

Pardes Yehuda

Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick

Parshas Toldos 5779

Year 9, #358

פרשת תולדות תשע"ט

Mood changes in Esav's way of speaking

וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו אֶל יַעֲקֹב הֲלֵעִיטָנִי נָא מִן הָאֲדָמָה הַזֹּאת כִּי עֵיפָה אָנֹכִי
עַל בֶּן כָּרָא שָׂמוֹ אֲדָוֹם: (כה: ל)

And Eisav said to Yaakov, "Pour into me, please, some of that really red stew into me, for I am faint"; he was therefore known as Edom. (25:30) "There is some difficulty here. We know that Eisav's nature was to speak in a rough language to all people. The Torah states later (27:22) that Yitzchok said: הַקֹּל קוֹל יַעֲקֹב "The voice is of Yaakov: Rashi explains the Posuk: It is the voice of Yaakov who spoke entreatingly: "Please rise," but Eisav spoke harshly, "Let my father arise!". We also find that even though Eisav had the utmost respect for Yitzchok, he still spoke in harsh terms to his father. Yet we see here that when Esav had an urge for the red beans, he spoke in extremely soft terms to Yaakov:

"I beg of you please pour... Why did Esav act differently now? The answer can be: **A desired goal spurs one on in directions he might otherwise not follow.** When a person has an urge to sin and wants to achieve his goal, he will do almost anything to fill that urge. He will even speak softly, even though it contradicts his nature. In the case of Avraham Avinu, when he arose early to go to the Akeida, he personally loaded up his donkey – something a dignitary of his stature would not ordinarily do. Bilaam provides another instance of this principle. In his perverse eagerness to curse and harm the Yidden, he himself saddled his donkey and did not wait for his servants to do so. His "desire" to fulfill his nefarious mission drove him to disregard his customary slowness. A general principle governing all these episodes is, as Rashi teaches in verse 22:3, הָאֲהָבָה מְקַלְקֶלֶת אֶת הַשְּׂוֹרָה. A driving desire supersedes accustomed behavior patterns. The same was true with Eisav. He was desperate to have the red lentils, and he knew that the only way to reach his goal was to speak in soft terms to Yaakov. Hence he requested: "I beg of you please pour into me...". (Ramat Shmuel: Reb Shmuel Walkin)

Why did Yaakov want the birthright from Eisav?

וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב מִכְרָה כִּיֹּם אֶת־בְּכֹרְתְךָ לִי: (כה:לא)

And Yaakov said, "Sell me as of this day your birthright." (25:31) The question is: What is the connection of Eisav wanting the red stew, to Yaakov

requesting to buy "now", outright, the birthright of Eisav? The answer might be: The sages heeded all the laws. In Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim chapter 470 the halacha requires all firstborn "Bechorim" to fast on Erev Pesach. Rashi quotes from chazal that the episode in this week's Parsha occurred on Erev Pesach. Yaakov reminded Eisav that that day was a fast day and that he could not eat! But Eisav, being so hungry, did not want to observe the halacha. Therefore, Yaakov asked Eisav to sell his birthright to him, as a result of which Yaakov would become the Bechor who would fast, and Eisav would be allowed to eat. Therefore בְּכֹרְתוֹ וַיִּמְכֹּר אֶת בְּכֹרְתוֹ לְיַעֲקֹב, "He sold his birthright to Yaakov."

(שיח יצחק - ר' יצחק ווייס אב"ד ווערבו)

Rivka was not afraid of the curse of Yitzchok? #1

אוֹלִי וּמִשְׁנִי אֲבִי וְהִנֵּיתִי בְּעֵינָי כְּמַתְעַתֵּעַ וְהִבֵּאתִי עָלַי קָלָלָה וְלֹא בִרְכָה: וְתֹאמַר לוֹ אִמּוֹ עָלַי קָלָלְתָּךְ בְּנִי אֲךָ שָׁמַע בְּקֹלִי: (כז יב-יג)

"Perhaps my father will feel me, and I will appear to him as a deceiver, and I will bring a curse upon myself and not a blessing. His mother said to him 'Your curse will fall on me, my son, only listen to my voice ...' " (27:12-13).

