

Parashat Toldot: In Defence of Rivkah [Rebecca]



Bereshiyth [Genesis] 25:19-28:9

Introduction: After last week's wonderful story of Rivkah [Rebecca] and her supernatural calling & marriage to Yitschaq [Isaac] our story continues in Toldot meaning generations where Yitschaq [Isaac] becomes so Rich & blessed that conflict arises over the Wells with the Philistines around Gerar but finally he can settle at Beer Sheva meaning the Well of the Oath known today as Beersheba. After 20 years of Bareness Rivkah [Rebecca] finally is with child and this is where our story begins.

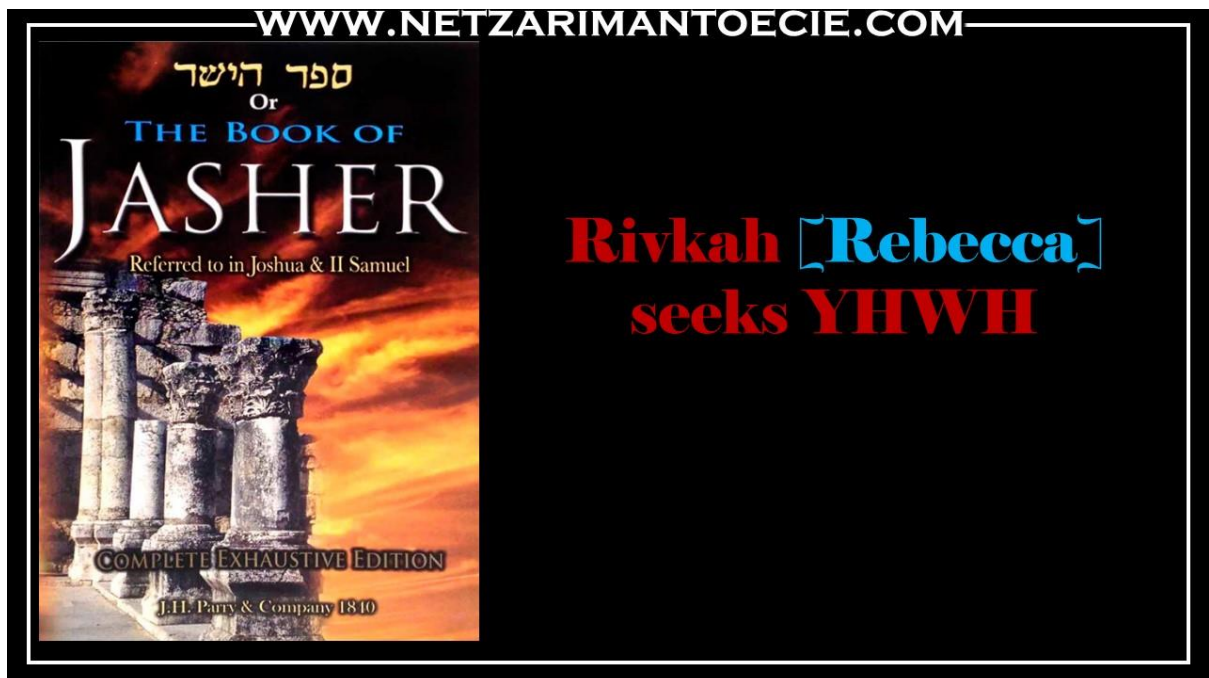
The Events within the Portion:

1. Rivkah finally becomes pregnant after 20 years & seeks advice from YHWH.
2. Yitschaq [Isaac] settles in Gerar calling Rivkah his sister but is discovered.
3. Yitschaq becomes rich, digs wells but is contested until the 3rd Well and dwells there.
4. YHWH appears to Yitschaq & Abimelek makes a peace agreement.
5. Rivkah [Rebecca] brings forth Esav & Yaacov [Jacob].
6. Esav [Esau] marries Canaanite women grieving his parents & the deception of Yitschaq occurs.
7. Yaacov [Jacob] sent to Laban's House to find a wife.
8. Esav marries Ishmael's daughter Machalat to appease his parents.

