

YOUR WAR
IS OVER



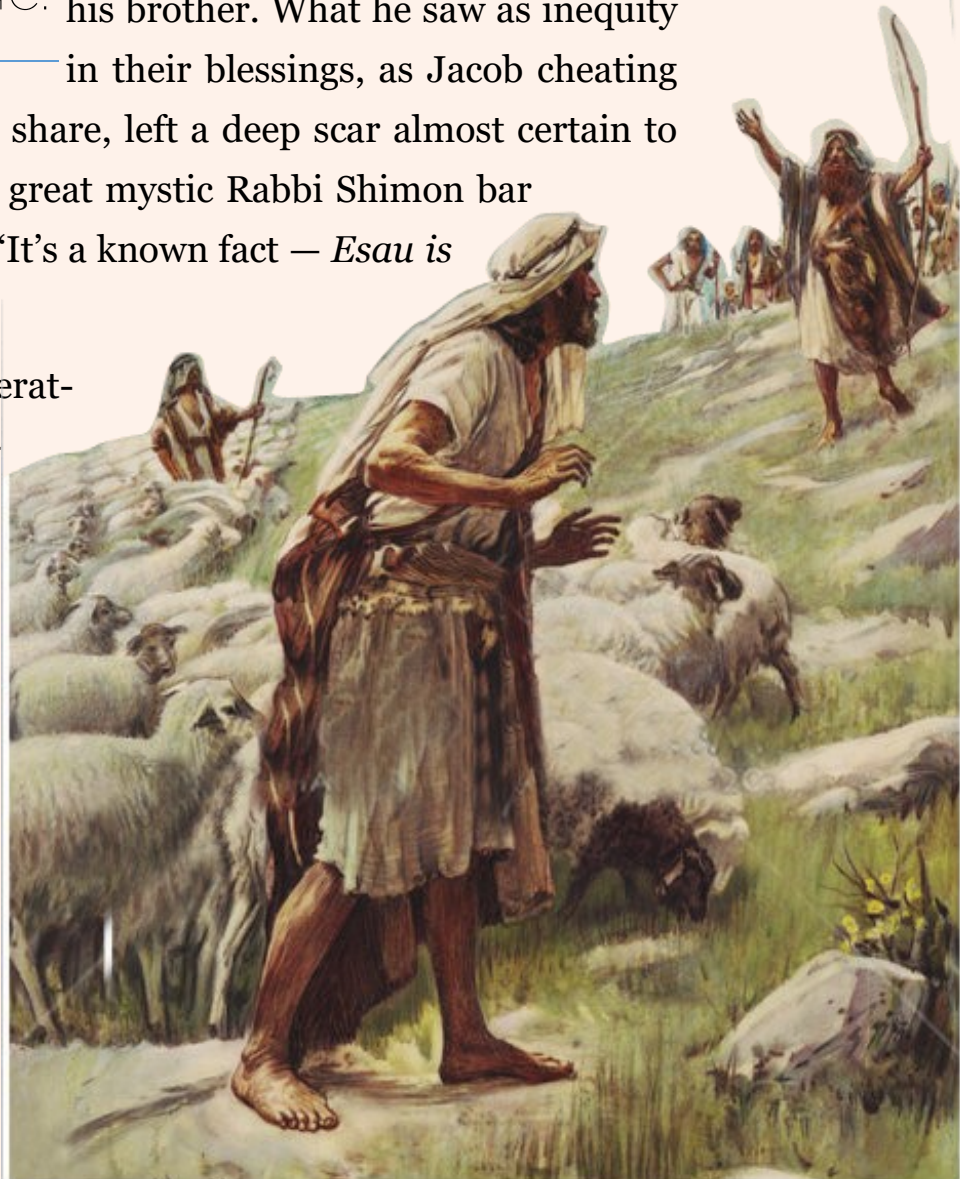
LIFE IS ALWAYS BRINGING US into contact with impossible people — disconnected and unconscious actors with whom we easily get drawn into drama. When Jacob returned to Canaan with his family, Esau came out to meet him with an army, and that was a veiled threat — you don't go to meet your long-lost brother fully weaponized unless you plan to do him harm. Jacob's experience when he met up with Esau again has a lot to teach us, because somehow Jacob managed to transform that

potential collision into a moment of reconciliation.

Esau wasn't just a problematic person; he genuinely and deeply hated his brother. What he saw as inequity in their blessings, as Jacob cheating

him out of his rightful share, left a deep scar almost certain to result in violence. The great mystic Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai said it plainly: "It's a known fact — *Esau is Jacob's enemy.*"

It's because we're operating only on the surface. When we remain at the level of the external, we find ourselves in conflict. The remedy is to reach inside. Here is where Jacob's nature has so much to teach us. He wasn't only an inner-focused person; he



was a centered person. Jacob is a model of how to stay steady and centered even when dealing with people who run to extremes.

