

In this newsletter, we are going to delve into the material of lecture #606 that was given on Monday in Ramat Hasharon in Midreshet Berina Yiktzoru on Haktzer Street #2 at 19:00 by Rabbi Ron Barina who is under the guidance of Gaon Rav Yaakov Edelstein Ztk"l, Rav Meir Mazuz Shlita and Rav Avraham Yosef Shlita.



A word from the editor:

This main theme of this week's Parsha is the birth of Yaakov and Esav, "And his hand was holding the heel of Esav and he was called Yaakov". The 'Ben Ish Hai' says (in his book Aderet Eliyahu): Because he was holding Esav's heel (Ekev), he was called Yaakov? Why was he called Yaakov? In Hebrew, Yaakov has the same spelling as the word heel. The Torah hinted using the name Yaakov that his hand was holding Esav's heel. If you rearrange the letters of Yado (his hand), you get the letter Yud and so a Yud was added to the word (Ekev) heel and it became Yaakov.

Afterwards, the Torah speaks about Esav selling his firstborn rights for the lentil soup and all the events of that day: "And Esav came from the field and he was tired" (25, 29). Rebbi Yudan says in the name of Rebbi Ayvu and Rebbi Pinchas says in the name of Rebbi Levi and the Rabbanim in the name of Rebbi Simmon, Avraham lived 175 years and Yitzchak lived 180 years. Hashem took five years away from Avraham (Avraham died the day that Esav came) because Esav did 3 sins that day: Illicit relations, murdering and Avodah Zarah (idolatry). The Midrash brings down proof that he committed murder from verses in the Torah, "And he was tired" (25, 29), that he killed a soul (That day, Esav killed Nimrod and his son and two of his warriors). And it says (Yirmiyahu 4, 31), "My soul is faint before the murderers". Rebbi said he even stole; like it says with Esav (Ovadiah 1, 5), "Did thieves come upon you, did plunderers of the night". Hashem says, this is what I promised Avraham and I said to him (Bereishit 15, 15), "And you will come to your fathers in peace," this is referring to Avraham having a good long life. So how would it be possible that he should see his grandson committing idolatry, having illicit relations and murdering people? It would be better that Avraham should die in peace like it says (Tehillim 63, 4), "For your kindness is better than life". A different explanation is that Hashem did not want Avraham to see his grandson going off the proper path of worshipping Hashem. "And he was tired." The Ben Ish Hai explains that a ravenous hunger overtook Esav so that he would sell his firstborn rights for a bowl of lentil soup. It says "He" to show that it was Esav and not someone else. As if to say, that even though a ravenous hunger overtook him, the sale took place with Esav being conscious of what he was doing. It is also explained in the verses "And Yaakov gave Esav bread and lentil soup, and he ate and drank and he got up and he went and Esav scorned his status as a firstborn son" (25, 34). The 'Ben Ish Hai' writes "Esav only asked for lentil soup like it says "And he said pour from this red thing into my mouth".

Then why did Yaakov also give him bread? When Esav came from the field tired, a ravenous hunger overtook him. Even though back then they were not aware that a ravenous hunger was dangerous, Yaakov was afraid that later Esav would claim he sold his firstborn rights in order to save his life. Therefore, Yaakov first gave Esav bread in order to remove the danger of hunger, and only then he gave him a bowl of lentil soup as a payment for the firstborn rights. "And Esav said, pour from this red thing into my mouth" (25,30): Rebbi Zeira says that wicked person opened his mouth like a camel. After Esav was satiated, Yaakov said to him, "Swear to me as clear as the sun at midday" to give validity to the sale "And he swore and he sold his firstborn right to Yaakov" (25,33). The question is asked, "How can one sell his firstborn rights? Just like a Cohen cannot sell his inherited priestly status, so too, a person cannot sell his status as firstborn son. A Cohen is a Cohen because he is the son of a Cohen and a firstborn is a firstborn because he was born first, so if he sells his firstborn rights, does that mean that the one who bought it changes to the one who was born first? It is possible to say that even though one cannot sell his firstborn rights, with the selling of the firstborn rights, Yaakov forever closed the possibility for Esav to be able to bring sacrifices in the future and this was Yaakov's whole mission. Wicked people, because they are so materialistic, do not give any importance to spirituality, to the point that they are willing to sell their firstborn rights or even their world to come for a few pennies or for worldly desires.

