

\*Special Article

## Heaven Scent

By: Rabbi Moshe Erlbaum, 9th Grade Gemara, 11th Grade Navi Rebbe

**L**'zecher nishmas my father BenTzion ben Tzvi Aryeh on his 4th Yartzeit

The Torah states that when Yaakov entered the room to receive the berachos from Yitzchak, “Vayigash vayishak lo vayurach es rai’ach bigadav vayivurchaihu vayomer ri’ay rai’ach binee kirai’ach sudeh asher baircho Hashem” – “And Yaakov came close and Yitzchak kissed him, he smelled the scent of his clothing and blessed him. He then said ‘See, the scent is like the scent of the field that Hashem blessed’. (27:27) The pasuk seems to imply that the scent of the clothing was the decisive factor for Yitzchak to give the berachos. Rashi addresses this issue and comments from the Beraishis Rabba (65:22) that this was no ordinary smell of washed goat skin clothing. It was rather the scent of the Garden of Eden which entered the room with Yaakov. On the next pasuk Rashi adds from the Gemara in Taanis (22b) that the field blessed by Hashem was a pleasant scent from a “sudeh tapuchim” – “a field of tapuchim.” Tosofos on the Gemara in Taanis translates ‘tapuchim’ as esrogim. The Maharsha explains this translation of Tosofos by connecting it to an earlier Midrash (65:16) also alluded to by Rashi (27:15). The Midrash states that the scent indeed emanated from the clothing worn by Yaakov and these garments were once in Gan Eden since they originally belonged to Adam HaRishon. They later get into the hands of Nimrod and are then stolen by Esav. Therefore, they are referred to earlier in the episode as “haChamudos” - “the coveted clothes [of

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## The Ancient Solution for the Child At Risk

By: Zachary Rosenberg, 12th Grade

**T**his week’s Parsha has the well-known story of the brachos that Yitzchak gave to Yaakov and Eisav: Eisav sold his bechor rights to Yaakov; Yaakov tricked Yitzchak and took the bracha that was meant for Eisav; Eisav was given a different bracha instead.

This story is one of the most bewildering in the Torah. Did Yitzchak, who had Ruach Hakodesh, not notice that his son Eisav was a rasha? The medrash clearly tells us that Yaakov went to places of learning while Eisav went to places of avodah zarah, and Yitzchak loved Eisav despite this fact. Evidently, Eisav’s wickedness was clear for all to see, so shouldn’t Yitzchak have known about it? Why did Yitzchak plan to give Eisav the brachos instead of Yaakov?

The Chasam Sofer asks further: After Yaakov took Eisav’s bracha, Yitzchak hesitated before giving Eisav an al-

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**Torah Teasers***By Rabbi Moshe Erlbaum, 9th Grade Rebbe***Parshas Toldos  
Questions**

1. In what two contexts does the number 40 appear in this parsha?
2. Which verse in this parsha has five verbs in a row?
3. In this parsha we are informed of the birth of the twins Yaakov and Esav. Which other set of twins appears in the Torah?
4. Besides Esav, who else in Tanach is called an "admoni" - a person with reddish complexion?
5. Who in the Torah is referred to as a firstborn male or female? (10 answers - 9 in the book of Genesis)
6. Whose neck is mentioned in this parsha? (2 answers)
7. Where else in the book of Genesis is a neck mentioned? (4 answers)
8. Which single verse in this parsha mentions all the following: A grandfather and grandson, a grandfather and granddaughter, a father and son, an uncle and nephew, a husband and wife, a father-in-law and son-in-law, and a brother and sister?

