

"And we circled Mount Seir many days. And Hashem spoke to me saying 'you have long passed this mountain, turn you northward.'" (2:1,2,3)

The *Midrash* interprets the phrase *vbum ofk ubp "turn you northward,"* as *vru,k ofk ubhpmv "hide yourselves for Torah."* This *Midrash* suggests a profound idea. Throughout our history, we have attempted to solve all of our problems with one common panacea, assimilation. If only we would develop a greater, more open-minded relationship with the gentile world, we would be accepted as equals and all of our problems would dissipate.

Unfortunately, a perusal through Jewish history indicates the opposite. Every time we have attempted to break through the religious barriers by assimilating with our gentile neighbors, we have been driven back in the most cruel and bestial manner. On the contrary, we experienced our few "moments" of reprieve when we remained separate, not groveling as cowards willing to shed our identities in return for gentile recognition and acceptance.

Horav M. Rogov, z.l., points out that this is the meaning of the *pasuk*. Hashem says to *Bnei Yisrael*, "You have long passed this mountain." Stop encircling *Har Seir*, attempting to ingratiate yourselves in *Eisav's* eyes. The only hope and salvation for *Bnei Yisrael* is when you "hide" themselves in the *Torah*. Through our complete devotion to *Torah* and *mitzvos*, we will develop a unique sense of Jewish pride. This will be our source of courage and strength throughout the *galus*, exile, as we wait for the ultimate salvation, the advent of *Moshiach*.