

PARSHAT TOL'DOT  
Genesis, Ch. 25, v 19 - Ch. 28, v 9

Parenting is No Job for Sissies.

1. Should a parent take on the power to absolve a child of guilt for his/her unethical or immoral behavior and thereby excuse a moral and/or ethical transgression?
2. Is it wise or even possible to maintain a family's cohesiveness when the various children of that family have vastly different sets of values and priorities?
3. How might a family cope with powerful sibling rivalry?
4. How would you suggest parents deal with the issue of apparent favoritism, particularly when one child appears to demonstrate the very qualities the parent/parents admire and desire?

With Mind so Blind I Cannot See?

1. Aside from having his physical needs met (hunger, warmth, etc.) is there some deeper and more profound explanation for Yitzchak's favoritism towards Esav?
2. Do you think Yitzchak was aware of or had any understanding of the depth's of his sons' sibling rivalry?
3. Do you believe that Yitzchak was really deceived by Yakov's and Rivkah's trickery?
4. Knowing that he had been deceived, should Yitzchak have confronted Yakov about his attempts at deception before giving Yakov his final blessing prior to Yakov's departure to Rivkah's ancestral home?

The Impact of Birth Order and Obligations to the Next Generation: L'Dor V'Dor.

1. Why does the Torah focus so much attention on the blessings that Yitzchak gives his two sons?
2. What did receiving blessings from one's father mean?
3. What is the deeper meaning of the blessing given to Yakov as contrasted with the blessing given to Esav?
4. Is a blessing to be valued and fulfilled if obtained through subterfuge?
5. Are the benefits that accrue to the "first-born" a privilege or a right? How does this question affect the brothers in this parshah?
6. If you had the opportunity, what "blessing" would you give to each of your children/grandchildren, recognizing their individuality, as you attempt to provide guidance and support in their roles in life?