

## **CAN YOU ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS?**

1. How old was Yaakov when he bought the birthright from Esau?
2. Why was Yitzchak ready to give blessings to Esau, but not to Yaakov, his learned and pious son?
3. What was the significance of the well and the three flocks of sheep that Yaakov encountered when he came to Haran?
4. Why did Yaakov continue to bear ill will towards Leah, even after they were married?
5. Why did the brothers sell Yosef into slavery?

This and much more will be addressed in the eighth lecture of this series: "Sibling Rivalry".

To derive maximum benefit from this lecture, keep these questions in mind as you listen to the lecture and read through the outline. Go back to these questions once again at the end of the lecture and see how well you answer them.

**PLEASE NOTE:** This outline and source book were designed as a powerful tool to help you appreciate and understand the basis of Jewish History. Although the lectures can be listened to without the use of the outline, we advise you to read the outline to enhance your comprehension. Use it as well as a handy reference guide and for quick review.

**This lecture is dedicated to the honor and merit of the Brin Family**

THE EPIC OF THE ETERNAL PEOPLE  
Presented by Rabbi Shmuel Irons

Series XIII Lecture #8

SIBLING RIVALRY

I. The Sale of the Birth Right

A.

(1) וְאֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת יִצְחָק בֶּן אַבְרָהָם אַבְרָהָם הוֹלִיד אֶת יִצְחָק: וַיְהִי יִצְחָק בֶּן אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה בְּקַחְתּוֹ אֶת רִבְקָה בִּת בְּתוּאֵל הָאֲרָמִי מִפְּדַן אֲרָם אָחוֹת לְבֶן הָאֲרָמִי לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: וַיַּעֲתֵר יִצְחָק לַד' לְנֹכַח אִשְׁתּוֹ כִּי עֲקָרָה הוּא וַיַּעֲתֵר לוֹ ד' וַתְּהַר רִבְקָה אִשְׁתּוֹ: וַיִּתְרַצְצוּ הַבָּנִים בְּקִרְבָּהּ וַתֹּאמֶר אִם בֶּן לְמָה זֶה אֲנֹכִי וַתִּלְךְ לְדַרְשׁ אֶת ד': וַיֹּאמֶר ד' לָהּ שְׁנֵי גֵיִים בְּבִטְנָךְ וּשְׁנֵי לְאֻמִּים מִמֶּעֶיךָ יִפְרְדוּ וּלְאִם מְלֵאָם יֵאָמֵן וְרַב יַעֲבֹד צָעִיר: בְּרֵאשִׁית כה:יט-כג

And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son; Abraham fathered Isaac; And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah for his wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Padan-Aram, the sister to Laban the Aramean. And Isaac prayed to the L-rd for his wife, because she was barren; and the L-rd granted his prayer, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together inside her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the L-rd. And the L-rd said to her, Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples shall be separated from your bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger. **Genesis 25:19-23**

(2) וַתֹּאמֶר אִם בֶּן לְמָה זֶה אֲנֹכִי אִם כֵּן גָּדוֹל צָעַר הָעֵבוֹר לְמָה זֶה אֲנֹכִי מִתְפַּלֵּל וּמִתְאוֹהַר עַל הַהֲרִיזוֹן לְשׁוֹן רִש"י וְאֵינְנוּ נִכּוֹן וְרַבִּי אַבְרָהָם אָמַר כִּי שְׂאֵלָה אֶת הַנְּשִׁים אִם אִירַע לָהֶם כְּכֹה וַתֹּאמְרָנָה לֹא, וַתֹּאמֶר אִם כֵּן הַדְּבַר וְהַמְנַהֵג לְמָה זֶה אֲנֹכִי בַּהֲרִיזוֹן מִשׁוֹנָה וְהִנֵּה הַכְּתוּב חָסֵר וְאֵינְנוּ שְׁלֵם בְּפִירוֹשׁ הַזֶּה: וְהַנְּכוּן בְּעֵינַי כִּי אָמְרָה אִם כֵּן יִהְיֶה לִי לְמָה זֶה אֲנֹכִי בְּעוֹלָם, הַלּוֹאִי אֵינְנִי, שְׂאֵמוֹת אוֹ שְׂלֵא הֵייתִי, כְּטַעַם כֹּאשֶׁר לֹא הֵייתִי אֵהִיָּה (אִיּוֹב י ט): וַתִּלְךְ לְדַרְשׁ אֶת ד' – לְשׁוֹן רִש"י, לְהַגִּיד מַה יֵּהָא בְּסוּפָה וְלֹא מִצְאָתִי דְרִישָׁה אֲצֵל ד' רַק לְהַתְּפַלֵּל, כְּטַעַם דְּרִשְׁתִּי אֶת ד' וְעַנְנִי (תְּהִלִּים לֵד ה), דְּרִשׁוֹנִי וְחִיו (עֲמוֹס ה ד), חִי אֲנִי אִם אֲדַרְשׁ לָכֶם (יְחִזְקֵאל כ ג): רַמְב"ן בְּרֵאשִׁית כה:כב

**And she said: If it be so, why am I thus?** Rashi explains it as follows: If the pain of pregnancy is so great, why did I pray and desire to conceive? [This explanation, however,] is not correct. Rabbi Avraham [ibn Ezra] said that she asked the women [around her] if they ever experienced such a [pregnancy] and they answered they they had not. She [then] said, "If this is so, [that pregnancies are normally without such pain,] why is my pregnancy so different?" Now according to this explanation, the verse is missing [this narrative] and is not complete. What seems to be correct in my eyes is that she said: If this is happening to me, why should I be in this world. I wish that I would no longer be alive or I never lived in the first place. This is similar to the verse (Job 10:19), "I should have been as though I had not been." **And she went l'drosh - to inquire - of the L-rd:** Rashi explains it as follows: That He should tell her how it will turn out in the end.. However, I have only found the word *drisha* used in conjunction with prayer, as, for example (Psalms 34:5), "I (*darashti*) sought the L-rd, and He answered me, [and saved me from all my fears]." [Also (Amos 5:4),] "[For thus says the L-rd to the house of Israel,] Seek me (*dirshuni*), and you shall live." ". . . [Are you come to inquire of me?] As I live, [said the L-rd G-d,] I will not be inquired (*idaraish*) by you." (Ezekiel 20:3) **Ramban ibid.**

B.

(1) וַיִּמְלֹאוּ יָמֶיהָ לִלְדוֹת וְהִנֵּה תוֹמִם בְּבֶטְנָהּ: וַיֵּצֵא הָרִאשׁוֹן אֲדָמוֹנִי כָּלוּ כְּאֶדְרֵת שֶׁעַר וַיִּקְרְאוּ שְׁמוֹ עֵשָׂו: וְאַחֲרָיו כֵּן יָצָא אָחִיו וַיְדוּ אַחֲזָת בַּעֲקֵב עֵשָׂו וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב וַיִּצְחָק בֵּן שָׁשִׁים שָׁנָה בְּלִדְתָּ אֹתָם: וַיִּגְדְּלוּ הַנְּעָרִים וַיְהִי עֵשָׂו אִישׁ יָדַע צִיד אִישׁ שָׂדֵה וַיַּעֲקֹב אִישׁ תָּם יוֹשֵׁב אֹהֲלִים: וַיֵּאָהֵב יִצְחָק אֶת-עֵשָׂו כִּי צִיד בְּפִיו וְרִבְקָה אֶהָבֵת אֶת-יַעֲקֹב: בְּרִאשִׁית כֹּה-כַד-כַּח

And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first came out red, all over like a hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob; and Isaac was sixty years old when she bore them. And the boys grew; and Esau was a (cunning) skillful hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a quiet (honest) man, living in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he ate of his venison; but Rebekah loved Jacob. **Genesis 25:24-28**

(2) וַיֵּאָהֵב יִצְחָק אֶת עֵשָׂו. לֹא כְּתִיב לַעֲשׂו כְּמוֹ וְאֶהָבֵת לְרַעַךְ וַיְבֹאֵר בְּס' דְּבָרִים ו' ה' דֹּאֵהָבָה שְׁעֵנִינָה בְּמַחֲשָׁבָה וּבְלֵב כְּתִיב בֵּאת. מִשָּׂא"כ אֶהָבָה שְׁעֵנִינָה מְלוֹי רִצּוֹן כְּתִיב בַּל': כִּי צִיד בְּפִיו. בִּיֵּאֵר הַכְּתוּב שֶׁלֹּא הָיוּ יִצְחָק וְרִבְקָה מַחֲוֹלְקִים בְּדַעוֹת. וְשֵׁנִינָה יָדְעוּ דַעִיקָר הַזֶּרַע אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו נֹאמֵר כִּי בִּיצְחָק יִקְרָא לָךְ זֶרַע בִּיצְחָק וְלֹא כֹל יִצְחָק. הוּא יַעֲקֹב יוֹשֵׁב אֹהֶל אַבְרָהָם בְּתוֹרָה. וְרַק אֶהָבָה הַחֹזֶרֶת הִיא לִיצְחָק אֶת עֵשָׂו דִּמְשָׁמֵשׁ לִי כַעֲבָדָא וְנִהְיָ בְּשִׁמּוֹשׁוֹ מֵאֵד. מִשָּׂא"כ יַעֲקֹב הִי' יוֹשֵׁב אֹהֶל וְלֹא שִׁמֵּשׁ הָרֵב וְעֵינָי עוֹד לְהֵלֵךְ כ"ו ל"ד: וְרִבְקָה שֶׁלֹּא הִיָּתֵה נִצְרַכְתָּ לְשִׁמּוֹשׁ בְּנִיָּה: אֶהָבֵת אֶת יַעֲקֹב. לֹא הִבִּיטָה אֲלֵא עַל הַמַּעֲלָה וְהַתְּכַלִּית מִשָּׁה כְּתִיב לְשׁוֹן הוּא וְלֹא כְּמוֹ בִּיצְחָק דִּלֹּא כְּתִיב וַיְהִי יִצְחָק אֹהֵב מִשׁוֹם דֹּאֵהָבֵת יִצְחָק לֹא הִיא אֲלֵא בְּמִקְרָה ע"פ הַשְּׁעָה. וּבִאֲמַת בְּסוֹף יָמָיו נִתְהַפְּכָה הָאֶהָבָה. וְע' מִשָּׁכ ס"פ זו. וּמִשָּׂא"כ אֶהָבֵת רִבְקָה הִיָּתֵה מִצַּד טְבַע הַעֲנִיָּן. וְגַם הִיָּתֵה מוֹסַפְתָּ אֶהָבָה יוֹם יוֹם כְּמֵאֲמָרִם בְּעִבּוּדֵת כּוֹכְבִים ד"ג כֹּל הַלּוֹמֵד תּוֹרָה בְּלֵילָה חוֹט ש"ח מִשׁוֹךְ עָלָיו בְּיוֹם: ס' הַעֲמֵק דְּבַר שֵׁם

**And Isaac loved Esau:** It is not written *l'Eisav* (for or to Esau) in a form similar to the verse, *v'ohavta l'reiacha* (and you shall love "l" (for or to) your friend or neighbor). [In my work on the verse] Deuteronomy 6:5 it is explained that love which is intellectual or emotional is prefaced with the word "*ess-et*". Love which refers to the act of satisfying or fulfilling the will of the beloved is prefaced with the letter "*lamed*" - "l". **Because he ate of his venison:** Scripture explains that Yitzchak and Rivkah were not divided in their respective opinions [of their children]. They both knew that the essential progeny (seed) of whom it is stated (Gen. 21:12), "For *in* Isaac shall your seed be called," which implies, not all of Yitzchak, referred to Yaakov who was sitting in the tent of Avraham and studying Torah. But rather there existed a special and mutual bond of love between Yitzchak and Esau who served Yitzchak as a servant and who received much pleasure from this service. Whereas Yaakov was sitting in the tent [involved in Torah study] and didn't serve his master [Yitzchak] . . . Rivkah, who didn't need the service of children, loved Yaakov. She didn't view anything but the intrinsic qualities and the purpose [of bearing progeny]. For this reason it is written, "Rebekah loved Jacob," using the present tense, "*oheves*", not like Yitzchak of whom it is written, "And Isaac loved Esau," [using the past tense, "*vayehav*"], which was not written in the present tense, because the love of Yitzchak [to Esau] was only temporary. In truth, at the end of his life, the love was reversed. . . . Whereas the love of Rivkah was based on the natural state of affairs. In addition, her love increased day by day as is stated in Avodah Zarah 3b, "All who are engaged in the study of Torah at night, the Holy One extends a thread of grace by day." **Sefer Haamek Davar ibid.**

C.