Lech-Lecha – a summary of the points in the Parashah

1. The prayers of Yitzchak and Rivkah for children, and Hashem accepted his prayers.
2. The birth of Yaakov and Esav, their personalities and deeds (25, 19-28).
3. Esav sells his firstborn rights to Yaakov for the lentil (25, 29-34).
4. The selling of his firstborn rights causes a famine in the land and Yitzchak Avinu (our patriarch) goes to the land of the Plishtim and there he has protection and the blessing of Hashem (chapter 26).
5. The blessing of Yitzchak to Esav (27, 30-40).
6. The hatred of Esav for Yaakov because of Yaakov taking the blessings (27, 41-46).
7. Yitzchak sends Yaakov his son to Padan Aram (28, 1-5).
8. Esav takes an additional wife from the daughters of Yishmael (28, 6-9).

"And he said, your brother came in deceit and he took your blessing" (27, 35).

"In deceit" - Onkelus translates it as it as "Smartly", because it is impossible here to say with deceit. If we say it was with deceit, then it was a mistaken transaction and the blessing goes back to its owner. We have to understand how Yaakov took the blessing using his wisdom.

In the Midras h it is brought down (Bereishit Rabba 62): When Yaakov Avinu said, "Because Hashem brought it before me", Yitzchak Avinu said, "For sure this is Yaakov because Esav is not accustomed to using Hashem's name". Therefore, in the beginning it is written, "And Yitzchak said to his son, "and then after Yaakov says, "Because Hashem brought it before me", it is written, "And Yitzchak said to Yaakov, "because at that moment it was clear that it is Yaakov (Alshich, Zt'I).

This needs to be further explained. Yaakov certainly knew that Esav was not accustomed to using Hashem's name so why did he mention Hashem; this would make his father Yitzchak suspicious? Yaakov was very smart. He wanted to receive the blessings according to the strict letter of the law so that there would be no claims against them later on. He wanted the blessings to be complete in action - that the one giving the blessing will put his hand on the head of the one receiving the blessing, and complete in thought - that the one giving the blessing is thinking about the one he is giving the blessing to and no one else. If Yitzchak would be thinking about Esav, the blessing would not have been complete. Therefore, Yaakov was smart in that he made signs that he is Yaakov as it says, "The voice is the voice of Yaakov" - these were two signs; one was that his voice was soft and he was soft spoken like Yaakov and the second sign was that he was accustomed to using Hashem's name. On the other hand, "His hands were like the hands of Esav" - there were two signs that he was Esav. First of all, he had hairy hands and second of all, the food he made tasted like the food that Esav made. Therefore, when Yitzchak came to bless him, he did not only have Esav in mind because he was having doubts that maybe it is Yaakov and his blessing will be in vain. He, therefore, said "And Hashem will give you" - he was forced to have the intention of his son, whichever son it may be, and in this way, the blessing was complete. (Od Yosef Hai)

"And Yitzchak prayed to Hashem opposite his wife because she was barren, and Hashem accepted his prayer. And Rivkah his wife conceived and the children struggled within her, and she said, "If so, why am I like this?" And she went to inquire of Hashem" (25, 21-22)"

"And he prayed" - for him and not her. The prayer of a righteous person who is the son of a righteous person is not comparable to the prayer of a righteous person who is the son of a wicked person. Therefore, he prayed for himself and not her (Rashi). The Baal HaMakor Baruch of Vizhnitz has an astounding explanation on these words which creates for

