



Ah, you are fair, my darling, Ah, you are fair. Your eyes are like doves behind your veil. Your hair is like a flock of goats streaming down Mount Gilead. (*Shir HaShirim 4:1*)

Your hair is like a flock of goats. *This praise is allegorized as the praise of a woman beloved by her bridegroom [who says to her], “Within your kerchief, your hair is beautiful and shines with brilliance and whiteness, like the hair of white goats descending from the mountains, and whose hair shines from a distance.” And the allegory with which he compares the congregation of Yisroel is as follows: From within your camps and your dwelling places, even the empty ones among you are as dear to Me as Yaakov and his sons, who trailed down from Mount Gilad when Lavan overtook them there. (Rashi ibid.)*

How can the least worthy Jew be as dear to Hashem as “Yaakov and his sons, who trailed down from Mount Gilad?” Why does the *pasuk* reference Yaakov and his sons specifically when they trailed down from Mount Gilad?

The above reference to Yaakov and his sons is found in this week’s *parsha*. There, the *pasuk* follows by saying: And Yaakov said to his brothers, “Gather stones.” The Medrash explains that “his brothers” refers to Yaakov’s children who are referred to as brothers “for they were *tzaddikim* akin to him.”

It seems the *pasuk* chose this reference for it symbolizes the sons of Yaakov in their greatest form i.e. equal to Yaakov himself. And just as their greatness was like their father Yaakov, so too, every Jew has within him similar greatness bequeathed to him from his father Yaakov. Therefore, “even the empty ones among you are as dear to Me as Yaakov and his children.”

