

דרכים בפרשה



וילך עשו אל־ישמעאל ויקח את־מחלת בת־ישמעאל בן־אברהם אחות נביות על־נשיו לו לאשה

So Esav went to Yishmael and took for a wife, in addition to the wives he had, Machalas the daughter of Yishmael son of Avraham, sister of Nevayos.

As reports of antisemitism are all the more common, seemingly on the rise, rearing its ugly yet again and again, we must keep in mind that this is not just a stroke of bad luck. Not at all! This is a very clear halacha derived from our parsha, that עשו שונא This is nothing new and will always be with us until the coming of Moshiach.

What is interesting to note is that this hatred is for the most part not mutual but rather a one way street. Perhaps this can be explained based on the following idea.

In our parsha, Eisav becomes so angry at Yaakov for stealing the birthright *brachos* that he vows to kill him, leaving Yaakov with no choice but to run for his life. Right after this event, the Torah informs us that Esav took Machlas bas Yishmoel as a wife. He was already married but he felt it necessary to marry again at this juncture, and of course the question is: why?

I saw a fascinating insight from the Shem M'Shmuel connecting the loss of his brachos and remarrying. After being cheated, Eisav needed to understand what exactly went wrong; how is it possible that he was duped? Upon looking very closely, long and hard at the mirror, he concluded that it was not his fault at all. He assumed that it was due to bad mazal. Why else could he have possibly lost out? After all, he was perfect. "Me? No it is never me!" It will always be someone else's fault but never my own. Chazal tell us that name עשו is related his to the word עשוי meaning made or complete. The Shem M'Shmuel adds that Eisav is gematria 376, just like the word שלום shalom which means completion. In Eisav's mind, he was perfect with nothing to change. If indeed there was a problem, it could not be him.

As Yidden, we understand that when something is wrong, we must look conducting inward, а cheshbon hanefesh, reflecting on what needs to be improved. When the entire world experienced a pandemic and many other great calamities, the call of our Gedolim was: "we must look inside of ourselves and see what needs to be fixed", because a Yid will always take it personally. The Chofetz Chaim famously remarked, "When an earthquake happens in China, HaShem is speaking directly to each of us." For the unfaithful, it is just a stroke of bad luck that might come around every hundred years or so. If you can manage to get lucky and steer clear of it, you will be fine, but to actually look internally and fix something, Vus eppes? This has nothing to do with me. The proof is that it is happening to everyone.

For Eisav, his response to his downfall was that there must be something up with the *mazal*. If I already do need to blame it on someone, there is always the wife to blame it on, and for that there is an easy fix. I can just marry someone else and see what my new *mazal* can bring me. 376) which aside from meaning perfection and completion, also means peace. The way of Eisav is to be at peace with himself, perfectly content with himself because he has no issues or imperfections that need to be addressed. Yaakov on the other hand stems from the word עקב *eikev* which means heel. The Yid looks at himself as a low imperfect person all the way at the bottom with so much to climb on any given day in order to reach the top. In the end, Yaakov perseveres and becomes ישראל *Yisroel*, which is the letters of לי ראש *Li rosh*-I am on top. As a result of constant introspection; always looking internally vs. externally, Yaakov is able to beat the Saar Shel Eisav, thus catapulting to the level of Yisroel.

When the *Umos Ha'olam* look at our success stories they become jealous. Instead of looking at what they themselves can do to improve, they try and break us down, therefore hating our successes and everything we stand for. But for the Yid, when success or a downfall is seen, the place to look is within, but never outside.

> Good Shabbos, מרדכי אפפעל

As mentioned, Eisav is shalom (both

