



MESSAGE FROM THE RAV

Dear Chevra

Welcome to our minyan! We hope you had a fulfilling and joyful week and that Shabbat brings a sense of spirituality and completion to all our efforts.

In this week's parsha, we encounter Yaakov and Esav receiving Yitzchak's blessings. We all know the story of how Yaakov bought Esav's birthright and had to trick his father into receiving his rightly deserved bracha.

Rashi has some interesting insights into the nature of the relationship between Yaakov and Esav, and their descendants, based on Yitzchak's blessings. In Yitzchak's "blessing" to Esav, he says: (27:40) "ועל חרבך ותחיה ואת אחיך תעבד והיה באשר תריד ופרקת עלו מעל צנאריך" – "And you will live by your sword, and you will serve your brother; and when you are aggrieved, you will throw his yoke from your neck". Rashi comments that Esav will have his 'lows' when he sees Yaakov disobeying the Torah, and will thus feel hard-done-by for losing his brachot to one who disobeys Hashem. כלומר כשיעברו ישראל את התורה, ויהיה לך פתחון פה ולהצטער על הברכות שנטל, ופרקת עלו".

It seems from Rashi that, other than the above mentioned situation, Esav shouldn't feel hard-done-by losing his brachot to Yaakov. In other words, as long as Am Yisrael is fulfilling the word of Hashem, Esav should be happy that we got the bracha – because we are getting what we deserve as a result of our actions. Though, should Yisrael not be following Hashem's commandments, Esav has permission to throw off the yolk of subservience from his shoulders

and fulfil the prophecy (given to his mother Rivka) of וְלֵאמֹר מְלֵאכָה יִימְצָא – explained to mean: only one nation will have strength at a time – when Yaakov is strong, Esav will be weak; and vice versa. Yaakov being weak and not fulfilling the Torah will give Esav permission to be the stronger brother and make his younger brother subservient to him.

Rivka was told the ideal situation: וְרַב יַעֲבֹד צְעִיר – the older will serve the younger. Rivka knew that Yaakov was destined for greatness and though she had mentioned that to her husband, Yitzchak, he wouldn't believe her! He thought she was favouring her younger son. וַיֹּאמֶר יִצְחָק אֶת עֵשָׂו בִּי צִיד בְּפִי, וַרְבֵּקָה אֲהַבֶּת (את יַעֲקֹב). Only once Esav 'spilled the beans' that Yaakov had indeed bought the birthright from him, did Yitzchak realise that his wife had been correct all along and that Yaakov was the rightful בכור. Thus Yitzchak gives Yaakov a further blessing before sending him away from his careless brother who would just as quickly kill Yaakov as sell his birthright for a pot of lentil soup.

Yaakov's blessing is intrinsically connected, though, to responsibility. Yaakov is given mastery over both the physical and spiritual worlds and is thus given the challenge to elevate the physical through and with spirituality. We, his descendants, continue that task here in Eretz Yisrael. May we merit being part of קהילת יַעֲקֹב and assist each other as a קהילה to imbue our physical efforts with spiritual endeavors and fill our קהילה with קדושה.

Shabbat shalom,
Rav Shmuel and Taly

LIKE FATHER LIKE SON

"And these are the generations of Yitzchak the son of Avraham; Avraham gave birth to Yitzchak." (Genesis 25:19)

The phrase "Avraham gave birth to Yitzchak" is striking for its apparent redundancy. The verse has already identified Yitzchak as Avraham's son. In order to account for this repetition, R. Mordechai Breur draws attention to an earlier verse: "And these are the generations of Yishmael the son of Avraham, whom Hagar the Egyptian, maidservant of Sarah, had bore to Avraham" (Ibid. 25:12). In this latter verse, suggests R. Breur (modern scholar, Israel), the connection from Yishmael to Avraham is presented as an indirect one, with Avraham almost passive in the creation of this paternal relationship. In contrast, Avraham is extremely active in Yitzchak's birth- "Avraham gave birth to Yitzchak." Noting several other occurrences of such phraseology, R. Breur suggests that the Torah formulates itself as such in order to highlight the birth of Yitzchak, ostensibly as the inheritor of Hashem's covenant with Avraham "and his descendants."

