



## The Idea Behind Taking the Blessings

**"Now Rivka was listening as Yitzchak spoke to Esav his son; and Esav went to the field to hunt game to bring"** (Bereishit 27:5)

Esav went to the field with the intention 'to bring', whatever happens he will return with something. Chazal clarify the words 'to bring': "If he won't find immediately, he will bring from stolen animals." And indeed when Esav returned to Yitzchak his father, he presented him with dog's meat since he was unable to find a kosher animal. He behaved with foolishness since it was clear that bringing his father non-kosher food was against his wish. Had he told his father that he was unable to find a kosher animal, he would have still blessed him for his efforts and also for abstaining from taking either a non-kosher animal or from stolen property. But when Esav entered with the food, Yitzchak Avinu saw gehinom and even if Ya'akov had not entered deceitfully and taken the blessings, Yitzchak would not have blessed Esav anyway.

This requires clarification: Rivka Imeinu was aware of all this, so why was it important to her that Ya'akov rush to bring delicacies for his father? Since anyway Esav would not have received the blessings, we can assume that Yitzchak would have then called Ya'akov to bless him in place of Esav?

The answer seems to be that Rivka Imeinu, with her great righteousness and ingenuity, wished to separate Ya'akov and Esav and even create hatred between them. In a similar situation, Sara Imeinu wished to send Yishmael away in order to prevent him from having a bad influence on Yitzchak, and Hashem told Avraham Avinu "heed her voice".

Similarly, here, Yitzchak Avinu heeded Rivka's request to bless Ya'akov and instruct him to leave home to find a suitable wife, since she was one of the holy Matriarchs who were able to discern the future. She understood that a tzaddik like Ya'akov cannot live in the same house as a person who is prepared to bring forbidden foods to his father. Therefore, she specifically sent Ya'akov to take Esav's place in order to create hatred between them. It is clear that her counsel was fulfilled since Chazal tell us: "It is a principle that Esav hates Ya'akov". How and when was this principle established? It appears that it was established by Rivka Imeinu, when Esav began to hate Ya'akov for taking the blessings that he felt were rightfully his.

Since Ya'akov Avinu's entire essence was truth, it was very difficult for him to bring delicacies to his father and involve himself with untruth and deception. But Rivka was determined and told him, "Your curse be on me". The Sages explain that with these words Rivka was implying, if you do not agree to go and receive the blessings, I will curse you. So Ya'akov was left with no way out- if he goes to his father and he realizes that he is Ya'akov, he will curse him. But if he doesn't go, his mother will curse him.

We still have to understand why Rivka chose a course of action that involved taking Ya'akov Avinu away from his learning and in a way that was so difficult for Ya'akov Avinu

to carry out? Why did she wish to hinder the natural course of events where Esav would arrive with the forbidden food and then anyway Yitzchak will not bless him? Could she not have found a different way to break them up and build hatred between them?

With siyata dishmaya I would like to suggest the following answer: While the Holy Torah commands us to abstain from eating certain forbidden foods, the Rambam explains that one is forbidden to say for example that pig is not tasty. Rather one should say that it is tasty but the Torah forbids us from eating it. Similarly, one sometimes gets a whiff of a pleasant smell that emanates from the non-kosher food of non-Jews and obviously in this case a person is rewarded for abstaining even from smelling these foods in order to distance himself from the sin of eating forbidden foods.

Rivka Imeinu saw with prophecy that Esav intended to offer his father food from stolen property and from non-kosher animals. She knew that her holy husband had asked for delicacies, allowing himself to grow hungry so that the food that his son prepares for him will bring him joy and then he would be able to bless him wholeheartedly. With her great wisdom, Rivka wanted to prevent a situation where the tzaddik will smell the non-kosher food at a time when he is hungry. This was so that this tzaddik who was called an 'oleh temima', an unblemished sacrifice, (due to his having been offered on the Mizbeach by his father Avraham) should not derive any pleasure, not even for one moment, just from the smell of these foods, before reminding himself that they are forbidden and only then sensing the scent of gehinom that emanates from them.

Now we can understand why Rivka commanded Ya'akov to leave his learning and approach his father. Rivka did not wish to transgress the command "You shall not stand aside while your fellow's blood is shed" (Vayikra 19:16). Ya'akov's delicacies would cause his father to smell the scent of Gan Eden and be satiated only through scents of holiness. Once Esav arrives with his non-kosher food, Yitzchak will already be satiated from Ya'akov's offering and a satiated person is not enticed by the smell of food. And in fact, Ya'akov Avinu did remain faithful to the truth of the Torah since his actions were carried out with the goal of saving his father from deriving pleasure from non-kosher food.

