

Then you shall call out and say before Hashem your G-d, 'An Aramean tried to destroy my forefather. He descended to Egypt and sojourned there.'" (26:5)

Rashi follows the *Midrashic* interpretation of the *pasuk*. The *Midrash* considers the "Aramean" to be none other than the deceitful Lavan, who left no stone unturned in his quest to destroy Yaakov *Avinu*. Yaakov subsequently descended to Egypt to be "greeted" by the tyrannical Pharaoh. The one who is bringing the *Bikkurim* expresses his gratitude to Hashem (the declaration begins with this *pasuk*), for without His intervention there would be no "*zeicher*," remembrance, left of *Klal Yisrael*. *Rashi's* choice of instances in which Yaakov was saved from certain destruction is enigmatic. Were these two crises the only situations in which he was in danger? Are we to completely ignore the life struggle with his evil brother, Eisav?

Horav M.D. Soloveitchik, Shlita, cites his father, the *Brisker Rav, z.l.*, who distinguished between the two types of challenges. The ordeals with Lavan and Egypt came to an end, while the crisis with Eisav is still a part of our lives today. Indeed, the *galus EDOM*, our struggle with the descendants of Eisav, will not end until the advent of *Moshiach*.

Yet another painful ordeal that has been disregarded and which caused Yaakov much anguish was the nightmare of Yosef. *Horav Soloveitchik* once again cites his father who differentiated between the *personal* tragedy which Yaakov sustained as a **father** and the harsh experiences he endured as the **Patriarch** of *Klal Yisrael*. The ordeal of Yosef was a private one to which only Yaakov was subjected. Indeed, his sons and even his father, Yitzchak, were privy to the truth behind Yosef's disappearance. For this reason it is not mentioned here. Conversely, when Yaakov underwent the trials with Lavan and Egypt, he represented the future of *Klal Yisrael*, (Yaakov as Patriarch), since his death would have put an end to our People.

The *parsha* of *Bikkurim* focuses on the joy *Klal Yisrael* will experience when they enter *Eretz Yisrael* and plant and harvest their own crops. Consequently, only those *tzaros* which nearly compromised *Klal Yisrael's* existence are recounted.