(1) וַיֵּזֶד יַעֲקֹב נֹזֵד וַיָּבֵא עֲשׂוֹ מִן הַשְּׂדֵה וְהוּא עֵיף: וַיֹּאמֶר עֲשׂוֹ אֵל יַעֲקֹב הֲלֵעִיטְנִי נָא מִן הָאָדָם הָאָדָם הַזֶּה כִּי עֵיף אֲנֹכִי עַל כֵּן קָרָא שְׁמוֹ אֲדוֹם: וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב מִכֶּרֶה כִּיּוֹם אֶת בְּכֹרְתְךָ לִי: וַיֹּאמֶר עֲשׂוֹ הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ לְמוֹת וְלָמָּה זֶה לִי בְכֹרָה: וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב הַשְּׂבֻעָה לִי כִּיּוֹם וַיִּשְׂבַּע לוֹ וַיִּמְכֹּר אֶת בְּכֹרְתוֹ לְיַעֲקֹב: וַיַּעֲקֹב נָתַן לְעֲשׂוֹ לֶחֶם וַנֹּזֵד עַדְשִׁים וַיֹּאכַל וַיִּשֶׂת וַיִּקֶּם וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּבֹז עֲשׂוֹ אֶת הַבְּכֹרָה: בְּרֵאשִׁית כַּח-כַּט-לד

And Jacob cooked pottage; and Esau came from the field, and he was famished. And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I beg you, with that same red pottage; for I am famished; therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day your birthright. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point of death; and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore to him; and he sold his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way; thus Esau despised his birthright. **Genesis 25:29-34**

(2) (בראשית כ"ד) וד' ברך את אברהם בכל מאי בכל? . . . שלא מרד עשו בימיו מנלן? דכתיב: (בראשית כ"ה) ויבא עשו מן השדה והוא עיף, ותנא: אותו היום נפטר אברהם אבינו, ועשה יעקב אבינו תבשיל של עדשים לנחם את יצחק אביו. [ומ"ש של עדשים]? אמרי במערבא משמיה דרבה בר מרי: מה עדשה זו אין לה פה, אף אבל אין לו פה. דבר אחר: מה עדשה זו מגולגלת, אף אבילות מגולגלת ומחזרת על באי העולם. מאי בינייהו? איכא בינייהו לנחומי בביעי. אמר רבי יוחנן, חמש עבירות עבר אותו רשע באותו היום: בא על נערה מאורסה, והרג את הנפש, וכפר בעיקר, וכפר בתחיית המתים, ושט את הבכורה. בא על נערה מאורסה - כתיב הכא: (בראשית כ"ה) ויבא עשו מן השדה, וכתיב התם: (דברים כ"ב) כי בשדה מצאה. הרג את הנפש כתיב הכא: עיף, וכתיב התם: (ירמיהו ד') אוי נא לי כי עיפה נפשי להורגים. וכפר בעיקר - כתיב הכא: (בראשית כ"ה) למה זה לי, וכתיב התם: (שמות ט"ו) זה אלי ואנוהו. וכפר בתחיית המתים - דכתיב: (בראשית כ"ה) הנה אנכי הולך למות. ושט את הבכורה - דכתיב: (בראשית כ"ה) ויבז עשו את הבכורה. בבא בתרא טז:

The L-rd had blessed Abraham in all things (Genesis 24:1) What is meant by 'in all things'? . . . [One] explanation is that Esau did not rebel so long as [Abraham] was alive. . . . Because it says (Gen. 25:29), And Esau came in from the field and he was faint. It has been taught [in connection with this] that that was the day on which Abraham our father died, and Jacob our father made a broth of lentils to comfort his father Isaac. Why was it of lentils? - In the West they say in the name of Rabbah b. Mari: Just as the lentil has no mouth, so the mourner has no mouth [for speech]. Others say: Just as the lentil is round, so mourning comes round to all the inhabitants of this world. What difference does it make in practice which of the two explanations we adopt? - The difference arises on the question whether we should comfort with eggs, [which have no mouth but are not perfectly round]. R. Johanan said: That wicked [Esau] committed five sins on that day. He dishonoured a betrothed maiden, he committed a murder, he denied G-d, he denied the resurrection of the dead, and he spurned the birthright. [We know that] he dishonored a betrothed maiden, because it is written here, "And Esau came in from the field," (ibid.) and it is written in another place [in connection with the betrothed maiden] (Deuteronomy 22:27), "He found her in the field." [We know that] he committed murder, because it is written here [that he was] faint, and it is written in another place (Jeremiah 4:31), "Woe is me now, for my soul faints before the murderers." [We know that] he denied G-d, because it is written here (Gen. 25:32), "What benefit is this to me," and it is written in another place (Exodus 15:2), "This is my G-d and I will make him an habitation." [We know that] he denied the resurrection of the dead because he said (Gen. 25:32), "Behold, I am on the way to die;" also that he spurned the birthright because it is written (ibid. 34), "So Esau despised his birthright." **Bava Basra 16b**

(3) ויזד יעקב נזיד. לא כתיב ויזד יעקב עדשים. ללמדנו שלא ידע עשו שהוא עדשים. שאלו ידע היה אומר הלעיטני נא מן העדשים. אלא שלא ידע כי אם ראה תבשיל אדום ע"כ אמר סתם מן האדום. וזה היה בהשגחה כדי שיהיה נקרא בשביל זה המעשה אדום. דמסוגל זה השם אליו כדאיתא ברבה הוא אדום וארצו אדומה ולבושו אדום כו': העמק דבר, שם

**And Jacob cooked pottage:** It is not written, "And Jacob cooked lentils." This teaches us that Esau didn't know that the [pottage] was made up of lentils. Had he known, he would have said, "Feed me, I beg you, from these lentils." He didn't know, however, for he only saw a red pottage. For that reason he only said, "From the red pottage." This was a Providential act in order that he be called as a result of this incident "Edom" (i.e. "Red"), as the name was befitting him, as is stated in Midrash [Beraishis] Rabbah (75:4), "He is red, his land red, his clothing his red, etc." **Haamek Davar, ibid.**

(4) בכרתך. לפי שהעבודה בבכורות, אמר יעקב אין רשע זה כדאי שיקרב להקב"ה. רש"י שם

**Your birthright:** Since the [Divine] service was through the first born, Yaakov said, "This evil one is not worthy of drawing close to the Holy One, blessed be He." **Rashi, ibid.**

(5) והבכורה שיקח פי שנים בממוץ אביו. ויש אומרים שיש לבכור לעולם מעלה על הצעיר לקום מפניו ולשרתו ככן לאב: ר' אברהם אבן עזרא שם

The birthright of the first born was that he should take a double portion in his father's property. There are those that say that the first born always has a special status that [the younger son] stand up before him and serve him, like a son serves a father. **R. Avraham ibn Ezra, ibid.**

(6) ויתכן כי פי השנים בבכורה ממשפטי התורה לא היה כן לפנים, רק לנחול מעלת האב ושררתו, שיהיה לו כבוד ומעלה על צעירו ולכן היה אומר ליצחק אני בנך בכורך (להלן כז לב), לומר כי הוא הבכור הראוי להתברך, וכן כי זה הבכור שים ימינך על ראשו (להלן מח יח), להקדימו בברכה, ואולי היה נוטל גם בנחלה יותר מעט כי דיין פי שנים מחדוש משפט התורה: רמב"ן שם

It is probable that the [entitlement of the] double portion of the first born is part of the laws of the Torah [from the time of Moshe] and was not in effect then. [The birthright meant] only the inheritance of the special rank of the father and his authority, that he should have the honor and rank over his younger sibling. For that reason Yaakov told Yitzchak (Gen. 27:32), "I am your first born son," saying in effect that he was the "first born" who was fit to be blessed. Similarly (Gen. 48:18), "For this is the firstborn; put your right hand upon his head," [being the first born entitled him] to be the first to be blessed. Perhaps, though, [in that period] the first born did take a little more of the inheritance, [but not the full double portion,] as the law of a double portion is an innovation of the law of the Torah, [which did not yet take effect]. **Ramban, ibid.**

## II. Receiving the Blessings

### A.

(1) ויהי פי זקן יצחק ותכהין עיניו מראת ויקרא את עשו | בנו הגדל ויאמר אליו בני ויאמר אליו הנני: ויאמר הנה נא זקנתי לא ידעתי יום מותי: ועתה שא-נא כליך תליך וקשתך וצא השדה וצודה לי ציד: ועשה לי מטעמים כאשר אהבתי והביאה לי ואכלה בעבור תברכך נפשי בטרום אמות: בראשית כז-א-ד

And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said to him, My son; and he said to him, Behold, here am I. And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death; Now therefore take, I beg you, your weapons, your quiver and your bow and go out to the field, and catch me some venison; And make me savory food, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless you before I die. **Genesis 27:1-4**

(2) ידע יצחק כי יעקב ישיג ברכת אברהם התלויה אך בתורה ועבודה. . . . עמוד גמ"ח אם היא נעשית לש"ש באשר כך רצון ד' אז ודאי אוכל פריה בעוה"ז והקרן קיימת לעוה"ב והכל בהשגחה פרטית. . . . אבל העושה גמ"ח מצד טבעו או דעת אנושי שראוי לעשות כן אין לזה שכר בעוה"ב והנהגה רוחנית אבל מכ"מ יש לזה שכר בעוה"ז. . . . והנה ראה יצחק בדעתו שמדה זו לעשות גמ"ח מדעת אנושי לבד אינו ראוי ליעקב כלל. באשר נוצר אך לתורה ולתעודה ואין לו להתנהג בחדסד אלא לש"ש וקיום תורתו. ואם לא בזה האופן אינו ראוי ליעקב כלל. באשר נוצר אך לתורה ולתעודה ואין לו להתנהג בחדסד אלא לש"ש וקיום תורתו. ואם לא בזה האופן אינו ראוי להתברך כלל. אפי' ברכת עוה"ז לבד. . . . ומדה זו מגעת אך לעשו שנוצר להליכות עולם. וגם למדה זו של הטבע מועיל יותר מעלת הבכורה כמש"כ להלן י"ט. ע"כ רצה לזכות את עשו במצות כיבוד אב כמו שאירע ליפת. ויהנה אותו בסעודה. . . . ובאשר אינו ראוי לעשות סעודה ביום המות. ע"כ רצה להקדים הענין. העמק דבר שם

. . . Yitzchak knew that Yaakov would receive the blessings of Avraham, which are solely dependent upon Torah and Divine Service . . . When the pillar of Loving Kindness, [upon which the world is supported], is upheld through acting for the sake of Heaven, which is the [fulfillment of the] will of G-d, then certainly one partakes of its fruits in this world and the principle remains for the next world. All of this is done through special Divine Providence. . . . When one acts with kindness as a result of one's inherent nature or because it is dictated by logic, as it is fitting for humans to act in such a manner, one does not receive reward in the World to Come nor is he given a special Divine Providence, but nonetheless, he receives reward in this world. . . . Now Yitzchak felt that this approach of acting kindly based upon logic is totally unfit for Yaakov, as he was designed to dedicate his life solely for Torah and Divine knowledge, and that he should only do acts of kindness for the sake of Heaven and the fulfillment of His Torah. Otherwise, it wasn't at all fitting for Yaakov to receive any blessing at all, even if it would only be for this world. . . . This kind of behavior [based upon logic and natural inclination and its resulting reward] is only befitting for Esau who was designed to be involved in the goings on of this world. In addition, for such a non-supernatural approach, the quality of being a first born is beneficial, as will be explained in verse 19. For this reason, [Yitzchak] wanted to grant [Esau] the opportunity of fulfilling the commandment of honoring his father, as was the case of Japheth [who merited blessings as a result,] by granting [Yitzchak] pleasure through preparing a meal. . . . And since it is not possible to prepare a meal on the day of death, [which would normally be the most appropriate time of bestowing a blessing,] he wanted to [make sure that it was done] before hand. **Haamek Davar, ibid.**

B.

(1) וּרְבֵקָה שְׁמַעַת בְּדָבַר יִצְחָק אֶל עֵשָׂו בְּנֹו וַיִּלְךָ עֵשָׂו הַשְּׂדֵה לְצוּד צִיד לְהַבִּיאַ: וּרְבֵקָה אָמְרָה אֶל יַעֲקֹב בְּנֵה לְאֹמֶר הִנֵּה שְׁמַעְתִּי אֶת אָבִיךָ מְדַבֵּר אֶל עֵשָׂו אָחִיךָ לְאֹמֶר: הַבִּיָּאָה לִי צִיד וְעֲשֵׂה לִי מִטְעָמִים וְאֶכְלֶה וְאֶבְרַכְכָּה לְפָנַי ד' לְפָנַי מוֹתִי: וְעַתָּה בְּנֵי שְׁמַע בְּקִלִּי לְאֲשֶׁר אָנִי מְצַוָּה אֹתְךָ: לָךְ נָא אֶל הַצֹּאן וְקַח לִי מִשָּׁם שְׁנֵי גְדֵי עִזִּים טָבִים וְאֶעֱשֶׂה אֹתָם מִטְעָמִים לְאָבִיךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר אָהֵב: וְהִבַּאתְ לְאָבִיךָ וְאֶכְלָ בְּעֶבֶר אֲשֶׁר יְבָרְכְךָ לְפָנַי מוֹתִי: וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל רְבֵקָה אִמּוֹ הֲנֵן עֹשֶׂו אָחִי אִישׁ שָׂעִר וְאָנֹכִי אִישׁ חָלֵק: אֲוִלִי יִמְשְׁנֵי אָבִי וְהִיִּיתִי בְּעֵינָיו כְּמִתְעַתֵּעַ וְהִבַּאתִי עָלַי קָלְלָה וְלֹא בְרָכָה: וַתֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִמּוֹ עָלַי קָלְלָתְךָ

