

Parsha Plug Parshat Toldot

Bereshit 25:27-28	בראשית כה:כז-כח
27 And the youths grew up, and Esav was a man who understood hunting, a man of the field, whereas Yaakov was an innocent man, dwelling in tents. 28 And Yitzchak loved Esav because [his] game was in his mouth, but Rivka loved Yaakov.	<p>כֹּז וַיִּגְדְּלוּ הַנְּעָרִים וַיְהִי עֵשָׂו אִישׁ יָדַע צֹיֵד אִישׁ שָׂדֵה וַיַּעֲקֹב אִישׁ תָּם יוֹשֵׁב אֹהֶלִים: כֹּחַ וַיֶּאֱהָב יִצְחָק אֶת־עֵשָׂו פֶּי־צֹיֵד בְּפִיו וְרִבְקָה אֶהָבֵת אֶת־יַעֲקֹב:</p>

Midrash Aggada on Bereshit 25:27	מדרש אגדה (בובר) בראשית כה: כז
And the youths grew up: A parable of a myrtle and a thorn bush that grew next to each other. When they were small, they were indistinguishable. But when they grew, the myrtle gave a good smell and the thorn bush brought forth thorns. So too with Esav and Yaakov-- all of the time that they were young, no one could tell who was the righteous one and who was the wicked one. When they grew up, Esav was a man who knew hunting, hunting creatures and killing them. But Yaakov was a simple man who dwelled in tents-- he learned in the beit midrash of Ever and the beit midrash of Shem.	<p>ויגדלו הנערים וגו'. משל להדס ועיצמוני שהיו גדלים זה אצל זה, כשהם קטנים אין אדם מכיר אותם איזה הוא הדס ואיזה הוא עיצמוני, כיון שגדל ההדס נתן ריחו הטוב ועיצמוני הוציא חוחו, כך עשו ויעקב כל זמן שהם קטנים לא היה אדם יודע איזה מהם יהיה צדיק, ואיזה מהם רשע, כיון שגדלו היה עשו איש יודע צד, שהיה ציד הבריות והרגן, אבל יעקב איש תם יושב אהלים, שהיה למד בבית מדרשו של עבר ובבית מדרשו של שם:</p>

Rashi on Bereshit 25:27	רש"י בראשית כה:כז
<p>Who understood hunting: [He knew how] to trap and to deceive his father with his mouth and ask him, "Father, how do we tithe salt and straw?" His father thereby thought that he was scrupulous in his observance of the commandments.</p> <p>An innocent man: He was not an expert in all these [matters]. Like his heart, so was his mouth. A person who is not astute at deceiving is called innocent.</p>	<p>יודע ציד: לצוד ולרמות את אביו בפיו, ושואלו אבא היאך מעשרין את המלח ואת התבן, כסבור אביו שהוא מדקדק במצות:</p> <p>תם: אינו בקי בכל אלה, אלא כלבו כן פיו. מי שאינו חריף לרמות קרוי תם:</p>

Kli Yakar on Bereshit 25:27	כלי יקר בראשית כה:כז
Esav is called a man of the field because he would go to demand engaged women there specifically because a woman's voice could not be heard when she screamed [in the field, see Devarim 22:27]...That Yaakov dwelled in the tents means that he cleaved to his wife and to no one else.	<p>...קרא לעשו איש שדה כי הלך לבקשם שם כדי שקולה לא ישמע כשתצעק...והיה יושב אוהלים ודבק באשתו ולא באחרת...</p>

Seforno on Bereshit 25:27	ספורנו בראשית כה:כז
<p>איש שדה, an expert farmer. יושב אהלים, the plural mode indicates that the Torah speaks of two distinctly different kinds of tents; one is the tent used by shepherds, the other the tent described as בל-יצען described in Isaiah 33:20 (a reference to Jerusalem or the Temple). The function of that “tent” is to help people come closer to God and to gain insight into His ways and as a result to become holy, inspired by His glory.</p>	<p>איש שדה. יודע בעבודת האדמה. יושב אהלים. שני מיני אהלים האחד אהל רועי והשני אהל בל יצען שבו התבונן להכיר בוראו ונקדש בכבודו:</p>

Rabbi Shimshon Rafael Hirsch on Bereshit 25:28
<p>That Yitzchak’s sympathies were more inclined toward Esav, and Rivka’s to Yaakov can be easily explained by their attraction to their opposites...The sympathies are explainable, but parents should not allow such hidden feelings to influence them in making any difference in their love towards their children.</p>

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, <i>Why Did Isaac Love Esau? Toldot 5777</i>
<p>The Maggid of Dubnow adds a perceptive comment as to why Isaac, but not Rebekah, was deceived. Rebekah grew up with the wily Laban. She knew deception when she saw it. Isaac, by contrast, had grown up with Abraham and Sarah. He only knew total honesty and was thus easily deceived...So the classic answer is that Isaac loved Esau because he simply did not know who or what Esau was. But there is another possible answer: that Isaac loved Esau precisely because he did know what Esau was. In the early twentieth century someone brought to the great Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Kook, first Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi of pre-state Israel, the following dilemma. He had given his son a good Jewish education. He had always kept the commands at home. Now however the son had drifted far from Judaism. He no longer kept the commandments. He did not even identify as a Jew. What should the father do? “Did you love him when he was religious?” asked Rav Kook. “Of course,” replied the father. “Well then,” Rav Kook replied, “Now love him even more.” Sometimes love can do what rebuke cannot. It may be that the Torah is telling us that Isaac was anything but blind as to his elder son’s true nature. But if you have two children, one well behaved, the other liable to turn out badly, to whom should you devote greater attention? With whom should you spend more time? It may be that Isaac loved Esau not blindly but with open eyes, knowing that there would be times when his elder son would give him grief, but knowing too that the moral responsibility of parenthood demands that we do not despair of or disown a wayward son...So, was Isaac right or wrong to love Esau? Esau reciprocated the love, but remained Esau, the hunter, the man of the field, not the man to carry forward the demanding covenant with the invisible God and the spiritual sacrifices it called for. Not all children follow the path of their parents. If it was Isaac’s intent that Esau should do so, he failed. But there are some failures that are honourable. Loving your children, whatever they become, is one, for surely that is how God loves us.</p>