



BEIT MIDRASH ZICHRON DOV

TORONTO TORAH

PARASHAT TOLDOT

VOL. 15 NUM. 11 (#595) • 5 KISLEV 5784 / NOVEMBER 18, 2023

This issue of Toronto Torah is dedicated by

Robert & Karyn Goldberger in memory of Robert's father Arye Goldberger, z"l on his ninth yahrzeit ז"ל בני צבי ז"ל
and by Larry & Lori Wolynetz and family in memory of the 7th yartzzeit of Lori's father Dov Ber ben Yisroel Tzvi z"l.



DVAR TORAH TOLDOT

RABBI YEHUDA MANN, ROSH BEIT MIDRASH

Creating Love

The verse that stands out the most in our Parasha is undoubtedly the verse expressing the hidden dispute between Yitzchak and Rivkah, the seemingly ongoing debate between them about which son is worthy of the blessing—Yaakov or Esav. The verse states: "And Yitzchak loved Esav because he ate of his game, but Rivkah loved Yaakov" (Bereishit 25:28). This begs the following questions:

1. Yitzchak Avinu, our forefather, the man who was willing to die for the sanctification of God's name during the *Akeida*, prefers the son who prepares meat for him over the son who is a righteous man, "ish tam yoshev ohalim"?
2. Perhaps the most significant question: "And Yitzchak loved Esav because..."—does a father need a reason to love his son? Every parent should love their child unconditionally! With Rivkah, it is written that she loves Yaakov without giving any reason! What is the meaning of Yitzchak's love for Esav?

To answer these questions, we need to understand what it means to love. Rabbi Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler in his book *Michtav Me'Eliyahu* (Vol 1, "Kunteras Hachessed") establishes a fundamental interpretation of

the concept of love. Rabbi Dessler says that 'love' and 'giving' are intertwined; a person who loves someone gives and bestows to the other. But which leads to which? Does a person give to someone they love, or do they perhaps love because they give to the other?

Indeed, love and giving are one. Is giving the offspring of love, or conversely, does love come from giving? We are accustomed to think that giving is the offspring of love ... But in fact it is the opposite—a person loves the fruit of his actions in the feeling that it becomes part of his identity—if a son is born, whom he fathered or raised, or an animal he raised, and if a plant he planted, or a house he built—behold, he is attached to the products of his hands with love ... and so we learn from the source ... (*Derech Eretz Zuta*, Chapter 2)—"If you want to connect with the love of your friend, be a giver for his benefit" ... In general, what a person gives to another ... is the attachment between a person and another, which is called 'love.'

Rabbi Dessler says a fundamental idea: A person doesn't give because he loves, but rather the opposite. When a person invests in something, whether it be a living being or even an object or a plant, he connects to the thing in which he invested

because **the nature of giving generates love in the other being.**

With this idea in hand, Rabbi Tzvi Alon (CEO of International Bnei Akiva) suggests the following answer to our questions: Yitzchak does not love Esav because of the game in his mouth, but rather the opposite. Yitzchak struggles to love Esav; after all, he does not follow the path of Torah and mitzvos but spends time in the fields. Yitzchak wants to love Esav, and because he struggles to love his son, he invests more in him; he wants to give him special blessings and give him more to create a connection between them!

From the fact that a person emotionally connects to things he invests in, we learn about the importance of investing in the right things. If we invest our time in Torah study, davening with a minyan, and invest time and patience for our family, we will open an emotional connection and love those important things. If we invest our time in less important things, we will emotionally connect and love those less important things.

May we identify the truly important things in our lives, invest all of ourselves for this purpose, and love what we truly need to love.



Yeshayahu 65

Where Chapter 64 presented Yeshayahu praying to Hashem on behalf of the Jews, Chapter 65 has Yeshayahu turn to the Jews with a message of rebuke and reward. The message is from Hashem, but Yeshayahu conveys it as though these were his own words.