**Answers**

1. Yitzhak marries Rivka at the age of 40 (Genesis 25:20). Esav also marries at age 40 (Genesis 26:34).
2. When Esav takes the lentil soup from Yaakov, the Torah states: "And he ate and he drank and he got up and he went and he degraded the birthright" (Genesis 25:34).
3. Twin sons, Zerach and Peretz, were born to Yehudah and Tamar (Genesis 38:27).
4. When the future king, David, first meets the prophet Shmuel, David is described as having "reddish complexion" (1-Shmuel 16:12).
5. The following people are called a firstborn: Abraham's nephew Utz (Genesis 22:21); the eldest daughter of Lot (Genesis 19:31); Naviot, the oldest son of Yishmael (Genesis 25:13); Esav (Genesis 27:19); Leah (Genesis 29:26); Reuven (Genesis 35:23); Esav's son Eliphaz (Genesis 36:15); Yehudah's son Er (Genesis 38:7); Yosef's son Menashe (Genesis 41:51); and Nadav, the son of Aaron (Numbers 3:1).
6. Yaakov's neck is mentioned when his mother places the goat skins upon it (Genesis 27:16). Esav's neck is mentioned by Yitzhak in his blessing (Genesis 27:40).
7. In Genesis 33:4, Esav cries on the neck on Yaakov. In Genesis 46:29, Yosef cries on the neck of Yaakov upon their reunion after 22 years. In Genesis 41:42, Pharaoh places a golden chain on Yosef's neck in appointing him viceroy of Egypt. In Genesis 45:14, Benyamin cries on the neck of Yosef upon their reunion.
8. The last verse in the parsha (Genesis 28:9) contains the following relatives: grandfather and grandson - Avraham and Esav; grandfather and granddaughter - Avraham and Machlat; father and son - Avraham and Yishmael; uncle and nephew - Yishmael and Esav; husband and wife - Esav and Machlat; father-in-law and son-in-law - Yishmael and Esav; brother and sister - Nivayot and Machlat.

**ALIYAH SUMMARY**

1st Aliyah - In this Aliyah, Yitzchak and Rivka daven for a baby after twenty years of barren marriage; Hashem answers their prayers and Rivka becomes pregnant. Through a Nevuah, Rivka is told that she will give birth to twins, which represent the struggle of two nations. Rivka gives birth to Yaakov and Esav; Esav grows up to become a hunter while Yaakov becomes an honest man who lives by the Torah. Yaakov was favored by Rivka, while Esav was favored by Yitzchak. Also contained in this Aliyah is the famous story in which Yaakov sells lentil soup to a starving Esav in exchange for rights to the Bechorah, the first-born. Later on, we hear that there was a famine in Eretz Cana'an, and Yitzchak goes to Eretz Plishtim. Hashem tells him that he will receive all of the brachos that had been promised to Avraham.

2nd Aliyah - Yitzchak settles in Eretz Plishtim where the people queried about his wife, and he lied in response by saying that she was his sister. The lie was in order to protect her, as he feared that the Plishtim would kidnap and subsequently kill Rivka. Eventually Avimelech, the king of the Plishtim, realized that Rivka was indeed Yitzchak's wife. And although he reprimanded Yitzchak for his lie, he issued a decree that no one should lay hands on either of them. While in Eretz Plishtim, Yitzchak becomes tremendously rich through the miraculous capabilities of his field.

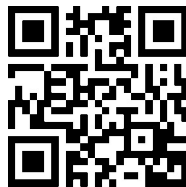
3rd Aliyah - Yitzchak becomes extremely wealthy. He digs some wells that his father Avraham had dug but had since been stopped up by the Plishtim. The Plishtim become envious of Yitzchak's wealth and ask him to leave, so he settles in the valley of Gerar. There, Yitzchak's servants dig two new wells but once again the Plishtim claim ownership of the wells. Yitzchak's servants dig a third well whose ownership is uncontested.

4th Aliyah - In this Aliyah, Yitzchak moves to Be'er Sheva where Hashem blesses him. Hashem assures Yitzchak that He will always be with Yitzchak. The Aliyah continues with Avimelech coming from Gerar; he approaches Yitzchak with his entourage, including his general Phicol, and requests a peace treaty. Yitzchak at first is not so in favor, but eventually agrees to a treaty.

5th Aliyah - Esav turns 40 years old and marries two women, whose idolatrous ways angered Yitzchak and Rivka. At this point in time, Yitzchak had developed blindness due to old age. Yitzchak summons Esav and tells him he'll give Esav a bracha after he hunts. Rivka, hearing this conversation, devises a plan so that Yaakov would receive the bracha in place of Esav. She instructs Yaakov to don Esav's clothing, gives Yaakov a piece of meat, and puts hairy coverings on his arms. Yaakov approaches Yitzchak in his costume, and Yitzchak is fooled by Rivka's trickery.