The outer self has its own ego-driven agenda that often puts it at odds with others, who naturally have their own motives too. If I can't harmonize with my child (he's oppositional, he's not fulfilling his obligations, etc.), how much of that friction is really about my impatience with him? How much of it is really about me being inconvenienced, disappointed, ego-invested, angry, and afraid for his future? I want to reach my child, but how can I when my externals are clashing with his externals? I'm facing a person who sees me as an obstacle in his way, as his enemy at this moment. And, right now, he happens to be right. When I'm still stuck at the surface of things, I'm in his way and he's in mine.

Jacob teaches me that there is a way in...

There is a way to connect

When I take that way in, I'm capitalizing on the moment of potential conflict as a means of becoming a more internal, evolved, and conscious person. What could have been all-out war isn't only defused; it becomes a moment of transformation for both of us.

Jacob lifted his eyes and saw Esau marching toward him with four hundred armed men — that's the numerical value of the Hebrew term for the "evil eye."

What did Jacob do? He placed each of the children with their mother and then "he passed before them" and bowed seven times as he approached Esau. The verse is ambiguous, though, about exactly who did this passing. It seems to be speaking about Jacob, but doesn't identify him by name. But we do know

that after Jacob bowed seven times, Esau ran to his brother, fell upon his neck, kissed him, and cried.

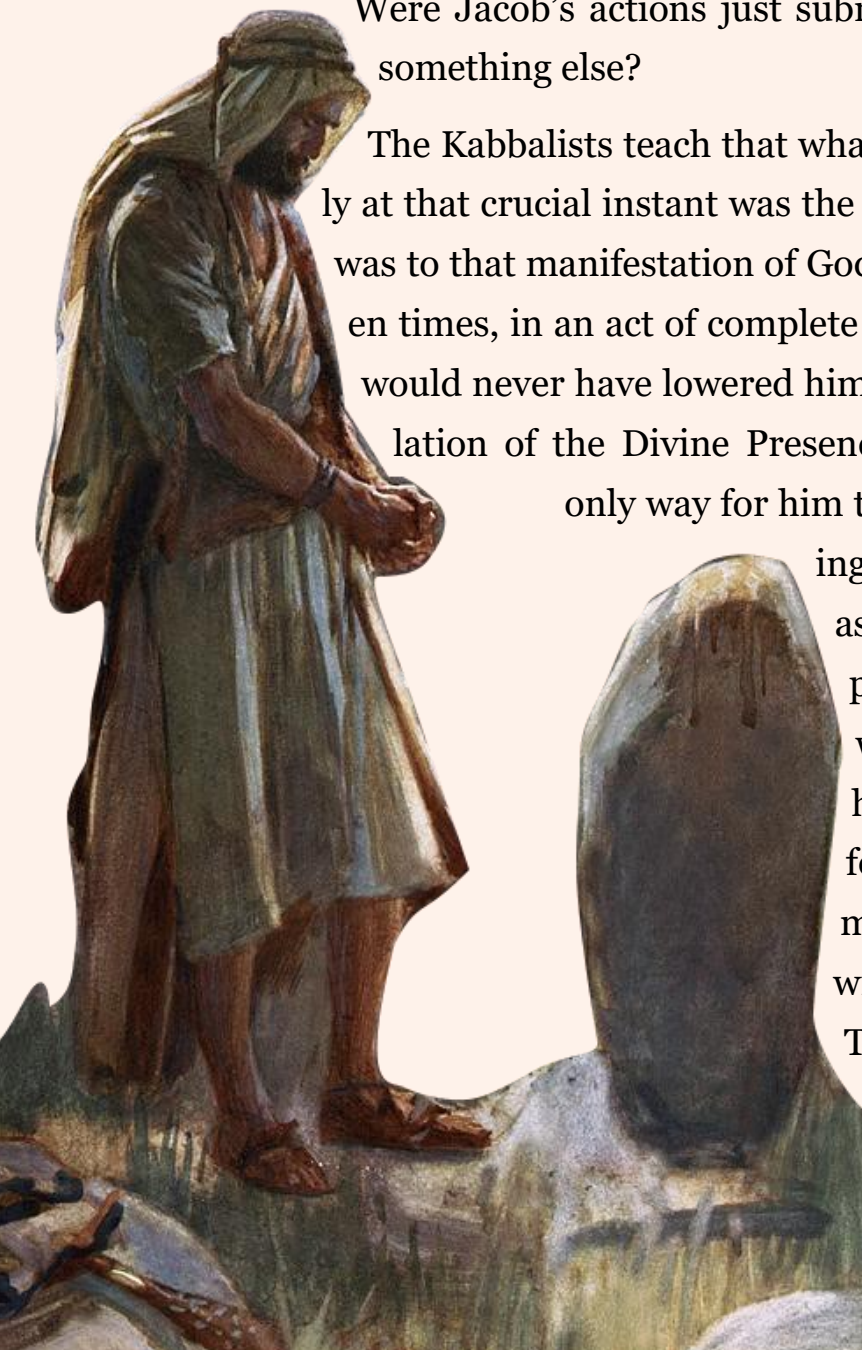
A complete turnaround. What really happened there?

