



פרשת תולדות

Life, and all the experiences it provides, demonstrates to us the wisdom and thoughtful understanding of Chazal and their scholarly Talmidim - the Baalei Mussar - into human nature, offering insight into the sometimes elusive Kochos Ha'Nefesh. To understand the undercurrent of our actions, the often multiple motivations behind our behaviors, is a true חכמה that must be untarnished by our biases. The world we live in today, this country especially, is an amazing Mussar Shmues. I read somewhere that the so called liberal/progressives are plagued by a problem. Because in their imaginary world, they are above everyone and only they care for the poor and oppressed, giving them moral and intellectual superiority over the masses that they hope to educate one day. Therefore, they cannot for the life of them understand how half the country could even vote for -- the other candidate. They drank the media's Kool-Aid, believing he is a liar, scoundrel and, on top of it all, an anti-Semite (their love for us is exceedingly strong; as if that really bothers them). The article that I read suggests that if any of your friends voted for Trump, then just end the friendship because "they are too far gone". Chazal taught us that השנאה מקלקלת את השורה, that hatred blinds one to what's right and logical. I have seen articles by people, so recklessly visionless, that say Israel will be better off with a new president - the one who has already lined himself up with שונאי ישראל and socialists. They really do think we are so dim-witted to be taken in by the vice president elect being nicknamed "Momala". Yes, they do. We better not.

Chazal also teach us that when someone accuses another of a fault, one he is usually not guilty of, it is about a fault that the accuser himself is in fact guilty of. The Gemara (Kiddushin 70a) teaches, כל הפוסל במומו פוסל, and it is even brought in Shulchan Aruch (Even Haezer 2:2) that if someone frequently calls others a ממזר or an עבד, you should suspect them of being a ממזר or an עבד themselves. We hear the complaint that not allowing the "new" administration to move in is criminal and harmful to the country. The one who won the election, democratically, should be able to assume the loyalty of the losers and with "unity" be allowed to govern. What this really means is

you are doing what we have done for four years, 24/7, and NOW its criminal, במומו פוסל.

Those of us who were Zocheh to learn in Yeshivos where the words of the Baalei Mussar were taught have a great advantage in understanding others behaviors, as well as our own. We are such complex creatures; to really, really "get us" requires a seasoned level of חכמה. To begin to understand, even a little, about Yaakov and Eisav requires an in-depth level comprehension of how two brothers, twins, could end up so far apart. We were taught, as Talmidim of Talmidim of Moreinu Harav Ahron Kotler (whose Yarhtzeit was Wednesday, 2nd of Kislev) of his penetrating view of Eisav, and how it applies to us. The Gemara (Bava Basra 16b) teaches that on the day the Bechora was sold, Eisav committed five Aveiros. He violated גילוי עריות, murder, denied תחיית המתים, denied Hashem's existence - כפר בעיקר - and he embarrassed the בכורה, rights of the first-born. Pretty heavy-duty for one day's work, and this is not including the Aveira of Avodah Zara that Rashi brings (25:27). Rav Ahron points out that of all of those Aveiros, we would consider יבז את הבכורה the misdemeanor among those other felonies. Yet, the only one mentioned explicitly is the יבז, while the others are only eluded to - ע"פ דרוש - in the words והוא עיף. Said Rav Ahron, because that was the source, the motivation for all the other indiscretions. Any Ruchnius was not important (or in today's vernacular "non-essential"). He cheapened it all, it was insignificant to him, never took it seriously - even the בכורה that Yaakov so desperately wanted despite its drawbacks - יבז.

This characteristic became Eisav's innate problem, something that was never solved. We find a similar concept with Haman, Eisav's Einikal. He had been elevated by Achashveirosh and had 127 countries bowing to him, yet could not find a place for himself because one old Mordechai refused to bow. He had to retaliate, but he had a problem, as stated in the Pasuk (Esther 3:6) **ויבז** בעיניו לשלוח יד במרדכי לבדו, it would be beneath Haman to kill Mordechai alone. We know the rest of the story. Imagine, the entire world falls to their knees for Haman AND





IT'S STILL NOT ENOUGH, IT IS STILL CHEAP. The Medrash (Esther 7:10) comments: בזוי כתיב ויבו עשו את הבכורה. בן בזוי. The same characteristic, not being able to assess things for their real value, and thereby cheapening them.

This helps us understand other Pesukim in the Parsha as well. Esav came in with his ugly נא הלעיטני, and as Rashi points out, used a word that is used to feed camels and asked for מן האדם האדם הזה, some of THE RED STUFF. The Pasuk concludes, על כן קרא שמו אדום, therefore the nation of Esav is called Edom. We wonder, because of a one time, maybe even a slip of the tongue, under duress is that a reason for a nation to be titled forever by that name? Based on the above we suggest – there is nothing more superficial than a color – sure it's red, but what is it? It is like someone walking into a car dealership showroom and asking to buy a car. When asked what type of car are you looking for, he responds, "a red one". But what type? Compact? Luxury? SUV? Mini-van? What are you looking for? "A red one". Someone who does not have the true ability to see the value of things as they really are can see ONLY THE COLOR, ONLY THE SUPERFICIAL COUNTS (see Sforno). It really does aptly describe Eisav as being only a color, what it looks like on the outside. This was Eisav even when he dealt with Yitzchak, asking him Halacha questions "to show" he's with the program. Even his Kibbud Av was a deception; the Medrash (67:8) describes that his plot was to get Yishmael to kill Yitzchak, and he would then kill Yishmael as the "Goel Hadam" to inherit both families. It was all superficial. The topic is huge and needs its own article to cover all the evidence of this idea.

One last idea for today. We always shake our heads when reading the Rashi (27:19) of how Yaakov, the איש אמה, fools his blind father with a costume and saying אנכי עשו בכרך. Rashi attempts to justify this by adding a comma, אנכי – I am who I am – comma – but Eisav is your Bechor. We would have hoped for a more satisfying explanation. In light of the above we can suggest, being that Eisav is ALL SUPERFICIAL, ONLY what it looks like on the outside – so by wearing Esav's clothing (27:15,16) and by donning goat skin, he already IS EISAV. That would justify announcing I am just like Eisav, validating the אמה of what was said. Please note that in the introductory

Pasuk of Yaakov and Eisav (25:27), Yaakov is described with one איש – תם – איש, while Eisav is described as איש יודע ציד and another איש – שדה – איש. Perhaps this is because there were two Eisavs, you didn't get what you saw. There was the Eisav, as Rav Ahron notes from the Zohar, whose head (ideas and thoughts) belonged in the מערת המכפלה, alongside the Eisav that was guilty of all those Aveiros – איש, איש. However, the "Guf" with all of its demands was his downfall, and it therefore could not follow his head. See Rav Ahron in his ultra-classic Shiur he gave at a Torah Mesorah Convention: "How to Teach Torah", see also Mishnas Rav Ahron (vol. I pg. 211).

Our Galus is Galus Edom, Eisav's Galus, where even a casual look at us will see a generation fixated on looking good on the outside – I'm sure you can provide your own examples, knowing how destructive that can be. We need to turn ourselves into Talmidim of Yaakov – אמה through and through, to value and respect the things that really deserve our reverence.

We hope and we Daven for the Yeshuah to come, BB"A.

Among those who are מוצפים לישועה.

מחנה דואר
חיים טובים
איתך