us a foundation of how we should pray and beseech Hashem for our needs. A lot of times when a person comes to pray to Hashem for his needs, a lot of prosecutors that were created from his bad deeds come and prevent his prayers from ascending. The solution to this is to pray that Hashem should fulfill our needs in order that His name should be exalted and sanctified in the world. For example, if a person is praying to be blessed with children, his intention should be that he wants children in order that his children will keep Torah and Mitzvot and will and bring pleasure to Hashem in this way. If one is praying for Parnassa (livelihood), his intention can be that he needs to money in order to support himself and his family so they will be able to learn Torah with peace of mind. In this manner, he is not only praying for his own needs, but he also has more lofty intentions, which is that he wants to sanctify Hashem's name in this world. In this way, he is able to bring about a salvation for himself. Therefore, Yitzchak, who was a righteous person the son of a righteous person, and who knew how to pray, "And he davened to Hashem opposite his wife", his intention in praying was "For Hashem" - that Hashem's name should be exalted in this world. His wife's prayer was not answered because she was praying for herself only. Therefore, Yitzchak was answered and not Rivkah, who was a righteous person son of a wicked person, because the prosecutors did not allow her prayers to ascend as she did not pray with proper intentions. We understand this concept even better with the next verses after this. "And she said why am I like this" when she prayed for the pregnancy. Rashi explained that she suffered tremendously. When she saw she is having such suffering during the pregnancy, she understood that she did not pray properly and she said "Why am I like this?" - why did I pray for "I" for myself? I should have prayed that Hashem should give me children for His sake, that He should be exalted in this world".

"And Yitzchak prayed to Hashem opposite his wife because she was barren, and Hashem accepted his prayer, and Rivkah his wife conceived." (25, 21)

"And Yitzchak prayed (Atir) to Hashem opposite his wife, "Rebbi Yochanan and Reish Lakish, Rebbi Yochanan says that he poured out prayers in abundance (Atir in aramaic is rich). Reish Lakish says that he overturned the decree (Bereishit Rabba 63, 5). It is written in the Gemara (Sukkah 14): Rebbi Eliezer asks, "Why are the prayers of the righteous compared to a pitchfork. To teach you that just as the pitchfork shifts the produce in a granary from place to place, so to the prayers of the righteous change Hashem's mind from the divine attribute of justice to the attribute of compassion. The gemara (Yevamot 64) gives further details about the Avot (our patriarchs) and Imahot (our matriarchs): "And Yitzchak was 40 years old when he took Rivkah" And it says (Bereishit 25-26), "And Yitzchak was 60 years old when they had children". Rebbi Yitzchak says, "Yitzchak Avinu was barren as

it says (Bereishit 25-21), "And Yitzchak prayed opposite his wife" – it does not say about his wife but rather "opposite his wife;" this teaches us that they were both barren. Then why does it say "He prayed for him" instead of "He prayed for them? The prayer of a righteous person who is the son of a righteous person is not comparable to the prayer of a righteous person who is the son of a wicked person. Rabbi Yitzchak asks why were our forefathers barren? Hashem desired their prayers and Rabbi Yitzhak asks why is their prayer compared to an Atar (a pitchfork)? To teach you that just as the pitchfork shifts the produce in a granary from place to place, so to the prayers of the righteous change Hashem's mind from the divine attribute of justice to the attribute of compassion.

"And the children struggled within her, and she said, 'If so, why am I like this?' And she went to inquire of Hashem" (25,22).

When Rivkah entered her seventh month of pregnancy, the two fetuses were not the same; one was righteous and the other wicked. Rivkah had a lot of anguish from this as they were fighting inside of her and they wanted to kill one another. Rivkah asked, "Why was I taken from my land, my birthplace to bring a son into the world who will serve idols". "And Hashem said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two kingdoms will separate from your innards, and one kingdom will become mightier than the other kingdom, and the elder will serve the younger". When Rivkah was walking in the street and she would pass a Yeshivah, Yaakov would begin kicking to come out. When she would pass a place of idol worship, Esav would begin kicking to come out. It is forbidden pass a place of idol worship, but Rivkah would pass by there sometimes in order to explain the fundamentals of faith to the women there. Just like Avraham, she would convert them to serve Hashem. Yaakov and Esav also fought in the womb about their inheritance in this world and in the next world (the ones who really fought were the angels Michael and Samech Mem). Samech Mem wanted to kill the good son (Yaakov). Michael in his anger came and wanted to burn Samech Mem since angels are made of fire and the larger one can burn the smaller one. This went on until Hashem separated them and portioned the inheritance. Hashem gave Esav this world and Yaakov the next world. They did not continue to fight with one another as their portions were ordained from Hashem. For all of the above reasons, Rivkah was very pained. She would walk around among the women and ask them, "Did you also have such suffering during your pregnancies? If I knew I would suffer so much, I would not have asked Hashem for children. Those ladies knew that the 12 tribes would come from Rivkah but Rivkah said, "If the pains of pregnancy are so great, I do not want the 12 tribes". "And she went to inquire of Hashem". She went the Yeshivah of Shem, the son of Noah, to ask what

