



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT"l

You Are What You Speak

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

"Yaakov drew close to Yitzchak his father who felt him and said, 'The voice is the voice of Yaakov, but the hands are the hands of Eisav.'" (27:22)

One of the pivotal events in the development of the Jewish nation was the blessing that Yitzchak gave to Yaakov, which greatly impacted the destiny of Yaakov and Eisav. When Rivka finds out that Yitzchak intends to give the blessing to Eisav, she formulates a scheme to deceive him into granting it to Yaakov. Yaakov is very hesitant to fool his father, but, as the Ramban explains, Rivka convinces him that if Eisav were to receive the blessing, it would belong to him and his descendants forever. Yaakov and his offspring – the Jewish nation – would never be able to stand up to them.

After Yaakov finally agrees, his mother dresses him in Eisav's special garments and puts goatskins on Yaakov's arms and neck. Yaakov even imitates Eisav's voice, but he tries to keep as close as possible to the truth while presenting himself as his brother. Yitzchak is suspicious and he reaches out to feel Yaakov to determine if it is, in fact, the hairy Eisav. Feeling the goat hair, he exclaims, "The voice is the voice of Yaakov, but the hands are the hands of Eisav."

The commentaries explain that although Yaakov went to great lengths to imitate Eisav, there was one aspect that he did not mimic. Eisav had a gruff, crude manner of speaking. Yaakov did not speak that way. Although he imitated Eisav's voice, Yaakov still spoke in a refined manner. He even mentioned the name of Hashem, something Eisav never did. Why didn't Yaakov take this step of imitating Eisav's crude way of speaking to avoid arousing Yitzchak's suspicion?

Some suggest that although Yaakov was able to disguise himself and present a meal to his father as if he was Eisav, he could not bring himself to speak in the way that Eisav did. The way a person speaks is a manifestation of their very essence and Yaakov could not bring himself to alter that. To speak in a coarse manner was something that went against everything he stood for and was so foreign to him that he would rather be exposed as an imposter and forgo the blessings than to speak improperly.

One can learn from this how vitally important it is to control the way we speak, always maintaining a courteous and gracious tone, for the way that we speak speaks volumes about who we truly are.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

"Now sharpen, if you please, your gear... and catch game for me" (27:3).

From that which is ownerless and not from which is stolen (Rashi).

Until now, we don't find that Yitzchak warned Eisav not to bring stolen food. Why did Yitzchak find it necessary, in this instance specifically, to warn Eisav not to bring stolen food? If Yitzchak was concerned that Eisav was stealing, he should have reprimanded him long ago regarding this behavior!

Parsha Riddle

Rivka says: "Why should I be bereaved of both of you on the same day?" (27:45) How was this prophecy fulfilled?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What connection is there between Sarah Imeinu and Queen Esther?

Answer: Sarah lived 127 years and merited a descendant, Esther, who ruled over 127 provinces.

HATORAH V' HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

A central theme of *parashas Toldos* is the contrast and rivalry between Eisav and Yaakov. One aspect of this contrast, not stated explicitly in the Biblical text but appearing in the Oral Torah, is in the area of the *mitzvah* of *kibbud av ve-eim* (honoring one's father and mother); surprisingly, it is Eisav, the brother hated by Hashem (*Malachi* 1:3), who is consistently lauded for his exemplary performance of this *mitzvah* (see, e.g., *Bereishis Rabbah* 65:16 and 76:2; *Devarim Rabbah* 1:15; *Tanchuma Kedoshim* 15), whereas Yaakov, the brother loved by Hashem (*Malachi* 1:2), is judged as having unjustifiably neglected his filial duty during the twenty two years he spent (in *parashas Vayitzei*) away from his father in the house of Lavan and on the journey home (*Megillah* 17a).

Regarding Yaakov's neglect of his father, the Talmud explains that he was actually absent for thirty-six years, but the first fourteen of those years, which he spent at the house of Eiver studying Torah, were justified, since **"studying Torah is greater and more important than honoring one's father and mother."** Based on this, the *Sheiltos* (end of #19) rules that if a son is forced to choose between remaining with his parents and attending to their needs, and traveling away from them in order to study Torah properly, he should choose the latter. Similarly, the *Terumas ha-Deshen* (40) rules regarding a son who wished to travel to a certain location to learn Torah from a particular teacher there, but his father vehemently objected that this would cause him enormous distress, since the location was a dangerous one and the father would constantly worry about his son's safety, that the son need not obey his father.

Many authorities explain, however, that Torah study is certainly not a justification for entirely neglecting one's parents. The *Pri Chadash* (*likutei YD* 240:13) rules that while one may travel away from his parents in order to study Torah, as long as he remains in their vicinity he must temporarily interrupt his Torah study to attend to their needs. The *Sefer ha-Mikneh* (31b s.v. *Istaya milsa*) maintains that while one may neglect his parents in order to study Torah, one may not ignore an explicit request they make of him. (Cf. R. Asher Weiss, *Gadol Talmud Torah Yoseir mi-Kibbud Av ve-Eim*.)

PRESENTED BY

RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. I caused kicking.
2. I caused the missing Aleph.
3. I was complete.
4. I am named for a color.

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. I am named for my grasp.
2. My name can mean trickery.
3. I was named for my battle.
4. Am I the firstborn?

Last Week's Answers

#1 Ephron (I spoke a lot, I did a little, Don't confuse me with a pencil, I was the opposite of Avraham.)

#2 127 years of Sarah (I was used as an alarm, My breaks prove innocence, My years are triple, I am age-old information.)

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Parsha Explorations

An in-depth weekly exploration of a theme associated with the coming week's parshah,

Presented by Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman
Sunday Evenings 7:30pm
at Kemp Mill Synagogue (KMS) and on Zoom

Zoom info at gwckollel.org