



Table Talk Parshat Toldot

חנוך לנער על פי דרכו

בראשית כ"ה:כ"ז

Genesis 25:27

וַיִּגְדְּלוּ הַנְּעָרִים וַיְהִי עֵשָׂו אִישׁ יָדָע צֹדָה
אִישׁ שֹׁדֵד וַיַּעֲקֹב אִישׁ יָשֵׁב אֹהֲלִים:

When the boys grew up, Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the outdoors; but Jacob was a mild man who stayed in camp.

ויגדלו הנערים - *As long as they were little, no attention was paid to the slumbering differences in their natures, both had exactly the same teaching and educational treatment, and the great law education -- "חנוך לנער על פי דרכו" "bring up each child in accordance with its own way" was forgotten: That each child must be treated differently, with an eye to the slumbering tendencies of his nature, and out of them, be educated to develop his special characteristics for the one pure human and Jewish life... To try to bring up a Jacob and an Esau in the same college, make them have the same habits and hobbies, want to teach and educate them in the same way for some studious, sedate, meditative life is the surest way to court disaster... Had Isaac and Rebecca studied Esau's nature and character early enough, and asked themselves how can even an Esau, how can all the strength and energy, agility and courage that lies slumbering in this child be won over to be used in the service of God ... then Jacob and Esau, with their totally different natures could still have remained twin- brothers in spirit and life; quite early in life Esau's "sword" and Jacob's "spirit" could have worked hand in hand, and who can say what a different aspect the whole history of the ages might have presented. But, as it was, ויגדלו הנערים, only when the boys had grown into men, one was surprised to see that, out of one and the selfsame womb, having had exactly the same care, training and schooling, two such contrasting persons emerge.*

-Rav Shamshon Raphael Hirsch

Let's Talk!

How were Yaakov and Esav different?

Why is it important for different people to learn differently?

How are you different from your siblings?

What are wonderful things about you that make you unique from your sibling(s)?

If you could tell grownups one thing that would help them understand kids better, what would it be?



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