

וישלח

ויאמר למה זה אמצא חן בעיני אדוני [לג, טו]

When עשו was taking leave of יעקב, he offered to walk together with יעקב and his family. יעקב declined by saying he had to walk at a slower pace. Then עשו made another offer to send one of his men with יעקב as protection. יעקב declined this as well and said אמצא חן בעיני אדוני, let me find favor in the eyes of my master. רש"י adds that יעקב was saying to עשו that he shouldn't pay him back for the gifts that he gave to him. It appears from רש"י that יעקב was asking that עשו should respect his position not to accept anything in return. Perhaps there is a deeper פשט here as well.

יעקב had presented to עשו an expensive present of many animals. עשו was indeed appreciative of this present, and he now felt very much indebted to יעקב for this. But this posed a problem to עשו. As long as he felt indebted and was מכיר טוב, יעקב, his sense of הכרת הטוב would not allow him to hurt him or do anything to him. He therefore wanted to pay יעקב back by sending one of his men with him. This would serve as some measure of payment to rid himself of his feelings of הכרת הטוב. יעקב understood עשו's intentions and declined the offer. This is what יעקב meant when he said אמצא חן בעיני אדוני, let me find favor in your eyes. He was referring to the original מציאת חן that עשו felt when he received the gift. By refusing to take עשו's offer, his present would still find favor in עשו's eyes, because עשו would still feel indebted to יעקב.

We can gain from here an important insight. Even a רשע like עשו has a natural sense of הכרת הטוב. The difference between a רשע and a צדיק is, that a רשע will not act upon those feelings of הכרת הטוב, on the contrary he will try to rid himself of it so that it won't get in his way. A צדיק on the other hand, will constantly keep these feelings of appreciation and הכרת הטוב with him and will always feel indebted.

Have a good Shabbos.

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