

Eisav took his wives, his sons, his daughters and all the members of his household ... and went to a land because of his brother Yaakov. (36:6)

Among the reasons which *Chazal* (*Bereishis Rabbah* 82:13) present for Eisav's moving on, separating himself from Yaakov, is that he left in humiliation over having sold his *bechorah*, firstborn birthright. *Horav Gershon Liebman, zl* (*Rosh Yeshivah*, Novarodok in Armentieres, France, notes that we are raised with a skewed perspective of Eisav, the man we know him as being evil to both G-d and man. We fail to take into consideration, however, that Eisav's behavior notwithstanding, we may not ignore that he was Yitzchok *Avinu's* son and Avraham *Avinu's* grandson. He spent his formative years in the home of his parents, and he certainly was in contact with his grandfather. Furthermore, as the *Arizal* posits, Eisav's head rolled into the *Meoras HaMachpeilah* and is buried together with Patriarchs and Matriarchs. His body acted in the most profligate manner, but his mind knew right from wrong. He just could not employ his intellect to subdue his illicit desires.

Apparently, Eisav's upbringing left an impression on his psyche – however subtle – that he acted foolishly in trading away his birthright for a bowl of red lentils. He should have known better. Veritably, it was not to satisfy his hunger, but rather, a philosophical position that he held: *Olam Hazei*, This World, precedes *Olam Habba*, The World to Come. People who live their lives hoping for a spiritual future, whose every ethical and moral step is guided by the Torah – what kind of life is that? Let's be real. This world was made for living. The next world? Who knows what that will be?

This was Eisav's perspective which he believed -- or thought he believed -- until he saw Yaakov, his wives, and his children. When he looked at Yaakov's family and contrasted them with his own, he realized how utterly foolish he had been to trade the "real" world of *Olam Habba* for this temporal world filled with decadence, moral filth and non-existent ethical values. Yaakov was the one who was living – not Eisav. Thus, he left in utter humiliation for having thrown it all away.

We derive from *Chazal* that, regardless of how immersed one is in sin, he often experiences a concealed sense of shame or discomfort when he comes face-to-face with the moral implication of his crude actions. We refer to this inner spark as the *Pintele Yid*, that little spark of virtue, that remains imbedded within, beneath the dross. Every *Yid* has a *neshamah* which remains pure, beneath the various layers of unJewish behavior that he has piled up upon it. It does not change, but, at any given moment, when a confrontation with reality emerges, the spark lights up.

The *Rosh Yeshivah* concludes with a powerful, almost frightening, observation. In this world, it is possible for one to run away and hide out of a sense of shame. In the World of Truth, from where can one run? It is all in front of us, in total, stark reality. He will be placed opposite *tzaddikim* righteous Jews, who devoted their lives to toiling in Torah and serving Hashem amid fear

of Heaven, having purified themselves from the base desires that plague man. A Jew should look forward to the future when concealment will no longer be an option.