav Rav Sees Hooves In The Heavens At Har Sinai

In Parshat KiTisa, (Shemot, 32, 4) the Eigel/Golden Calf walks out of the fire, and the Erav Rav proclaim-
“ These are your Elokeichah Israel, that raised you up from the land of Egypt.”

The Chizkuni there explains that when they saw the hoofs, they remembered that they had seen hoof marks when they were looking up into the heavens at Mathan Torah. They surmised that the hoof marks were the footsteps of HaShem, and therefore, what they saw walk out of the fire, was actually HaShem. He goes on to explain, that what they actually saw were the feet of the angels, who we are taught have hooves for feet.

While the explanation helps us to understand the wording of the pasuk, we are still left wondering- how could anyone see anything about an angel who is totally spiritual. (While the Chachamim explain that when angels come down to Earth to perform a task, they take on the guise of physical beings, here they were seen in Heaven. In the Shamayim, they are totally spiritual and without form.)

So it's clear that the Chizkuni is actually explaining to us how the angels were *perceived* by the Erav Rav. (Except for Mosheh Rabeinu who saw everything through “enlightened visions/Espeklaria Meirah” all other humans have an unclear vision/dream that they then interpret based on their understanding, life experiences, vision of the world , etc.)

So now we have to understand why they, indeed, perceived the angels as having hooves.

So to understand this, one could draw on their Knowledge of *Mesecheth Chulin*, where we are given a list of various wounds that would cause an animal to get the status of a *Terifah*- an animal that the *Chachamim* don't expect to last another year. The *ChaChamim* point out, that if a kosher animal has the bottom segment of its leg cut off, beneath the last joint, it is not considered *Tareif*.

One wonders why that is so, when so many seemingly minor wounds, are consider to be life threatening. Certainly, the loss of a leg should be considered to be life threatening?

(With all apologies to the reader, the story is told by a female police officer, that when she entered *Be'Eiri* after the October 7th massacre, she found a seven year old girl who had had her arm cut off above the wrist, by the Evil Hamas monsters. She succumbed to her wound the next day.)

So, when you look into it, you learn that kosher animal hind legs actually have their hips covered by their abdomen. In order to help visualize this, think of the non kosher camel. On its hind leg, the uppermost visible joint is its hip, but on a cow, it's the knee. Go one down on a camel and you will see its knee, so what is it that we see one down on a cow? It is in fact the ankle.

It turns out that kosher animals (and pigs) are actually standing on the tips of the nails, of their toes, when they stand. Cats, dogs, lions, bears, mice etc are like humans that stand on their heels and the ball of their feet, and the toes are out in front of them.

In *Nakdishach*, when we say “*Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh*”, we lift off onto our toes like the angels who are trying to get close to *HaShem*. Similarly, in *Birkat Halevanah*, we lift off onto our toes when we say – “just like we are jumping up towards You (*HaShem*), and we are unable to reach you, so too if others should jump up opposing us, they should not be able to reach or harm us, etc” .

So the following becomes clear. When the *Erav Rav* was looking heavenwards- they were seeing the angels from below. *Rambam* counts 20 levels of angels, one higher than the other. That being the case- the angels, who are eager and sincere in serving *HaShem*-, are also trying to launch up, as it were, to reach *HaShem*. A human who perceives their actions will visualize them as standing on the tips of their nails/ toes, and it will look like hooves.

We mentioned the pig and the camel. The pig has split hooves, like a kosher animal, but doesn’t chew its cud. The camel chews its cud, like a kosher animal, but doesn’t have split hooves.

The Chachamim teach us that the pig, as if to say, is a big faker. It lies on its side and shows off its four split hooves, as if to say that it’s kosher.

Eisav was also a big faker. He was a *Rashah* who decided at his bar mitzvah to longer remain a Jew and serve *HaShem*. We are told that he would “fool” his father Yitzchak, by asking him how to take *Maaser* from salt etc. , pretending like he is a big *Tsazdik*, when he was far from it.

There is a saying among the descendents of Eisav in Great Britain, other English Speaking countries, and in Germany. The impossible will happen “when pigs fly”.

It’s Strange that they should pick this animal to make the analogy. Why do they specifically pick pigs? Why not mice, or dogs etc?

So if you think about it, we mentioned above that angels look like they are standing on hooves, because they are attempting to launch towards *HaShem*. Kosher animals are also standing on their hooves and almost look like they are trying to launch skywards on their hind legs. The front legs of a pig, unlike kosher animals, in fact look just like their hind legs,.

