THE WEISS EDITION

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Toldos



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Light points

FROM THE TEACHINGS OF
THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE ON THE
WEEKLY TORAH PORTION

Lightpoints

לזכרון ולעילוי נשמת

הרה"ח הרה"ת הרה"ג ישעיהו זושא

ב"ר אברהם דוד ע"ה ווילהעלם

נלב"ע ביום ד' שבט התשפ"ב

תנצב"ה

לעילוי נשמת

מרת **חיה מרים** בת **ר' יעקב לייב** ע"ה

ראזענבלום

נלב"ע ביום ד' כסלו ה'תשס"ז

תנצב"ה

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נדפס ע"י בתה מרת **שרה מלכה** ומשפחתה שיחיו **סיימאן**

לעילוי נשמת

הרה"ת **יוסף יהודה** ב"ר **מרדכי** ע"ה

גאלאווינסקי

נלב"ע ביום ב' כסלו ה'תשמ"ח

תנצב"ה

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נדפס ע"י בני משפחתו שיחיו

תולדות
Toldos

25:22 | כה:כב

וַיִּתְרֹצֲצוּ הַבָּנִים בְּקִרְבָּהּ

The children struggled within her.

The Fighter

Our patriarchs and matriarchs were perfectly righteous. In the words of the Tanya, "Throughout their lives they sanctified their every limb to serve exclusively as a 'chariot' for the implementation of G-d's will."[1]

Yet, when our matriarch Rivkah was pregnant with twins, "the children struggled within her."[2] Rashi explains, "When she passed the Torah study hall of Shem and Eiver, Yaakov struggled to emerge, and when she passed places of idolatry, Eisav struggled to emerge." How was Eisav, the child of the saintly Yitzchak and Rivkah, already so innately attracted to

1. Tanya, chapter 23.
2. Bereishis 25:22.

idol worship when he was but a fetus in his mother's womb, causing him to stir each time she passed a house of idolatry?

Our Sages tell us that the deeds and lives of our patriarchs and matriarchs paved the way for their descendants, the Jewish people, to fulfill their destiny.[3] One aspect of this legacy is that through their unassailable commitment to G-d, our forefathers endowed every Jew with an inner strength of devotion to G-d. With this strength, a Jew can overcome any challenge to his Jewishness—be it adversity from the outside, or his personal struggles from within.

Yitzchak and Rivkah themselves were perfectly righteous, but because the path to G-dliness for some of their descendants would involve struggling with temptation, the legacy of Yitzchak and Rivkah also includes a natural inclination towards sin—in order to overcome it. They thus bore not only Yaakov, whose passions were entirely holy and pure, but also Eisav, who was born with an allure to sin and the inner strength to overcome it.

In fact, the Zohar states that as a child, Eisav, like Yaakov, excelled in the education he received from his grandfather Avraham—"Avraham's merit assisted and caused them to thrive, training them in the observance of mitzvos."[4] Undeniably, Eisav made the wrong choices as an adult. But until he went off on his own path, Eisav's attraction to idolatry was simply a natural part of being Yitzchak's child and Avraham's disciple: he exemplified the Jew who is born to struggle and is naturally endowed with the strength it takes to win.

—Likkutei Sichos, vol. 20, pp. 109–113

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3. See Ramban, Bereishis 12:6; Bereishis Rabbah 40:6.

4. Zohar 1:138b.

כז:א-ד | 27:1-4

וַיִּקְרָא אֶת עֵשָׂו בְּנוֹ הַגָּדֹל וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו...
בַּעֲבוּר תְּבָרֶכְךָ נַפְשִׁי בְּטֶרֶם אָמוּת

He summoned his elder son Eisav
and said to him, "...so that I may grant you
my soul's blessing before I die."

Beneath Eisav's Surface

Yitzchak was not entirely oblivious to Eisav's unrefined character and conduct, yet he intended to bestow upon him the most powerful blessings.[5] Surely, his desire to bless Eisav was not based only on what he did *not* know about him, but also on what he *did* see in him.

The Torah relates that Yitzchak devoted a great deal of energy to digging water wells, restoring old wells, and searching for and developing new sources of fresh water. Chassidus explains that this hobby was not a meaningless detail in Yitzchak's life, but a reflection of his distinctive nature and his unique path in the service of G-d. Where others saw dirt and gravel, Yitzchak dug deeply to reveal springs of lifegiving water that ran beneath the earth. This means, in spiritual terms, that Yitzchak devoted himself to refining the unrefined, unearthing and cultivating the potential within all creation to recognize its G-dly source.

Accordingly, we can understand why Yitzchak desired to bless Eisav. Despite Eisav's disreputable behavior, Yitzchak had the ability to see the great spiritual potential associated

5. See Bereishis 26:35; Rashi, Bereishis 27:21.

with Eisav's soul. Yitzchak therefore hoped that his powerful blessings would successfully excavate the spiritual treasures that lay hidden in his child.[6]

Today there are no Eisavs, but like Yitzchak, who labored to reveal the connection to G-d buried even within the wicked Eisav, we too must endeavor to draw near even those who seem distant from the lifegiving waters of the Torah. With toil and effort, we can reveal within them their innate connection to the Source of Life.

