

Yaakov departed from Beer-Sheva and went toward Charan. (28:10)

In the previous *parsha*, we read that Yaakov *Avinu* incurred the implacable wrath of his brother, Eisav, because he appropriated the blessings. Eisav was quite upset, and he swore to kill Yaakov in the proper place and time. This *parsha* begins with Yaakov leaving home on his way to seek a wife at his Uncle Lavan's house. Between the time that Yaakov received instructions from his parents concerning leaving home for Charan, and the actual commencement of his journey, the Torah interrupts the story by informing us that, when Eisav saw that his father disapproved of Canaanite women, he decided to go to Yishmael to take a wife. The Torah spends four *pesukim* telling us about Eisav, then it reverts back to the story of Yaakov.

According to *Rashi*, the connection between Eisav taking a wife from Yishmael and Yaakov leaving home is a digression of Yaakov's departure. When Eisav heard that his father did not want Yaakov to marry a girl from Canaan, he figured that he would do the same. Other than this, no other connection seems to exist. **Horav Nissan Alpert, zl**, suggests a different approach, one which develops a connection between Eisav taking a wife from Yishmael and Yaakov leaving Charan. Indeed, the Torah is telling us what motivated Yaakov's quick departure from Charan.

Eisav hated Yaakov. It was as simple as that; cut and dried; no embellishment – plain, simple hate. So, why did Yaakov remain in Charan? He should have escaped at his earliest opportunity. Apparently, Yaakov felt it was not necessary to pick himself up and leave. He could live with an Eisav who hates him. As long as Eisav was acting like “Eisav,” harboring a burning resentment for Yaakov, the danger was not that great. It was overt danger which, if one is careful and maintains his guard, can be circumvented. All Yaakov had to do was not be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Now, however, since Eisav was becoming a changed man, a *baal teshuvah*, penitent, of sorts, Yaakov had to be extremely careful. When Eisav listened to his father by not taking a Canaanite wife, he became dangerous. He presented himself as a changed man, a man of peace. A “peaceful” Eisav was dangerous, since it was all a sham. Yaakov might have missed the signs and inadvertently become lulled into complacency. Thus, Yaakov packed his bags and left for Charan. He could not live in the proximity of a “peaceful” Eisav.

We live in such a world today. Nary a day goes by that a Jew-hating Eisav does not rear his ugly head seeking to impress the world with his changed, born-again nature. This peaceful Eisav only masks the “real thing.” The hatred is still present. The perpetrators just do a better job of concealing it.