בְּנֵי אֵךְ שָׁמַע בְּקֹלִי וְלָךְ קָח לִי: וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּקַּח וַיָּבֵא לְאִמּוֹ וַתַּעַשׂ אִמּוֹ מִטְעָמִים כַּאֲשֶׁר אָהֵב אָבִיו: וַתִּקַּח רַבֵּקָה אֶת בְּגָדֵי עֶשָׂו בְּנֵה הַגָּדֹל הַחֲמֹדֶת אֲשֶׁר אָתָּה בְּבֵית וַתִּלְבַּשׁ אֶת יַעֲקֹב בְּנֵה הַקָּטָן: וְאֵת עֶרְת גְּדֵי הָעֵזִים הַלְבִּיֶשָׁה עַל יָדָיו וְעַל חֻלְקֵת צְוָאָרָיו: וַתִּתֵּן אֶת-הַמִּטְעָמִים וְאֵת הַלֶּחֶם אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂתָּה בְּיַד יַעֲקֹב בְּנֵה: בְּרֵאשִׁית כֹּזֵה-יִז

And Rebekah heard when Isaac spoke to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it. And Rebekah spoke to Jacob her son, saying, Behold, I heard your father speak to Esau your brother, saying, Bring me venison, and make me savory food, that I may eat, and bless you before the L-rd before my death. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command you. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from there two good kids of the goats; and I will make them into savory food for your father, such as he loves; And you shall bring it to your father, that he may eat, and that he may bless you before his death. And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother: Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man; My father perhaps will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing. And his mother said to him: Upon me be your curse, my son; only obey my voice, and go fetch me them. . And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother; and his mother made savory food, such as his father loved. And Rebekah took the best garments of her eldest son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son; And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck; And she gave the savory food and the bread, which she had prepared, to the hand of her son Jacob. **Genesis 27:5-17**

(2) אבל רבקה מאהבתה ליעקב השתדלה אשר הרשעים שיצאו מיעקב שיעשו חסד. ישאו ברכה מד' בעוה"ז כמו שהי' באמת בדורו של אחאב שנתברכו בגשמים לפני קללת אליהו כדאי' בפ' חלק. והי' בזכות חסד שהי' אחאב ודורו נזהרים הרבה. וכן בכל דור יש אפיקורסים והם בעלי חסד ומתברכים בשפע. והכל בא מברכת יצחק שכיון לברך את עשו והגיעה ליעקב וחז"ל ביארו כ"ז כדברינו כמו שיבואר להלן כ"ז. ומעתה מובן מה שבא ההשגחה שיגיע ברכה זו ליעקב במרמה. משום שבאמת אין זה מדת יעקב. וגנובה היא מדה זו מהליכות אוה"ע. העמק דבר שם

But Rivka, out of her love for Yaakov, made the effort on behalf of those evil ones that would issue forth from Yaakov, so that they would receive G-d's blessings in this world if they would act kindly, as was truly the case with Ahab, who was blessed with rain prior to Eliyahu's curse, as is stated in Sanhedrin, Perek Helek. This was as a result of the merit of the kindness which Ahab and the rest of the generation were scrupulous in observing. Similarly, there are heretics who are generous and are blessed with an abundance [of wealth]. All of this is because of Yitzchak's blessing which he intended to give Esau but was received by Yaakov. Our Sages explained all of this in the manner we stated, as will be explained on verse 27. With this we can understand why Providence directed that Yaakov should receive this blessing through trickery, for this [non spiritual] approach to life [the subject of this blessing] is truly not in concert with Yaakov's true nature and was purloined from a this worldly approach [which is befitting Esau]. **Haamek Davar ibid.**

(3) הנה רבקה הבינה כל כונת יצחק איך רוצה לעשות התקשרות בין עשו ובין יעקב כהתקשרות יששכר וזבולון ושבט לוי וישראל שיעקב יעסוק בתורה ועשו יפרנס אותו, אבל היא ידעה היטב רשעת עשו ורוע תכונתו. . . והעושר שיתן לו אביו בברכתו יהיה שמור לרעתו לכן ראתה כי טוב שיבורך יעקב גם בברכת עה"ז בעושר וממשלה. מלבי"ם שם

Now Rivkah understood that the entire motivation of Yitzchak was that he wanted to create a bond between Esau and Yaakov similar to the bond that existed between Yissacher and Zevulon or the tribe of Levi and the rest of Israel, so that Yaakov would involve himself in the study of Torah and Esau would support him. [Rivkah], however, knew quite well of Esau's evil doings and his terrible nature . . . and that the wealth that his father would bequeath him through the blessing would be used against [Yaakov]. Therefore she saw that it would be better that he bless Yaakov with the blessings of this world, i.e. wealth and power. **Malbim, ibid.**

C.

(1) וַיָּבֵא אֶל אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אָבִי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנַנִּי מִי אַתָּה בְּנִי: וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל אָבִיו אֲנִכִּי עָשׂוּ בְּכָרְךָ עָשִׂיתִי כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ אֵלַי קוּם נָא שָׁבָה וְאָכְלָה מִצִּידֵי בְּעִבּוֹר תְּבָרַכְנִי נְפֹשְׁךָ: וַיֹּאמֶר יִצְחָק אֶל בְּנוֹ מַה זֶה מִהֲרַתְּ לְמַצָּא בְּנִי וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי הִקְרָה ד' אֵלַי לְהִיָּדֵךְ לְפָנָי: וַיֹּאמֶר יִצְחָק אֶל יַעֲקֹב גְּשֶׁה נָא וְאָמְשֶׁךָ בְּנִי הֲאֵתָה זֶה בְּנִי עָשׂוּ אִם לֹא: וַיִּגַּשׁ יַעֲקֹב אֶל-יִצְחָק אָבִיו וַיִּמְשָׁהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר הֲקַל קוֹל יַעֲקֹב וְהִידִים יָדָי עָשׂוּ: וְלֹא הִפִּירוּ כִּי הָיוּ יָדָיו כִּידֵי עָשׂוּ אָחִיו שְׁעֵרֶת וַיְבָרַכְהוּ: וַיֹּאמֶר אַתָּה זֶה בְּנִי עָשׂוּ וַיֹּאמֶר אָנִי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲגִשָּׁה לִי וְאָכְלָה מִצִּיד בְּנִי לְמַעַן תְּבָרַכְךָ נְפֹשִׁי וַיִּגַּשׁ לוֹ וַיֹּאכַל וַיָּבֵא לוֹ יַיִן וַיִּשְׁתָּ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו יִצְחָק אָבִיו גְּשֶׁה נָא וּשְׁקָה לִי בְּנִי: וַיִּגַּשׁ וַיִּשַׁק-לוֹ וַיִּרַח אֶת-רִיחַ בְּגָדָיו וַיְבָרַכְהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר רְאֵה רִיחַ בְּנִי כְּרִיחַ שָׂדֵה אֲשֶׁר בָּרַכּוּ ד': בְּרֵאשִׁית כּוֹזֵיח-כּוֹ

And he came to his father, and said: My father; and he said: Here am I; who are you, my son? And Jacob said to his father: I am Esau, your firstborn; I have done according to what you told me; arise, I beg you, sit and eat of my venison, that your soul may bless me. And Isaac said to his son: How is it that you have found it so quickly, my son? And he said: Because the L-rd your G-d brought it to me. And Isaac said to Jacob: Come near, I beg you, that I may feel you, my son, whether you are really my son Esau or not. And Jacob went near to Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said: The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him. And he said, Are you really my son Esau? And he said, I am. And he said: Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless you. And he brought it near to him, and he ate; and he brought him wine, and he drank. And his father Isaac said to him: Come near now, and kiss me, my son. And he came near, and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his garment, and blessed him, and said: See, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the L-rd has blessed. **Genesis 27:18-27**

(2) אבִי. והמתין עד שיבין מהתשובה אם השעה מוכשרת להכין עצמו לרוה"ק ולברך. ע"כ ענה הנני: עשו בכרך . . . ואמר יעקב כי אני הבכור באשר קנה הבכורה והיה בזה דבר אמת ליעקב אלא שיצחק לא ידע מזה: ויברכהו. באשר הוחלט במחשבתו שהוא עשו חשב עוד מה שהקול קול יעקב הוא בתחבולה נכונה לעשו לשנות קולו ולשונו הפעם באשר נדרש להמשיך רוה"ק על דבריו של יצחק וטוב להזכיר שם ד' כלשון הכתוב בכל המקום אשר אזכיר את שמי אבוא אליך וברכתך. וגם קול יעקב המורגל בתורה ותפלה מסוגל להופיע רוה"ק ע"כ עושה עשו ככה. ע"כ. ויברכהו. אישר חילו כי טוב הוא עושה להקל מיצחק הענין להמשיך עליו רוה"ק. ובספורנו כ' דבשביל שחשדו ומצא שלא כן הוא מש"ה ברכו כדאי' בברכות דל"א ב' ולא עוד אלא שצריך לברכו: אתה זה בני עשו. לא כחזור ומסתפק דא"כ מה חשב שיועיל בהשיבו שנית אני. אלא בשביל שנדרש לברכה לעורר אהבה להמתברך. ומזה הטעם א"ל אח"כ גשה נא ושקה לי ע"כ הזכיר אותו בשמו. דהזכרת השם מועיל לעורר אהבה כאשר יבואר להלן מ"ח ח' . . . וירח את ריח בגדיו. ראה ברוה"ק גדולת גמ"ח של בוגדיו שנעשה לא לש"ש. . . הנעשה בדעת אנושי מכונה בשם בגדיו שהגוף ודעת אנושי המה מלכושי הנפש הנעלה. העמק דבר שם

**My father:** [Yaakov waited until he would understand from [Yitzchak's reply] that the time was propitious for him to prepare himself to receive the Holy Spirit and to bestow the blessing. That is why he answered, "Here I am [ready]." **Esau, your first born:** . . . Yaakov said, "I am the first born," as I have purchased the birthright. This statement was true as far as Yaakov was concerned, but Yitzchak was not aware of this [purchase]. **And he blessed him:** Since he was convinced that he was Esau, he supposed that the reason that the voice was similar to Yaakov's was intentionally done by Esau, in order to cause the Holy Spirit to descend upon Yitzchak's words. He mentioned G-d's name in the spirit of the verse (Exodus 20:21), "In all places where I cause my name to be pronounced I will come to you, and I will bless you." In addition, the voice of Yaakov which was accustomed to studying Torah and praying was more propitious to bring about the Holy Spirit. **And he blessed him:** He blessed him with renewed strength as he had done well in helping Yitzchak bring about the Holy Spirit. Seforno writes that he blessed him because he had previously falsely suspected him, as is stated in Berachos 31b, and was required to bless him. **[And he said,] Are you really my son Esau?:** Not that he was really in doubt [at this point] because if that would have been the case how would his second reply have helped. [He asked him,] however, as the love of one who bestows a blessing must be aroused towards the object of his blessing. For that reason he said to him afterwards, "Come near now, and kiss me." That is why he mentioned him by name, as mentioning a name arouses feelings of love, as will be explained in Gen. 48:8. . . . **And he smelled the smell of his garment:** [Yitzchak] saw through the Divine Spirit the greatness of the acts of kindness performed by the rebels [*bogdav*] which are not done for the sake of Heaven. . . . [Kindness] which is done based upon human logic is called "*bigdav*" (his clothing) since the body and intellect are clothing for the higher soul. **Haamek Davar, ibid.**

D.

(1) וַיִּתֵּן לְךָ הָאֱלֹהִים מִטֵּל הַשָּׁמַיִם וּמִשְׁמַנֵּי הָאָרֶץ וְרֹב דָּגָן וְתִירֹשׁ: יַעֲבֹדוךָ עַמִּים וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ לְךָ לְאֲמִים הַזֶּה גְבִיר לְאֲחִיךָ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ לְךָ בְּנֵי אִמְךָ אֲרֵרֶיךָ אָרוּר וּמְבָרְכֶיךָ בְּרוּךְ: בְּרֵאשִׁית כֹּחַ-כַּחַט

Therefore G-d give you of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of grain and wine; Let people serve you, and nations bow down to you; be lord over your brothers, and let your mother's sons bow down to you; cursed be every one who curses you, and blessed be he who blesses you. **Genesis 27:28-29**

(2) הא-להים: ולא אמר הוי'. והנה לפי מחשבתו של יצחק שהוא מברך לעשו ה"ה ממש כברכת נח ליפת. יפת א-להים ליפת. . . . באשר הברכה איננה מכח תורה ועבודה וגמ"ח שנעשה לש"ש. כי אם כמו דור אחאב וכדומה כמש"כ בהר"ד. וא"כ אז תבוא שפע הברכה מכח טבע הבריאה שנוסד על זכות חסד. מש"ה אמר בשם הא-להים: הוה גביר לאחייך: . . . וזה נתקיים בבית ראשון שאומה אדום אע"ג שהיא מלוכה בפ"ע מכ"מ היו משמעים לישראל אפי' בימי אחאב ומלכי יהודה הרשעים ורק בשביל כח גמ"ח הנפלא: וישתחוו לך בני אמך. ג"כ זרע עשו והשתחוו מלא הוא עבדות ממש וזה הי' בימי מלכות בית שני שהיו אדום עבדים ממש לישראל ומש"ה כתיב בני אמך. שנכנסו לגמרי בהנהגת ישראל. . . . ונתקיים ביעקב עד שנתקלקל גם כח גמ"ח של יעקב. וכמו שהוכיח הושע הנביא מה אעשה לך אפרים. . . . וחסדכם כענן בקר. . . . ובבית שני נתקלקל ע"י שנאת חנם ורציחה כידוע: העמק דבר שם

**G-d (E-lohim):** The Tetragrammaton (Four letter Name which is pronounced A-donai-L-rd) was not used. Now according to Yitzchak's understanding he was blessing Esau. Therefore, this takes the exact form of the blessing of Noah to Japheth (Yefes) (Gen. 9: 27), "G-d shall enlarge Japheth." . . . Since the blessing wasn't for those [who dedicated themselves to] Torah study,

Divine service, and loving-kindness that was performed for the sake of Heaven, but rather for those similar to the generation of Ahab, as was stated before, the abundance of blessing would come about through the power of the Creation that was established through kindness. For that reason the name E-lohim (G-d) is used. **Be lord over your brothers:** . . . This was fulfilled in the first Temple period when the nation of Edom, even though they were an independent nation, were subservient to Israel during the time of Ahab and the wicked kings of Judea. This was all due to the amazing power of kindness. **And let your mother's sons bow down to you:** This also refers to the descendants of Esau. The word "*hishtachaveh*" in the full form (with two "*vavs*") refers to actual slavery. This occurred during the period of the second Temple when Edom actually became slaves to Israel. For that reason it is written, "your mother's sons," for they completely became culturally one with Israel. . . . This [blessing] was fulfilled with Yaakov until their kindness dwindled, as the prophet Hoshea rebuked them (Hoshea 6:4), "O Ephraim, what shall I do to you? O Judah, what shall I do to you? For your kindness is like the morning mist, and like the dew that early goes away." . . . In the second Temple they became corrupt through unwarranted hatred and murder, as it well known. **Haamek Davar, ibid.**

E.