R. Yosef Dov Soloveitchik zt"l, a 20th century Talmudic scholar and theologian, makes an observation along these lines with regards to Rashi's (11th century, France) comment on 25:19. In that verse, Rashi cites the Midrash Tanchuma's explanation of the verse's redundancy. The Midrash explains that there were people in Avraham's generation who were claiming that King Avimelech had impregnated Sarah (see ibid 20:2); after all, after years of being barren, she suddenly conceives, immediately following being taken by the king! In order to silence them, Hashem made

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"SUCCESS COMES FROM GOOD JUDGEMENT, GOOD JUDGEMENT COMES FROM EXPERIENCE, EXPERIENCE COMES FROM BAD JUDGEMENT."



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Yitzchak appear similar to Avraham, as testimony to Avraham's paternity.

R. Soloveitchik offers a homiletic reading of this Midrash. What the people really doubted, he suggests, was Avraham's ability to transmit his values to Yitzchak. Would this be possible in a world of such prominent 'foreign' influences, with Avraham alone in his beliefs? Would not Avimelech be a far more attractive model to Yitzchak? In response, Hashem formed Yitzchak in the

likeness of Avraham, to affirm that, indeed, Avraham would and could pass on his legacy to Yitzchak.

As such, both Rabbis Breur and Soloveitchik interpret our verse as emphasizing not a biological connection between Avraham and Yitzchak, but rather an ideological, spiritual one. Their analyses demonstrate the importance of the passages detailing lineage, despite what appears to be (prima facie) their lack of thematic interest.

(From the Beit Hillel mailing list)

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

*IF ANYONE NEEDS A PLACE FOR LUNCH, OR IF ANYONE HAS A SPARE PLACE AT THEIR TABLE, PLEASE SPEAK TO RAV SHMUEL AND TALI BLOOM AFTER SHUL, AND WE WILL DO OUR BEST TO ACCOMODATE EVERYONE.

*FOR COMMENTS ON THE PARSHA PAGE OR QUESTIONS FOR RAV BLOOM PLEASE E-MAIL: RABBI@LATEMINYAN.COM

*IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT A DVAR TORAH TO THE PARSHA PAGE – IN HEBREW OR ENGLISH – PLEASE SEND IT TO RAV BLOOM BY MONDAY.

*IF ANYONE WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR THIS WEEKLY PARSHA PAGE IN MEMORY OF A CLOSE ONE OR IN HONOUR OF AN UP-COMING SIMCHA, PLEASE CONTACT TAMMY WILSON AT: TAMMYWILSON@LATEMINYAN.COM

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SHABBAT SHALOM FROM THE LATE LATE MINYAN

THE LLM IS 10 YEARS OLD
CHANUKA IS THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE LLM.
AS PART OF OUR CELEBRATIONS, WE HAVE DECIDED TO POSTPONE THE "MEALS OF 8" (INITIALLY PLANNED FOR THIS SHABBAT), THIS WILL GIVE ALL OF US MORE TIME TO KEEP THAT SHABBAT FREE ON OUR CALENDERS, IN ORDER TO GIVE A REAL OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY TO GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER
SHABBAT PARASHAT MIKETZ
DECEMBER 22ND
PEOPLE WHO WOULD LIKE TO HOST OR PEOPLE WHO WOULD LIKE TO BE HOSTED ARE WELCOME TO SEND AN EMAIL TO:
GALI@TALI.ORG.IL EVENTS COMMITTEE

WE ARE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS FOR LAYENING-PLEASE CONTACT YEHUDA ON 052-665-7077 YSHALPER@GMAIL.COM
WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO INVITE ANYONE – MEN OR WOMEN – TO GIVE THE DVAR HALACHA IN SHUL. PLEASE SPEAK TO RAV SHMUEL OR TALI TO ORGANISE WHEN YOU ARE GOING TO BE SPEAKING.

WE INVITE YOU TO ADD YOURSELF TO THE SHUL MAILING LIST – YOUR DETAILS WILL APPEAR ON THE WEBSITE. VISIT WWW.LATEMINYAN.COM.

THIS WEEKS PARSHA SHEET IS SPONSORED BY BINNY FREEDMAN IN MEMORY OF THE YARTZEIT OF HIS FATHER REB YITZCHAK MENACHEM B'REB YEHOShUA HESHEL
לעילוי נשמת הרב יצחק מנחם ברב יהושע השל