— Likkutei Sichos, vol. 15, pp. 195–198

6. Nevertheless, despite Eisav's immense potential, his actual lowly state was such that in reality the blessings would not have had the desired effect on him. Rivkah therefore deemed it necessary for Yaakov to receive the blessings instead of Eisav.

כז:ב | 27:2

וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה נָא זָקַנְתִּי לֹא יָדַעְתִּי יוֹם מוֹתִי

He said, "Behold now, I have grown old;
I do not know the day of my death."

Gifts from a Minimalist

Yitzchak was 123 years old when he summoned his son Eisav and said, "Behold now, I have grown old; I do not know the day of my death." He instructed Eisav to prepare a meal for him, so that he could bless him before he died.

What was the occasion that inspired Yitzchak's words? Rashi explains:

> If a person is approaching the age at which his parents died, he should worry five years beforehand and five years afterwards. Yitzchak was 123 years old. He thought, "Perhaps I will live to my mother's age; she died at 127. I am thus within five years of her age." He therefore said, "I do not know the day of my death: I may reach my mother's age, or perhaps my father's."

At that point Yitzchak was five years younger than his mother had been at her passing, and there was still a good chance that he would live another 50 years or more, as his father had. (In fact, he ultimately lived to the age of 180, five years longer than his father did.) Moreover, his mother's passing at the age of 127 had been due to unnatural causes,[7] so it was safe to assume that he would live longer than she did. Yet Yitzchak began concerning himself with his end-of-life

7. See Rashi, Bereishis 23:2.

affairs at the age of 123, the youngest age—according to his calculations—when it was likely for him to die.

This degree of caution was not out of character for Yitzchak, whose dominant personality trait was *gevurah*—discipline and restraint.[8] He therefore viewed every aspect of life from a cautious and moderate perspective.

Nevertheless, despite Yitzchak's nature of discipline and moderation, the blessings that he bestowed (ultimately, upon Yaakov) were the most rich and extensive blessings given in the Torah, from the "dew of the heaven" to "the fat of the earth."

Yitzchak's paradoxical behavior teaches us—his descendants and spiritual heirs—that even if we are extremely disciplined and hard on ourselves, this cannot have any bearing on the way we relate to and give to others. Our relationship with our fellow Jew must always be one of affection and benevolence, generously sharing "from the dew of heaven and the fat of the earth."

—Likkutei Sichos, vol. 15, p. 220

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8. See Zohar 3:4a (Raaya Meheimna).

27:13 | כז:יג

וַתֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִמּוֹ עָלַי קִלְלָתְךָ בְּנִי

And his mother said to him,
"Let your curse be upon me, my son."

Earning the Unearnable

When Rivkah heard about Yitzchak's plan to bestow his greatest blessings upon Eisav, their wicked son, she told Yaakov, the righteous son, to trick Yitzchak into giving him the blessings instead. But Yaakov was concerned that Yitzchak would catch on to his act, and that Yaakov would end up with curses instead of blessings. Rivkah therefore guaranteed him that she took full responsibility, saying, "Let your curse be upon me, my son," whereupon Yaakov agreed to go ahead with the plan.

Now, Yaakov was a devoted son, and was certainly as concerned for his mother's welfare as he was for his own. Clearly, then, his mother's guarantee that any curse would transfer to her could not have been very convincing!

Rather, what persuaded Yaakov was Rivkah's willingness to take such great risk in order for him to receive the blessings. Through her offer, Rivkah demonstrated that these blessings were worth any risk involved in receiving them. In fact, the risk-taking itself would made Yaakov worthy of receiving them.

Rivkah understood that these blessings were so extraordinary and unfathomable that they could not be earned through normal and rational means. She realized that to be the fertile soil in which these transcendent blessings could take root, one needed to be willing to transcend the security of his perfectly

calculated and balanced lifestyle—he must be ready for *mesiras nefesh*, self-sacrifice.

Through her readiness to take such great risks for Yaakov to receive the blessings, Rivkah inspired within Yaakov an "uncalculated" readiness for *mesiras nefesh*, whereby he became worthy of blessings that surpass anything the mind could possibly grasp.

—Likkutei Sichos, vol. 1, p. 56

לעילוי נשמת

הרה"ת **חיים** ב"ר **אהרן** ע"ה **ניומאן**

נלב"ע כ"ד מרחשון ה'תשע"ו

תנצב"ה

נדפס ע"י בנו הרה"ת **ישראל** וזוגתו מרת **שרה** שיחיו **ניומאן**

לזכות

הנערה **מושקא** תחי'

בת הרה"ת **אשר שלום הכהן**

וזוגתו מרת **אסתר** שיחיו

גוטניק

לרגל הגיעה לגיל שתים עשרה שנה

היא עונת בת מצוה בשעטו"מ ביום ו' כסלו ה'תשפ"ז

יה"ר שתקבל על עצמה עול מלכות שמים ועול מצוות בלבב שלם,

ותצליח בקיום המצוות מתוך יראת שמים טהורה

לנח"ר הורי' וכל משפחתה שיחיו

לעילוי נשמת

הרה"ת **אהרן יואל הלוי**

ב"ר **משה** ע"ה

בייטש

נלב"ע ג' כסלו ה'תשפ"ב

תנצב"ה

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נדפס ע"י

בני משפחתו שיחיו



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