



TORAH 4 TEENS

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STRENGTH OR FAITH?

UNDERSTANDING ANTISEMITISM

When we think of antisemitism, we often think of Amalek. But our parsha offers another lens.

Moshe asks Edom for permission to pass through their land on the way to Israel. Despite a respectful request, Edom refuses and mobilizes for war. Reading the pesukim, it is difficult to understand such hostility. Rashi connects this to the ancient conflict between Yaakov and Esav — Edom being Esav’s descendants.

This illustrates the famous principle from the Sifri on Bereshit: הַלֵּכָה הִיא בְּדִוּעַ שְׂעֵשׂוֹ שׁוֹנֵא לִיַּעֲקֹב — it is a known rule that Esav hates Yaakov.

The Torah is teaching us something timeless: certain hatred is irrational and deep-rooted. But the Torah also models how to navigate it — with dignity, patience, and realism. This is a message we must internalize when confronting our enemies today.

In Parshat חקת , Bnei Yisrael once again find themselves without water. Hashem commands Moshe to speak to a stone, and water would rush out. Instead, Moshe strikes the stone. Although water comes out, Hashem is displeased with him and decrees that Moshe will be forbidden from entering Eretz Yisrael.

Why was this considered such a serious sin? Hashem wanted to teach Bnei Yisrael that all blessing comes from Him alone. By speaking to the rock, Moshe would have demonstrated the power of Hashem’s word and the importance of relying on Him. By striking the rock, that message was diminished.

For someone as great as Moshe, even a small departure from Hashem’s command carried great significance. From this we learn an important lesson: although we are expected to make an effort, our trust must always remain in Hashem, the true source of everything we achieve. ■