The Chasam Sofer asks: how was Rivka so confident that the curse would not take effect? After all, Yitzchok was a tzaddik, and the curse of a tzaddik is very potent! The Chasam Sofer explains that the answer lies in the words "Do it because I, your mother, have ordered you to do so." Rivka promised Yaakov protection from his father's curses, provided that he not only follow her instructions, but that he do so for the sake of the Mitzvah of Kibud Eim. כְּבֹד אֶת־אָבִיךָ וְאֶת־אִמְךָ Honor your father and your mother(Devarim 5:16) Therefore Yaakov would be going on a mission of a mitzvah, and שְׁלוּחֵי מִצְוָה אֵינָם נִיזְוָקִין – Mitzvah emissaries come to no harm. (Pesachim 8a) (Chasam Sofer - הת"ם סופר)

Rivka was not afraid of the curse of Yitzchok? #2

Another answer is found in the sefer Terumas Zahav from Rav Mendelzon of Warsaw: Rivka told Yaakov not to worry and that his father will not curse him. He realizes that if he curses you and something will happen to you, I, your mother will also suffer. Yitzchok would never hurt his wife, and therefore would refrain from cursing Yaakov. This is what the Posuk means: עָלַי קָלָלְתָּךְ, Your curse will fall on me, בְּנִי, because you are my son."

(תרומת זקב ר' בונם זאב מנדלזון ווארשא תרל"ח)

STORY OF THE WEEK (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

*****The gentile Judge brought a Yid to do Teshuva*****

Several years ago, Rabbi Shlomo Chaim Gruskin, Rav of Congregation Bnai Tzion of Detroit was on his way to St. Louis, Missouri. He was driving through rural Iowa in the late afternoon, when he realized that the sun was setting, and he would have to find a place to daven mincha - the afternoon prayers. He was passing through a small town, so he pulled up to the post office and went inside. "Do you know if there are any Jews around here?" he asked the woman behind the counter. "There is a Jew who lives about a mile from here," she told him. "His name is Rosenfeld." The woman in the post office gave Rabbi Gruskin directions, and he was soon on his way to old Mr. Rosenfeld's place. Rabbi Gruskin arrived and knocked on the door. He told Mr. Rosenfeld that he was looking for a shul in which to daven mincha. The old man told Rabbi Gruskin that there were no synagogues anywhere nearby. Rabbi Gruskin then asked if he could pray in his house. After he finished davening, Rabbi Gruskin asked Mr. Rosenfeld for permission to eat the supper he was carrying with him in his house. Mr. Rosenfeld agreed, but he invited Rabbi Gruskin to instead join him for dinner at his table. Rabbi Gruskin refused the offer, telling Mr. Rosenfeld that he had brought food with him from home and that all he needed was a means to wash his hands. "I know what you are thinking," said Mr. Rosenfeld. "But really, you can eat with me. I am Shomer Shabbos and keep kosher."

Rabbi Gruskin was floored. A Shomer Shabbos Jew in these parts??? Mr. Rosenfeld smiled at the reaction of surprise. Mr. Rosenfeld then proceeded to tell Rabbi Gruskin the amazing story of how he had become Shomer Shabbos, after being arrested several decades earlier...

He had immigrated to the United States shortly after World War II. As an immigrant with poor English skills, Mr. Rosenfeld resorted to becoming a traveling salesman. One day, Mr. Rosenfeld found himself in a small town near Akron, Ohio. It was Saturday. He

knocked on doors and tried to sell his wares, but everyone in the town slammed the door in his face. He was baffled. He tried one last door. As Hashgacha Pratis / Divine Providence, arranged matters, the door belonged to the Chief of Police! The Chief of Police arrested Mr. Rosenfeld on the spot, on two counts: 1) for selling merchandise without a license, and 2) for violating the Saturday ordinance laws. (Explanation: The town was populated by members of, and governed by, the "religion" of the Seventh-Day Adventists, who observe their Sabbath on Saturday, and the local law forbade business on that day.)

The next morning, Mr. Rosenfeld appeared in court. Mr. Rosenfeld pleaded ignorance of the law. The judge told Mr. Rosenfeld that he would not mind acquitting him on the count of selling without a license. However, the judge could not understand why Rosenfeld a Jew was selling on Saturday. "Surely you must know about Saturday ordinances; after all, they are prohibitions from your Torah! For that I cannot pardon you. Fifty dollars or thirty days in jail," the judge said.

"Please, I really did not know any better. I never studied the Torah," pleaded Mr. Rosenfeld. "Okay Rosenfeld," said the judge, "I will pardon you if you promise me faithfully that from today on, you will observe your Jewish Sabbath." Mr. Rosenfeld promised to do so, and the judge released him on the spot.

The next Saturday morning, Mr. Rosenfeld woke up as usual and began to ready his horse and wagon for a day of peddling. As he walked to the horses, his mind went back to the previous week. He thought to himself: "Last Saturday, I promised to keep the Sabbath! How can I break my word?" From that point on, Mr. Rosenfeld was Shomer Shabbos. He realized years later that everything that Hashem does is for the best. Mr. Rosenfeld was introduced to the beauty of Shabbos by and was forever grateful to, the judge who had made him into a Shomer Shabbos. Even the Goy knows that a Yid must abide by the Torah, and they respect it too!

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