Why did Rivka herself not prepare the food for her husband? Yitzchak desired to receive the food from his son since in gratitude for the food he would bless him with more joy. One can say that certainly the food that Ya'akov prepared for his father Yitzchak contained a genuine and delicate spice – the spice of Torah. This would add to his nachat when partaking of Ya'akov's food.

May Hashem cause all the sinners to truly repent. As the holy Ohr Hachaim writes (Bamidbar 25:14), the Torah calls Zimri an 'Ish Yisrael', an Israelite man. Despite his wickedness, he is still considered a Jewish person. Furthermore, if he repents he will merit the Eternal World since every Jew contains a G-dly essence and can never be banished from Hashem.

## Paris • Orh 'Haim Ve Moché

32, rue du Plateau • 75019 Paris • France  
Tel: 01 42 08 25 40 • Fax: 01 42 06 00 33  
hevratpinto@aol.com

## Jérusalem • Pninei David

Rehov Bayit Va Gan 8 • Jérusalem • Israël  
Tel: +972 2643 3605 • Fax: +972 2643 3570  
p@hpinto.org.il

## Ashdod • Orh 'Haim Ve Moshe

Rehov Ha-Admour Mi-Belz 43 • Ashdod • Israël  
Tel: +972 88 566 233 • Fax: +972 88 521 527  
orothaim@gmail.com

## Ra'anana • Kol 'Haim

Rehov Ha'ahouza 98 • Ra'anana • Israël  
Tel: +972 98 828 078 • Fax: +972 58 792 9003  
kolhaim@hpinto.org.il



## Hilula

2 – Rabbi Ahron Kotler, Rosh Yeshiva of Lakewood

3 – Rabbi Yosef David

4 – Rabbi Rafael Kadir Tzeban

5 – Rabbi Shmuel HaLevi Idells, the Maharsha

6 – Rabbi Shmuel Pinto, son of Rabbi Daniel Pinto

7 – Rabbi Rafael David Sebban, Rav of Turkey

8 – Rabbi Avraham HaKohen, author of 'Mishmerot Kehunah'



## Walking in their Ways

Tidbits of faith and trust penned by Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagoan Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita



## Words of our Sages

### Casualties Should Not Be Taken Casually

I remember that when the news reached us in France about yet another terrorist attack that had taken place in Israel, I prayed tearfully that there would be no casualties. But, sadly, the media reported six deaths, may Hashem avenge their blood.

Upon hearing this, I felt a stab of pain and pleaded with Hashem to end the suffering there. However, the numbers escalated to a total of eleven killed. Besides, there were tens of injured, many in critical condition and when I thought of them, I wondered what type of life awaited them. Although they were spared death, the quality of their lives had taken a drastic turn. Who could know if they would ever return to normal living?

Many of my countrymen clucked their tongues at the news filtering in from Israel. "How sad for our fellow Jews in the Holy Land," they sympathized. But only a few hours later, they completely forgot about these fellow Jews and went about their forbidden pleasures without even thinking about making changes in their lives.

Of course, when one hears sad news, one is not meant to fall into a black hole of depression and one must continue going about one's regular routine. But some change is called for on everyone's part. The Jews of Israel suffer on behalf of their fellow Jews worldwide. It is therefore incumbent upon us to heed this wake-up call and reinforce our avodat Hashem. Maybe then we won't need additional painful reminders.

### The Haftarah

"The prophecy of the word of Hashem" (Malachi 1,2)

The connection to the Parsha: The Haftarah speaks about Ya'akov and Esav, as it says: "Was not Esav the brother of Ya'akov", while the Parsha tells of the birth of the twins, Ya'akov Avinu a"h and Esav the rasha and their offspring.



### Guard Your Tongue

#### Regret and Commitment for the Future

If a person transgresses and accepts rechilut, he can rectify this sin by working on himself to no longer believe the rechilut and remove the matter from his heart.

If it is hard for him to imagine that the one who told over the rechilut invented the story, he should think that maybe he exaggerated or left out a certain detail, or it could be that the original words were said in a completely different tone. These details can change the impact of something that was really positive to something negative. He should also accept upon himself not to believe lashon hara and rechilut about any Jewish person, and admit his sin. This is how he rectifies his sin if he did not pass on the information to anyone else.

