



SIMCHAT SHMUEL

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Parshat Toldot opens with the birth and brief description of the youth and development of *Yaakov Avinu* and his twin brother *Eisav*. The verse describes the different trajectories of these twin boys:

וַיִּגְדְּלוּ הַנְּעָרִים וַיְהִי יַעֲשׂוּ אִישׁ יָדָע צִיד אִישׁ שָׂדֶה וַיַּעֲקֹב אִישׁ תָּם יֹשֵׁב אֹהֶלִים:

When the boys grew up, Eisav became a skillful hunter, a man of the outdoors; but Yaakov was a mild man who dwelled within the tents.

Why does the *Torah* describe *Yaakov* as *Yosheiv Ohalim*-staying within the tents, rather than the expression *Yosheiv B'ohel*-dwelling within (his own) tent-a homebody?

Rashi points to a well known *Midrash* to answer this question:

ישב אהלים. אהלו של שם ואהלו של עבר:

Dwelling in tents — the tent of *Sheim* **and** the tent of *Eiver*-*Yaakov Avinu* spent his time learning together from **both** *Sheim* and *Eiver*.

In explaining this insight of *Rashi*, Rabbi Berel Povarsky, one of the *Roshei Yeshiva* of *Yeshivat Ponovitch*, suggests that the reason that the *Torah* describes *Yaakov Avinu* as

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staying in multiple tents, in spending time learning from both *Sheim* and *Eiver*, is to demonstrate how one who is a true seeker of the *Torah's* wisdom, should pursue that wisdom. One who is truly interested in the beauty of *Torah*, will seek to learn and gain insights from all Sages. As the *gemara* in *Avoda Zara 19a* states:

Kol HaLomeid Torah MeiRav Echad, ein roeh siman bracha L'Olam-Whoever learns Torah from just one teacher, will not live to see any sign of blessing. Rav Povarsky suggests further, that the true way of *Torah* study is to learn from every single person, as the *Mishna* in *Pirkei Avot* with which we are all familiar states:

Eizeh Hu Chacham-HaLomeid MiKol Adam- Who is considered Wise? One who learns from every individual.

Yehi Ratzon, May each of us be blessed to heed this beautiful message, to strive to be true students of *Torah*, to be *Yoshvei Ohalim*, and to learn from one another.... ■

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