

Kayin spoke with his brother Hevel. And it happened when they were in the field, that Kayin rose up against his brother Hevel, and killed him. (4:8)

The *pasuk* does not detail Kayin and Hevel's conversation. *Chazal* (*Midrash Rabbah, Bereishis* 22:7) debate the source of their arguing with one another. First, they contended about the division of the land, with one taking land and the other taking movable property. This arrangement did not work. When Kayin, who had taken the ground, told Hevel, "You are standing on my ground," Hevel countered, "Everything that you are wearing is mine." This led to discord, which was the precursor to the first act of murder. A second opinion concerns the area in which the *Bais Hamikdash* would be built, with each brother demanding that it be built in his portion of the land. Apparently, the division of the land had proceeded peacefully until it applied to the place in which the *Shechinah* would appear. This led to Kayin rising up against Hevel, killing him.

Each one had been born with a twin sister. Hevel, however, was born with two sisters. This engendered Kayin's envy. He felt that, as the firstborn, she belonged to him. Hevel countered, "But she was born with me." We are all aware of the consequences of their disagreement. After all is said and done, with *Chazal* seeking reasons to rationalize the discord between the brothers – a discord which led to murder – they avoid one pressing question: Why does the Torah not make any mention of the source of their conflict? While none of *Chazal's* reasons rationalize murder, at least we have a reason for their dissonance. If so, the Torah should have alluded to it. Why is the Torah mum on the subject? It writes: "Kayin said to Hevel." What did he say?

Horav Yechiel Yaakov Weinberg, zl, offers a penetrating explanation. The Torah did not reveal the reason for their disagreement, because it is not consistent with reality. *Chazal's* reasons are merely an external camouflage which the *yetzer hora*, evil inclination, employs as a way of concealing the true evil lurking in his heart. He makes up excuses and rationalizations to assuage his guilt complex. Kayin came to argue, to sow discord with his brother. The *yetzer hora* did a great job on Kayin, convincing him that he was justified in his negative feelings toward Hevel.

The human psyche is comprised of *middos raos*, deficient negative character traits, as well as positive *middos*. The human being should not ignore the facts that he is the repository of anger, envy, hatred and that the *yetzer hora* takes advantage of him, convincing him that he is acting in the best interests of Hashem, His Torah, His People. As long as one acknowledges this reality, he has hope that, through constant introspection, his actions will not be tainted with the *yetzer hora's* machinations. Otherwise, what he thinks is a *mitzvah* may actually be a sin – chocolate covered, compliments of his *yetzer hora*.