מדרש

Midrash

ON GENESIS 27:34

Does G-d punish wrongdoing, or does He wait and collect later?

Bereshit Rabbah 67:4

Rabbi Ḥanina teaches that G-d is not lax but shows patience and collects His due. The midrash illustrates this with Yaakov's deception of Esav: Esav's cry at losing the blessing is repaid when Mordechai cries out in Shushan (Esther 4:1). Rabbi Yoḥanan reads "bemirma" as Yaakov coming with the wisdom of his learning, and Reish Lakish reads Esav's "hakhi" as Esav clearing his throat and spitting as one who mocks, before Esav complains that he was left with only the inferior blessings. AI SUMMARY

"When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out, a very great and bitter cry, and he said to his father: Bless me too, my father" (Genesis 27:34). "When Esau heard the words of his father" – Rabbi Ḥanina said: Anyone who says that the Holy One blessed be He is lax, may his intestines become lax. Rather, He shows patience and collects His due. Jacob caused Esau to cry out one cry, as it is written: "When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out." Where did He punish him [Jacob]? It was in the Shushan citadel, as it is stated: "[When Mordekhai learned what had happened...] and cried out an exceedingly loud and bitter cry" (Esther 4:1).

"He said: Your brother came in cunning, and he took your blessing" (Genesis 27:35). "Your brother came in cunning [bemirma]" – Rabbi Yoḥanan said: He came with the wisdom of his Torah. "He said: It is for this that his name was called Jacob [Yaakov], as he deceived me these two times; he took my birthright and, behold, now he took my blessing. And he said: Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" (Genesis 27:36).

"He said: It is for this [hakhi] that his name was called Jacob [Yaakov], as he deceived me [vayakveni]" – Reish Lakish said: He began clearing his throat, like one who clears his throat [meḥakekh] and expectorates from his mouth. "He said: Hakhi." "He deceived me...he took my birthright" – and I said nothing to him. "Behold, now he took my blessing" – shall I say nothing to him? "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" – from the inferior ones.