6th Aliyah - This Aliyah continues the story of Yaakov receiving the Brachos in place of Esav. Yitzchak gives the Brachos to Yaakov, namely, control over his brother and the "dew of the heaven and the fat of the earth." As soon as Yaakov departs the room, Esav storms in, furious at the stunt Rivka and Yaakov had just pulled. To quell Esav's anger, Yitzchak gives Esav an additional Bracha; however, Esav swears he'll still kill Yaakov. Rivka, catching wind of Esav's plot, requests of Yitzchak that he send Yaakov to Charan to search for a wife.

Yitzchak complies, and again blesses Yaakov before he departs for Charan. 7th Aliyah - This Aliyah tells us the aftermath of the aforementioned story of the "stolen Brachos". Yitzchak sends Yaakov to Lavan, Yitzchak's brother-in-law, to get married and seek shelter. Esav again marries, this time to Machlat, the daughter of Yishmael.



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# 10-Minute Halacha Shiur

Given by Rabbi Aryeh Lebowitz  
on [yutorah.org](http://yutorah.org)

Transcribed by  
Shmuel Maltz

## Taking Sleeping Pills on Shabbos:

Those with insomnia have an issue on Shabbos: Since Shabbos is a day of rest, they need to sleep. However, the only way they would be able to fall asleep is with sleeping pills. Can they take sleeping pills on Shabbos?

A Mishna in Gemara Shabbos (109) says that it is prohibited to take medicine on Shabbos. The Gemara explains that the reason is because a person might come to violate the Melacha of Tochain (grinding). Since one might come to grind up herbs for his medicine, the Rabbis made a decree that one may not take medicine on Shabbos. The obvious question is that nowadays, when we don't grind up our own medicine, why is it forbidden? It's very far-fetched to say that we might grind up our own medicine, as we get our medicine ready-made.

A Gemara in the first Perek of Maseches Beitzah says that whenever you have a rabbinic decree, you can only repeal that decree with a Beis Din that is greater in wisdom than the Beis that made the decree. Finding such a Beis Din is very difficult. Therefore, we follow the decree even if it doesn't apply anymore. Rav Shachter says that this means that really we should undo the decree, but we simply don't have the tools to do so. The Tzitz Eliezer writes that sometimes people do make their own home remedies nowadays, so it's not such a far-fetched decree.

There are exceptions to this prohibition. The Mishna explains that if a person eats a food that is used to treat a certain illness, since it's food, it's perfectly permissible. For example, if someone has a cold, they can eat hot chicken soup or drink hot tea if it makes them feel better.

Additionally, if someone can't function in a normal way, then one can take medicine on Shabbos, since they're considered to be a Choleh Sheyesh Bo Sakana (a sick person who is in danger).

Would one be able to take vitamins on Shabbos? According to Rav Soloveichik, one can take vitamins, since it gets them through the day, so it's not really considered medicine. The Shmiras Shabbos C'Hilchasa disagrees and says that one cannot take vitamins since it's considered to be a medication. Rav Moshe Feinstein says that if one wants to take vitamins because they are feeling a little bit weak, then they can't take it, since they are not actually sick. However, if one wants to take vitamins so that they don't become ill (vitamin C), then it would be permissible for them to take the vitamins.

Regarding sleeping pills, according to some, it might be Asur to take them because you are not really sick, and since it's like taking medication. Others say that if you can't sleep, then you're considered sick, so you would be allowed to take it. You're a Choleh Sh'Ein Bo Sakana (a sick person who is not in danger), so you would be allowed to take the medication. Others go as far as to say that it's not even medicine at all, it just makes you feel a little better. Insomnia is not an illness according to them.

The Tzitz Eliezer writes that sleeping pills are considered to be medication, so they would be Asur to take on Shabbos. According to Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, It's not considered to be a medicine, so it would be permissible to take. The Shmiras Shabbos C'Hilchasa writes that If you are very uncomfortable, meaning you really cannot fall asleep, then you can be lenient and take the sleeping pills, even though you are not considered to be a Choleh Sh'Ein Bo Sakana. It really depends if you hold if insomnia is an illness or not. If it is, then it would be forbidden to take it. If it isn't, then it would be permitted to take it.