(1) וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר כִּלְהָ יִצְחָק לְבָרֶךְ אֶת יַעֲקֹב וַיְהִי אֵךְ יֵצֵא יַעֲקֹב מֵאֵת פְּנֵי יִצְחָק אָבִיו וְעָשׂוֹ אָחִיו בָּא מִצִּידוֹ: וַיַּעַשׂ גַּם הוּא מִטְעָמִים וַיָּבֵא לְאָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר לְאָבִיו יָקִים אָבִי וַיֹּאכַל מִצִּיד בְּנֹו בְּעֵבֶר תְּבָרַכְנִי נִפְשָׁךְ: וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יִצְחָק אָבִיו מִי-אֵתָהּ וַיֹּאמֶר אָנִי בְנֶךָ כְּכֹרֶךְ עָשׂוֹ: וַיַּחֲרֵד יִצְחָק חֲרָדָה גְּדֹלָה עַד מְאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר מִי אַפּוֹא הוּא הַצֵּד צִיד וַיָּבֵא לִי וְאָכַל מִכָּל בְּטָרִם תְּבוֹא וְאֶבְרַכְהוּ גַם בְּרוּךְ יִהְיֶה: כְּשָׁמַע עָשׂוֹ אֶת דְּבָרֵי אָבִיו וַיִּצְעַק צָעָקָה גְּדֹלָה וּמְרָה עַד מְאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר לְאָבִיו בְּרַכְנִי גַם אָנִי אָבִי: וַיֹּאמֶר בָּא אַחִיךָ בְּמִרְמָה וַיִּקַּח בְּרַכְתְּךָ: וַיֹּאמֶר הֲכִי קָרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב וַיַּעֲקֹבְנִי זֶה פְעָמִים אֵת בְּכֹרְתִי לָקַח וְהִנֵּה עֵתָה לָקַח בְּרַכְתִּי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלֹא אֶצְלַת לִי בְרַכָּה: וַיַּעַן יִצְחָק וַיֹּאמֶר לְעָשׂוֹ הֲנָן גְּבִיר שְׁמֹתִי לָךְ וְאַתָּה כָּל אָחִיו נִתְּתִי לוֹ לְעִבְדִים וְדָגָן וְתִירֵשׁ סִמְכֹתִיו וְלָכָה אַפּוֹא מָה אַעֲשֶׂה בְּנִי: וַיֹּאמֶר עָשׂוֹ אֵל אָבִיו הַבְּרַכָּה אַחַת הוּא לָךְ אָבִי בְּרַכְנִי גַם אָנִי אָבִי וַיִּשָּׂא עָשׂוֹ קְלוֹ וַיִּבֶךְ: וַיַּעַן יִצְחָק אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הִנֵּה מִשְׁמֵנִי הָאָרֶץ יִהְיֶה מוֹשְׁבָךָ וּמִטַּל הַשָּׁמַיִם מֵעַל: וְעַל חֲרָבְךָ תַחֲיֶה וְאַתָּה אַחִיךָ תַעֲבֹד וְהָיָה כַּאֲשֶׁר תִּרְיֵד וּפְרָקֶת עָלָיו מֵעַל צְוֹאָרְךָ. בְּרֵאשִׁית כו:ל-מ

And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had scarcely gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. And he also had made savory food, and brought it to his father, and said to his father, Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that your soul may bless me. And Isaac his father said to him, Who are you? And he said, I am your son, your firstborn Esau. And Isaac trembled very much, and said: Who then is he who hunted venison, and brought it to me, and I have eaten of all before you came, and have blessed him? moreover, he shall be blessed. And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and very bitter cry, and said to his father: Bless me, me also, O my father. And he said: Your brother came with cunning, and has taken away your blessing. And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he has supplanted me these two times; he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he has taken away my blessing. And he said, Have you not reserved a blessing for me? And Isaac answered and said to Esau: Behold, I have made him your lord, and all his brothers have I given to him for servants; and with grain and wine have I sustained him; and what shall I do now to you, my son? And Esau said to his father: Have you but one blessing, my father? bless me, me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept. And Isaac his father answered and said to him: Behold, your dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above; And by your sword shall you live, and shall serve your brother; and it shall come to pass when you shall have the dominion (or alternately, when you are pained by the descendants of Jacob who are not loyal to the Torah), that you shall break his yoke from off your neck. **Genesis 27:30-40**

(2) והיה כאשר תריד. דכ"ז לא נדבר אלא באומה הנקראה ע"ש אדום ומעולם לא היתה אומה הנקראת ע"ש אדום בממשלה גבוהה ורק יצא ממנו יחידים רודים בעמים היינו קיסרי רומה שהיו מזרע צפו בן אליפז שבא לכתים הוא רומה. וע"ז אמר כאשר תריד. אז. ופרקת עלו מעל צוארך. גם אומה של אדום הנכנעת ליהודה תצא בפריקת עולו ע"י ממשלת כתים שרודים בהם בני עשו: העמק דבר, שם

**And it shall come to pass when you shall have the dominion (or alternately, when you are pained by the descendants of Jacob who are not loyal to the Torah):** All of this was only said in regards to a nation which was called by the name Edom, [like its founder], and such a nation never had great power. There were, however, individuals [of that nation] who dominated nations, meaning the Caesars who ruled over Rome who were descended from Tzefto, the son of Eliphaz, who came to the Kittim, which are the Romans. Regarding this [nation of Edom] is it written, "And it shall come to pass when you shall have the dominion (or alternately, when you are pained by the descendants of Jacob who are not loyal to the Torah)," then, "you shall break his yoke from off your neck." Also the nation of Edom who were subservient to Judea left that subservience through the rule of the Kittim (Rome) who were dominated by the descendants of Esau. **Haamek Davar, ibid.**

### III. Exile

#### A.

(1) וישטם עשו את יעקב על הברכה אשר ברכו אביו ויאמר עשו בלבו יקרבו ימי אבל אבי ואהרגה את יעקב אחי: ויגד לרבקה את דברי עשו בנה הגדל ותשלח ותקרא ליעקב בנה הקטן ותאמר אליו הנה עשו אחיך מתנחם לך להרגך: ועתה בני שמע בקלי וקום ברח לך אל לבן אחי חרנה: וישבת עמו ימים אחדים עד אשר תשוב חמת אחיך: עד שוב אף אחיך ממך ושכח את אשר עשית לו ושלחתי ולקחתיך משם למה אפשר גם שניכם יום אחד: ותאמר רבקה אל יצחק קצתי בחיי מפני בנות חת אם-לקח יעקב אשה מבנות חת כאלה מבנות הארץ למה לי חיים: בראשית כז:א-מו

And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father blessed him; and Esau said in his heart, When the days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob. And these words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah; and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said to him, Behold, your brother Esau comforts himself by planning to kill you. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee to Laban my brother to Haran; And remain with him a few days (years), until your brother's fury turns away; Until your brother's anger turns away from you, and he forgets what you have done to him; then I will send, and fetch you from there; why should I be deprived of both of you in one day? And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these who are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life be to me? **Genesis 27:41-46**

(2) ושלחתי ולקחתיך משם. ועפ"י דברי רבקה ביקש יעקב מלבן בכלות י"ד שנה להיות בחרן וברשות עצמו כאשר יבואר שם. ולולי דברי רבקה אלה לא נתפייס בשום אופן לשבת עמו עוד שש שנים רק ע"פ שהזהירתי שלא ישוב לביתו עד אשר תשלח ולקחהו משם. ולבסוף שב ע"פ דבר ד' שוב אל ארץ אבותיך:

**Then I will send, and fetch you from there:** Based on Rivkah's words, Yaakov asked of Lavan, at the end of fourteen years, to remain in Haran, on his own, as will be explained there. Had it not been for Rivkah's words, he would never have agreed to stay with him an extra six years in any way. This was done strictly because of her admonition that he not return until he would be sent for. At the end, he returned because of Hashem's command, "Return to the land of your forefathers." **Haamek Davar, ibid.**

B.

(1) וַיְהִי עֵשׂוֹ בֶן אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה וַיִּקַּח אִשָּׁה אֶת-יְהוּדִית בַּת בְּעֻרֵי הַחִיטִּי וַיִּקַּח אִשָּׁה אֶת-בְּשֵׁמֶת בַּת אֵילָן הַחִיטִּי: וַתְּהִינָן מֵרַת רוּחַ לְיִצְחָק וּלְרִבְקָה: בְּרֵאשִׁית כּוֹלֵד-לָהּ

And Esau was forty years old when he married Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite; And they made life bitter for Isaac and for Rebekah.  
**Genesis 26:34-35**

(2) וַיִּקְרָא יִצְחָק אֶל יַעֲקֹב וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתוֹ וַיְצַוְהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לֹא תִקַּח אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן: קוּם לְךָ פְּדֻנָה אֲרָם בֵּיתָהּ כְּתוּבָל אָבִי אִמְךָ וְקַח לְךָ מִשָּׁם אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת לְבֶן אָחִי אִמְךָ: וְאֶל-שְׂדֵי יִבְרָךְ אֶתְךָ וַיְבָרֶךְ וַיִּרְכָּב וְהָיִיתָ לְקַהֲל עַמִּים: וַיִּתֵּן לְךָ אֶת בְּרִכַּת אַבְרָהָם לְךָ וּלְזֶרְעֶךָ אֶתְךָ לְרִשְׁתָּךְ אֶת אֶרֶץ מְגֻרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן אֲלֶי-לְהִים לְאַבְרָהָם: וַיִּשְׁלַח יִצְחָק אֶת יַעֲקֹב וַיֵּלֶךְ פְּדֻנָה אֲרָם אֶל לְבֶן בֶּן כְּתוּבָל הָאֲרָמִי אָחִי רִבְקָה אִם יַעֲקֹב וְעֵשׂוֹ וַיֵּרָא עֵשׂוֹ כִּי בָרַךְ יִצְחָק אֶת יַעֲקֹב וְשִׁלַּח אֹתוֹ פְּדֻנָה אֲרָם לְקַחַת לוֹ מִשָּׁם אִשָּׁה בְּבָרְכוֹ אֹתוֹ וַיֵּצֵא עָלָיו לְאָמֵר לֹא תִקַּח אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן: וַיִּשְׁמַע יַעֲקֹב אֶל אָבִיו וְאֵל אִמּוֹ וַיֵּלֶךְ פְּדֻנָה אֲרָם: וַיֵּרָא עֵשׂוֹ כִּי רָעוּת בָּנוּת כְּנָעַן בְּעֵינָי יִצְחָק אָבִיו: וַיֵּלֶךְ עֵשׂוֹ אֶל-יִשְׁמָעֵאל וַיִּקַּח אֶת-מַחֲלַת בַּת יִשְׁמָעֵאל בֶּן אַבְרָהָם אַחֹת נְבִיּוֹת עַל נָשָׁיו לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: בְּרֵאשִׁית כַּח-א-ט

And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said to him, You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padan-Aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father; and take a wife from there of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother. And G-d Al-mighty bless you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, that you may be a multitude of people; And give the blessing of Abraham to you, and to your seed with you; that you may inherit the land where you are a stranger, which G-d gave to Abraham. And Isaac sent away Jacob; and he went to Padan-Aram to Laban, son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother. When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padan-Aram, to take a wife from there; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan; And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padan-Aram; And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father; Then went Esau to Ishmael, and took, besides the wives he had, Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebaioth, to be his wife. **Genesis 28:1-9**

(3) וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתוֹ. בְּאִשֶׁר הָיָה יַעֲקֹב בּוֹשׁ לְבוֹא לְאָבִיו שְׂרָמָהּ וּמִשָּׁה לְעֵיל כְּתִיב וַתִּשְׁלַח וַתִּקְרָא לְיַעֲקֹב הָרִי שְׂלָא הָיָה בְּבֵית אָבִיו. ע"כ כֹּאשֶׁר קָרָא לוֹ יִצְחָק מִתְחִלָּה אִישֶׁר חִילוֹ עַל הַתְּחַבּוּלָה שֶׁעָשָׂה וְכִי טוֹב עָשָׂה וַאֲיֵן בְּלָבוֹ עָלָיו כְּלוֹם:

**And he blessed him:** Since Yaakov was embarrassed to come to his father, because he had tricked him, as it is written, "And she sent and called Jacob." Evidently he wasn't in his father's house. Therefore, when Yitzchak called him, the first thing he did was to bless him that he be strengthened for what he had done, as he had done the right thing and bore no ill feelings towards him. **Haamek Davar, ibid.**

C.

