

Remote Youth Groups!!!

Parshas Toldos
November 21st 2020
5 Kisleiv 5781

Parsha Summary and Discussion

Yitzchok and Rivka are married for twenty long years without having children. Finally Rivka gets pregnant with twins. As the kids grow inside her belly they constantly kick around, so Rivka goes to visit a great rabbi by the name of Shem to ask him for advice. Shem tells her that there are two children in her womb who will be the fathers of two nations, and the younger one will eventually rule the older one -- that's why they were fighting even before they were born.

Discuss – When does a child receive its soul? At birth, or before?

Esav is born first. He is hairy and red-headed. Then follows Yaakov, who is holding Esav's heel as he is born. Esav and Yaakov are quite different: Esav is sly and loves to hunt, while Yaakov is peaceful and spends most of his time studying Torah. On the day that Abraham is buried, Esav goes hunting while Yaakov stays home and cooks a pot of lentils for his father to eat (a person who is mourning a loved one eats round foods when he or she comes back from the funeral).

Discuss – Why do you eat round foods during mourning?

Esav comes home and is very hungry, so hungry that he sits next to Yaakov and says: "Give me to eat!" He wants Yaakov to pour the food down his throat. Yaakov says yes, on condition that Esav sell him his birthright, his right to be the firstborn. (Why did Yaakov want Esav's birthright? Yaakov knew that in the future the firstborn would be privileged to serve in the Holy Temple, but Esav didn't behave like a person who will serve in G-d's temple should -- he hunted and killed, and didn't have respect for life -- so Yaakov asked him to sell his birthright, which he did.)

Yitzchok ages and becomes blind. He wants to bless his children before he dies. Esav goes to hunt for a couple of animals to prepare food for his father. In the meantime Rivka dresses Yaakov as Esav. She covers his

arms and neck with hairy goatskin so that he should resemble Esav and sends him into Yitzchok's room to get the blessings which were destined to the firstborn son. When Esav returns and discovers that Yaakov got the first blessings, he becomes very angry and wants to kill his brother. So Yaakov runs away to Charan, his mother's birth-place, where he will also look for a wife whom we will meet in next week's *parshah*.

Discuss – Doesn't it seem that Yaakov was always tricking other people? How can a Tzaddik do that?

Mitzvah of the Week

The Mitzvah of the week is to comfort mourners. We find that Yaakov was making food to comfort his father after his grandfather, Avraham Avinu, had passed away. Although it is not comfortable, it is necessary. Even if we don't always know what to say, we can just sit there and be there for the mourner to comfort them and take care of them. Just being there helps to comfort the mourner, as they know that they have friends and family to help them out.

This Mitzvah is part of a Mitzvah of chessed, kindness to others, and is one of the greatest mitzvos, as the rabbis teach us, that there is no set amount to it, and is truly emulating the Almighty who is the greatest doer of kindness.

Parsha Questions

Q: How long did Yitzchak and Rivka not have children?

A: 20 years

Q: When Rivka was expecting, why did she seek out the advice of a Rabbi?

A: The baby was kicking a lot – she didn't know it was twins

Q: Who did she ask?

A: Shem, the son of Noach

Q: What did he answer?

A: That she was expecting twins and that they were fighting over

Q: What were the names of Rivka's children?

A: Yaakov and Esav

Q: Who was born first?

A: Esav, and Yaakov was holding on to his heel

Q: What happened when Esav came back from hunting one time?

A: He was hungry and Yaakov was cooking lentil soup and he traded his birthright for the soup

Q: Why was Yaakov cooking lentils?

A: For his father, Yitzchak, who was mourning Avraham Avinu

Q: What did Yitzchak want to do before he died?

A: Bless his children

Q: What did Yaakov do?

A: Dressed up like Esav, and took the firstborn blessing

Q: Why didn't Yitzchak know who it was?

A: He was blind

Harder Questions

Why was it important that Yitzchak look like Avraham?

25:19 - So everyone would agree that Avraham was indeed his father.

Why does the Torah stress that Rivka was Betuel's daughter and Lavan's sister?

25:20 - To praise her, that even though her family was evil she was righteous.

What are the two differences between Tamar's pregnancy and Rivka's pregnancy?

25:24 - Rivka gave birth at full term to two children, one righteous and one wicked. Tamar gave birth after seven months to two righteous children.

Why was Esav named Esav?

25:25 - He was born fully developed. The name Esav is based on the Hebrew word for "made".

Who gave Yaakov his name?

25:26 G-d.

How did Esav deceive his father?

25:27 - Esav deceived Yitzchak by asking questions that suggested that he was very strict in mitzvah observance.

Why was Esav faint when he returned from the field?

25:29 - From having murdered.

Why are lentils a food for mourners?

25:30 - They are round like a wheel and mourning is like a revolving wheel that eventually touches everyone.

What was the birthright that Yaakov bought from Esav?

25:31 - The right to bring sacrifices.

Why was Yitzchak not permitted to go to Egypt?

26:2 - Through the *akeida* he had attained the status of a *korban* and was forbidden to leave Eretz Canaan.

Why did the Philistines plug up the wells?

26:15 - They felt that either marauders would attack to capture the wells, or, if attacking for other reasons, they would use the wells as a water supply.

Why did Yitzchak lose his sight? (three reasons)

27:1 - a) From the smoke of the incense offered by Esav's wives to their idols; b) From the angels' tears which fell into Yitzchak's eyes at the time of the *akeida*; c) In order for Yaakov to receive the blessings.

At what age should one anticipate his own death?

27:2 - When he reaches five years from the age his parents were when they passed away, until five years after.

Why did Rivka ask Yaakov to bring *two* kid goats?

27:9 - One for Yitzchak and the other to offer as a *korban Pesach*.

Why did Esav leave his special garments with Rivka?

27:15 - He suspected that his wives might steal them.

What fragrance did Yitzchak detect on Yaakov's garments?

27:27 - The scent of *Gan Eden*.

What was the "fat of the land" promised to Esav?

27:36 - Italy.

When will Esav be freed from subjugation to Yaakov?

27:40 - When the Jewish People transgress the Torah.

What inspired Esav to marry the daughter of Yishmael?

28:7 - Seeing that his father despised his current wives, he resolved to take a wife from his father's family.

Knowing that Machalat was Yishmael's daughter, it's self-evident that she was the sister of Nevayot. Why, then, does the Torah state that Esav married "Yishmael's daughter, the sister of Nevayot?"

28:9 - To indicate that Yishmael died between her betrothal and her wedding, and that it was Nevayot who gave his sister in marriage to Esav. Knowing the date of Yishmael's death, we can determine the date of Esav's marriage and thus Yaakov's age, 63, at the time of his flight from Esav.

Good Shabbos!!!