

## "These are the generations of Yaakov; Yosef." (37:2)

*Rashi* cites the *Midrash* which draws a parallel between Yaakov and Yosef. Whatever happened to Yaakov similarly occurred to Yosef. The former was hated by his brother, and the latter was also despised by his brothers. The former's brother sought to kill him, just as the latter's brothers also sought to destroy him.

*Horav Elchanan Wasserman z.t.l.* advances this thought by applying the famous dictum of "Whatever happens to the "fathers" is a portent for their "sons." The dilemmas confronting Yaakov in his "relationship" with Esav and Lavan are a presage for *Klal Yisrael's* external relationship in *galus*, exile, among the gentile nations. He continues by stating that Yosef's relationship/interactions with his brothers foreshadow future "situations" which will occur for *Torah's* internal existence in the midst of *Klal Yisrael*. As Yosef was the object of hatred by his brothers, so, too, will the *Talmidei Chachamim*, *Torah* scholars, be loathed by the *am ha'aretz*, the illiterate and unschooled.

Perhaps we may expound upon this statement. Exactly, what is the definition of '*am ha'aretz*'? The *Rambam* writes, "*Chazal* define an *am ha'aretz* as one who hates to learn *Torah*." This category does not include one who loves to learn but either does not have the ability or opportunity to do so. Such an individual will one day share in *Torah* learning. *Horav Shimon Schwab, Shlita*, compares the *am ha'aretz* to Do'eg and Achitofel, who were *reshaim*, evil, even though they were erudite in *Torah* knowledge. Their *Torah* learning was "from their lips outward." They went through the whole *Torah*, but the *Torah* did not penetrate them! They did not implement *Torah* principles and *yiraas shomayim* into their daily endeavor. They belonged to a world of confusion and emptiness.

The *am ha'aretz* has no respect for *Torah*. Therefore, he hates it and everything for which it stands. Every loyal adherent, every scholar, is in fact viewed as a piercing reproach to the *am ha'aretz*. Consequently, he must degrade the *Torah* scholar, so that he can rationalize considering himself the better man. The rivalry between the spiritually handicapped and the *Talmid Chacham* is very similar to that of Yosef and his brothers. As Yosef's conflict originated in jealousy, so, too, are jealousy and the deep-seated knowledge that the *ben Torah* is truly performing Hashem's will the source of current resentment.

We suggest one more parallel. The brothers misinterpreted Yosef's sincerity in speaking to Yaakov concerning their dubious behavior. A lack of communication between them resulted in this tragic animosity. Perhaps due to insecurity, the *am ha'aretz* employs hatred and disdain as his methods of communication with the *ben Torah*. If these individuals would only stop to think and look beyond their self-imposed wall of ambiguity, they would realize that we are all brothers who have the same mandate to follow in the path prescribed for us by our Father in Heaven.