וַיֵּצֵא יַעֲקֹב מִבְּאֵר שֶׁבַע וַיֵּלֶךְ חֲרָנָה: וַיִּפְגַּע בְּמָקוֹם וַיֵּלֶךְ שָׁם כִּי בָא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ וַיִּקַּח מֵאֲבָנֵי הַמָּקוֹם וַיִּשֶׂם מִרְאֲשֵׁתָיו וַיִּשְׁכַּב בְּמָקוֹם הַהוּא: וַיַּחְלֵם וַהֲנִיחַ סֵלֶם מִצָּב אֲרָצָה וְרֵאשׁוֹ מִגִּיעַ הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וַהֲנִיחַ מִלְּאָכִי אֶל-לְהִים עֲלִים וַיְרַדִּים בּוֹ: וַהֲנִיחַ ד' נְצֻב עָלָיו וַיֹּאמֶר אָנִי ד' אֶל-לְהִי אַבְרָהָם אָבִיךָ וְאֶל-לְהִי יִצְחָק הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֶתָּה שֹׁכֵב עָלֶיהָ לְךָ אֶתְנַנָּה וּלְזֶרְעֶךָ: וַהֲנִיחַ זֶרְעֶךָ כַּעֲפַר הָאָרֶץ וּפְרָצְתָּ יָמָה וְקִדְמָה וְצַפְנָה וְנִגְבָּה וְנִבְרָכוּ בְךָ כָּל-מִשְׁפַּחַת הָאָדָמָה וּבְזֶרְעֶךָ: וַהֲנִיחַ אָנֹכִי עִמָּךְ וּשְׂמֵרְתִיךָ בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר-תֵּלֶךְ וְהִשְׁבַּתִּיךָ

אֶל-הָאֲדָמָה הַזֹּאת כִּי לֹא אֶעֱזָבְךָ עַד אֲשֶׁר אִם-עָשִׂיתִי אֶת אֲשֶׁר-דִּבַּרְתִּי לָךְ: וַיִּיקֶץ יַעֲקֹב מִשְׁנָתוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אָכֵן יֵשׁ ד' בַּמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה וְאֲנֹכִי לֹא יָדַעְתִּי: וַיִּירָא וַיֹּאמֶר מַה-נִּזְרָא הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה אֵין זֶה כִּי אִם-בַּיִת אֲ-לֵהִים וְזֶה שַׁעַר הַשָּׁמַיִם: וַיִּשְׁכַּם יַעֲקֹב בַּבֹּקֶר וַיִּקַּח אֶת הָאֲבָן אֲשֶׁר שָׁם מִרְאֲשֵׁתוֹ וַיִּשֶׂם אֹתָהּ מִצְבֵּה וַיִּצַק שָׁמֶן עַל רֹאשָׁהּ: וַיִּקְרָא אֶת שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא בַיִת אֵל וְאוֹלָם לִזְ שֵׁם הָעִיר לְרֹאשְׁנָהּ: וַיִּדַר יַעֲקֹב נָדָר לֵאמֹר אִם יִהְיֶה אֲ-לֵהִים עִמָּדִי וְשָׁמְרָנִי בַדֶּרֶךְ הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ וְנָתַן לִי לֶחֶם לֶאֱכֹל וּבְגָד לְלַבֵּשׁ: וְשִׁבְתִּי בְשֵׁלוֹ אֶל בַּיִת אָבִי וְיִהְיֶה ד' לִי לֵא-לֵהִים: וְהָאֲבָן הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַתִּי מִצְבֵּה יִהְיֶה בַיִת אֲ-לֵהִים וְכָל אֲשֶׁר תִּתֵּן לִי עֲשֶׂר אֶעֱשֹׂרְנִי לָךְ: בְּרִאשִׁית כְּהִי-כֹב

And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and remained there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of G-d ascending and descending on it. And, behold, the L-rd stood above it, and said, I am the L-rd G-d of Abraham your father, and the G-d of Isaac; the land on which you lie, to you will I give it, and to your seed; And your seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in you and in your seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with you, and will keep you in all places where you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you, until I have done that about which I have spoken to you. And Jacob awoke from his sleep, and he said, Surely the L-rd is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How awesome is this place! this is no other but the house of G-d, and this is the gate of heaven. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon its top. And he called the name of that place Beth-El; but the name of that city was called Luz at the first. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If G-d will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and garment to put on, So that I come back to my father's house in peace; then shall the L-rd be my G-d. And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be G-d's house; and of all that You shall give me I will surely give the tenth to You. **Genesis 28:10-22**

D.

(1) וַיֵּשֶׂא יַעֲקֹב רִגְלָיו וַיִּלְךְ אֶרְצָה בְּנֵי קְדָם: וַיִּירָא וְהִנֵּה בְּאֵר בְּשָׂדֵה וְהִנֵּה שָׁם שְׁלֹשָׁה עֲדָרֵי צֹאן רֹבְצִים עָלֶיהָ כִּי מִן הַבְּאֵר הַהוּא יִשְׁקוּ הָעֲדָרִים וְהָאֲבָן גְּדֹלָה עַל פִּי הַבְּאֵר: וַנֶּאֱסַפוּ שָׁמָּה כָּל הָעֲדָרִים וַגִּלְלוּ אֶת הָאֲבָן מֵעַל פִּי הַבְּאֵר וְהִשְׁקוּ אֶת הַצֹּאן וְהִשִּׁיבוּ אֶת הָאֲבָן עַל פִּי הַבְּאֵר לְמַקְמָהּ: וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם יַעֲקֹב אַחֵי מֵאֵין אַתֶּם וַיֹּאמְרוּ מִחֶרֶן אָנַחְנוּ: וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם הִידַעְתֶּם אֶת לְבָן בֶּן נַחֹר וַיֹּאמְרוּ יָדַעְנוּ: וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם הַשְּׁלוֹ לֹ וַיֹּאמְרוּ שְׁלוֹ וְהִנֵּה רַחֵל בְּתוֹ בָּאָה עִם-הַצֹּאן: וַיֹּאמֶר הֵן עוֹד הַיּוֹם גְּדוֹל לֹא עַת הָאֶסֶף הַמִּקְנֵה הַשִּׁקּוֹ הַצֹּאן וּלְכוּ רְעוּ: וַיֹּאמְרוּ לֹא נוֹכַל עַד אֲשֶׁר יֵאָסְפוּ כָּל הָעֲדָרִים וַגִּלְלוּ אֶת הָאֲבָן מֵעַל פִּי הַבְּאֵר וְהִשְׁקִינוּ הַצֹּאן: בְּרִאשִׁית כְּטֵא-ח

Then Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the people of the east. And he looked, and saw a well in the field, and, lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for from that well they watered the flocks; and a great stone was upon the well's mouth. And there were all the flocks gathered; and they rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the sheep, and put the stone again upon the well's mouth in his place. And Jacob said to them, My brothers, where are your from? And they said, Of Haran are we. And he said to them, Know you Laban the son of Nahor? And they said, We know him. And he said to them, Is he well? And they said, He is well; and, behold, Rachel his daughter comes with the sheep. And he said, Behold, it is yet high day, nor is it time that the cattle should be gathered together; water the sheep, and go and feed them. And they said, We can not, until all the flocks are gathered together, and till they roll the stone from the well's mouth; then we will water the sheep. **Genesis 29:1-9**

2. . . . כי כאשר ראה יעקב את הבאר שם על לבו כי ירמזו לו על העתיד . . . שהשפעת ד' נקרא באר מים חיים . . . וכ"ז שישראל בא"י הבאר היא בעיר מושב, וכשהם בגלות והשכינה עמהם, הבאר בשדה, . . . וזה שראה יעקב שהבאר ההיא בשדה שזה בעת הגלות וזה היה שלשה פעמים בגלות מצרים, ובבל, ואדום שגלו מא"י וז"ש והנה שלשה עדרי צאן רובצים עליה . . . רק בעת שיתאספו שמה כל העדרים שכל ישראל יתאחדו והיו לגוי אחד ואז וגללו את האבן ויפתח מקור השפע בכל פעם בגלותם רק שבכל פעם חזרו לחטוא ועי"כ חזר האבן למקומה עד שיגש יעקב שבזכותו יבנה מקדש הג' כמו שהראו לו הסולם ומלאכי א-ל. מלבי"ם שם

. . . When Yaakov saw the well, he took it to heart, for [the whole incident] alluded to the future. . . . for spiritual outpouring is referred to as, "a well of spring water." . . . As long as Israel is in the Land of Israel, the well is [considered, metaphorically, to be] in a settled city. When they are exiled and the Shechina (Divine Presence) is with them [in exile], then the well is [metaphorically considered to be] in the field. . . . That which Yaakov saw the well in the field, [was a sign for] the period of exile. There were three times that this [exile] occurred, in Egypt, in Babel, and in Edom, when they were exiled from the Land of Israel. This is what is meant by, "lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it." . . . But only when, "all the flocks gathered," i.e. that all of Israel were united and would become a united nation, then, "they rolled the stone from the well's mouth," and the source of spiritual outpouring would be opened while they were in exile. However, every time they slipped back and sinned and because of that, the "stone returned again and was put upon the well's mouth in his place." This was the case until, "Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth," for in his merit will the third Temple be built. [This message is] similar to the ladder and the Divine angels that he was shown. **Malbim ibid.**

#### IV. Laban and his Daughters

##### A.

עוֹדְנוּ מְדַבֵּר עִמָּם וְרַחֵל | בָּאָה עִם-הַצֹּאֵן אֲשֶׁר לְאָבִיהָ כִּי רָעָה הוּא: וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר רָאָה יַעֲקֹב אֶת רַחֵל בַּת לְבֵן אָחִי אִמּוֹ וְאֶת צֹאֵן לְבֵן אָחִי אִמּוֹ וַיִּגַּל אֶת הָאֶבֶן מֵעַל פִּי הַבְּאֵר וַיִּשְׁק אֶת צֹאֵן לְבֵן אָחִי אִמּוֹ: וַיִּשְׁק יַעֲקֹב לְרַחֵל וַיִּשָּׂא אֶת קִלּוֹ וַיִּבְנֶה: וַיִּגַּד יַעֲקֹב לְרַחֵל כִּי אָחִי אָבִיהָ הוּא וְכִי בֶן רַבְקָה הוּא וַתִּרְץ וַתִּגְדֵּל לְאָבִיהָ: וַיְהִי כַשְּׂמֹעַ לְבֵן אֶת-שְׂמֵעַ | יַעֲקֹב בֶּן אָחִיתוֹ וַיִּרְץ לְקַרְאָתוֹ וַיַּחֲבֹק לוֹ וַיִּנְשָׁק לוֹ וַיְבִיֵּאוּ אֵל בֵּיתוֹ וַיִּסְפֹּר לְלֵבָן אֶת כָּל-הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה: וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לְבֵן אֵךְ עֲצָמִי וּבְשָׂרִי אָתָּה וַיֵּשֶׁב עִמּוֹ חֹדֶשׁ יָמִים: וַיֹּאמֶר לְבֵן לִיעֲקֹב הֲכִי אָחִי אָתָּה וְעַבַדְתָּנִי חֲנָם הַגִּידָה לִּי מַה מְשַׁכְּרָתְךָ: בראשית כט:ט-טו

And while he still spoke with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she kept them. And it came to pass, when Jacob saw Rachel the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, and the sheep of Laban his mother's brother, that Jacob went near, and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother. And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice, and wept. And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother, and that he was Rebekah's son; and she ran and told her father. And it came to pass, when Laban heard the tidings of Jacob his sister's son, that he ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And he told Laban all these things. And Laban said to him, Surely you are my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him a month. And Laban said to Jacob, Because you are my brother, should you therefore serve me for nothing? Tell me, what shall your wages be? **Genesis 29:9-15**

B.

וּלְלֶבֶן שְׁתֵּי בָנוֹת שֵׁם הַגְּדֹלָה לְאָה וְשֵׁם הַקְּטָנָה רָחֵל: וְעֵינֵי לְאָה רַכּוֹת וְרָחֵל הֵיטָה יָפֶת-תֶּאֱרָר וַיִּפֹּת מֵרָאָה: וַיֵּאָהֵב יַעֲקֹב אֶת-רָחֵל וַיֹּאמֶר אֶעֱבֹדְךָ שְׁבַע שָׁנִים בְּרָחֵל בְּתֶדֶק הַקְּטָנָה: וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן טוֹב תַּתִּי אֶתָּה לְךָ מִתַּתִּי אֶתָּה לְאִישׁ אַחֵר שְׁבַח עַמְדִּי: וַיַּעֲבֹד יַעֲקֹב בְּרָחֵל שְׁבַע שָׁנִים וַיְהִיו בְּעֵינָיו כִּיָּמִים אַחָדִים בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ אֶתָּה: בְּרֵאשִׁית כֹּט:טז-כ

And Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah had weak eyes; but Rachel was beautiful and well favored. And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve you seven years for Rachel your younger daughter. And Laban said, It is better that I give her to you, than that I should give her to another man; stay with me. And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed to him but a few days, for the love he had for her. **Genesis 29:16-20**

C.