#### Torah Delivers

"Yitzchak entreated Hashem opposite his wife, because she was barren. Hashem allowed Himself to be entreated by him, and his wife Rivka conceived" (Bereishit 25:21)

The Maggid Rabbi Shlomo Levenstein shlita often tells over this wonderful story: There was a couple who were married for twenty years yet were still not blessed with children. Since they lived in Chutz La'aretz they decided to make Aliya, in line with the Rashi that says that dwelling in the Land is a segulah for having children. However, after three years of living in Eretz Yisrael, their situation had not changed.

Meanwhile, a friend from Chutz La'aretz who was visiting Eretz Yisrael, met the couple and inquired how they were doing. When he heard that after all these years they were still waiting, praying and hoping for salvation, he exclaimed: "It is time for you to put your suffering behind you! If after twenty-three years you did not merit giving birth to a child, it is a sign that you will not have any children... There are many couples who were not blessed with children yet they live meaningful lives... There are other mitzvot in the Torah that you can fulfill!" This friend, chalila, did not mean to hurt them. He felt their sadness and despair and it was his way of comforting and encouraging them. He wished to instill new strength in them for the next stage of their lives.

However, when this friend returned home and told his wife about the conversation, she admonished him: "Why interfere with other people's lives?"

"Had you witnessed their pitiful state, you would have said the same thing!" he justified himself.

"But how can you be certain that they won't be blessed with children?" his wife asked.

"They won't have children! Period! If twenty-three years have passed without seeing salvation, they will never have children!"

"But if they are blessed?" She asked.

"Do you know what? If they will have a child, I will close my business here in Chutz La'aretz and go and live in Eretz Yisrael and become an avreich. Okay?"

"Yes", she replied, "That would be great! I am okay with that!"

After another two years of waiting and praying, Hashem blessed this couple with twins! They merited giving birth to a baby girl and boy!

"The entire city was tumultuous". How everybody rejoiced on hearing the wonderful news! Only one person was anxious...

Our friend took the first plane to Eretz Yisrael. Straight from the airport he took a taxi to Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky shlita and explained the situation: "Honorable Rav! This is the story, this is what I said, what am I supposed to do now?"

"What's the question? Keep your word!"

"Honorable Rav! Can I not annul my vow?"

"No! The vow that you made is considered as a vow to perform a mitzvah which one should not annul."

"Can I make a shaliach, can I elect someone as my representative that he should study in a Kollel instead of me and I will support his every need?"

"It is actually a good idea to make a shaliach, but we will do it in the other way round: You learn in Kollel and let him run your business..."

Rabbi Chaim shlita continued: "Who knows if they were blessed with children in the merit of you promising to learn in Kollel!"

What a powerful statement! This person had not yet started learning, he had only accepted it upon himself under certain terms. And already in the merit of this Torah, the childless woman was blessed!

This is exactly what we always emphasize: Learning Torah is oxygen; it gives life to the entire world! It is Torah that brings deliverance to barren women and it is Torah that heals sickness! There is nothing more significant than the Torah!



## Pearls of the Parsha

### Who is the Tzaddik, the Son of the Rasha?

*"Hashem allowed himself to be entreated by him" (Bereishit 25:21)*

Rashi points out that the very exact wording of the verse, "Hashem allowed Himself to be entreated by him", rather than 'by her', shows us that "the prayer of a tzaddik who is the son of a tzaddik cannot be compared to the prayer of a tzaddik who is the son of a rasha. Therefore, he (Yitzchak) was answered and not her (Rivka)."

This gives rise to an interesting question: Since Rivka was a female, should Rashi have not said 'tzaddekhet daughter of a rasha', rather than 'tzaddik son of a rasha'? It is also surprising why Rashi finishes off with the words, "therefore he was answered and not her". These words seem redundant.

The sefer 'Gan Raveh' explains that Rashi is in fact answering the following difficulty: Why did Avraham have to leave his country of origin in order to merit the blessing of children, as we are told, 'changing one's dwelling place changes one's mazal', while for Yitzchak it was enough just to pray?!

To this Rashi answers: "Since the prayer of a tzaddik the son of a tzaddik"- this refers to Yitzchak, "cannot be compared to the prayer of a tzaddik the son of a rasha"- this refers to Avraham (and not to Rivka). Rashi's finishing words are not redundant. He first explains the difference between Avraham and Yitzchak and then goes on to explain that due to this reason, "Therefore," also here with the prayers of Yitzchak and Rivka, "he (was answered) and not her".

