



Ohr Yerushalayim News

פ - ב כסלו תש"פ - תולדות - 30th November 2019 - Volume 12 - Issue 18

News This Week

מזל טוב

Mazel Tov to Yisroel and Zippy Rosenberg on the birth of a boy. The Sholom Zochor takes place at 55 Waterpark Road. The Bris will take place in Shul Sunday morning following the 8.20 Shacharis.

Mazel Tov to Dr & Mrs Meyer on the birth of a grandson to Shmelke and Esther Meyer in Tzfas.

Kiddush This Shabbos

Mazel Tov to the Kehilla on our 21st anniversary, there will be a celebratory kiddush after davening.

ותן טל ומטר

Remember that we start saying ותן טל ומטר on Thursday night

Passing on the Baton

Rafi Black

In the beginning of Parshas Toldos, the Torah prefaces the Parsha with the passuk;

וְאֵלֶּה הַדּוֹרוֹת יִצְחָק בְּרֵאֲבָרָהּ אֲבָרָהָם הוֹלִיד אֶת יִצְחָק

Why does the Torah say 'these are the generations of Yitzchok', but not actually go on to tell us who they are? And why does it repeat the fact Yitzchok was the son of Avraham?

The Rashbam explains this passuk by contrasting it to an earlier passuk in Sefer Bereishis when the Torah gives us the details of Yishmael and says that he was the son of Hagar Hamitzris, but does not mention he is the 'son of Avraham'! Regarding Yitzchok, the Torah specifically tells us twice in this passuk that Yitzchok was the son of Avraham.

The Torah is teaching us who Yitzchok really was and what we can learn from him. Yitzchok's legacy is that he was the son of Avraham, his father's son. He followed in his father's footsteps, continuing the mesorah and being the link in the chain. We can see how Yitzchok remained steadfast in his commitment to the mesorah by how he dealt with situations he came across. When faced with famine, he wanted to go to Mitzrayim like Avraham. Hashem did not allow it and instead he went to Gerar, to Avimelech, just like his father, and dug wells, just like his father, and even gave them the same names.

Avraham is famous for being the person who spread the name of Hashem and monotheism around the world. Yaakov is famous as the father of the Shevatim and future nation of Am Yisrael. There is not much dialogue with Yitzchok in the Torah and he doesn't have a clearly defined role. This passuk is telling us that Yitzchok's legacy is that he was a key player in the mesorah and the man transitioning the world from the previous generation to the next generation. He was consistent with the mesorah and the lessons from his father and strengthened their teachings for future generations.

To be a major person in history you don't need to have your name in lights, make radical innovations or even be in a position of leadership. Sometimes you can be great by being a 'Yitzchok', passing on the baton from your parents to your children, empowering the next generation with the strength of Torah, yiras shomayim and avodas Hashem.

Removing the Tags

Rabbi Yisroel Ciner (Torah.org)

This week's parsha, Toldos, contains a number of issues that seem difficult to understand. It begins: "V'aileh toldos Yitzchak (And these are the generations of Yitzchak)[25:19]," relating the details of the birth of Yaakov and Esav. We then move on to Esav selling the birthright to Yaakov and Yitzchak blessing Yaakov with the blessings he had intended for Esav.

The book of Michah concludes with the verse: "Teeten emes l'Yaakov

chessed l'Avrohom (Give (to us) the truth (that you promised) to Yaakov (as reward for the) chessed of Avrohom) [7:20]." Each of the Avos (Forefathers) had their particular middah (attribute) in which they excelled and through which they brought the service to Hashem to a new realm.

The chessed (kindness) of Avrohom is well documented as the Torah contains many parshios which extol this middah of his. The emes (truth) of Yaakov is not nearly as apparent. The rigorous honesty that Yaakov displayed while tending the flocks of Lavan was clearly superlative. However, our superficial understanding of the events of our parsha seem to leave us with a feeling that Yaakov was not being honest.

We hear stories when we are very young and, as would be expected, our level of understanding is childish. Unfortunately, this level of understanding becomes ingrained in our minds and remains as such, long after we have matured in the depth of our perception.

"UNDER PENALTY OF LAW THIS TAG IS NOT TO BE REMOVED." Which child hasn't seen such a tag attached to the bottom of the dining room chairs? We always wondered: Why can't we remove that tag? What will happen if we do? Will 'they' ever know? Will we really go to jail? Long after we stopped crawling under the table we carried with us that anxiety. One time we might actually remove that tag and then, there's no telling what might happen... You see, as children we never understood the words which were written after that warning: "EXCEPT BY THE CONSUMER." What's a consumer? All that remained in our minds was that this tag had better not be removed, or else... That childish understanding remained long after we understood the meaning of a consumer...

Let's 'remove the tag' of our childish understanding of the events in this week's parsha and see if we can't view those events in a different light.

