

Eisav became one who knows hunting, a man of the field; but Yaakov was a wholesome man, abiding in tents. (25:27)

Pathology is a word which often conjures up images of fear and the macabre. Actually, it means to search for the source, the origin, the root of something, so that one can define its nature and eventual course of growth. Thus, if it is a disease, the choice of treatment will depend on its origin. A speech pathologist is able to discern among various speech impediments. Thus, she is able to determine the proper course of therapy. A “sin pathologist” studies the source of one’s aberrant behavior in search of a course of therapy to assist the subject in returning to Hashem. Thus, when we describe a person – and we do so with *seichal*, common sense, with an astute perception of his character – we use terms that reach into his origin, the source of his sinful behavior.

Yaakov *Avinu* and Eisav *ha’rasha* were twins, born from the same parents, carried together in the same womb – but this is where their likeness ended. One was a *tzaddik*, righteous and virtuous, who became the third Patriarch, while the other was his archenemy, whose descendants hounded our People, becoming successful heirs to his legacy of hate. We know all of this, but wherein lies the source of their variance? What about Eisav’s pathology, his basic nature, distinguishes him from Yaakov?

Horav Chaim Friedlander, zl, addresses this question and posits that the many differences which manifested themselves in the lives and behaviors of Yaakov and Eisav all revert back to the major discrepancies in their lives: Their individual attitudes towards enlightenment and their willingness to be educated further. Eisav maintained an attitude of, “I know it all, I need no further enlightenment; I am there already.” Yaakov, however, was never able to garner enough learning. Let us see how this divergence characterized the lives of these two seminal figures: one representing good and all that is positive; and the other representing the complete contrast.

Vayikreu shemo Eisav – Vayikra shemo Yaakov, “They named him Eisav” – “He called his name Yaakov.” From their births, the twins were different. Eisav was born red, entirely like a hairy mantle, while Yaakov was born grasping on to the heel of Eisav. Eisav was not simply “red,” he was covered with a red mantle. Thus, upon seeing such a completely formed, mature child, everyone called him Eisav. His name came to the mind of everyone at once, because it was most fitting, given that he appeared to be a mature, fully-developed “adult – in appearance.” Eisav means *asui*, completely finished. The name given to the infant, Eisav, defined his essence. He was complete – finished – done. He had no need to learn from anyone, having entered into this world as a consummate person. Does this name really define Eisav? The man was a moral degenerate; an individual whose base desires could not be satiated. His name should also have addressed his profligate behavior. Apparently, the name Eisav, implying complete, finished, says it all. This was his pathological source of evil. He was a finished person, who could learn from no one and had no reason to learn.

Not so his twin brother, Yaakov, who emerged into this world grasping onto the heel of Eisav. Indeed, it was Hashem Who gave him his name, because only the Almighty, in His infinite wisdom, was able to see the future Yaakov, the man who would hold onto Eisav's heel and eventually take him down. Yaakov was not complete; he was patient, "hanging in there" until the opportune moment in which he would take over and reign supreme over Eisav and his minions.

Eisav was a hunter, a man of the field. The commentators explain that he felt no sense of responsibility. He was a complete wastrel who had no desire to do anything other than to take it easy. Yaakov, however, went from tent of Torah to tent of Torah. He would first study with Yitzchak *Avinu* and then supplement his studies at the *yeshivah* of Shem and Eivar. It was never enough for him. The more he could grab, the more he would grab. As *Targum Yonasan ben Uziel* writes, *Yaakov tova ulpenah*, "he demanded and sought learning, constantly seeking to further and further his growth and self-development."

Yaakov was an *ish tam*, a wholesome man, but there is never an end to wholesomeness. One can always strive to achieve greater *sheleimus*, perfection. Eisav was also aroused to achieve holiness. After all, why not? However, he was, *tzayid b'fiv*, his hunt was in his mouth. As **Horav Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler, zl**, writes, "Whatever inspiration for sanctity that Eisav had – remained in his mouth." It went no further. He talked about it, but he was never serious about pursuing *kedushah*, holiness.