will be in the end. She did not go to the Yeshivah of Avraham Avinu because she did not want to cause him any pain as he was the grandfather of these children. She asked Shem, the son of Noah, to explain to her the reason for all the suffering she was going through as no other woman suffered so much. We should understand from here the fundamental concept of how a righteous lady should behave when she is in pain. She should first try to figure out the spiritual reason behind her pain and only afterwards go to a doctor. In our days, it is the exact opposite. Rivkah did not know she was carrying twins and so she did not know that one is righteous while the other is wicked.

A story is told about the wife of Rabbi Meir Baal Hanes, Bruria, in the Midrash Shochar Tov (Mishlei 31) on the verse, "Who can find a woman of valor" (Mishlei 31, 10). Rabbi Meir was given a lecture on Shabbat at Mincha time in the Beit Midrash. Right at that time, two of his sons passed away at home. Bruria left them in their bed and covered them with a sheet. Rabbi Meir came home after Shabbat and asked, "Where are my children"? She gave him the cup for Havdalah and after he ate and said Birkat HaMazon, Bruria asked him, "If someone came yesterday and gave me a treasure to hold for him and today he is asking me to return it, do I have to return it to him?" Rabbi Meir innocently answered her, "Of course, you have to return it". Bruria took him to the room where the boys were and she removed the sheets. Rabbi Meir began to cry. Bruria says to him, "Rebbi! You taught me that we have to return the treasure and it says in the verse, "Hashem gave, Hashem took, may Hashem's name be blessed (Iyov 1,21)". In general, when there is a tragedy, a woman will react more emotionally than a man because she is much more attached to the child and she is naturally more emotional. In this story, we see the total opposite. Bruria showed great faith while Rabbi Meir is the one who broke down crying.

A small sin, a great destruction – A Shabbat Story

"Shalom Mr. Kobi Levi, this is Ronald Zuckerman, your good friend from America calling you, after two months of not speaking to you. How are you doing in Israel. You know that that in our Shul here in New York we are continuously praying for the IDF soldiers who are fighting and we are beseeching Hashem send peace for us and all of Jews".

"If Ronald Zuckerman is calling me so early in the morning", I think to myself, "For sure he has an interesting story to tell me that will certainly elevate me spiritually and add to my fear of Heaven. Is it not so, Ronald"? "Yes, yes, Mr. Levi, I have an amazing story with a lesson that is appropriate for any time, and especially appropriate for those people weak in faith who do not understand how a small sin can cause such great destruction. This time, though, you will not hear the story from me, you will hear it from a friend of mine. I will give you a small introduction and then my friend will call you and tell you the story. One night, a few friends and I were sitting together after Arvit and as we left the Shul, we spoke about our worries about

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he current situation. You know, a war can start from a little matchstick and who knows how bad it can become. As we were speaking, a Jewish merchant (born in Morocco) who overheard the conversation came by and he said to us, "You are right, a small matchstick can start a huge fire, but know that worse than this is the fact a small sin, whether it is down unintentionally or because of laziness, can cause great destruction in the upper worlds of creation. A Jew, any simple Jew has in his hands eternal worlds that he can build or destroy. I am not just telling you this out of nowhere. When I was a young boy in Morocco learning in Yeshivah in the city of Paz, our Rebbi told us a terrible story that happened in the city 200 years before".

"You hear Mr. Levi, the Moroccan merchant aroused my curiosity about this true story he had to tell. So with your permission, I am giving the phone over to Albert Olmosellino". "Shalom Mr. Levi, Albert speaking. After Mr. Zuckerman's introduction, here is the story: 250 years ago in the city of Paz, Morocco there lived an extremely rich person who was a hunter. He leared the secrets of hunting and was very successful in trapping a lot of animals, amongst them carnivorous animals which he would give over to the Moroccan zoo.