What would it mean for Jacob to act so submissively before his brother, who really was a wicked and violent man? Is that the lesson we're supposed to learn — that when we're threatened we should just fold before anyone, even someone who does real evil? It's clear that Jacob's actions at that sensitive moment touched something within Esau — his core of genuine brotherly love that was plastered over with layers of jealousy and fury.

Were Jacob's actions just submissive flattery, or were they something else?

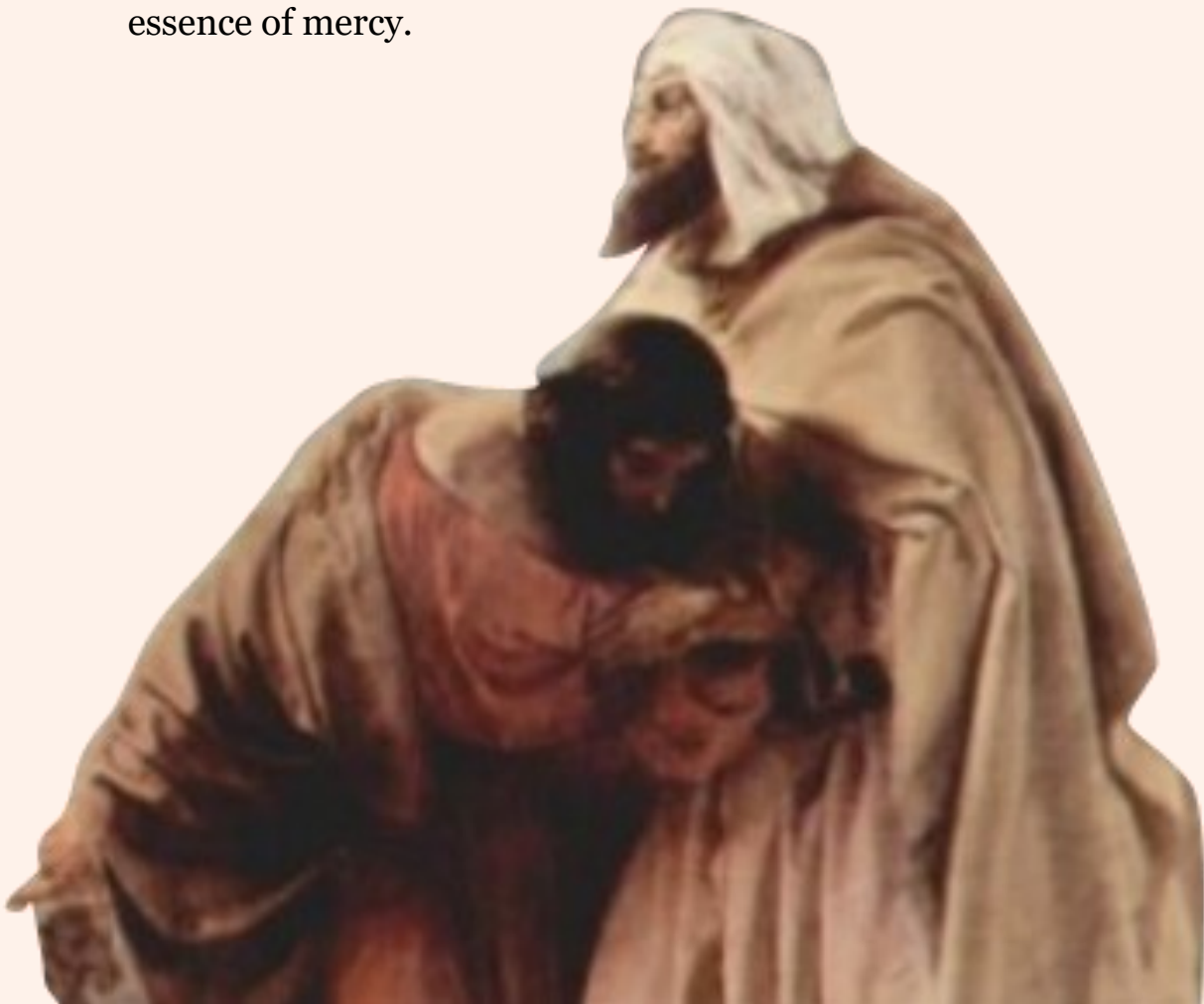
The Kabbalists teach that what passed before Jacob's family at that crucial instant was the Divine Presence itself. And it was to that manifestation of Godliness that Jacob bowed seven times, in an act of complete elimination of his ego. Jacob would never have lowered himself before evil. But the revelation of the Divine Presence made him aware that the only way for him to come away from this meet-

ing whole would be if he set aside his external self completely. How does that really work, though? What really happens when you submit before the Divine Will at the moment you're about to clash with another human being? The sages taught: "Make your will into His Will, and He will make the will of others into your will."