Yaakov was wholesome; his mouth and his heart were on the same page. What he sought, he worked for with every fibre of his body.

The *parsha* concerning Yaakov and Eisav teaches us an important principle of education. Animals are considered full-term at birth. This means that a baby calf is already considered in the eyes of *Halachah* to be a fully grown ox. Animals achieve completion with birth, because their potential is realized at birth. A baby animal can walk, sprint, eat, drink on its own. It requires no assistance. Not so a human being, who, without the help of its mother, cannot function. A human being develops throughout a lifetime, growing steadily, achieving more with each ensuing day.

Does it have to be this way? Should not the human being, the crown of Creation, be complete at birth? Why should we be born in the infant stage, which requires growth and development? Why could we not have been created like Adam *HaRishon*, Primordial Man, complete and finished, fully-developed and ready to take on the world? **Horav Simcha Zissel Broide, zl**, the *Alter m'Kelm*, explains that the manner of man's birth and his lifetime of development are in consonance with his essence, his manner of education, and ultimate purpose in life.

The purpose of man's presence in this world is *ruchniyos*, spirituality. He must strive to become closer to the Source of all spirituality – Hashem. In order for one to have a desire for positive growth, it is necessary for him to be created in an incomplete manner. Otherwise, what would he be missing? Why would he bother to seek more when he already has it all? Thus, by looking

around and observing the image of an *adam ha'shaleim*, he seeks to improve and follow the same course. Indeed, a child achieves more growth in his early years than throughout any other period in life.

We now understand the progression of Eisav's life, as he became the evil incarnate that he ultimately represented. Eisav was born complete, with no need for continued learning. He had no desire to learn. Yaakov was born an unfinished infant, with a desire to develop into adulthood. He, therefore, seized every opportunity for growth.

A *ben Torah* is one who is constantly striving to achieve greater and loftier heights in Torah knowledge. The **Chazon Ish** was prepared to give up his precious time and strength to respond to any question concerning *bonei Torah*. He would spend hours searching for ways to help a *yeshivah* student advance in his studies. In his eyes, the entire world revolved around *yeshivos* and *bonei Torah*. This was the focus of Creation: the true *ben Torah* and helping that *ben Torah* develop.

The centrality of the *yeshivah* was uppermost in the mind of the *Chazon Ish*. Prior to taking a trip to the diaspora, *Horav Shlomo Lorincz* asked the *Chazon Ish* if he could do anything for him. The *Chazon Ish* replied that a certain *yeshivah* was in the midst of putting up its building and was short five tons of cement. Apparently, the country was rationing cement, and the shortage was hurting the *yeshivah*. The building could not be delayed any longer.

Rav Lorincz looked at the *Chazon Ish* and asked if the matter was really one of such high importance. There are priorities; it was a small *yeshivah* which did not occupy a critical position in the Torah world.

The *Chazon Ish* replied, "Know that this *yeshivah* stands *b'rumo shel olam*, at the apex of the world. Everything outside of the *yeshivah* is subsidiary. This does not refer only to a large *yeshivah* with a multitude of students; it applies to every *yeshivah* – regardless of its size – even if it just recently opened its doors and no one has ever heard of it. Even that *yeshivah* stands at the pinnacle of the world, and it is worthy that you should devote yourself to seeing to it that they can complete their building and begin learning in earnest."

The *ben Torah* was the center of the *Chazon Ish's* world. He personally guided hundreds of *yeshivah* students in their spiritual growth. He was the spiritual leader of the entire Torah world, whose days and nights, when he was not personally studying or writing novella, were devoted to the critical issues facing the Jewish People. Yet, he always found time to help a young teenager who was stymied in his learning. No student was ever turned away, and each one felt that he was the only student about whom the *Chazon Ish* was concerned.

Spiritual growth was paramount to the *Chazon Ish*. He understood that status quo represented Eisav's perspective on life. He could not offer enough encouragement to individuals to continue their upward growth in learning. To paraphrase the *Chazon Ish* in his *Igros* (1:14), "A young man

who steeped himself in Torah heartens me and captivates my soul. The memory of him fills my entire world, and my soul is bound to him with unbreakable bonds of love.”