

"And the sons struggled within her" (25:22)

The *Talmud* states that the implacable hatred which Eisav exhibited for Yaacov was foreshadowed in their mother's womb. The eternal struggle between Eisav and Yaakov began even before birth. Hence, says *Horav S. R. Hirsch, z.l.*, the paths of these two rival brothers seems to have been pre-established. This approach is consistent with the teachings of some scholars who contend that the first gestures of a human being are indicative of the tendencies and desires which become evidenced throughout his life. From the most tender age, the child conceals the man. The skilled educator is mandated to display acute sensibility to the mental makeup of the young student. In this way the educator can adroitly cultivate the student's capabilities in order to prepare him to be a useful member of society. One should not suppress an individual's attitude or impose an alien orientation upon him, for the future man is already present under the surface. One succeeds in guiding, advising, and ultimately helping the young student only through absolute understanding and infinite patience.

The story of Yaakov and Eisav is a living example of positive and negative approaches to education. The former consists of observing the child, taking heed of his abilities, structuring realistic goals for him, and educating him in accordance with his own learning style. *ufrs hp kg rgbk lubj* - "*Educate the young man according to his presumed life's path.*" The latter approach lies in perceiving the child not as he is, but as he ought to be. All too frequently this method ends in total defeat for the mentor and utter disaster for the student.