(1) וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל לָבָן הֲבָה אֶת אִשְׁתִּי כִּי מָלְאוּ יָמֵי וְאָבוֹאָה אֵלַיָּהּ: וַיֹּאסֶף לָבָן אֶת כָּל אַנְשֵׁי הַמָּקוֹם וַיַּעַשׂ מִשְׁתֵּה: וַיְהִי בַעֲרֹב וַיִּקַּח אֶת לְאָה בְּתוֹ וַיָּבֵא אֶתָּה אֵלָיו וַיָּבֵא אֵלָיָהּ: וַיִּתֵּן לָבָן לָהּ אֶת זֶלְפָּה שִׁפְחָתוֹ לְלְאָה בְּתוֹ שִׁפְחָה: וַיְהִי בִבְקָר וְהִנֵּה הוּא לְאָה וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל לָבָן מָה זֹאת עָשִׂיתָ לִּי הֲלֹא בְּרָחֵל עֲבַדְתִּי עַמְדָּה וְלָמָּה רַמִּיתָנִי: וַיֹּאמֶר לָבָן לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה כֵן בְּמִקְוֵמְנוּ לְתַת הַצְּעִירָה לְפָנֵי הַבְּכִירָה: מָלְא שְׁבַע זֹאת וְנִתְּנָה לְךָ גַם אֶת זֹאת בַּעֲבֹדָה אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲבֹד עַמְדִּי עוֹד שְׁבַע שָׁנִים אַחֲרוֹת: וַיַּעַשׂ יַעֲקֹב כֵּן וַיִּמְלֵא שְׁבַע זֹאת וַיִּתֵּן לוֹ אֶת רָחֵל בְּתוֹ לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: וַיִּתֵּן לָבָן לְרָחֵל בְּתוֹ אֶת בִּלְהָה שִׁפְחָתוֹ לָהּ לְשִׁפְחָה: וַיָּבֵא גַם אֶל רָחֵל וַיֵּאָהֵב גַּם-אֶת רָחֵל מִלְאָה וַיַּעֲבֹד עִמּוֹ עוֹד שְׁבַע שָׁנִים אַחֲרוֹת: בְּרֵאשִׁית כֹּט:כא-ל

And Jacob said to Laban, Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in to her. And Laban gathered together all the men of the place, and made a feast. And it came to pass in the evening, that he took Leah his daughter, and brought her to him; and he went in to her. And Laban gave to his daughter Leah Zilpah his maid for an maidservant. And it came to pass, that in the morning, behold, it was Leah; and he said to Laban, What is this that you have done to me? did not I serve with you for Rachel? why then have you deceived me? And Laban said, It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn. Complete her week, and we will give you this also for the service which you shall serve with me yet seven other years. And Jacob did so, and fulfilled her week; and he gave him Rachel his daughter for his wife also. And Laban gave to Rachel his daughter Bilhah his maidservant to be her maid. And he went in also to Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years. **Genesis 29:21-30**

(2) רְאוּיָה הֵיטָה בְּכוֹרָה לְצֵאת מִרְחֵל, דְּכַתִּיב: (בְּרֵאשִׁית ל"ז) אֵלֶּה תוֹלְדוֹת יַעֲקֹב יוֹסֵף, אֵלֶּה שִׁקְדַּמְתָּה לְאָה בְּרַחֲמִים, וּמִתּוֹךְ צְנִיעוֹת שֶׁהֵיטָה בָּהּ בְּרָחֵל הַחֲזִירָה הַקְּב"ה לָהּ. מֵאִי קִדְמַתָּה לְאָה בְּרַחֲמִים? דְּכַתִּיב: (בְּרֵאשִׁית כ"ט) וְעֵינֵי לְאָה רַכּוֹת, מֵאִי רַכּוֹת? אֵילִימָא רַכּוֹת מִמֶּשׁ, אִפְשָׁר? בְּגִנּוֹת בְּהֵמָה טְמֵאָה לֹא דָבַר הַכְּתוּב, דְּכַתִּיב: (בְּרֵאשִׁית ז') מִן הַבְּהֵמָה הַטְּהוּרָה וּמִן הַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר אֵינְנָה טְהוּרָה, בְּגִנּוֹת צְדִיקִים דָּבַר הַכְּתוּב? אֵלֶּה א"ר אֶלְעֶזֶר: שְׁמִתְנוּתִיהָ אֲרוּכּוֹת. רַב אָמַר: לְעוֹלָם רַכּוֹת מִמֶּשׁ, וְלֹא גִנְאֵי הוּא לָהּ אֵלֶּה שְׁבַח הוּא לָהּ, שֶׁהֵיטָה שׁוֹמַעַת עַל פְּרִשְׁת דְּרָכִים בְּנֵי אָדָם שֶׁהִיוּ אוֹמְרִים: שְׁנֵי בָנִים יֵשׁ לָהּ לְרַבְקָה, שְׁתֵּי בָנוֹת יֵשׁ לוֹ לְלֶבֶן, גְּדוּלָה לְגְדוּל וְקִטְנָה לְקִטְן, וְהֵיטָה יוֹשְׁבַת עַל פְּרִשְׁת דְּרָכִים וּמִשְׁאֲלָת: גְּדוּל מִהּ מַעֲשִׂיו? אִישׁ רַע הוּא מְלַסְטֵם בְּרִיּוֹת, קִטְן מִהּ מַעֲשִׂיו? (בְּרֵאשִׁית כ"ה) אִישׁ תָּם יוֹשֵׁב אוֹהֲלִים, וְהֵיטָה בּוֹכָה עַד שֶׁנִּשְׁרָוּ רִיסֵי עֵינֶיהָ. וְהֵינּוּ דְּכַתִּיב: (בְּרֵאשִׁית כ"ט) וַיִּרְא ד' כִּי שְׁנוּאָה לָאָה, מֵאִי שְׁנוּאָה? אֵילִימָא שְׁנוּאָה מִמֶּשׁ, אִפְשָׁר? בְּגִנּוֹת בְּהֵמָה טְמֵאָה לֹא דָבַר הַכְּתוּב, בְּגִנּוֹת צְדִיקִים דָּבַר הַכְּתוּב? אֵלֶּה רְאוּיָה הַקְּב"ה שֶׁשְׁנוּאִין מַעֲשֶׂה עָשׂוּ בְּפָנֶיהָ - וַיִּפְתַּח אֶת רַחֲמָהּ. ב"ב כַּגַּ.

The birthright, should have emanated from Rachel, as it is written (Genesis 37:2), “These are the generations of Jacob, Joseph,” but Leah anticipated [her with her prayers for] mercy. On account, [however], of the modesty, which was characteristic of Rachel, the Holy One, blessed be He, restored it to her. What [was it that caused] Leah to anticipate her with [her supplications for] mercy? It is written (Genesis 29:17), “And the eyes of Leah were weak.” What [is meant by] weak (*rakkos*)? If it is suggested [that the meaning is that her eyes were] actually weak, [is this, it may be asked,] conceivable? [If] Scripture did not speak disparagingly of an unclean animal, for it is written (Ibid. 7:8), “. . . of the clean beasts, and of the beasts that are not clean,” [would] Scripture speak disparagingly of the righteous? – But, said R. Eleazar, [the meaning of *rakkos* is] that her bounties were extensive (*arukhos*). Rav said: [Her eyes were] indeed actually weak, but that was no disgrace to her but a credit; for at the crossroads she heard people saying: Rebecca has two sons, [and] Laban has two daughters; the elder [daughter should be married] to the elder [son] and the younger [daughter should be married] to the younger [son]. And she sat at the crossroads and inquired, “How does the elder one conduct himself?” And the answer came that [he was] a wicked man, a highway robber. “How does the younger man conduct himself?” “A quiet man dwelling in tents” And she wept until her eyelashes dropped. And this accounts for the Scriptural text (Ibid. 29:31), “And the L-rd saw that Leah was hated.” What [could be the meaning of] “hated”? If it is suggested [that it means that she was] actually hated, [surely] it may be retorted, is this conceivable? [If] Scripture did not speak disparagingly of an unclean animal, [would] it speak disparagingly of the righteous? But the [meaning is this]: The Holy One, blessed be He, saw that Esau's conduct was hateful to her, so he opened her womb. **Bava Basra 123a**

#### V. The Founders of the Tribes of Israel

##### A.

(1) וַיֵּרָא ד' כִּי שָׁנוּאָה לְאֵה וַיִּפְתַּח אֶת רִחְמָהּ וְרָחֵל עֲקָרָה: וַתְּהַר לְאֵה וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ רְאוּבֵן כִּי אָמְרָה כִּי רָאָה ד' בְּעֵינַי כִּי עָתָה יִאָּהֲבֵנִי אִישִׁי. בְּרֵאשִׁית כֹּטֶל־לֵב

And when the L-rd saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb; but Rachel was barren. And Leah conceived, and bore a son, and she called his name Reuben; for she said, Surely the L-rd has looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me. **Genesis 29:31-32**

(2) כל הלילה היה משמש עמה סבור שהיא רחל כיון שעמד בבוקר והנה היא לאה אמר לה ברתייה דרמאה למה רמית אותי אמרה לו ואת לא רמית באביך כשהיה אומר לך האתה זה בני עשו והיית אומר אנכי עשו בכורך (בראשית כז יט) ואת אומר למה רימיתני אביך לא אמר בא אחיך במרמה ויקח ברכתך (שם שם לה) ומתוך הדברים הללו שהוכיחה אותו התחיל שונאה אמר הקב"ה אין רפואתה של זו אלא אם יהיה לה בנים הרניני נותן לה בנים ובעלה נכפף לה לפיכך וירא ד' כי שנואה לאה. מדרש אגדת בראשית פרק מט

The entire night [Yaakov] had relations with [Leah] and thought that she was Rachel, when he got up in the morning he suddenly realized that she was Leah. He told her, “O daughter of the deceitful one, why did you deceive me?” She replied, “Didn’t you deceive your father when he asked you, ‘Are you my son Esau?’ and you said, ‘I am Esau your first born.’ (Genesis 27:19) And now you say, ‘Why did your father deceive me?’ Didn’t [your father] say, ‘Your brother came with cunning and took away your blessing.’ (ibid. 35)” As a result of her rebuking him, he began to hate her. The Holy One, blessed be He, said, “Her only remedy is if she has children. I am going to give her children and her husband will bend down to her.” This is what is meant by the verse, “the L-rd saw that Leah was hated.” **Midrash Agadas Bereishis Chapter 49**

B.

וַתְּהַר עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתֹּאמֶר כִּי שָׁמַע ד' כִּי שָׁנוּאָה אֲנֹכִי וַיִּתֵּן לִי גַם אֶת זֶה וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ שִׁמְעוֹן: שם לג

And she conceived again, and bore a son; and said, Because the L-rd has heard that I was hated, He has therefore given me this son also; and she called his name Simeon (Shimon). **Ibid. 33**

C.

וַתְּהַר עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתֹּאמֶר עַתָּה הִפְעֵם יְלֹוּה אִישִׁי אֵלַי כִּי יִלְדֹתִי לוֹ שְׁלֹשָׁה בָּנִים עַל כֵּן קָרָא שְׁמוֹ לֵוִי: שם לד

And she conceived again, and bore a son; and said, Now this time will my husband be joined to me, because I have born him three sons; therefore was his name called Levi. **Ibid. 34**

D.

וַתְּהַר עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בֵּן וַתֹּאמֶר הִפְעֵם אוֹדָה אֶת ד' עַל כֵּן קָרָאָה שְׁמוֹ יְהוּדָה וַתֵּעַמַּד מִלְדָּת: שם לה

And she conceived again, and bore a son; and she said, Now will I praise the L-rd; therefore she called his name Judah; and ceased bearing. **Ibid. 35**

E.

וַתִּרְא רָחֵל כִּי לֹא יִלְדָה לִיעֶקֶב וַתִּקְנֶה רָחֵל בְּאֶחָתָהּ וַתֹּאמֶר אֵל יַעֲקֹב הִבֵּה לִי בָנִים וְאִם אֵין מִתָּה אֲנֹכִי: וַיַּחַר אֵף יַעֲקֹב בְּרָחֵל וַיֹּאמֶר הֲתַחַת אֲ—לֵהִים אֲנֹכִי אֲשֶׁר מָנַע מִמֶּךָ פְּרִי בֶטֶן: וַתֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה אֲמַתִּי בְלֵהָהּ בֹּא אֵלַיָּה וַתֵּלֶד עַל בְּרַפִּי וְאִבְנָה גַם אֲנֹכִי מִמְּנָה: וַתִּתֵּן לוֹ אֶת בְּלֵהָהּ שִׁפְחָתָהּ לְאִשָּׁה וַיָּבֵא אֵלַיָּה יַעֲקֹב: וַתְּהַר בְּלֵהָהּ וַתֵּלֶד לִיעֶקֶב בֵּן: וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל דָּנָנִי אֲ—לֵהִים וְגַם שָׁמַע בְּקֻלִּי וַיִּתֵּן לִי בֵן עַל כֵּן קָרָאָה שְׁמוֹ דָּן: בראשית ל:א-ו

And when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said to Jacob, Give me children, or else I die (am dead). And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel; and he said, Am I in G-d's place, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb? And she said, Behold my maid Bilhah, go in to her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her. And she gave him Bilhah her maidservant to wife; and Jacob went in to her. And Bilhah conceived, and bore Jacob a son. And Rachel said, G-d has judged me, and has also heard my voice, and has given me a son; therefore she called his name Dan. **Genesis 30:1-6**

F.