So, if someone asks you if they can take sleeping pills on Shabbos, it depends. If they are really not going to be able to fall asleep and not be able to function the whole next day, then they can take it. If they can fall asleep without it, then they should not take it.

# SPARKS OF CHASSIDUS



*With  
Noah Birnbaum*

In Parshas Toldos, the Torah mentions whom Yitzchak and Rivkah love: while Yitzchak was more fond of Eisav, Rivkah was seemingly more perceptive and loved Yaakov more. There are a few questions that we can ask on this, but I will focus on two. 1) Why is the Torah talking about child favoritism? Should parents favor specific children? 2) Why did Yitzchak love Eisav more if he was known to be a Rasha? Did he just have no idea?

Rebbe Nachman responds to this by saying that Yitzchak was very innocent; therefore, he was not a person that could understand the evil of this world because he was so separated from it. When Eisav would deceitfully ask questions to his father like if he should take trumas u'maseros from the straw and salt, those were the questions of a tzaddik; Yitzchak just didn't see through Eisav's façade of integrity because Yitzchak was such a pure person. Yet because a lot of Rivkah's family was deceitful (like Lavan, her brother), she understood this mindset and learned how to see right through it.

Now it is understandable why we saw this favoritism from each of the parents, Yitzchak and Rivkah. This teaches us a few very important lessons: 1) Although it is generally good to have the benefit of the doubt for your fellow Jews, it is also immensely important to be able to see the true side of anyone because only Hashem knows what someone can do in terms of stealing, and you should do everything to stop that. 2) As we just saw from both Rivkah and Yitzchak, your nurture (the environment around you as you grow up) and how you were raised has a tremendous impact on how you develop in the future.

Adapted from YUTorah

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him and explained the reason for his actions. "Tomorrow many more women will be coming to shul than on a regular Shabbos. Every seat in the women's section will be taken and the women will be dressed in their finest Yom Tov clothing. If they rip their clothing on one of these nails, imagine how much anguish it would cause them. Their entire day would be affected and what a shame that would be to have their Yom Kippur ruined because of a nail. So I decided to bang in all the loose nails and prevent this from happening." Reb Yisroel smiled at his dumbfounded disciples and walked home to take care of some unfinished business. After all, it was Erev Yom Kippur, just a few hours before the holiest day of the year.

*Blind Faith**By: Akiva Mehlman, 11th Grade*

Parshas Toldos begins the story of Yaakov Avinu and his conflict with Eisav. To understand their conflict, Rabbi Tendler asked a series of questions and offered an important insight. One, why is it that there are four mothers and only three fathers? Second, how is it that Yitzchak was fooled by Yaakov's trickery?

After seeing the strange behavior of the babies during her pregnancy, Rivkah sought direction from Shem and Eiver. They explained that the internal conflict she was suffering was between twins battling for dominance over each other. However, in the end, "The greater will serve the younger." This prophecy can be interpreted in two different ways. One way is that the two brothers, one good and one evil, would be in constant conflict with each other. However, in the end, the good would prevail over the evil. Another way of explaining it is that the two nations would work together; Eisav would contribute his economic and political leadership while Yaakov would lead Eisav with his spirituality and truthfulness. The goal was for both to contribute towards the future of the Jewish people. If Eisav had joined Yaakov in carrying on Avraham's mission, Yaakov would have married Rachel and Eisav would have married Leah. This would have caused there to be four mothers and four fathers! However, it became apparent to Yaakov that Eisav could not be a partner in fathering the Jewish people. Yaakov's deal to buy the first-born rights from Eisav placed the full responsibility of fathering both components of the Jewish people on Yaakov.