Rav Isaac Sher zt"l explains that Yaakov did not need to buy the birthright from Esav in order to be considered the bechor (firstborn). Similarly, Esav did not lose the birthright because he had sold it to Yaakov.

Reuven, the firstborn of Yaakov, was destined to be the kohen (priest) and the king. Because of the slight sin he performed when, thinking he was fulfilling the mitzvah of honoring his mother, he moved Yaakov's mattress from Zilpah's tent to his mother, Leah's tent, he lost the bechorah. There was no need for any sale. Reuven wasn't deserving — he therefore couldn't and wouldn't get it.

The firstborns were designated to perform the divine service of sacrifices.

The Week Ahead

שבת פרשת תולדות

Candle Lighting	No later than 3.40pm
Mincha	3.45pm
Rov's Shiur	8.45am
Shacharis	9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.58am
Children's Group	10.45am
1st Mincha	1.30pm
2nd Mincha	3.32pm
Shalosh Seudos	Following
Motzei Shabbos	4.52pm
Ovos uBonim	5.52pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am
Mon / Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues / Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	3.40pm
Late Maariv	8.00pm

They disqualified themselves by participating in the 'cheit ha'egel' (the sin of the golden calf). The tribe of Levi, by not worshipping the egel (calf), were chosen to perform the service in their stead. Once again, there was no need for a 'sale'. If they were not worthy then it was transferred to others who were.

If so, then regardless of the sale, Esav, who was not worthy, was not going to be the bechor. Yaakov, who was deserving, was clearly the bechor.

Why then did Yaakov buy the bechorah from Esav?

Rashi explains on the passuk: "Michrah cha'yom es bechorascha lee (Clearly sell the bechorah to me)[25:31]," that Yaakov's concern was that Esav was not worthy of the service to Hashem. It would be a disgrace to Hashem to have an unworthy person offer the service and it would demean and defile the service of Yitzchak if an Esav would be his partner. Therefore, in order to spare Esav the disgrace of his service not being accepted and in order that Esav would willingly give over the bechorah, Yaakov arranged to purchase it. In retrospect, this act was the true synthesis of Avrohom and Yaakov's attributes. The emes (truth) of Yaakov recognized that, by virtue of his behavior, Esav wouldn't be the bechor and that emes wouldn't allow an unworthy person to attempt to offer the service. The chessed (kindness) of Avrohom made sure that it be done in a face-saving way that spared Esav that humiliation.

In order to understand Yitzchok's love for Esav and his desire to give him the blessings, we must remember what we discussed back in parshas Berishis. Before the sin, Adom Harishon and the entire world was in a state of pure, unadulterated tov (good). Standing before him was the Eitz HaDaas (The Tree of Knowledge), symbolizing the concept of "soor mai'ra (move away from evil)" and the Eitz HaChaim (The Tree of Life), symbolizing the concept of "asay tov (do good)." Adom's eating from the Eitz Hadaas caused ra (evil) to be mixed into him and into the world.

The Ohr Gedalyahu explains that the Avos were toiling to correct the sin of Adom, each one picking up where the other had left off. Yaakov, the third of the Avos, was an "ish tam (pure man)," — in the state of Adom before the sin. His mission was "asay tov," to "dwell in the tents", totally devoted to tov, to the Eitz HaChaim.

Esav was born a mixture of tov and ra, he was "a man of the field". His mission was "soor mai'ra," to subjugate that ra to the tov — to vanquish the Eitz HaDaas.

Together they would have continued the work of their father and grandfather. The Medrash teaches that, had Esav accepted his role, each would have had six tribes.

"And Yitzchok loved Esav [25:28]." Yitzchok's attribute was g'vurah (power)—overpowering the desires and quelling the ra. He thought Esav had the same middah as he. He saw the battle raging inside of Esav and thought it was the same as the battles that he had waged. He wanted to bless Esav. A blessing is assistance and support — the creation of life-conditions that are conducive to serving Hashem. Yitzchok thought that Yaakov, in his pure state, dwelling in his tents, didn't need the blessings. He thought that Esav did.

"And Rivka loved Yaakov [25:28]." Rivka, raised in the house of Lavan, saw to the very core of Esav. There was no internal battle. The tov was being hung as an adornment to mask the mastering ra.

Chaza"l say that the righteous receive their portion and the portion of the wicked in the next world. Being that they have to shoulder the service that the wicked neglect, they thereby earn their portion.

Yaakov had to also assume the service of Esav. He could no longer just dwell in the tents. He now had to confront ra and control it. He 'became' Esav. He'd father all twelve tribes. The blessings were now rightfully his — the assistance and support necessary for this battle.