So when looking at them, it seems like they are trying to take flight. The Bnei Edom who can be likened to a pig, and who are big fans of pork, pick up on this. And they come to the conclusion, that just like they try to go aloft, and can’t, so too, other impossible things can’t happen.

The Torah and Chachamim teach us that Eisav was holding in and concealing his rebellion against *HaShem* , until the day that Avraham Aveinu passed away. On that day, he Committed adultery, murder, denied *Techiyat Hameitim*(which is when the *tzadikim* will return to a more perfected world, and enjoy the rewards coming to them for a lifetime of Torah and Mitzvoth), etc.

When he came back at night, hungry and tired from his day of massive rebellion against *HaShem*, he sees red lentils that Yaakov Aveinu was cooking, as an apropos meal for mourners, and growls “*Haleitenah Nah-* pour some of that red stuff down my throat right now”.

There is significance to that.

A kosher animal eats/takes in grass etc, when he can find it and it goes to its first stomach- the *Keres*, to be stored. When it’s no longer grazing, it will bring up the food and chew it again and swallow. This

could happen once more before the food is actually allowed to go through the other three stomachs, and reach its intestines, where it actually absorbs/ has the main benefit of its food.

A good Jew does the same. He grabs Torah and Mitzvoth, when the opportunities arise. With mitzvot, he will take time to store them, to maybe chew them some more, work on them some more. With Torah, he reviews and relearns it, and if he has been so blessed, will delve deeper and deeper into its inner meanings and insights. (In the words of the *Rambam*, one has to first fill his *Keres* with *Tanach* etc, before he can revisit his learning and go through to the level of understanding that is PARDES). In the end he will benefit from the fruits of his labor, but the main reward is saved for the *Olam Habah*, his gratification is not instant, but delayed.

Eisav, on the day of Avraham's passing, finally comes out and blasts his contempt for HaShem. He finally acts on his pact with Yaakov *Aveinu*, that he will take *Olam Haze*, and let's Yaakov *Aveinu* work on *Olam Habah*.

On this pivotal day, he tells Yaakov, as if to say, to finish him off, and bypass his Delayed Gratification System, and pour the food straight down his throat, just like the pig that gulps down farm refuse. No more work now and enjoy later.

In fact, (again digging into the knowledge that we learn from *Mesechet Chulin*), we know that in a nursing calf, there is a pathway that bypasses storage of the grass in the other stomachs and goes straight to the *Keiva*. It's as if to say that Eisav is telling his brother to help him go back to being a child that has no responsibilities, only cares about his self gratification, and cannot delay his gratification.

However, Eisav has a "problem". He is the product of the Tzadik Yitzchak, and the Tzadeket Rachel, and therefore stands on their work, signified by his hooves, that he shows off to others. His lineage is, in a wicked sense, a hindrance to him. He can't shake that off, yet he goes as far as he can.

So, one can see the significance of this episode of Eisav's turning away from HaShem, by eating Lentils.

Our Chachamim teach us that an *Aveil* eats lentils and other round foods, to hint at the circle of life, at rebirth etc.

In fact, there are those who say that the pig will become kosher in the times of *Mashiach*.

And in fact, we are taught that in the times of *Mashaich*, even *Eisav* will join us again (*Rashi* on *Bereishith*, 32, 14, where Yaakov *Aveinu* tells him to go ahead of him, and he will catch up to him) . In a practical context, for our times, past and present, the Chachamim tell us that we get converts from Bnei Eisav. This would make sense because, after all, his lineage is kosher.

The pig, too, will fly some day.

As for the nation that one identifies with the camel, and camel caravans traversing the desert, Bnei *Yishmael*, we are taught that no converts will come from them. They do not have split hooves.

They chew their cud. It's true that they are concerned about their future world, but that's taken to a distorted extreme.

They don't care enough about their *Olam Haze*.

This is the problem that exists with Hamas, Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad and other like terrorists.

They have been taught from childhood to glorify death as a way to boundless pleasure. They are taught not to worry about living.

This type of thinking makes them dangerous beings with no remorse, embarrassment or fear of mortal consequence. In their minds, their own lives are better off being cut off, all the more so, those of the people that they are taught to hate. HaShem protect us all.

May we be *zocheh* to see the ending of our suffering in this *galuth*, and ingathering of all of our brothers, speedily in our day, without having to suffer much more *Chevlei HaMashiach*.