Although Yaakov and Rivkah lost their hope for Eisav, Yitzchak maintained the hope that his son would one-day reform and join Yaakov as a partner in fathering the Jewish people. We can see this by examining the pasuk. After questioning the disguised Yaakov and feeling his hairy arms, Yitzchak said, "The voice is Yaakov's voice but the hands are the hands of Eisav." However, a blind man depends more on his hearing, so why did he ignore Yaakov's voice and focus on Eisav's hands? Immediately before Yitzchak had touched Yaakov's arms, Yitzchak asked Yaakov how he had returned so quickly from the hunt. Yaakov naturally answered that it was because of Hashem. This response surprised Yitzchak because Eisav never attributed his successes to Hashem. Therefore, Yitzchak allowed for his most heartfelt wish to surface. Yitzchak thought "Had Eisav finally come around to recognizing Hashem and accepting his partnership with Yaakov? Is Eisav finally speaking with the voice of Yaakov but maintaining the hands of Eisav!" Yitzchak seemingly was hopeful that Eisav would do Teshuvah and that is why he believed that it was Eisav who had come for the brachot. After Yitzchak blessed Yaakov and realized that it wasn't Eisav, the Torah says that Yitzchak finally knew that he had been wrong about Eisav and that Eisav would not be a partner in the future of the Jewish people.



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## STORIES OF GREATNESS

TOLD OVER BY: ARIEL KORORI

Erev Yom Kippur is a day when many rush to grab their last chance to do teshuvah. Many stories have been told about these last-minute acts of repentance. Observing the manner in which a Torah giant behaves on this day can be very inspiring, if not surprising.

Let's peek into the life of Reb Yisroel Salanter. On one Erev Yom Kippur, just a few hours before the beginning of the holiest day of the year, his disciples had noticed their Rebbe sneak off in the middle of the day. Reb Salanter appeared to shy away from bringing attention to himself, so these young men who were following him kept their distance. Reb Yisroel slipped into an alleyway and looked behind him. His students could hardly wait to observe their teacher in deep meditation, crying in awe right before the Day of Atonement. Once he finished, Reb Yisroel came out of the alleyway holding something in his hand. It looked like some sort of utensil, although from the distance the students were keeping it was difficult to tell exactly what it was. They heard of the minhag some had to receive malkus on Erev Yom Kippur, and they imagined watching him dispensing lashes to himself as an atonement. The students followed Reb Yisroel as he started walking toward his shul, the place where he would be contemplating that Yom Kippur how he could serve the Almighty better and reflect on the events of the past year. Once Reb Yisroel arrived at the shul he again looked around to make sure no one was watching. The students felt somewhat guilty. Here they were secretly spying on their Rebbe when he clearly was wary that no one should see what he was doing. But they quickly resolved their dilemma by rationalizing that this too was something they needed to learn. After all, it was Erev Yom Kippur, and when else should they observe how their Rebbe behaved if not on this auspicious day.

The students peeked out from behind the house where they were hiding and waited until Reb Yisroel entered the shul. He checked to see if anyone was in the building and then proceeded to walk upstairs to the women's section. The "spies" who had been following him waited for their Rebbe to go upstairs; when he did they quietly crept up after him. It was here they figured he would begin his "holy work". They understood that he wanted to serve his Creator in private. They huddled next to each other and carefully observed their Rebbe's every move. But what happened next shocked them. The utensil he held in his hands was not an administering tool for malkus, but a simple hammer. Watching the scene unfold, the young men could not help but wonder why in the world their rebbe would be using a hammer a few hours before the holiest day of the year. They watched as Reb Yisroel ran his hand smoothly over the benches, and whenever he felt a nail sticking out he would take the hammer and nail it in. Over and over the hammer met its mark. After he was satisfied that all the nails had been firmly embedded in their places did he then turn to leave. It was then that he first noticed the students who had been

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watching his every move. Sensing that his students had expected to find him engaged in a "holy" act, not just banging in nails like a carpenter, Reb Yisroel pulled them close to

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# SEPARATE TWINS

By Ariel Kunin, 11th Grade

In Parshas Toldos Perek 25 Pasuk 23, Hashem tells Rivka that she will have twins leading to two different nations; “One will overpower the other, and the older will serve the younger.” In the next pasuk it is written “Vayimli’u Yameha Laledes Vehenai Tomim Bevitnah”, that “Her time to give birth came, and, behold, there were twins in her womb.” Rivka gives birth and finds out that she had twins. The Rashbam writes that the word Vehenai is used when a previously unknown event took place. Seemingly, it was unknown to Rivka that she would give birth to twins. But how can that be when in the previous Pasuk Hashem explicitly tells her that she will have twins?