The Great Struggle

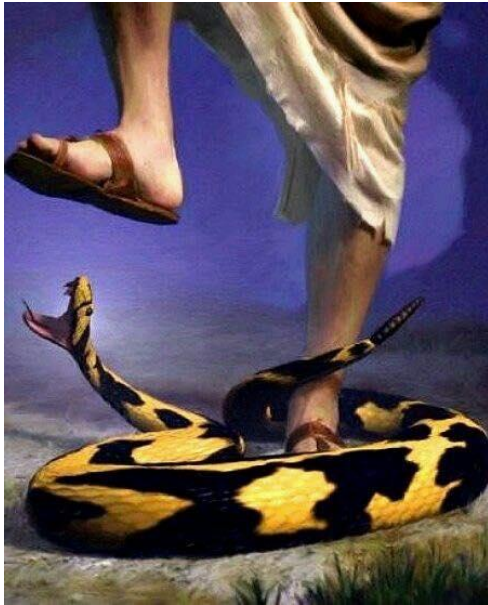


As we read in the book of **Yasher**, like with Sarah, Rivkah was plagued with bareness so Yitschaq [Isaac] & Rivkah [Rebecca] journey to the place of Yitschaq's life changing event to the land of Moriah to pray. The Lord heard their prayer & Rivkah conceived. However, after about seven months the children struggled within her & it pained her greatly.



We read in **Yasher 26:10** **And she went to the land of Moriah to seek the Lord on account of this; and she went to Shem and Eber his son to make enquires of them in this matter.**

I do truly see this struggle within her womb as the sign going all way back to the prophetic words found in:



Bereshiyth [Genesis] 3:15 “And I put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her Seed. He shall crush your head and you shall crush His heel.”

Can it be that these two seeds reflect this prophetic thought since we also read this statement from Yahweh which may seem rather unfair from a human perspective in:

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Romans 9:11 Yet, before they were born or had done any good or evil – in order that the purpose of Elohim, according to election, might stand, not of works but of Him who calls – **12** it was said to her, “The greater shall serve the lesser,” **13** as it has been written, Ya'aqob I have loved, but Esaw I have hated.” [Malachi 1:3] **14** What, then, shall we say? Is there unrighteousness with Elohim? Let it not be!

It is with this thought that we see these two being born, one reflecting the nature of the flesh which will become very apparent as we progress in the story. The prophetic word we see concerning these reveals the Divine choice of Elohim in the world today. Have you ever thought why you believe & not someone else? Surely it is in the hands of Elohim. We even find this thought with our Master Yeshua [Yahusha] in His day when He says this:



Yahuchanan [John] 6:44 No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

This is the joy we have found, that out of all the World we have been called not because of anything we have done but just like Ya'acov [Jacob] through the choice of Yahweh which we

cannot fully grasp. This has been a contention through all the generations of faith, but this is the undeserved favour or Grace of Yahweh.

We find Yeshua often confronted with the religious Pharisees of His day and makes this statement that greatly incensed them that they picked up stones to stone Him. These are those words:



Yahuchanan [John] 8: 42
Yahusha [Yeshua] said to them, "If Elohim were your Father, you would love Me, for I came forth from Elohim, and am here. For I have not come of Myself, but He sent Me. **43** "Why do you not know what I say? Because you are unable to hear My Word. **44** "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you wish to do.

Sibling Rivalry

Is it not strange that failure to perceive the truth of Yahweh Elohim relates so often to food? This situation is not different, for we read that Yitschaq [Isaac] in his fleshly desire is guided by his appetite for a Savoury dish such as he loves after which he will bless Esav [Esau].



