

"And Yaakov kissed Rachel, and he raised his voice and wept." (29:11)

Rashi explains the reason Yaakov cried was because he had not brought any gifts for Rachel, since Elifaz, Eisav's son, had waylaid him along the way and had taken all his possessions. Eisav had instructed Elifaz to kill Yaakov. But having grown up under Yitzchok's guidance, Elifaz was in a dilemma. Should he follow his father's orders or go against everything he had been taught by Yitzchok? It was Yaakov who helped him solve this problem by advising him to rob him of his possessions thereby impoverishing him. This would be considered as carrying out his father's command since *"a poor man is considered as dead."*

Let us attempt to analyze Elifaz's thoughts as he confronted Yaakov. He sees himself as Eisav's son who has been sent on a mission to kill Yaakov, and yet he is Yitzchak's student, who has been taught the prohibition of shedding blood. The fact that Elifaz was in such quandary indicates clearly how it is possible for one to be so mixed up in his beliefs that he becomes the ultimate hypocrite. Both good and evil are exerting a powerful influence upon this person. The basis for his intended act of murder was the very *mitzvah* of "honoring one's parents."

We find the basis for this concept mentioned in *Chazal*: *"For those who study Torah diligently, it becomes a source of life, for those who study it laxly, it becomes poison."* (*Shabbos 88*) The same *Torah* which gives life to one person becomes a deadly poison to the one who takes a carefree approach to its study. *Torah* knowledge may be accessible to each on his own level, but solid accomplishment on any level requires complete dedication of time and effort. Without this dedication, a person's knowledge will only be superficial. Given such superficial knowledge, he will not be able to fully appreciate the depth and scope of Jewish learning and will come to consider it irrelevant and trivial.