In the pasuk, the twins are referred to as Tomim and not T’Omim, which is the correct Hebrew word for twins. Rashi explains that the Pasuk shortened the word because only one of the children would be a Tzaddik.

The Netziv explains that when Rivka was told by Hashem that she was having twins, she thought that they would separate in their righteousness when they entered into the world, but that in her stomach they would still be equal. But the word Vehenai means that they were separate even in her stomach. The Netziv can’t be telling us that the word Vehenai meant that inside her stomach one was wicked and one was a Tzaddik because Rashi explained based on the Pasuk two pesukim earlier that Yaakov kicked when Rivka passed Yeshivat Shem V’Ever, and Esav kicked when Rivka passed by a place of Avodah Zarah. So we already know that inside her stomach one was wicked and one was a Tzaddik. So what exactly is the Netziv trying to tell us?

Rav Schachter (quoted and paraphrased from Torahweb.org) writes that Esav attempted to imitate Yaakov to prove to everyone that he was on the same level as Yaakov. “When Yaakov left to Padan Aram to marry a girl from the family, Esav followed suit and also married a girl ‘from the family’ but did not divorce his non-Jewish wives. This act of marrying a “girl from the family” was solely in order to appear as though he was following in the footsteps of Jewish tradition.” In many ways we see that, “Despite the fact that the two brothers were twins, and had a lot in common biologically, they had very little in common in terms of lifestyle. There is an often-quoted Midrash which states, “Why is the pig called a ‘chazir?’ Because someday in the future God will return it (“Iehachziro”) to the Jewish people.” The Rishonim ask how this can be! The Rambam postulates, as one of the thirteen principles of our faith, that the laws of the Torah will never change! Can it be that someday it will be permissible for us to eat Pork? Some of the Rishonim explained that “The return of the pig does not refer to eating pork, but rather to the restoration of the Jewish government in place of a Non-Jewish one.” The ‘pig’ is the faker who makes believe that he is kosher by

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*(R' Erlbaum Continued from page 1)*

Esav].” Furthermore, the Maharsha explains that this approach must follow the opinion in Sanhedrin (70a-b) [see Beraishis Rabbah (15:6)] that identifies the fruit from the Eitz Hadaas as the esrog.

This fascinating Maharsha concludes that this understanding contains a minor contradiction. Tosofos implies that the scent emanated from the clothing. However, a careful reading of the Beraishis Rabbah (65:22), implies that the scent of Gan Eden emanated in the merit of Yaakov. In fact, the very next midrash relates that when Esav entered the room Yitzchak smelled the scent of Gehenum. This apparent inconsistency is not resolved.

A possible resolution to this can perhaps be gleaned from another Midrash in the same section of the Beraishis Rabbah. The Midrash states that instead of reading the words “Vayurach es rai’ach bigadav” “and he smelled the scent of his clothing” one should read it as “Vayurach es rai’ach bogdav” - “and he smelled the scent of his traitors” (see Sanhedrin 37a). The Midrash then elaborates with two amazing stories about two Jewish traitors during the period of the second Temple. The first is about Yosef Mashita who attacked Yerushalayim fighting on the side of the Romans. When they reached the Har Habayis the Romans offered him to enter the Temple first and take whatever he wished. He gladly entered and took out the golden menorah. When the Romans saw what he grabbed, they said to him ‘such a treasure is not befitting a commoner like you.’ They then ordered him to enter again and take something else. Realizing then how they were using him, he felt remorse and regret and refused to dishonor the Temple a second time even after being ordered to do so by his commander. The commander, noticing his sudden change of heart, executed him. Yosef Mashita in his dying breath screamed out the words ‘Woe is me that I angered my Creator.’ The second traitor was Yikom Ish Tzeroros, the brother-in-law of Rav Yossi ben Yoezer. Yikom was riding a horse on Shabbos alongside his brother-in-law Rav Yossi ben Yoezer who was being taken to be crucified. Yikom began mocking his relative regarding his own sinful behavior which has brought him a successful life as opposed to Rav Yossi’s righteousness leading to his upcoming execution. Rav Yossi ben Yoezer sharply answered him “If this is how an evildoer is treated in this world, kal vachomer how a tzadik will be treated in the next. If this is how a tzadik suffers in this world, kal vachomer how a rasha will be treated in the next world.” These words hit Yikom like venom from a snake. He then planned a most innovative way to commit suicide through all four misos beis din. At the last moment of their lives, Rav Yossi related that “I see the ‘bed’ of my brother-in-law who is preceding me to Gan Eden.”