וַתְּהַר עוֹד וַתֵּלֶד בְּלֵהָהּ שִׁפְחַת רָחֵל בֵּן שְׁנַי לִיעֶקֶב: וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל נִפְתּוּלִי אֲ—לֵהִים | נִפְתַּלְתִּי עִם—אֶחָתִּי גַם—יִכְלַתִּי וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ נַפְתָּלִי: שם ז-ח

And Bilhah, Rachel's maid, conceived again, and bore Jacob a second son. And Rachel said, With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed; and she called his name Naphtali. **Ibid. 7-8**

G.

וַתִּרְא לֵאָה כִּי עָמְדָה מִלְדָּת וַתִּקַּח אֶת זִלְפָּה שִׁפְחָתָהּ וַתִּתֵּן אֹתָהּ לִיעֶקֶב לְאִשָּׁה: וַתֵּלֶד זִלְפָּה שִׁפְחַת לֵאָה לִיעֶקֶב בֵּן: וַתֹּאמֶר לֵאָה בְּגָד [בָּא גָד] וַתִּקְרָא אֶת שְׁמוֹ גָד: שם ט-יא

When Leah saw that she had ceased bearing, she took Zilpah her maid, and gave her for a wife to Jacob. And Zilpah, Leah's maid, bore Jacob a son. And Leah said, Fortune has come; and she called his name Gad. **Ibid. 9-11**

H.

וַתֵּלֶד זִלְפָּה שְׁפַחַת לְאָה בֶּן שְׁנַי לְיַעֲקֹב: וַתֹּאמֶר לְאָה בְּאִשְׁרֵי כִּי אֲשֶׁרוּנִי בָנוֹת וַתִּקְרָא אֶת שְׁמוֹ אֲשֶׁר:  
שם יב-יג

And Zilpah, Leah's maid, bore Jacob a second son. And Leah said, Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed; and she called his name Asher. **Ibid. 12-13**

I.

וַיֵּלֶךְ רְאוּבֵן בְּיָמֵי קְצִיר חֲטִים וַיִּמְצָא דוּדָאִים בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיָּבֵא אֹתָם אֶל לְאָה אִמּוֹ וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל אֵל לְאָה תִּנֵּי נָא לִי מְדוּדָאֵי בְנֶךָ: וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ הַמְעַט קָחְתִּיךָ אֶת אִשְׁתִּי וְלָקַחְתְּ גַם אֶת דוּדָאֵי בְנֵי וַתֹּאמֶר רָחֵל לָכֵן יִשְׁכַּב עִמָּךְ הַלַּיְלָה תַּחַת דוּדָאֵי בְנֶךָ: וַיָּבֵא יַעֲקֹב מִן הַשָּׂדֶה בְּעֶרְבַּ וַתֵּצֵא לְאָה לְקָרְאָתוֹ וַתֹּאמֶר אֵלַי תָּבוֹא כִּי שָׁכַר שְׁכָרְתִּיךָ בְּדוּדָאֵי בְנֵי וַיִּשְׁכַּב עִמָּה בַּלַּיְלָה הַזֶּה: וַיִּשְׁמַע אֱלֹהִים אֶל לְאָה וַתֵּהָרֶה וַתֵּלֶד לְיַעֲקֹב בֶּן חַמִּישִׁי: וַתֹּאמֶר לְאָה נָתַן אֱלֹהִים שְׁכָרִי אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי שְׁפַחְתִּי לְאִשְׁתִּי וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ יִשָּׂשכָר:  
שם ליד-יח

And Reuben went in the days of wheat harvest, and found mandrakes in the field, and brought them to his mother Leah. Then Rachel said to Leah, Give me, I beg you, of your son's mandrakes. And she said to her, Is it a small matter that you have taken my husband? and would you take away my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore he shall lie with you to night for your son's mandrakes. And Jacob came from the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, You must come in to me; for I have hired you with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night. And G-d listened to Leah, and she conceived, and bore Jacob the fifth son. And Leah said, G-d has given me my hire, because I have given my maid to my husband; and she called his name Issachar. **Ibid. 14-18**

J.

וַתֵּהָרֶה עוֹד לְאָה וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן שְׁשִׁי לְיַעֲקֹב: וַתֹּאמֶר לְאָה זָבְדַנִּי אֱלֹהִים | אֶתִּי זָכַר טוֹב הַפַּעַם יְזַבְּלֵנִי אִשְׁתִּי כִּי-יִלְדַתִּי לוֹ שְׁשָׁה בָנִים וַתִּקְרָא אֶת-שְׁמוֹ זְבֻלוֹן: שם יט-כ

And Leah conceived again, and bore Jacob the sixth son. And Leah said, G-d has endowed me with a good dowry; now will my husband live with me, because I have born him six sons; and she called his name Zebulun. **Ibid. 19-20**

K.

וְאַחַר יָלְדָה בֵּת וַתִּקְרָא אֶת-שְׁמָהּ דִּינָה:

And afterwards she bore a daughter, and called her name Dinah. **Ibid. 21**

L.

וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת רָחֵל וַיִּשְׁמַע אֲלֶיהָ אֱלֹהִים וַיִּפְתַּח אֶת רַחְמָהּ: וַתֵּהָרֶה וַתֵּלֶד בֶּן וַתֹּאמֶר אֶסְפָּה אֱלֹהִים אֶת חֲרָפְתִּי: וַתִּקְרָא אֶת שְׁמוֹ יוֹסֵף לְאֹמֶר יֹסֵף ד' לִי בֶּן אַחֵר: וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר יָלְדָה רָחֵל אֶת יוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֵל לָבֵן שְׁלַחֲנִי וְאַלְכָה אֶל מְקוֹמִי וְלֹאֲרָצִי: תָּנָה אֶת נָשִׁי וְאֶת יְלָדֵי אֲשֶׁר עִבַּדְתִּי אִתָּךְ בְּהֵן וְאַלְכָה כִּי אַתָּה יָדַעְתָּ אֶת עִבְדְּתִי אֲשֶׁר עִבַּדְתִּיךָ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו לָכֵן אִם נָא מִצָּאֲתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ נַחֲשֵׁתִי וַיְבָרְכֵנִי ד' בְּגִלְגָּלָה: שם כב-כז

And G-d remembered Rachel, and G-d listened to her, and opened her womb. And she conceived, and bore a son; and said, G-d has taken away my reproach; And she called his name Joseph; and said, The L-rd shall add to me another son. And it came to pass, when Rachel had

born Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, Send me away, that I may go to my own place, and to my country. Give me my wives and my children, for whom I have served you, and let me go; for you know my service which I have done for you. And Laban said to him, I beg you, if I have found favor in your eyes, remain; for I have learned by experience that the L-rd has blessed me for your sake. **Ibid. 22-27**

M.

(1) וַיִּסְעוּ מִבֵּית אֵל וַיְהִי עוֹד כְּבָרַת הָאָרֶץ לְבוֹא אֶפְרָתָה וַתֵּלֶד רָחֵל וַתִּקְשׁ בְּלִדְתָּהּ: וַיְהִי בְּהַקְשָׁתָהּ בְּלִדְתָּהּ וַתֹּאמֶר לָהּ הַמִּיֻלְדֵת אֵל תִּירָאִי כִּי גַם זֶה לָךְ בֶּן: וַיְהִי בְצֵאת נַפְשָׁהּ כִּי מָתָה וַתִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ בֶּן אוֹנִי וְאָבִיו קָרָא לוֹ בְנִימִין: וַתָּמַת רָחֵל וַתִּקְבֹּר בְּדֶרֶךְ אֶפְרָתָה הוּא בֵּית לָחֶם: וַיֵּצֵב יַעֲקֹב מִצְבֵּה עַל קְבֻרָתָהּ הוּא מִצְבֵּת קְבֻרַת רָחֵל עַד-הַיּוֹם: בְּרֵאשִׁית לֵה:טז-כ

And they journeyed from Beth-El; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath; and Rachel labored with child, and she had difficult labor. And it came to pass, when she was in difficult labor, that the midwife said to her, Fear not; you shall have this son also. And it came to pass, as her soul was departing, for she died, that she called his name Benoni; but his father called him Benjamin. And Rachel died, and was buried on the way to Ephrath, which is Beth-Lehem. And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave; that is the pillar of Rachel's grave to this day. **Genesis 35:16-20**

(2) הנה רחל נשאת באיסור ב' אחיות רק שקודם מ"ת היה מותר וגם שהיה עפ"י הדבור להוליד שבטי י-ה, אבל אחר הברכה שברכו ד' להיות תחת ההשגחה הא-להית, מאז התנוצץ עליהם הענין הא-להי כמו שיהיה אחר מ"ת, ומאז היה פגם שיחזיק ב' אחיות, בפרט שכבר ילדה את בנימין ונולדו השבטים לכן מתה רחל. . . . מלבי"ם שם

Now Rachel was married through [what would seem to be the] prohibition of marrying two sisters. It occurred, however, before the giving of the Torah and it was actually permitted. In addition, it was done through Divine command in order to father the G-dly tribes. But after G-d had blessed him that he would now be under special Divine Providence (see Gen. 35:9 and Malbim's commentary *ibid.*), the Divine spirit that would reach maturation at the giving of the Torah began then to blossom and rest upon them. From that time on, it would have been a failing on Yaakov's part to maintain two wives, especially after the birth of Benjamin when the founders of the tribes had already been born. For that reason, Rachel died. . . . **Malbim, *ibid.***

(3) ויהי עוד וגו'. פגע ביעקב מדת הדין. ונענש באשתו האהובה לו כגופו בשעת הסכנה: העמק דבר, שם

**And there was but a little way to come to Ephrath:** The attribute of Divine justice struck him. His wife, whom he loved like his own self, was punished at the time she was most vulnerable, [at childbirth]. **Haamek Davar, *ibid.***

VI. Joseph and his Brothers

A.

וַיֵּשֶׁב יַעֲקֹב בְּאֶרֶץ מְגוּרֵי אָבִיו בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן: אֵלֶּה | תִּלְדוֹת יַעֲקֹב יוֹסֵף בֶּן-שֶׁבַע עָשָׂרָה שָׁנָה הָיָה רֹעֵה אֶת אֶחָיו בְּצֹאן וְהוּא נֹעַר אֶת בְּנֵי בְלָהָה וְאֶת בְּנֵי זְלֶפְחָה נְשֵׁי אָבִיו וַיָּבֵא יוֹסֵף אֶת דְּבָתָם רֹעֵה אֶל-אָבִיהֶם: וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל אֶהָב אֶת יוֹסֵף מִכָּל בָּנָיו כִּי בֶן זְקֻנִים הוּא לוֹ וַעֲשָׂה לוֹ כְּתָנֶת פָּסִים: וַיִּרְאוּ אֶחָיו כִּי אֶתוֹ אֶהָב אָבִיהֶם מִכָּל אֶחָיו וַיִּשְׂנְאוּ אֹתוֹ וְלֹא יָכְלוּ דַּבְּרוֹ לְשָׁל: וַיַּחְלֵם יוֹסֵף חֲלוֹם וַיַּגִּד לְאֶחָיו וַיִּסְפּוּ עוֹד שָׁנָא אֹתוֹ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם שְׁמְעוּ נָא הַחֲלוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר חֲלַמְתִּי: וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי חֹנֵן מְאֹלָמִים אֲלֵמִים

בַּתּוֹךְ הַשָּׂדֶה וְהִנֵּה קָמָה אֶלְמָתִי וְגַם נֹצֵבָה וְהִנֵּה תֹסְבִינָה אֶלְמַתֵיכֶם וּתְשַׁתְּחוּיָן לְאֶלְמָתִי: וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ אָחִיו הַמֶּלֶךְ תִּמְלֹךְ עָלֵינוּ אִם מָשׁוּל תִּמְשָׁל בָּנוּ וַיֹּסְפוּ עוֹד שָׁנָא אֹתוֹ עַל חֲלַמְתּוֹ וְעַל דְּבָרָיו: וַיַּחְלֹם עוֹד חֲלוֹם אַחֵר וַיְסַפֵּר אֹתוֹ לְאָחָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה חֲלַמְתִּי חֲלוֹם עוֹד וְהִנֵּה הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְהַיָּרֵחַ וְאַחַד עֶשֶׂר כּוֹכָבִים מְשַׁתְּחוּיִם לִי: וַיְסַפֵּר אֶל אָבִיו וְאֶל אָחָיו וַיִּגְעַר בּוֹ אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ מָה הַחֲלוֹם הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר חֲלַמְתָּ הֲבֹא נִבּוֹא אֲנִי וְאַמְדָּךְ וְאַחֶיךָ לְהִשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְךָ אֲרָצָה: וַיִּקְנְאוּ—בוֹ אָחָיו וְאָבִיו שָׁמַר אֶת—הַדְּבָר: בְּרֵאשִׁית לִז:א-יא

And Jacob lived in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brothers; and the lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought to his father their evil report. Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a coat with long sleeves. And when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably to him. And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it his brothers; and they hated him even more. And he said to them, Hear, I beg you, this dream which I have dreamed; For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood around, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brothers said to him, Shall you indeed reign over us? or shall you indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him even more for his dreams, and for his words. And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it to his brothers, and said, Behold, I have again dreamed a dream; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told it to his father, and to his brothers; and his father rebuked him, and said to him, What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall I and your mother and your brothers indeed come to bow down ourselves to you to the earth? And his brothers envied him; but his father kept the matter in mind. **Genesis 37:1-11**

B.