Formerly Esav himself was tested concerning the value he placed on his firstborn birthright when he returned from a hunting trip and was weak & famished from the hunt and Ya'acov [Jacob] was making a red lentil stew. We read this in:

Ivriim [Hebrews] 12:15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of Elohim; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; 16 lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.

Is that any different than Yahudah [Judas]:



Who was one of the chosen Disciples even experiencing miracles when the 12 went out in two to announce the Kingdom but gave that up for 30 pieces of silver.

Rivkah's [Rebecca's] defence:

Previously we discovered how the Character of Rivkah was so beautifully revealed, so we now need to dig deeper into this story to see what we may have missed.



At the Twins birth the first was named **Ezav** [Esau] which stems from the word **Asah**

meaning to do so he is seen as a doer since he emerges at birth as very developed covered in hair, so Yitschaq & Rivkah together call him **Esav**. We do see how he grows to be a doer since he becomes a hunter & a man of action which Yitschaq likes.



When **Yaacov** [Jacob] comes out holding Esav's Heel it is only Yitschaq that names him & Rivkah remains silent. Maybe it is not a nice name as it speaks of being crooked while later Yaacov's name is changed by Yahweh to **Yisrael** which can mean "**Straight with El**".

We know how Rivkah [Rebecca] loved Yaacov & scripture suggests that he is a **simple** man meaning **child-like** or **naïve, unsophisticated** living in tents & not one of action. Now Rivkah overhears **Yitschaq** [Isaac] talking to Esav to go and hunt & prepare some venison so Yitschaq [Isaac] can bless Esav [Esau].

Rivkah knows that this is the opportunity for **Yaacov** [Jacob] to show that he can be a man of action so she prepares him to go to his father so that his father may eat & bless Yaacov [Jacob] and that is all she says. I want you to really focus in here and read without the end in mind. Is she telling him to deceive his father? There's no mention of deception, whatsoever.

Could it be that Rivkah was encouraging Yaacov to go to his father & make his case? The mere fact that he comes to father to stand before him with confidence and make that case with him having food and say,

"Father, I overheard what you said, I can bring food to you too. Bless me."

Suddenly that would be a new Yaakov.

"You can get this blessing, my son. Go to him. become the person who can get this blessing."

That's all she is saying. If anything, not only does she not have deception on her mind, she has the opposite.

"You're going to cast off the name Yaakov."

There's going to be nothing crooked about this. You're going to go to your father, you're going to make a case, straight forward and your father will bless you."

Rivkah is saying, "I'm, sort of, ushering you into this new life, the life of the doer. You're going to stand up there and you're going to take your first steps into this new world, but you can do it my son. Just go do it. However, Yaacov is saying I'm no doer and Father will say, **"Yaakov, come on. Who are you? You're the big doer? Look at you. You're not a hunter, you're not a doer, you're not a chef, you're not an anything. It's not going to work, Mom. It will seem in his eyes as if I'm deceiving him."**

Rivkah [Rebecca] in her great love and compassion for him says, **"my son, if you're worried about being cursed, don't let that bother you. If he curses you in that kind of way, then the curse will go on me. I'm just doing what a good mother would do here. I'm trying to give you confidence."**

The sign of a doer is taking the risk and saying to Yitschaq **"Father, I know that you said that you'd like to bless Esav, but I want to make a case to you that you can bless me too. I can have those qualities that you love so much in him and therefore I can be trusted to carry on this legacy that you seek to pass on."**

It's not really a deception, but this is a progression to cause Yaacov to assert himself as a doer. Rivkah is encouraging him every step of the way but reaches a climax in the very next stage of the story where, tragically, it all begins to fall apart.



