



SIMCHAT SHMUEL

BY RABBI SAM SHOR
DIRECTOR, TORAH INITIATIVES,
OU ISRAEL

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 עֵשָׂו אִישׁ יָדָע צֹדֵד אִישׁ שֹׂדֵד
וַיֵּעָקֹב 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?

The **Sefat Emet**, the **Gerrer Rebbe zy'a**, explains that *Yaakov Avinu* was totally focused on matters of holiness, rather than engaging with the potential impediments of the outside world, he remained focused, at home in the tents of *limud*-scholarship and *ruchniyut*-spirituality.

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

יֹשֵׁב אֹהֶלִים. אֹהֶלֹךָ שֶׁל שָׁם וְאֹהֶלֹךָ שֶׁל עֵבֶר:

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, shlita** one of the *Roshei Yeshiva* of *Yeshivat Ponovitch*, suggests that the reason that the *Torah* describes *Yaakov Avinu* as 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, eino 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 *Yosheiv Ohalim*, and to learn from one another.... ■

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