

Eisav said to Yaakov, “Pour into me, now, some of the very red stuff... (He therefore called his name Edom).” (25:30)

Avraham *Avinu* fathered Yishmael about whom we read in the previous *parsha*. The other symbol of evil born from a Patriarch was Eisav *ha'rasha*, Yaakov *Avinu*'s twin. The Torah makes a point to enumerate the *alufim*, heads of the tribes, of both Yishmael and Eisav, more so than other pagan nations. This is because these two individuals/nations represent the root source of the evil of all the other pagan nations. *Horav Moshe Shapiro, zl (Mimaamakim)*, explains that Yishmael and Eisav represent the two primary categories of the seventy nations of the world, with each individual nation drawing its source of character and identity from one of these two. Thirty-five nations attribute their essence to Eisav and identify with his base character traits. Likewise, the thirty-five remaining nations receive their cultural and societal character and DNA from Yishmael.

Chazal (Tanchuma V'Zos HaBrachah) teach that prior to giving the Torah to *Klal Yisrael*, Hashem turned to all the nations of the world and offered it to each one of them. The *Midrash*, however, only delineates the responses of two nations: Yishmael and Eisav. The *Rosh Yeshivah* explains that this is not a contradiction, since Eisav and Yishmael represent the nations of the world. When these two nations demurred accepting the Torah, each of them gave a reason which is consistent with the very root of his essential character. When Eisav's descendants were asked if they would accept the Torah, their response was: *retzichah*, murder, is part of our lives. Eisav was the *rotzeach* who murdered Nimrod on the day that his grandfather, Avraham *Avinu*, left this world. The Torah fared no better with *Bnei Yishmael*, who asserted that a Torah that prohibited stealing was not acceptable to their culture. Yishmael was the *pere adam* for whom no one's possessions prevented him from fulfilling his desire. If he wanted it – he took it.

The *Rosh Yeshivah* deduces that these two nations represent the sources of evil that draw their power from the poison of the *nachash*, primordial serpent. The sin of Adam *HaRishon* was founded in *taavah*, desire, and the sin of Kayin was *retzichah*, murder. *Horav Tzadok HaKohen, zl (Kedushas HaShabbos 25; Pre Tzaddik, 4:68)*, writes that the *klipah* (outer covering, husk, which conceals the G-dly light within all creation on the unholy side of the universe) of Eisav is *kaas*, anger, and *kinaah*, envy (which lead to murder), and the *klipah* of Yishmael is *taavah*, unbridled desire.

To take this further, we quote from the commentary of *Rabbeinu Bachya* to the *Parsha* (Ibid. 25:30) in which he explains the significance of the color red with regard to Eisav's intrinsic character. Eisav's repeating the word *edom* (*ha'odom ha'odom ha'zeh*) refers to the *mazalos*, discipline of astrology, in which the planet Mars appears red, and, as such, is the symbol of war and bloodshed. *Rabbeinu Bachya* contends that scientists claim that red fruit derives some of its power from the red planet. This, likewise, applies to red gemstones, such as the ruby. In other words, the planet Mars extends its influence over some of all three categories of phenomena in our world: living creatures, vegetation, and inert substances. This planet (its horoscope) was especially germane to

Eisav, which was why Yitzchak blessed him with a power that he already possessed – the power of the sword. Thus, when Eisav asked for the red lentils, it was because the color was endemic to his character, more so than any other color. He derived strength from it. A bowl of red lentils would renew his flagging spirits more quickly and effectively than anything else. Eisav's inclination to shed blood was derived from his having been born under that horoscope. [Yaakov *Avinu* was also born under that same zodiac sign. He employed the fire and passion toward serving Hashem with all his heart and soul.]

We now understand that the *kochos ha'ra*, evil powers, that exist within the seventy nations are outgrowths of the two *roshei ha'goyim*, heads of the nations: Yishmael, representing *taavah*; and Eisav, exemplifying *kaas*, the two *middos*, character traits, which essentially are the root of all evil which man perpetrates.

Eisav and Yishmael refused to accept the Torah, because it would infringe on their way of life. *Klal Yisrael* accepted the Torah with two words: *Naaseh v'nishma*, "We will do and we will listen." The *Gaon, zl, m'Vilna* (*Aderes Eliyahu*, commentary to the beginning of *V'Zos HaBrachah*) posits that *Naaseh* is the panacea to the evil of Eisav (*asiyah*, action = Eisav) and *nishma* is the remedy to Yishmael (*shmiyah*, hearing = Yishmael). We have remedied the evil created by Eisav's actions and Yishmael's listening to his heart's desires.

Two primary antagonists have confronted the Jewish People throughout our tumultuous history: one is called *oyeiv*; the other is referred to as *sonei*. These two terms describe an enemy, an adversary. *Sonei* alludes to Eisav and his minions; *oyeiv* is a reference to Yishmael and his descendants. *V'nasan Hashem Elokecha eis kol ha'alos ha'eileh al o'yivecha v'al son'echa*; "Hashem, your G-d, will place all these imprecations upon your enemies and those who hate you" (*Devarim* 30:7). *Rabbeinu Bachya* explains: *o'yivecha* – Yishmael; *so'necha* – Eisav. What is the difference between these two terms – especially in light of the tainted character traits manifested by each individual adversary?

Rav Shapiro cites *Rashi* (commentary to *Bamidbar* 10:35), *V'yafutzu o'yivecha v'yanusu so'necha*, "And let your enemies be scattered, and let those who hate you flee." *Rashi* defines *o'yivecha* to be those who are gathered together ready/planning to attack, but have not yet done so, and he interprets *so'necha* to be those who are already in pursuit of *Klal Yisrael*. This may be explained further, with *o'yeiv* being an adversary who has a reason for his hatred. He wants something. With regard to Yishmael, this would be land. Conversely, the *sonei*, Eisav, represents implacable, irrational hatred for no reason. This makes sense, especially given the *Talmudic* dictum, *Eisav sonei l'Yaakov*, "Eisav hates Yaakov." This is an absolute – no reason – just plain unvarnished hatred. In light of the previous explanation rendered by *Rabbeinu Bachya*, that Eisav derives his power source and character from the "redness" associated with his zodiac star, hatred is part of his intrinsic character. We now have two understandings of the motivational roots of anti-Semitism. Not all types of anti-Semitism are alike. Thus, they should not be bunched together and addressed in a similar manner. Nothing is what it seems.