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Esav and Yaakov

When Rivkah was pregnant with Yaakov and Esav, she was told that there were two nations inside her. Yaakov would inherit the World To Come, while Esav inherits this physical world. In other words, Esav's share is superficiality - *chitzoniyus* -- while Yaakov's share is *pnimiyus*, spirituality.

The Sages say that "If there is no flour, there cannot be Torah." We have to eat in order to survive, so what does it mean that only Esav has this world? Doesn't Yaakov also need this physical world in order to learn Torah and survive?

The simple answer to this is because Esav only has this world and no spirituality, while Yaakov only makes use of this world in order to survive.

But the deeper meaning of this is because Esav only wants this world and its materialism, while Yaakov only desired the World to Come - he had no desire for this mundane world.

The fight between Yaakov and Esav didn't only take place in Rivka's womb. It takes place in our soul as well: Do we want spirituality, or do we want this world with its materialism?

Our Inner Fight

This is a fight that takes place in our soul: it is our power of free will. It is a fight about what we really want.

The Sages tell us that Esav seemed very *frum* on the outside, but on the inside, he had no desire whatsoever for the next world. All he wanted was this mundane world and its physicality.

It is only Esav who acted like this. Any person might act like he wants the next world, but if his inside doesn't want it, he is living a life of superficiality. He doesn't live for the next world and for spirituality. It could even be that he learns Torah and does mitzvos, but if in his heart all he truly desires is this materialistic world, then he is living his life like Esav.

The Sages say that "There is no day that is not more cursed than the day before it." The depth of this curse is that as each day goes on, the world becomes more and more superficial. People are becoming more and more focused on what's external and not important – concerned only about *chitzoniyus* (superficiality).

The depth of this problem

What is the depth behind this problem?

There are two kinds of fights a person has: an external kind of fight and an internal kind of fight. People want to know what to do and what not to do, what we are allowed to do and what we are not allowed to do, what is considered pious behavior and what isn't. That is one kind of inner fight. But this is still *chitzoniyus* – it is still an external kind of problem. The real problem is taking place on our inside – when we have a hard time deciding what we really, truly want.

There was a story with Rav Tzvi Markovitz shlit"a, in which someone asked him all kinds of questions if a certain halachic issue was permissible or not on Shabbos. The Rav told him, "On the outside of the issue, it's okay, but the problem is on the inside of your question: Why do you want it to be permissible?"

When we wonder about if a certain kind of clothing is permissible to wear or not, it's only a question that has to do with *chitzoniyus*: permissible or not? There are all kinds of bans and *takkanos* that we have been made by the Rabbonim, but that is only addressing the outer part of the problem. The real issue is the inside of the problem -- what we really want deep down.

Esav is called a "man of the field" – this means that he is a man of superficiality. This is a person who lives a superficial kind of life, who only worries about his *chitzoniyus*.

We have the free will to decide if we will live a life of *pnimiyus* or *chitzoniyus*.

What we talk about

What does it mean to live a life of *pnimiyus*? There are many levels to this.

In Egypt, our people did not change their language, their clothing, or their names. The fact that they didn't change their clothing or names was only an external accomplishment, but the fact that they didn't change their language was an inner accomplishment. It showed that their *pnimiyus* didn't get affected by Egypt. Why? This is because the way a person talks has a lot to do with his *pnimiyus*. Many times we see people talking to each other, but the words they speak do not come from their *pnimiyus*.

There is talking that comes from our soul, and then there are superficial kinds of talking. What type of language do we have? Do we talk with others from our soul, or from superficiality?

When we talk throughout the day, is it just external or does it come from our *pnimiyus*? When a person only talks in an external manner, he is living a life like Esav.

When a person lives a superficial kind of life, his difficulties in life are only external kinds of difficulties. All his challenges are in *chitzoniyus*. But if a person lives a spiritual kind of life, a life of *pnimiyus*, then his tests are in areas of *pnimiyus* - in what really matters.

If we want to change at least a little, we must fight only with our inner struggles and not with our external struggles. Different things have to bother us.

When people only talk about politics and the latest news in the world, this shows that the person lives a superficial kind of life. When a person wonders if it's okay to wear this kind of clothing or not, it's not really an issue of if it's permissible. It's really an issue that has to do with one's *pnimiyus*. Such a question shows that a person is only concerned with this materialistic world.

What should we speak about all the time? We need to speak about what our purpose on this world is, what we came here for.

It's possible when a person hears this, he will say, "It's impossible," and give up on ever trying to implement such a change. But know that it's possible also not to give up.

Our soul wants to grow. Many people really want to grow and aspire for greatness, but even more than this we have to realize that we have to change our very conversations; we need to focus in our daily life about what's really important.

How to survive our struggles on this world

This is what life is about. If we want to survive this physical world, we need to fight with our own inner struggles. If we change what bothers us - if we are bothered more by our spiritual problems than our materialistic problems - then we can have hope in surviving life on this world.

The world is constantly changing. The problems grow more and more. The world today is different than the world fifteen years ago; the problems of this world keep growing, and the Sages indeed say this - "There is no day that is not more cursed than the day before it."

If we are to have any hope in our life on this world, we need to change what bothers us. I hope that all of us merit to live the true kind of life.

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