חסידות

From the Chassidic Courts

CHERNOBYL · ME'OR EINAYIM, VAYERA

Can even a wicked person draw close to God?

Me'or Einayim

Drawing on the Zohar, which identifies the three men as Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, and on the Tikkunim's image of the rider and horse, the author reads Genesis 18 as describing how even a wicked person is visited by God through thoughts of teshuvah and can aspire to become a chariot for God's Name, so that he goes only where God wants and not where the yetzer hara leads. AI SUMMARY

"Hashem appeared to him in the plains of Mamre, as he was sitting at the entrance of the tent in the heat of the day. He lifted his eyes and saw, and behold, three men," etc. "He saw, and he ran toward them from the entrance of the tent, and bowed down to the ground."

The holy Zohar writes: Who are the three men? Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. It is known that the holy Torah must apply to every person and in every time, for it is eternal. But the truth is that the Creator, blessed be He, is found in every one of Israel, even in the greatest wicked person and the greatest transgressor, God forbid. The proof is that thoughts of teshuvah (return, repentance) come to every wicked person every day, and this is Hashem, blessed be He, appearing to him. As he goes on in this way, raising his intellect, he begins to say: "When will my deeds reach the deeds of my forefathers?"

For the forefathers are the chariot (merkavah). And what is a chariot? The Tikkunim writes: The horse is secondary to the rider, and the rider is not secondary to the horse, so that the horse would go where it wants and lead him to a river and to filthy places. Rather, it goes only to the place where the rider wants to go. So when a person is a chariot for God's great Name, he goes only where Hashem, blessed be He, wants him to go, for he does only the will of Hashem, blessed be He, and not the will of the yetzer hara (evil inclination).

This is why it says "Hashem appeared to him" without specifying, and does not write "to Avraham." It refers to every one of Israel, for Hashem, blessed be He, appears to each one. That is, even to a great wicked person, God forbid, Hashem, blessed be He, appears, namely through the thoughts of teshuvah that come to him, as explained above.

"And he was sitting at the entrance of the tent" means that an opening is opened for him, "in the heat of the day," when the fervor of thoughts of teshuvah comes to him. "He lifted his eyes" means that he raises his intellect. "And he saw, and behold, three men": Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov. That is to say, he sees the level of the forefathers, who were a chariot for His great Name. "He saw, and he ran toward them" means that he says, "When will my deeds reach the deeds of my forefathers?" He too wants to reach this level, to be a chariot for Him, blessed be He, so that he goes only where He, blessed be He, wants.

"From the entrance of the tent" means from that same opening that was opened for him, as above. And then "he bowed down to his face." Bowing is a drawing down: he draws down [influence] to the aspect of earthliness. And understand this.

Translation: translated by AI (anthropic/claude-sonnet-5.5)