Yeshayahu, speaking for Hashem, complains that he sought to help people who never asked for it; he said he was at their service, but they never called upon him. For all that he pleaded with the Jews to listen, they angered him with idolatry, and told him to go away. But the nation does not have the ability to send Hashem away; their idolatry, and that of their ancestors, will be punished (65:1-7).

The impending punishment will not befall the entire nation, though. Yeshayahu returns to one of his most frequent

metaphors, comparing the righteous to a good, wine-producing grape in a vineyard. These shall be spared, and given ample land in Israel (65:8-10).

On the other hand, those who abandon Hashem for idolatry will suffer at the hands of our enemies. The righteous will be protected; the idolatrous will be vul-

Dying at 100 will be viewed as dying young

nerable. The righteous will be nourished; the idolatrous will go without. The righteous will sing with a happy heart; the idolatrous will cry out from heartache. Radak (65:13) explains that this is not about our world; it is about Olam HaBa, the next world (65:11-14).

The names of the wicked will be invoked as

a curse, while people will bless themselves by the Name of Hashem. All of the earlier suffering of the righteous will be forgotten in a new world of Hashem's creation. Jerusalem will rejoice, and Hashem will rejoice with us. As Radak (65:18) notes, the entire world will be peaceful, but Jerusalem will still be special (65:15-19).

People in this new world will live to a ripe old age; dying at 100 will be viewed as dying young. They will build and plant and enjoy the fruits of their labours, and Hashem will help them even before they voice their needs. Revisiting the utopia he promised in Chapter 11, Yeshayahu predicts that the wolf and lamb will graze together, the lion will become vegetarian and snakes will content themselves with dust. As promised in 11:9, Yeshayahu reiterates that Hashem's holy mountain will be a place of safety (65:20-25).



Week 6 • Shemitta and Other Expansions: Rav Kook

As we saw, the Ramban argues that in addition to the prohibition of melacha, one is forbidden from performing activities that will destroy the spirit of the day. Based on Ritva and Chatam Sofer, we argued that many activities that are forbidden rabbinically are only "merely" rabbinic if performed rarely. If, however, they are violated consistently and destroy the spirit of the day, then one violates the biblical call for Shabbaton.

Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak HaKohen Kook (*Shabbat HaAretz*, Kuntres Acharon 6) argues that the same is true for Shemitta. While the Talmud argues that only very specific actions such as plowing and pruning may be biblically prohibited, the second chapter of *Sheviit* lists many rabbinic prohibitions such as watering and fertilizing. When it comes to these actions, the Talmud permits them in certain cases where failure to perform them will cause significant loss (the parameters of this are beyond our discussion here). However, Rabbi Kook argues that these actions are only permitted biblically if performed rarely. If, however, a

farmer were to spend his entire Shemitta tending to his fields with these actions, he would violate Shemitta biblically.

Rabbi Kook expands this. He notes that Rambam (Mitzvat Lo Taaseh 353) biblically forbids physical involvement with the *arayot*, forbidden sexual partners. Ramban (ibid) disagrees and argues these actions are rabbinic. Rabbi Kook, however, argues that Ramban only disagrees with Ramban when one does this once. If, however, one would have a consistent physical relationship with a prohibited partner, Ramban would agree that it is prohibited biblically. He further argues that this model is likely true in many laws in the Torah. Based on what we have seen in the previous weeks, this argument is compelling. Ramban argues that the Torah never intended to provide a comprehensive list of prohibition, but rather to use the mitzvot to point us in the proper directions. While Rambam gives three examples, in interpersonal mitzvot, mitzvot between man and God, and Shabbat, it seems likely that more expressions of this idea should exist.



Stopping Shemoneh Esre in the Case of a Siren

Question: Unfortunately, due to the ongoing war, there are sirens warning of missile attacks from our enemies. What is the halacha regarding praying when there is a siren? Is it permissible for me to interrupt the Amidah prayer to seek shelter?

