

When my brother Eisav meets you and asks you, saying, “Whose are you, where are you going, and whose are these that are before you?” (32:18)

Upon coming to this *pasuk*, the *Chidushei HaRim*, z.l., would turn to his *chassidim* and say, “Note how these three questions have a strong similarity to the three queries which *Chazal* teach us are the fundamental questions a Jew must ask of himself. Know these things, and you will not come into the grip of sin: know from where you came; where you are going; and before Whom you will give justification and reckoning (*Pirkei Avos* 3:1). *Chazal* give us the three keys to our spiritual survival. Are they different than the questions Eisav asked?”

“We derive an important lesson from here,” says the *Chidushei HaRim*. “Even today, Eisav can ask these fundamental questions with one purpose in mind: to bring us to depression, to belittle us, to lower our self- esteem and self-confidence. Yes, Eisav asks the same questions that *Chazal* instruct us to ask of ourselves. There are, however, two disparate goals in these questions – and that is the “who” difference. One must be acutely aware of who is asking these questions.”