Why would these two traitors who did teshuva and died al kiddush Hashem be the impetus for Yitzchak to bestow the berachos on Yaakov. There were many other Jews in history that gave their lives al kiddush Hashem as well. Rav Henech Lebowitz z”tl in the sefer Chachmei Halev explains that these two traitors were unique since they were at the lowest level and behaved in the most treacherous way, yet they were still able to totally change in an instant and be willing to die al kiddush Hashem. When Yitzchak recognized that within the future descendants of Yaakov there would be this unbelievable power, even to do teshuva in an instant, he readily bestowed the berachos upon him.

I think that it is possible to delve even deeper into this connection and resolve the earlier difficulty raised by the Maharsha. As mentioned above, according to Tosofos as explained by the Maharsha, these clothes had the powerful scent of the esrogim of the Eitz Hadaas. This scent then had traces of the earliest treachery committed against Hashem by Adam HaRishon. Adam had permission to eat and derive pleasure from all the fruits in the world yet he chose to eat from the only tree that was forbidden by Hashem. Rav Aryeh Kaplan z”l in the book on tzitzit suggests that the clothing themselves were given to Adam and Chava as a sign of this treachery. Thus these two words, bigadim and bogdim, share the same root. Interestingly, these clothes were never in the possession of Noach, Shem, or Avraham. They were owned by Nimrod and Esav, the two famous bogdim of Sefer Beraishis. Consequently, this scent should have frightened Yitzchak and prevented him from giving the berachos. However, he then smelled the sweet scent of Gan Eden originating from Yaakov himself. This scent was the power of his descendants to do teshuva instantly, even from the most detestable and sacrilegious treason. At that moment he realized that Yaakov and his descendants are truly capable of redeeming the sin of Adam and guiding back the world to the Gan Eden state (see Ramban 30:6). Thus, the scent of the clothing was both from the esrog of the Eitz Hadaas and the merit of Yaakov and his descendants. The merger of both scents coming together is what finalized the berachos to be bestowed upon Yaakov.



*(Rosenberg-Continued from page 1)*

ternative bracha. He said, “what shall I do now for you my son, and only after Eisav cried, did he bless him, ‘from the fat of the earth shall be your dwelling.’” If Yitzchak loved Eisav, and seemingly didn’t know that he was a rasha, why did he hesitate?

Chazal say that the bracha that was given to Yaakov (and was originally meant for Eisav) is dependent on the worthiness of the receiver. Part of the bracha was, “Vayeten Lecha Elokim”, “Elokim will give you”. Elokim is the name of God that refers to His quality of judgement. The pasuk is saying that Yaakov would only get the bracha if he deserved it. Conversely, Eisav would receive his bracha whether he was a tzadik or a rasha. Did Eisav get a better bracha than Yaakov?

The Sefer Chasidim writes that any success of Eisav in this world would be because of his mesiras nefesh (putting himself in danger) to bring food to his father. This poses another question: why did Yitzchak ask Eisav to risk his life by hunting amid dangerous animals to get food? Didn’t they have plenty of livestock?

Moreover, why did Yitzchak request that Eisav make him food that he loves? Did he have a desire for meat at this moment? The Ran writes that since a bracha is given in a state of happiness, Yitzchak asked Eisav for meat to bring him to that state. Would meat fill Yitzchak with happiness?

To answer all of the above questions, we must say that Yitzchak indeed knew that Eisav was a rasha, and he wanted to set him straight through the brachos. Yitzchak wanted Eisav to have the bracha that needs to be earned, because when a person receives his livelihood according to what he deserves, he has a constant connection to Hakadosh Baruch Hu; such a connection would put Eisav on the right track.