Answer: Certainly! A person praying should immediately interrupt their prayer and find a safe space to take refuge during a time of danger, even in the middle of the Amidah prayer.

Some have argued, following the Mishnah in Berachos 5:1, that prayer should not be interrupted even when a siren goes off, because the Mishnah says that one should not interrupt his prayer if there is a snake around his leg. The rationale behind this interpretation is that since most snakes are not dangerous, there is no need to interrupt prayer due to the unlikely danger of a snake bite. Similarly, in the case of a siren,

since the majority of the time there may be no immediate danger, one should not interrupt his prayer. However, this argument is incorrect.

Rabbi Aharon Yehuda Leib Shteinman z"l said there is a clear distinction between the cases. In the case of the Mishnah that says one should not interrupt prayer due to the snake, it is because the majority of snakes are not dangerous. But in the case of a siren, while the majority of the time there may be no danger, the rocket itself is most certainly dangerous. Since there is danger in the surroundings, even if the majority of the time the danger won't reach the individual, one should still interrupt their prayer.

Therefore, it is important to reiterate that in the case of a siren, one should interrupt their prayer and seek shelter.

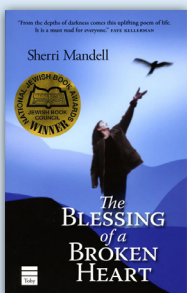
Regarding resuming the prayer after

finding shelter: According to the Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim 104-5, when one is forced to interrupt the prayer due to extenuating circumstances, if the interruption was the amount of time that takes to daven the Amidah from beginning to the end, then they should begin the prayer anew from the beginning. If they did not stop long enough to complete the entire prayer, they should continue from the blessing in which they find themselves. However, according to halacha, the first and last three blessings of the Amidah are considered as one unit. So if one has to restart, and is for instance in "Ata Kadosh" they should begin from the very beginning of the Amidah. If they are in the midst of, for example, the "Modim" section, they should restart from the "Retzeh" blessing.

Have a halachic question? Share it with Rabbi Mann at ymanntorah.com.



Week 5: Something to Give



The Blessing of a Broken Heart
By Sherri Mandell
The Toby Press, 2003

"When Jacob, disguised as Esau in his hunter's clothing, asked his father, Isaac, for the blessing meant for Esau, the blessing of the first born, Isaac said to Jacob: 'The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau.' What are the hands and what is the voice? The Sfat Emet, tells us that ... Jacob's voice is the voice of prayer. Prayer is the most intimate expression of our pain at not knowing why we suffer. Prayer is our deepest, most authentic language, a language that cries out for connection, for order, for understanding." (The Blessing of a Broken Heart, page 163)

Yitzchak describes Yaakov's most distinguishing feature as being his voice. In the Sfat Emet's explanation, Yaakov's voice refers

to his ability to pray. As our forefather, Yaakov taught us how to address challenges: like Yaakov, we respond with prayer. In the face of suffering and confusion, our prayer can become a beacon of hope. It can transcend the confusion of our lives and connect us to the divine.

Of course, action is also necessary. We do not expect to achieve security through prayer alone. Still, Yaakov reminds us that one of our most powerful assets is our heartfelt prayer. When we pour out our soul to the Creator of the universe, we rise above the chaos, and hopefully, achieve a sense of calm.

Just as Yaakov received his blessing from Yitzchak with the "voice of Yaakov," so too may we merit blessings for us and all of Klal Yisrael.

The Blessing of a Broken Heart can be purchased from Koren Publishers at tinyurl.com/KorenBMZD. Use the code TorontoTorah for a 10% discount on this or any other book on their website.



TABLE TALK RABBI NOAH SONENBERG, DEAN

Source: Rashi, Bereishit 27:19

Yaakov said to his father, "I am Esav, your firstborn."