### A Two-Faced Person

*"Esav became a man who knows hunting, a man of the field" (Bereishit 25:27)*

The 'Minchat Eliezer' explains why the word 'ish' (man) is written twice. This is because Esav was a two-faced person. On the one hand, to his father Yitzchak, he showed the face of a G-d fearing person, one who was meticulous with mitzvah performance. However, while out in the fields he showed a different face.

This is in contrast to Ya'akov Avinu a"h who remained the same person throughout: "a wholesome man, abiding in tents".

### Praised for the Murder

*"Esav thought, "May the days of mourning for my father draw near, then I will kill my brother Ya'akov" (Bereishit 27:41)*

In a figurative way, the 'Siach Ya'akov Yosef' explains Esav's intent when saying, "May the days of mourning for my father draw near, then I will kill my brother Ya'akov".

If he intended to kill Ya'akov, why did he wish to wait until the days of mourning for his father?

Esav reckoned that if he kills his brother Ya'akov now, then the people will disparage him and say, how can it be that a man decides to kill his brother for no reason, like the story with Cain who remained disgraced forever?! Therefore, he thought of a plan: He will wait until his father dies and then on the Shabbat preceding the Azkarah he will come to the Beit HaKnesset together with his brother Ya'akov. No doubt Ya'akov will be honored with leading the prayers and reciting Kaddish and he will also be given the Aliya of Maftir. This will cause a dispute between them since each of them will want to be the one to lead the prayers and receive the Aliya of Maftir (as is the custom on the Shabbat preceding an Azkarah). An argument will erupt and during this chaos, he will kill Ya'akov. Witnessing his devotion in wanting to honor his father will cause the congregation to take his side.

This is the meaning of "May the days of mourning for my father draw near". At this opportunity, he will kill his brother Ya'akov so that he will even be commended for this act of deception.

## Treasures

Based on the teachings of  
Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon  
Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya  
Pinto, shlita



### The Tent of Ya'akov Versus the Field of Esav

***"The lads grew up and Esav became one who knows hunting, a man of the field; but Ya'akov was a wholesome man, abiding in tents"***

(Bereishit 25:27)

Ya'akov and Esav - two brothers, two lifestyles. Esav was known as a man of the 'field', while Ya'akov was a man of 'tents'.

A tent is generally pitched in a field with the help of pegs so that it should remain steady and even a sudden strong wind will not blow it over. The size of the pegs must be in proportion to the size of the tent- a large tent requires large, strong pegs so that it should not collapse no matter the weather conditions.

Ya'akov sat in 'tents' and Esav was a man of the 'field'. This alludes to the fact that Ya'akov, in order not to be influenced by the work of the field which refers to the concept of materialism, had to pitch his tent firmly with strong pegs. This tent refers to the tent of Torah. There inside the tent, he sacrificed everything for Torah so that he shouldn't be influenced by the wicked Esav who was a man of the field.

This is a lesson for all times. If a person wishes to be saved from the 'field', from the futilities of this world, he must pitch his tent firmly. This is the only way that affords us protection.

Ya'akov Avinu pitched his tent in the field, where he was secluded and separated from the rest of the world. Inside the tent, he could grow spiritually and devote his entire being to the Torah. In the merit of the Torah that Ya'akov learned, he merited inspiring his environment with the spirit of Torah, all from within his tent. He transformed the field into "a field which Hashem had blessed".

Therefore, when Ya'akov left Be'er Sheva the inhabitants sensed that a tzaddik had left. They felt the lack of blessing which they merited from having the presence of Ya'akov among them. Chazal say, "A righteous person's departure from a place leaves a void. As long as he lives in a city, he constitutes its glory, its splendor, and its beauty; when he departs, its glory, splendor, and beauty depart with him". Ya'akov Avinu, by secluding himself in the tent and through his toil in Torah was the glory, splendor and beauty of the place and in his merit, the entire town was blessed.

# A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA



Rashi explains the meaning of the verse (Bereishit 25:22), **"The children agitated within her"**: they agitated each other and fought over the inheritance of both worlds.

This is most perplexing:

Chazal tell us, "The yetzer hara rules over wicked people" (Berachot 61b) and the Vilna Gaon explains that the yetzer hara leads and guides wicked people and they are held under the influence of their hearts.

