

בס"ד
ט"ו כסלו תש"פ
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פרשת וישלח

When Yaakov and Esav are talking, they each reveal how much they think they own from a materialistic point of view, as Esav says, "יְשֵׁלֵי רֹב",¹ and Yaakov responds, "יְשֵׁלֵי כָל".² Rashi³ remarks that Yaakov's comment means that he has all of his necessities, and quotes a *Medrash Tanchuma*⁴ that when Esav is speaking, it is done haughtily, implying that he had much more than he needed. The *Kli Yakar*⁵ elaborates on this, despite all of his riches, Esav still felt that he was missing things (like all other well-off sinners in the world), and his profusion of wealth was not enough for him. Tzaddikim do not have everything, yet act as if Hashem has given them everything; evildoers can have it all, yet will never feel as they have enough, as they are always praying for more wealth and possessions.

There is a famous Mishnah in *Pirkei Avos*⁶ that says, "Who is rich? One who is satisfied with his portion," and quotes a pasuk in *Tehillim*⁷ as a source for it that says, "When you eat the labor of your hands, you will be happy, and it will be well with you." Indeed, we see from a Gemara in *Bava Basra*⁸ that Hashem gave three people a taste of *Olam HaBa* in *Olam HaZeh*. Those three people were the Avos, and they were blessed with "כל", "מכל", "בכל" respectively, with Yaakov's כל coming for his remark of "יש לי כל".⁹ Yaakov's attitude of being so satisfied with what he had allowed for his *Olam HaZeh* to be like the *Olam HaBa*, and Hashem continued to shower him with riches and opulence because of his contentment and thanks towards HaKadosh Baruch Hu.

In society, the happiest people routinely are not the wealthiest ones, and vice versa. In fact, a study done by Psychological Science¹⁰ revealed that one possible reason "money doesn't buy happiness" is that people may get used to their higher income, but they never tire of being admired by others. Researchers concluded that at the end of the day, how much a person has gathered over their life is not what matters; the important thing is their attitude toward their wealth and what they do with it.

Before passing away,¹¹ Baron Rothschild handed his children two letters. He instructed them to open one immediately following his death, and the second a month later. They opened the first letter and discovered the following message: "My last request is that I should be buried wearing my socks." Even though his children were perplexed by such a request, they still tried to honor it. Although they fought hard, the rebbeim would not allow it, and he was buried without his socks. After the month had passed, his children anxiously opened up the second letter to discover another message from the Baron: "I know that you did not bury me wearing my socks as I had requested, since it is against *halacha*. You are most

¹ בראשית לג:ט

² בראשית לג:יא

³ רש"י בראשית לג:יא ד"ה יש לי כל

⁴ מדרש תנחומא פרשת וישלח ג

⁵ כלי יקר בראשית פרשת וישלח פרק לג:ט ד"ה ויאמר עשו יש לי רב

⁶ פרקי אבות ד:א

⁷ תהלים קכח:ב

⁸ בבא בתרא יז.

⁹ תורה תמימה בראשית פרשת וישלח פרק לג

¹⁰ <https://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=159596>

¹¹ <https://www.aish.com/tp/b/1-min-vort/295621371.html>

probably wondering why I requested it in the first place. My dear children, this is an eternal lesson: a person can spend his life amassing a great amount of money and possessions, but no matter how hard he tries, he cannot even take his socks with him to the next world! Only the money which he used for Torah and *mitzvos* will accompany him.” We must do our best to serve Hashem regardless of our social and financial standing, and constantly remind ourselves that what we are really defined by is how we act as *ovdei Hashem* and *Bnei Torah*.