וַיֵּלְכוּ אָחָיו לְרֵעוֹת אֶת צֹאן אָבִיהֶם בְּשֶׁכֶם: וַיֹּאמֶר יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל יוֹסֵף הֲלוֹא אָחֶיךָ רֹעִים בְּשֶׁכֶם לָכֵה וְאֲשַׁלְּחֶךָ אֲלֵיהֶם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ הִנְנִי: וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לָךְ נָא רֵאֵה אֶת שְׁלוֹךְ אָחֶיךָ וְאֶת שְׁלוֹךְ הַצֹּאן וְהַשְׁכְּנִי דָבָר וַיִּשְׁלַחְהוּ מֵעֵמֶק חֲבֹרֹן וַיָּבֹאוּ שְׁכֵמָה: וַיִּמְצְאוּהוּ אִישׁ וְהִנֵּה תֵעָה בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיִּשְׁאַלְהוּ הָאִישׁ לֵאמֹר מַה תִּבְקֹשׁ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֶת אָחִי אֲנֹכִי מִבְּקֹשׁ הַגִּידָה נָא לִי אֵיפֹה הֵם רֹעִים: וַיֹּאמֶר הָאִישׁ נִסְעוּ מִזֶּה כִּי שָׁמַעְתִּי אִמְרִים נִלְכָה דַּתְיָנָה וַיִּלְךְ יוֹסֵף אַחֵר אָחָיו וַיִּמְצְאוּם בְּדֹתָן: וַיִּרְאוּ אֹתוֹ מֵרָחֵק וּבְטָרִם יִקְרַב אֲלֵיהֶם וַיִּתְנַכְּלוּ אֹתוֹ לְהַמִּיתוֹ: וַיֹּאמְרוּ אִישׁ אֶל אָחָיו הִנֵּה בַעַל הַחֲלָמוֹת הֲלוֹזָה בָּא: וְעַתָּה | לָכוּ וְנִהַרְגֶהוּ וְנִשְׁלַכְהוּ בְּאֶחָד הַבְּרוֹת וְאִמְרָנוּ חִיָּה רָעָה אֲכָלְתָהוּ וְנִרְאָה מָה יִהְיֶה חֲלַמְתּוֹ: וַיִּשְׁמַע רְאוּבֵן וַיִּצְלָהוּ מִיָּדָם וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא נִכְנְנוּ נַפְשׁ: וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים | רְאוּבֵן אֵל תִּשְׁפְּכוּ דָם הַשְּׁלִיכוּ אֹתוֹ אֶל הַבּוֹר הַזֶּה אֲשֶׁר בְּמִדְבַר וַיֵּד אֶל תְּשַׁלְּחוּ בּוֹ לְמַעַן הִצִּיל אֹתוֹ מִיָּדָם לְהַשִּׁיבּוֹ אֶל אָבִיו: וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר בָּא יוֹסֵף אֶל אָחָיו וַיִּפְשִׁטוּ אֶת יוֹסֵף אֶת כְּתָנָתוֹ אֶת כְּתָנֹת הַפְּסִים אֲשֶׁר עָלָיו: וַיִּקְחָהוּ וַיִּשְׁלְכוּ אֹתוֹ הַבְּרָה וְהַבּוֹר רַק אֵין בּוֹ מַיִם: בְּרֵאשִׁית לִז:יב-כד

And his brothers went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. And Israel said to Joseph, Are not your brothers feeding the flock in Shechem? Come, and I will send you to them. And he said to him, Here am I. And he said to him, Go, I beg you, see whether it is well with your brothers, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out from the valley of Hebron, and he came to Shechem. And a certain man found him, and, behold, he was wandering in the field; and the man asked him, saying, What do you seek? And he said, I seek my brothers; tell me, I beg you, where they feed their flocks. And the man said, They have departed from here; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brothers, and found them in Dothan. And when they saw him from far away, even before he came near to them, they

conspired against him to slay him. And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer comes. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and throw him into some pit, and we will say, "Some evil beast has devoured him;" and we shall see what will become of his dreams. And Reuben heard it, and he saved him from their hands; and said, Let us not kill him. And Reuben said to them, Shed no blood, but throw him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him from their hands, to deliver him to his father again. And it came to pass, when Joseph came to his brothers, that they stripped Joseph of his coat, his coat of long sleeves that was on him; And they took him, and threw him into a pit; and the pit was empty, there was no water in it. **Genesis 12-24**

C.

(1) וַיֵּשְׁבוּ לֶאֱכֹל לֶחֶם וַיִּשְׂאוּ עֵינֵיהֶם וַיִּרְאוּ וְהִנֵּה אַרְחַת יִשְׁמַעְאֵלִים בָּאָה מִגִּלְעָד וּגְמֻלֵיהֶם נֹשְׂאִים נֹכָחַת וּצְרֵי וְלֹט הוֹלְכִים לְהוֹרִיד מִצְרֵימָה: וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוּדָה אֶל אָחָיו מָה בָּצַע כִּי נִהְרַג אֶת אָחִינוּ וְכִסִּינוּ אֶת-דָּמוֹ: וְנִמְכְּרֵנוּ לְיִשְׁמַעְאֵלִים וַיִּדְנוּ אֶל תְּהֵי בּוֹ כִּי אָחִינוּ בְּשָׂרֵנוּ הוּא וַיִּשְׁמְעוּ אָחָיו: וַיַּעֲבְרוּ אַנְשֵׁי מִדְּיָנִים סַחְרִים וַיִּמְשְׁכוּ וַיַּעֲלוּ אֶת יוֹסֵף מִן הַבּוֹר וַיִּמְכְּרוּ אֶת יוֹסֵף לְיִשְׁמַעְאֵלִים בְּעֶשְׂרִים כֶּסֶף וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶת-יוֹסֵף מִצְרֵימָה: וַיֵּשֶׁב רְאוּבֵן אֶל-הַבּוֹר וְהִנֵּה אֵין-יוֹסֵף בְּבוֹר וַיִּקְרַע אֶת-בְּגָדָיו: וַיֵּשֶׁב אֶל-אָחָיו וַיֹּאמֶר הִילָד אֵינָנו וְאֲנִי אָנָּה אֲנִי-בָא: וַיִּקְחוּ אֶת-כְּתָנֵת יוֹסֵף וַיִּשְׁחֲטוּ שְׁעִיר עִזִּים וַיִּטְבְּלוּ אֶת-הַכְּתָנֶת בְּדָם: וַיִּשְׁלְחוּ אֶת-כְּתָנֵת הַפָּסִים וַיָּבִיאוּ אֶל אֲבֵיהֶם וַיֹּאמְרוּ זֹאת מְצָאנוּ הִכָּר נָא הַכְּתָנֶת בְּנֶךְ הוּא אִם לֹא: וַיִּפְיֶרָה וַיֹּאמֶר כְּתָנֶת בְּנֵי חַיָּה רְעָה אֲכַלְתָּהּ טָרֶף טָרֶף יוֹסֵף: וַיִּקְרַע יַעֲקֹב שְׂמֹלְתָיו וַיִּשֶׂם שֶׁק בְּמַתָּנוֹ וַיִּתְאַבֵּל עַל בְּנוֹ יָמִים רַבִּים: וַיִּקְמוּ כָל-בְּנָיו וְכָל בְּנֹתָיו לִנְחָמוֹ וַיִּמְאַן לְהִתְנַחֵם וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי אֲרֹד אֶל בְּנֵי אֵבֶל שְׂאֵלָה וַיִּבְכֶּה אֹתוֹ אָבִיו: וְהַמְדָּנִים מָכְרוּ אֹתוֹ אֶל מִצְרַיִם לְפֹטִיפָר סָרִיס פְּרַעֲזָה שֹׂר הַטְּבָחִים: בְּרֵאשִׁית לֹז-כֹּה-לוֹ

And they sat down to eat bread; and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead with their camels bearing gum, balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt. And Judah said to his brothers, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brothers were content. Then there passed by Midianites merchants; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out from the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver; and they brought Joseph to Egypt. And Reuben returned to the pit; and, behold, Joseph was not in the pit; and he tore his clothes. And he returned to his brothers, and said, The child is not; and I, where shall I go? And they took Joseph's coat, and killed a kid of the goats, and dipped the coat in the blood; And they sent the coat of long sleeves, and they brought it to their father; and said, This have we found; know now whether it is your son's coat or no. And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast has devoured him; Joseph is without doubt torn in pieces. And Jacob tore his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down to Sheol to my son, mourning. Thus his father wept for him. And the Midianites sold him in Egypt to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard (chamberlain of the butchers). **Genesis 37:25-36**

(2) וַיִּשְׁחֲטוּ שְׁעִיר עִזִּים: מִשְׁלֵם הַקֶּבֶ"ה לְבְנֵי אָדָם מִיָּדָה כְּנֹגֵד מִיָּדָה כּוֹ' וַאֲפִילוֹ לְצַדִּיקֵי עוֹלָם מִשְׁלֵם מִיָּדָה כְּנֹגֵד מִיָּדָה יַעֲקֹב אֲבִינוּ רִימָה בְּאֲבִינוּ בְּעוֹרוֹת גְּדֵי הָעִזִּים, וּבְנֵינוּ רִימָה בּוֹ בְּגֵדֵי הָעִזִּים וַיִּשְׁחֲטוּ שְׁעִיר עִזִּים וַיִּטְבְּלוּ אֶת הַכְּתָנֶת בְּדָם. מִדְּרַשׁ (מִבּוֹא בְּתוֹרָה שְׁלִימָה מִגְּנִזֵּי שִׁכְטָר ח"א צד קמ.).

**And they killed a kid of the goats, [and dipped the coat in the blood]:** The Holy One, blessed be He, repays a person in kind, measure for measure, . . . Even to the greatest *tzaddikim* [righteous people] of history does He punish [for their slightest indiscretion,] measure for measure. [Because] our forefather Yaakov tricked his father through the skins of the kids of the goats, [so] his children tricked him through a kid of the goats and slaughtered one and dipped the coat in the blood. **Midrash quoted in Torah Shelaimah**

(3) קב"ה מדקדק בהו בצדיקייא אפילו כחוט השערה, יעקב עבד עובדא כדקא יאות, במאי, בגין דאקריב לגבי אבוי שעיר, דאיהו סטרא דדינא קשיא, ועם כל דא בגין דאיהו אקריב שעיר ואכחיש ליה לאבוי, דאיהו סטרא דיליה, אתענש בהאי שעיר אחרא דאקריבו ליה בנוי דמא דיליה, באיהו כתיב (בראשית כז טז) ואת עורות גדיי העזים הלבשה על ידיו ועל חלקת צואריו, בגין כך ויטבלו את הכתנת בדם, אקריבו ליה כתונתא לאכחשא ליה, וכלא דא לקבל דא, איהו גרים דכתיב ויחרד יצחק חרדה גדולה עד מאד, בגין כך גרמו ליה דחרד חרדה בההוא זמנא דכתיב הכר נא הכתנת בנך היא אם לא. רבי חייא אמר, ביה כתיב (בראשית כז כא) האתה זה בני עשו אם לא, ליה כתיב הכתנת בנך היא אם לא, ובגין כך קב"ה מדקדק בהו בצדיקיא בכל מה דאינון עבדין. זחר ח"א קפה:—קפו

The Holy One, blessed be He, is very particular with *tzaddikim* and judges them even for matters as light as [or as small as the breadth of] a single hair. Yaakov did what was proper. How so? Because he brought a goat to his father, which [symbolically] represents strict judgement. But despite that, because he lied to his father, who embodied the same aspect [of strict judgement which is represented by the goat], he was punished with another goat whose blood his children brought to him. Regarding Yaakov is it written (Genesis 27:16), “[And Rebekah took the best garments of her eldest son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son;] And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck.” For that reason, they dipped the coat in blood. They brought him the coat in order to trick him, one act corresponding to the other. He caused his father that he “trembled very much,” therefore they caused him that he trembled that time, as it says (Genesis 37:32), “Know now whether it is your son’s coat or not.” Rabbi Hiyya said: Regarding [Yaakov] is it written (Gen. 27:21), “are you really my son Esau or not.” So too is it written (Gen. 37:32), “Your son’s coat or not.” We see that the Holy One, blessed be He, is very particular with *tzaddikim* and judges them on all of their actions. **Zohar I 185b-186a**