

"And Yaakov was left alone and a man wrestled with him." (32:25)

Chazal state that this "man" was really the angel of Eisav posing as a "man." On the surface, the story is quite straightforward; the angel waits until Yaakov is alone and then attacks him. However, there are greater ramifications in this struggle between Yaakov and Eisav's angel. The *Talmud* relates the word "ecthu" (*and he wrestled*) to the word "ect" (*dust*).

Rabbi Yehoshua Ben Levi said, "*This teaches that the dust of their feet rose up to Hashem's throne.*" We see from this that their struggle had enormous implications that went beyond the physical aspect. This was a struggle between the powers of Yaakov, representing all that is true and good, and those of Eisav, representing all that is false and evil.

The "dust" mentioned here represents the essence of their struggle. Dust can cause the most brightly polished object to lose its sheen. Eisav's angel attempted to obscure the luster and glow of Hashem's holiness, with the dust of illusion and deception. Rather than acknowledge Hashem as the source of all things in the world he promoted misguided philosophies which were tailored to human weakness and desires. However, Yaakov would not be deceived. His response was to wipe away this false "dust" until he ultimately succeeded in exposing the hidden truth and triumphed over Eisav's angel.