Yaakov received the blessings and immediately leaves his 'tents' — he goes out into exile. Ultimately he confronts and battles the ministering angel of Esav, the yetzer ha'ra himself, and emerges wounded but victorious. His named is changed to Yisroel. We Bnei Yisroel, the descendants of Yaakov, continue to wage this battle until today.

The Plan

Shlomo Katz (Torah.org)

In this week's Parashah, Yitzchak plans to bless his son Esav. Many commentaries ask why Yitzchak wanted to do that; surely, he knew that Yaakov was his righteous child and Esav was wicked!

R' Yaakov Kranz z"l (1741-1804; the Dubno Maggid) explains with a parable: A rich man had two sons, one virtuous and one wicked. The man owned a large plot of land that was a fitting site for a grand estate. Before his death, he gave this land to the wicked son, along with a large sum of money. The virtuous son was shocked. He wondered, "How did my wicked brother find such favor in our father's eyes, while I received nothing?" Meanwhile, the wicked son built a large mansion on the land. Shortly afterwards, however, he

died prematurely, leaving everything he had built to his virtuous brother.

The virtuous son now saw things differently. "What would I have built had our father given me what he gave my brother? I would have contented myself with a simple house, enough to satisfy my basic needs, and no more. Now I see that my father did me a big favor, for I will enjoy what my brother prepared with no effort at all on my part."

Similarly, concludes the Dubno Maggid, Hashem wants the virtuous to enjoy the benefits of this world, but He does not want them to waste their time pursuing worldly pleasures. Therefore, ordinarily, He causes the wicked to build the world; then, when He is ready, He transfers what the wicked built to the virtuous.

This was Yitzchak's intention, as well, and it is the reason he wanted to bless Esav, not Yaakov. In this case, however, Hashem did want Yaakov to receive the blessings of this world directly. Therefore, He engineered the events described in our Parashah by which Yaakov obtained the blessings. (Kol Rinah V'yeshuah; Voice of Rejoicing and Salvation p.153)

"Uly" (אולי) / Perhaps my father will feel me [my skin] and I will be as a mocker in his eyes; I will thus bring upon myself a curse rather than a blessing." (27:12)

The Vilna Gaon observes that Hebrew has two words for "Perhaps": "Uly," which is used in our verse, and "Pen" (פן).

The difference between them is as follows: When one hopes the outcome being mentioned will occur, he says "Uly." For example, Eliezer, Avraham's servant who was tasked (in last week's Parashah) with finding a wife for Yitzchak from among Avraham's relatives in Charan, said (Bereishit 24:5), "Uly / Perhaps ('if only') the woman will not wish to follow me . . ." Because he said "Uly," our Sages understand that Eliezer hoped his mission would fail and Yitzchak would have no choice but to marry his (Eliezer's) daughter.

On the other hand, when one hopes the outcome being mentioned will not occur, he says "Pen"; for example (Devarim 29:17), "Pen / Perhaps ('lest') there is among you a man or woman, or a family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from being with Hashem, our Elokim, to go and serve the gods of those nations." [The Vilna Gaon provides many other examples that fit each side of the above pattern.]

In light of the above distinction, however, our verse is difficult to understand. Why would Yaakov use "Uly" ("if only") about the possibility of being caught impersonating Esav? R' Yitzchak Dov (Seligman Baer) Bamberger z"l (1807-1878; rabbi of Wurzburg, Germany) explains: Yaakov is identified by our Sages as a man of impeccable honesty. Though he was forced to deceive people several times in his life, including his father Yitzchak in our Parashah, he hated every moment of that experience, so much so that he hoped his father would discover his deception.

Therefore, "Uly" is the proper word to use in our verse. (Kol Eliyahu: Parashat Chayei Sarah)

Q&A

Kids

1. How old was יצחק when he married רבקה?
2. What did each of the אבות learn?
3. Who did רבקה ask about her children?
4. What animals skins did רבקה cover יעקב with?
5. How did רבקה know that יעקב wanted to kill יעקב?

Adults

1. How many students did יצחק have?
2. Why does the Torah repeat telling us that אברהם's son was יצחק?
3. Why did רבקה not go and speak to יצחק, when worried about her children?
4. Why is באר שבע called this?
5. Why did יצחק give another ברכה in פסוק א וז ברכה יעקב?

1. 40 2. The existence of hashem and his will. 3. She went to the beis hamedrash of Shem. (Rashi) 4. Goat 5. Through הרקודים.
Adults
1. 1. Who he trained and appointed him to teach others (Rambam) 2. To prove to the cynics of that generation, that Avraham was Yitzchok's father not avimelech. (Tanchuma) 3. As she was afraid they might deem her suffering to be a sign of sinfulness. (Gur aryeh) 4. As it commemorates 2 things, the באר well, and the יעקב, which took place here. (Rambam) 5. Earlier יצחק had been tricked into blessing יעקב, now he reinforced the will on his own.

Answers
Kids