

"And Rivkah took the garments of Eisav, her older son, the choicest which were with her in the house." (27:15)

Chazal explain that these precious clothes had previously belonged to Nimrod before Eisav slew him. These clothes had the remarkable power to attract animals which Eisav immediately killed. It was specifically these extraordinary garments that Eisav would don before he served his father. Indeed, *Chazal* emphasize Eisav's special devotion to the *mitzvah* of *kibud av*, honoring his father. He dressed up as if it was a holiday when he came to greet his father!

A perusal of the various *Midrashim* indicates that Eisav was either an enigma or the archetype of hypocrisy. On the one hand, he served his father clothed in royalty. Simultaneously, on the other hand, he addressed his father in a coarse, disrespectful manner. Moreover, Eisav used clothes obtained through murder to serve his father. The same Eisav who distinguished himself in *kibud av*, later arrogantly proclaimed that if necessary, he would even kill his father! How do we reconcile this extreme form of duplicity? Eisav seems to vacillate between the spiritual sublime and the nadir of degeneracy!

In analyzing Eisav's personality, *Horav Chizkiyahu Cohen z.l.*, concludes that Eisav characterizes the individual whose nature and lifestyle reflect an inconsistency between the intellect of the mind and the passion/desire of the heart. Indeed, was not Eisav's head buried in the *Me'oras Ha'Machpeilah* together with the Patriarchs? One could surmise that his head did not "follow" the rest of his body. In his "mind" he was acutely aware of his nefarious deeds. His "heart," the seat of his desires, however, drove him to senseless and diabolical hatred for his brother. He was consumed by an implacable lust that dominated every aspect of his being. He comprehended what was right, but he had no control over his behavior. Rather than subdue his passions by subjugating them to the sophisticated deliberation of the mind, he allowed his intellect to become a slave to his desires.

In truth, prior to Eisav's spiritual departure, he gave no indication of a tendency to be different than his saintly twin brother. It was only after *ohrgbv uksdhu*, the boys matured, that they went on divergent paths. *Horav Cohen* asserts that Eisav and Yaakov were products of the same education system and environment. They both studied diligently in the same "school." Indeed, Eisav probably felt he was no different than Yaakov in any way.

Chazal alluded to Eisav's self-deception. Concerning the fact that Eisav married at the age of forty, *Chazal* assert that he emulated his father's actions. Just as his father married at the age of forty, so, too, he married at the age of forty. He saw no distinction between his father and himself. Indeed, *Chazal* compare Eisav to a pig that flaunts his one pure sign, his split hooves, while ignoring the fact that he does not chew his cud. This analogy defines Eisav. He noticed only his signs of purity, while he overlooked his impurities. The pig only sees his pure sign, but his impure sign remains hidden within his body. Eisav was so obsessed with flaunting his virtue that he was

not able to see his iniquities. He wanted to do the right thing, while simultaneously performing immoral deeds.

This "Eisavian" philosophy is the antithesis of Judaism. Our religion does not ascribe to the notion of selective Judaism, whereby one picks and chooses the *mitzvos* which he feels "more inclined" to observe, while ignoring those with which he is uncomfortable. To delete from the *Torah* is to render oneself spiritually impaired and to devoid oneself of the true essence of Judaism.