It happened with Esau — his innermost point of mercy woke up as soon as he saw before him the thing we almost never see: a human being approaching without an agenda. Without a personal, ego-driven agenda independent of God's agenda. There are times we need to take a stand, to say no or draw a line, but what melts the shells around the other person's heart is when we say what we have to say *without our ego getting in the way*.

The truth is, it's possible to relate to anybody. We know of great teachers who could reach the most unreachable student; great masters who could touch the furthest soul. This is our gift from Jacob — a natural ability we inherited by virtue of all of the work he did — to reach all the way into the core and relate to the essence of every person and situation. Jacob bowed seven times, and he didn't stop bowing until he could feel Esau make that transformation, until his natural cruelty was overtaken by his essence of mercy.



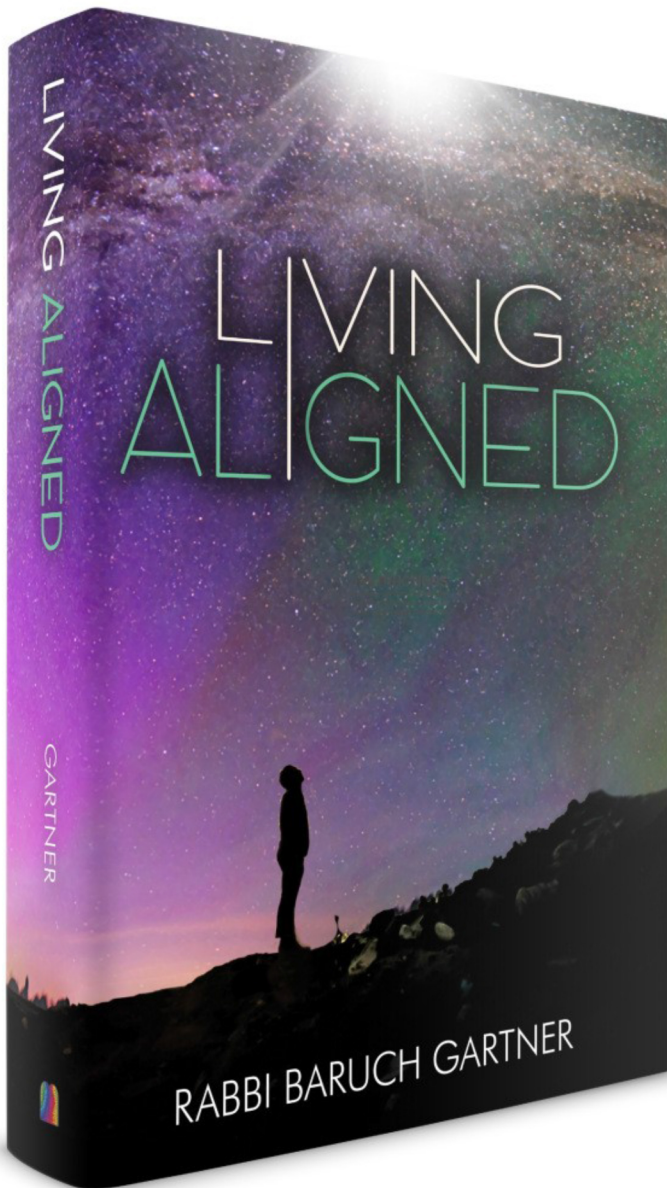
A student once came to me with terrible news. “There’s a war going on in my house! My wife hates the forward motion I’m making spiritually. If I make a blessing out loud, she acts annoyed. Everything good I do, she resists.”

I asked him, “Well, how do you feel about her?”

He said, “Honestly, it’s hard to respect her. All she cares about is the physical aspect of life — she talks with her friends about recipes, loves to shop for clothes for the kids...”

I started to laugh, because the cause of their war was pretty obvious. “If Jacob could see the good in Esau, I think you can see the good in your wife. You look at her externally, and so you can’t see the beauty of who she is. What you think is just material is her way of expressing her holy quality of nurturing. And so she naturally hates you for your religious intolerance! Go home...and pay close attention to the beauty of what she’s doing. Your war is over.”

And you know what? It really was.



Available on **amazon**

Click the link below to order now:

<https://www.amazon.com/Living-Aligned-successful-navigation-different/dp/1946351342>