Maran Rabbi Isser Zalman Meltzer zt"l discusses the following difficulty, quoting Maran Rabbi Yitzchak Blazer of Petersburg zt"l (one of the great talmidim of Rabbi Yisrael Salanter), in the sefer "Otzrot HaTorah": According to the above Chazal, the yetzer hara should ensure that the wicked person holds on to his wicked ways with all his might and not regret his deeds. So why do Chazal tell us (Nedarim 9b) that wicked people are full of regret? How can it be that the same yetzer hara that persuades a person to sin later allows him to feel regret and then once again persuades him to sin which is again followed by regret?

Our Sages teach us that one of the names of the yetzer hara is 'Soneh' (hater). The Chovat Halevavot writes that the yetzer hara is a person's biggest enemy. It is a mistake to think that the only goal of the yetzer hara is to make a person sin. His goal is to make a person sin and also cause him damage and destroy him completely, just like an enemy. Since this is his objective, he persuades a person to sin so that he will lose his Olam Haba and after that generates feelings of regret so that he should also lose any enjoyment in this world that he gained by performing the sin. In this way he causes a person to lose both worlds.

This concept holds an essential message for every single person!

The yetzer hara persuades a person to commit a certain sin and he is tempted by imagining the great 'pleasure' that awaits

him through indulging. But he must know that the yetzer hara will not allow him to feel a morsel of this pleasure! He will get him to sin and then fill him with feelings of regret which will not allow him to enjoy the results of his wrongdoing. He will be so full of regret that all he desires is to vomit the sin. Not only will a person not feel any gratification but he will also suffer from feelings of remorse! This is the meaning of the yetzer hara being a person's biggest enemy. Besides, a person must realize that all worldly pleasures are only imaginary and fleeting.

The following incident, told over by Harav Yitzchak Gold shlita, is a demonstration of understanding the total absence of substance in a life full of sin, a life devoid of any spirituality: Several years ago, an irreligious broadcasting media celebrated the birthday of the tzaddik Harav Uri Zohar shlita, who merited reaching his eightieth birthday.

The reporters began the interview by extending their congratulations to Harav Zohar on reaching his eightieth birthday, to which he replied: "I am in fact now celebrating my fortieth birthday!"

Noting their surprise, he explained that when he was forty years old he merited recognizing his Creator and from that stage only does he considers himself 'alive'. He feels that the first forty years of his life where he lived without Torah and mitzvot, without emunah and religion, were not a life!

As can be expected, among other assertions, the interviewers argued with him that in the early years of his life he had built himself up into a professional performer and that is what enabled him to achieve whatever he achieved. How can he discredit that stage of his life? Realizing that they were unable to fathom his reasoning, he answered them with characteristic wit: "Ok, you know what? Take it that today I am celebrating forty years plus another forty years!"

On Friday night, Harav Gold tells over, I approached Harav Zohar to wish him mazal tov for his fortieth plus fortieth birthday and told him that I have a proof for his statement that life without spirituality is not a life! It simply does not have the implication of life! Since the yetzer hara entices a person yet doesn't allow

him to enjoy any gratification from his sins, this is a life devoid of any worth! The following is a quotation of his wonderful words:

The Gaon Rabbi Yitzchak Zilberstein shlita quotes Maran Hagaon Harav Elyashiv zt"l, who used to describe the difference between Ya'akov and Esav in the following way: "Esav became one who knows hunting, a man of the field". He went around dressed in the height of fashion, complete with a bulletproof vest and appropriate weaponry; in short he looked superior and attractive. He enjoyed all the pleasures of this world, nothing stood in his way and he could indulge in his every lust. On the other hand, "Ya'akov was a wholesome man, abiding in tents". Ya'akov was refined, he dressed in simple clothing and did not look impressive. He sat in the Beit Midrash learning throughout the day, knowing no worldly pleasures, no expensive restaurants, no round-the-world excursions; in short, he was 'stuck' in the Beit Midrash...

Now any person who harnesses the power of his imagination and dulls the strength of his intellect, will immediately be attracted to the rich personage of Esav who lived a life full of pleasures and lust. But what does the Torah tell us later on? "Esav came in from the field, and he was exhausted"! After indulging in every possible kind of gratification, what was he left with in the end? Fatigue! At the end of the day, there is nothing left from all his pleasures! He returns tired, falls into bed without any taste in life and without any enjoyment. What reason does he have to get up tomorrow?

On the other hand, at the end of his day, Ya'akov Avinu returns home with more vitality than he experienced at the beginning of his day. His soul is satiated, he is gratified and full of happiness and waits for tomorrow with the anticipation of another day of satisfying his soul's delight.

This foundation has enormous ramifications. We must remember that the yetzer hara hates a person to such a great extent that he doesn't allow him to derive any pleasure from his sins...