Rashi: *I am he that brings food to you, and Esau is your first-born.*

Radak: *If, in a situation such as this, the tzaddik changes words so that they sound like a lie, this is in order and does not reflect on him negatively.*

Questions to Discuss

- Why is it wrong to lie?
- What tempts people to lie?
- Is misleading information considered to be a lie?
- When is it acceptable or even ideal to lie?

After Shabbat, please share your family's answers with us at nsonenberg@torontotorah.com to enter our raffle for a challah and six bilkas from Richmond Bakery to enjoy at your Shabbat table next week!

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Shabbat	Halacha from the Parasha	Clanton Park	After Hashkama Minyan	Rabbi Mann
	Gemara	BAYT	Between Mincha & Maariv	Rabbi Gutenberg
Sunday	Tzurba M'Rabanan – Halacha	Yeshivat Or Chaim	8:30 AM	Rabbi Shor
	Men's Semichat Chaver: Hilchot Smachot	Clanton Park	9:00 AM	Rabbi Spitz and Rabbi Mann
	Shiur b'Ivrit	BAYT (Milevsky/Mizrachi)	9:00 AM	Rabbi Mann and Rabbi Lax
Monday	The Torah: A Psychic Turn. Psychological Theories in the Eyes of Tanach	Zoom: tiny.cc/idanrak	2:00 PM	R' Rakovsky
	Men's Halacha	Shomrai Shabbos	8:30 PM	Rabbi Mann
	University Women's Beit Midrash	Yeshivat Or Chaim	7:45 PM	Rabbi Anstandig
	Introduction to Gemara: Learn how to learn	Yeshivat Or Chaim	8:30 PM	Rabbi Sonenberg
Tuesday	Then and Now: Returning to the Land of Israel – a Study in Tanach	Zoom	1:30 PM	Rabbi Horovitz
	Women's Gemara Shiur	Yeshivat Or Chaim	8:30 PM	Rabbi Anstandig
	Women's Contemporary Halacha Shiur	Clanton Park	8:15 PM	Rabbi Mann
Wednesday	Finding Meaning and Connection in the Psalms from the Siddur	Zoom	10:00 AM	Rabbi Sonenberg
	Men's Contemporary Halacha	Clanton Park	After Mincha/Maariv	Rabbi Mann
	Men's Gemara Bekiut	Yeshivat Or Chaim	8:30 PM	Rabbi Sonenberg
	Eliyahu HaNavi: A Prophet of Fire & Water	Shaarei Tefillah	8:00 PM	R' Rakovsky
Thursday	Tanach: Sefer Shmuel	Zoom: tiny.cc/BMZDtanach	1:30 PM	Rabbi Horovitz
	Men's Tzurba M'Rabanan	Yeshivat Or Chaim	8:30 PM	Rabbi Turtel
	Men's Gemara Iyun	BAYT (Milevsky/Mizrachi)	8:00 PM	R' Diena
Sun-Thu	Men's Community Night Seder	Yeshivat Or Chaim	8:30-9:30 PM	
	Pre-Maariv Shiur	Yeshivat Or Chaim	9:15-9:30 PM	

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Shabbaton	Shaarei Shomayim	December 1-2, 2023	
Rabbi Toczyner Scholar in Residence	BAYT	December 15-16, 2023	
Rabbi Toczyner: 'I Don't Understand! A Jew Responds to Tragedy'	Shaarei Shomayim	December 16	Motzei Shabbat

YOUR BEIT MIDRASH

Rosh Beit Midrash

Rabbi Yehuda Mann
ymann@torontotorah.com

Dean

Rabbi Noah Sonenberg
nsonenberg@torontotorah.com

Sponsorships & Dedications

Ronit Bendayan • (416) 630-6772 x 243
rbendayan@torontotorah.com

Maggidei Shiur Rabbi Mordechai Toczyner • Rabbi Jared Anstandig • R' Ezer Diena • Rabbi Josh Gutenberg • Rabbi Hillel Horovitz
R' Idan Rakovsky • Rabbi Bentzi Shor • Rabbi Jeff Turtel