## Parashah 6-3 Tol'dot תּוֹלְדֹת



Torah: B'resheet (Genesis) 25:19-28:9

Haftarah: Mal'akhi 1:1-2:7 B'rit Hadashah: Romans 9:1-17

	year 1 25:19-26:22	year2 26:23-27:27	year 3 27:28-28:9
1	25:19 – 22	26:23 – 29	27:28 - 30
2	25:23 – 26	26:30 - 33	27:31 - 33
3	25:27 - 34	26:34 - 27:4	27:34 - 37
4	26:1 – 5	27:5 – 13	27:38 – 40
5	26:6 – 12	27:14 – 17	27:41 – 46
6	26:13 – 16	27:18 – 23	28:1 – 4
7	26:17 – 22	27:24 – 27	28:5 - 9

and may God give to you from the dew of the heavens / and from the richness of the earth and abundance of grain and sweet wine ve'yíten-l'kha ha'Elohíym mital ha'shamayim u'mish'maney ha'áretz ve'rov dagan ve'tiyrosh

וְיִתֶּן־לְדְּ הָאֱלֹהִים מִטַּל הַשָּׁמַיִם וּמִשְׁמַנֵּי הָאָרֶץ וְרֹב דָּגָן וְתִירֹשׁ:

The sparse patriarchal narrative regarding Yitz'khaq is contained in this single parashah. He is the only patriarch who remains monogamous, becomes a farmer, and never leaves the land of promise. Much of his story is integrated into the biographies of his father, Avraham (birth, circumcision, Akedah, marriage) and his sons, Ya'aqov and Esav, who struggle from the womb with the issues of birthright and blessing.

### Aliyah Summaries

- 1. Gen. 27:28-30 In the Bible, dew (tal טָל) is a metaphor for abundance and provision from HaShem. It is not simply hydration from existing sources, but reinvigoration that adds to the overall hydrology of The Land. The richness (mish'maney מָשְׁמַבְּי, literally "from the oil," symbolizes the finest fruits of the soil. Military might / political power will keep hostile neighbors at bay. Comprehensive predominance is emphasized.
- 2. Gen. 27:31-33 'Esav is presented as the innocent victim of a deceitful ruse, though when asked who he was, he deceitfully responds by leveraging his role as first-born rather than giving his name. Yitz'khaq, though overwhelmed by emotion, says that the blessing must stand, a concept that was held in the ancient world. Words represented observation and alignment with God and his plans.
- 3. Gen. 27:34-37 'Esav does not ask for the blessing to be rescinded, but to be blessed as well. He interprets Ya'aqov's name as "supplanter" (Hos. 12:4) and plays on the words for "birthright" (bekhorah בְּכִּהָה) and "blessing" (berakhah בְּכָּהָה). Yitz'khaq confesses/concludes that it was Ya'aqov that "took away" (la-qakh בְּכָּה) which can also mean "to purchase" (Ge. 20:3, Pro. 31:16, Neh. 5:3) 'Esav's blessing.
- **4. Gen. 27:38-40** The hardy hunter is reduced to convulsive sobs. Although the wording of seems identical to that given to Ya'aqov, the parallel words "richness" and "dew" are reversed, and the addition of the word "from" before them could be interpreted as separation "from" those blessings. Historically, the land of Edom was never very fruitful, and subsisted primarily on pillage and plunder of neighbors and passing caravans. It was vassal to King David though later successfully revolted.
- 5. Gen. 27:41-46 'Esav's hate for Ya'aqov was heart-felt. Rivqah learns of it (mother's intuition?) and "sends for" Ya'aqov, who is likely in hiding. "Both" could refer to Yitz'khaq and Ya'aqov, or 'Esav and Ya'aqov. Rivqah leverages 1) the need for Ya'aqov to marry and, 2) disdain for the local women (Ge. 26:34-35), to send Ya'aqov away immediately with Yitz'khaq's agreement, and concealing her involvement in the deception.
- **6. Gen. 28:1-4** Yitz'khaq blesses Ya'aqov independent of any deceptions. With this blessing the birthright is confirmed to Ya'aqov as heir of the Avrahamic covenant (Ge. 17), even using the name,

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- El Shaddai. Therefore, he must not marry outside of the family. Yitz'khaq uses the term, "go" (lekh לְּבִּר אוֹי) vs. Rivqah's "flee" (b'rakh בְּרַה) suggesting he is unaware of the real reason for the journey.
- 7. Gen. 28:5-9 Ya'aqov given preference. 'Esav attempts to repair his relationship with his parents as a dutiful son by marrying the daughter of his father's late brother, Yishma'el, just as his Ya'aqov was to marry the daughter of his mother's brother.

#### **Thought Focus**

No definitive answers: Torah does not give definitive judgment regarding who is right and who is wrong. Parent/Child favoritism and sibling rivalry is a big problem. Why is there no interaction at all between Rivqah and 'Esav? Why is 'Esav so distraught when he cared not about the birthright (Ge. 25:34)? It seems that Ya'aqov is, in fact, favored, but there is suggested sympathy for 'Esav who seems to step up when confronted about the birthright by his father. Family conflict seems to be the norm in Torah. What does seem clear is that actions have consequences that must be endured, whether good or bad. Perhaps what is being taught is that we can rise above our circumstances to fulfill God's purpose for our lives despite difficult origins.

### Daily Devotional questions for reflection and application

- 1. (25:19) Yitz'khaq is clearly defined as Avraham's son. Who is your father? Do people see Him in you? (John 8:19, Rom 8:29)
- 2. (26:6) In spite of famine, God directs Yitz'khaq to stay in the land. Has God directed you to stay where it is uncomfortable? Did He supply you with His grace to "dwell" there? (Joh 16:33, Luk 21:10-19)
- 3. (26:13) This verse literally says that Yitz'khaq "walked the walk" in the midst of greatness. Are you distracted by God's blessings? Are you growing in greater greatness? (Psa 112:1-3)
- 4. (26:24) A theme of scripture is God's presence in the midst of suffering/trials (Psa 23:4-5). Is your focus on your circumstances or His promises? (Isa 43:2, Joh 16:32-33, 2Co 12:7-10)
- 5. (26:30) Food, drink and celebration is a part of covenant relationships. Have you participated on either side of such hospitality recently? (Mat 25:35, Heb 13:2)
- 6. (27:28) Has God blessed you? How are you sharing His blessing with others? (Luke 6:38, 1Ti 5:8, Gal 6:10, Deu 33:13-16, Zec 8:12-13, Jam 2:13)
- 7. (28:8-9) Esav attempted to please his parents after Ya'aqov's departure. How do your actions show your desire to please your Father? (Mat 21:28-31)

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