When Yitzchak realized that he had given this bracha to Yaakov instead, he didn’t want to give Eisav the alternative bracha that can be received without deserving it, because the unconditional wealth would cause Eisav to lose any connection to Hakadosh Baruch Hu. Only once Eisav began to cry (it is said that his two tears brought the destruction of the first and second Beis Hamikdash) did Yitzchak agree to give him the bracha.

Eisav sold the firstborn rights for a lentil stew because material matters meant far more to him than anything else. In all matters, there is an ikur (main) and a tafel (subordinate). The world to come is the ikur, this world is the tafel; Shabbos is the ikur, the week is the tafel; the soul is the ikur, the body is the tafel. Eisav asked Yitzchak how to take Maaser from straw and salt so that Yitzchak would think that he cared about the mitzvos, but Yitzchak realized that he was focusing only on the tefel. The grain is the ikur, the straw is the tafel; the dish is the ikur, the salt is the tafel.

When Yitzchak saw that Eisav was obsessed only with this world (which was evident from the fact that he was obsessed with the tefel), he devised a plan to get Eisav involved in olam habah as well: he wanted Eisav to hunt food for Yitzchak, fulfilling the mitzvah of honoring one’s parents. One mitzvah would lead to another, a concept known as mitzvah goreret mitzvah, and Eisav would eventually change his ways. The tasty food that the pasuk references that would bring Yitzchak to a state of happiness was when Eisav would be wholeheartedly involved in the Mitzvah of kibud av. The Zohar indeed says that no one ever did kibud av like Eisav.

This is a fundamental point for baalei teshuva. They should start off strong with one mitzvah which will then lead them to others.

Why didn’t this work for Eisav? Because he was too focused on the one mitzvah of kibud av and didn’t move on to do other mitzvos.

Adapted from the talks of Harav Yosef Stern Z”L

*(Continued from page 7)*

showing his split hooves, just as others claim that theirs is a twin-religion with ours, just as Esav was a twin brother of Yaakov.”

Maybe this is what the Netziv was trying to teach us. Originally Rivka thought that while Yaakov and Esav would have different actions and expressions in the world, that fundamentally at their core they were both the same. But that wasn’t the case. Rivka understood that Yaakov fundamentally signified avodas hashem and Kedushah, and Esav fundamentally signified wickedness and beastiality. They were not fundamentally the same and even in the womb (at their core) they were different. Similarly, we have to understand that Judaism and the Jewish people are fundamentally different. Hashem tells us “Ve’atem Teyu Li Mamleches Kohanim, VeGoi Kadosh” (“You shall be to Me a kingdom of Kohanim and a holy nation”). We are a holy nation, and we have to view ourselves as such. We have to realize that although we are twins with Esav biologically, we are on a different level spiritually.

## Living for the Future

By: Yosef Adler, 9th Grade

In this week's parsha, we see that Eisav sold his *bichorah*, his birthright, to Yaakov, in return for a bowl of soup. Eisav came back to his father's house after a long day of hunting. After seeing Yaakov's lentil soup, Eisav said, "Pour some of this red stuff down my throat (25:30)." Eisav didn't even want to drink the soup himself; he requested that Yaakov pour it down his throat! Yaakov said that he'd give him some soup if Eisav gave Yaakov his birthright in return. Eisav agreed. Why? That's obviously not a fair trade. Why would Eisav sell his birthright in exchange for some soup? Eisav wasn't stupid. How was he ever willing to make that trade?

The answer is that Eisav

only cared about having pleasure now, in the moment. Eisav wasn't looking ahead at his future and weighing what would be best for him in months or even years. Eisav wasn't capable of thinking for the future. Eisav only wanted the temporary pleasure of a bowl of soup. We experience this as a constant battle. Everyday we encounter temptations that we know will not be beneficial for us in the future, but we are tempted to follow them regardless because of the false sense of temporary pleasure. We have to fight these temptations, and manage to think about the future. It's not easy, but in the end, you don't want to give away your birthright for some soup.

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