One time, this man succeeded in capturing a baby lion and instead of giving it over to the zoo, he decided to keep it in his house. He was able to convince his wife and children about the idea and so the lion grew up and became a dangerous creature. The man went out and bought a very strong chain, put it around the lion's neck and attached the other end of the chain to the stone wall that surrounded his house. The rope was short enough that it gave the lion only a small amount of space to move around. His servants were able to place the lion's food in front of him while the lion was sleeping. The lion became a very dear attraction for the family, but not everyone knew that a dangerous lion is chained to the yard of this rich man. One day, two merchants arrived from the city of Agdir Domani.

These merchants had purchased fabrics and dishes from one the factories in the city and they had loaded the merchandise into their wagon making sure to strap everything in. As they were traveling, one of the ropes tore and it fell to floor and got dirty. What should we do, they said. One of the merchants saw a rope that was attached to a stone gate. He took out his pocket knife to cut it. The other merchant shouted, "Stop! Stop! Don't cut it, you are stealing. I am willing to go to the center of town and buy a rope for us. Don't take a rope that doesn't belong to us". The first merchant, however, was very stubborn and had an answer. "You are right, it is stealing, but we are talking about an old rope that has no use and I am willing to pay moey for it. I will cut, we will strap in the merchandise again and then I will pay the owner for the rope..."

This argument went on for a while, but in vain. The merchant said, "You are right but this is a small sin and you are making a big deal out of nothing". He cut the rope slowly and he started to pull it little by little. As he was pulling, the other merchant sat in the wagon and was in distress. Suddenly, the head of the lion appeared, he took a look at the merchant, understood he was free and jumped the gate. When the merchant on the wagon looked to see what the noise was all about, he saw that the other merchant was eaten by the lion.

Now I will return the phone to Ronald. Oh I forgot to mention that 20 people had to sit Shiva for this merchant. Here is Ronald". Mr. Levi, this is Zuckerman again, so what do you say? In my opinion this is a great story that teaches us that a small action, a small sin, can cause great destruction. Isn't it a great story Mr. Levi"? "Wow, amazing, my friend Mr. Zuckerman; a small rope, a great tragedy. Unbelievable."



WITH BLESSINGS OF TORAH
RON BARINA

Rav Ron Barina is a 30 year veteran of the air-force. Since he retired, he has served as a consultant who travels from Israel to USA to also meet with USA air force representatives in the area of engineering/technology. He now dedicates most of his time to learning, teaching and spreading the sweet Torah. He learns with the Gaonim Rav Meir Mazuz Shlita, Rav Yaakov Edelstein Zt'l and Rav Avraham Yosef Shlita. He resides with his lovely wife and children in Ramat Hasharon. If you travel to Israel, you are welcome to visit his house and drop in on a class at Hashomer Street, #8, Ramat Hasharon.

"The preparation of the heart are man's, but the answer of the tongue is from Hashem" (Mishlei 16, 1)

L'Ilyu Nishmat:



My teacher, my father: Yaakov ben Rahel and Tzadok
My beloved mother: Sarah-Serach bat Simchah and Yosef
My father-in-law: Marchus Mordechai ben Rivkah and Yosef
Rav Yaakov ben Miriam Ztk'l : Roni ben aziza
Rav Shalom Ovadiah ben Ovadiah Zt'l : Rav Yaakov ben Margalit Zt'l : Mosheh Aharon ben Meir Yitzchak : Tzvi Aryeh ben Aba David and Miriam : Yaakov ben Salam : Binyamin ben Shulamit : Rahamim ben Chauru Avraham : Menachem Mendel ben Avraham and Tziporrah : Meir Ben Simchah : The Rabanit Mina bat Mordechai Shemuel Yaffa Nidra bat Neima : Miriam bat Aziza : Rahel Bulur bat Miriam : Katun bat Chaviva Rabant Batsheva Esther Kanievsky : Rahel bat Chana

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Yaakov Yisrael ben Galit
Paola bat Dina
David ben Sarah: Miriam Keren bat
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Blessing for children:

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Shoshana Raizel bat Mina
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Due to this newsletter containing the name of Hashem, it needs Genizah (proper burial). Please do not throw away.