Stop right there. Pretend you do not know what happens next. Would you really think that a deception is happening now? She never tells him to go deceive his father. She just puts those clothes on him. But why would she do that if she doesn't mean to deceive Yitschaq. **Rivkah's** thinking, I know what going to happen. He's going to go before his father and he's going to have that tremor in his voice and he's not going to be confident. He's not going to

feel like a doer. He's going to be so insecure about those smooth hands. What can I do to help him? And she thinks about one last thing she can do to help **scaffold him**, to help make him feel like that doer. Not only will she help him by cooking the food for him, not only will she help him by assuming the risk of the curse for him, but she's going to help him one last way. She's going to find clothes, those **clothes of Esav**. She'll dress him in those clothes. She'll give those skins of sheep and put them on his smooth hands so that he won't have to worry about those smooth hands when he goes to Father. She'll take care of one last problem for him and maybe if he's wearing those clothes, he'll feel more **Esav-like**. He'll feel more **doer-like**. There's a heroic mom who just wants her son, to go out and make the case to Father that he's a doer and that he can be everything that he wants him to be. Maybe that's what leads to the very next tragic moment.

What happens when Yaakov approaches his father. Yitschaq [Isaac] says the fateful words, - **"Who are you, my son?"** A very, very good question indeed. He looks at the clothes and looks at himself and then the words come out. - **I am Esav, your firstborn son**. You can imagine, **Rivkah** [Rebecca] listening from outside and hearing these words and it's like, **"Oh my goodness, what did he even say?"** That was off script. What are you even doing? This wasn't part of the plan." Now he's got to ad-lib his way through this, and it turns into a deception.

It was never planned to be a deception. That's not what she planned. It's not what he planned. it's almost as if the clothes overshadow who he really is, and he just feels like Esav wearing those clothes and he just said it. You know, if you wanted to assess blame, **Rebecca** pushed him out there and he's not quite ready for it. He decided to go when he's not quite ready to go and then, you know, there's **Yitschaq** [Isaac] who really has it only in his head that he wants to bless the doer. Here's this kid who wants to be seen as the doer. You could find enough blame to go around in the family, but it's not the way it appears.

Conclusion:

It is so easy to see the villain in the story, this approach however may cause us to look with a bit more compassion on the characters of this sad story. We know the gentil character of **Rivkah** from last week that is extremely generous & unselfish that surely has not changed. Yaacov however must have been somewhat, a **Mummy's boy** lacking confidence & **Yitschaq** [Isaac] is not without fault as his choices are faulty knowing that a prophecy was already given concerning the younger, but Yitschaq [Isaac] revealed his favouritism.



May we always look to one another with the heart of compassion and love as we are human & even though Yaacov failed to trust the outcome, **Yahweh** in his goodness never left Yaacov through his days when he was separated from his family & away from the promised land. We also know that Yaacov [Jacob] never saw his mum **Rivkah** again which must have been very traumatic. We can be assured too, that even when we do fail, our Master will never leave us nor forsake us for we are a chosen people whom he has called.

Haftarah: Malachi 1:1-8



The setting here is that only about 50,000 exiles had returned from Babylon around the year 538-536BC. The nation however expressed doubt about Elohim's love, but He affirms his love by recalling His covenant choice of **Ya'acov** [Jacob] and his offspring over **Esav** [Esau] apart from human merit. No one should conclude that Yahweh does not love them because he afflicted them but rather because He loves them, He afflicted them. This portion then addresses **the Priests**, the Nation's leaders who through the sacrifices are showing contempt for Elohim. What we read is that the Priests were offering ceremonial unclean or blemished sacrifices that were strictly forbidden in Torah.

Netzarim Ketuvim: Romiyim [Romans] 9:6-16



Shaul [Paul] in this reading illustrates that only the descendants of Yitschaq [Isaac] could inherit the promises and not the children of the flesh. Only Abraham's spiritual children can enjoy the promises made to Abraham not based on merit or demerit but on election. This may seem hard to fathom so Shaul then asks **“What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with Elohim? Certainly not.**

This will always be a hard thought to understand but we just need to accept it & rejoice that in Yahweh's Divine choice we have been given that great call through his mercy towards us.

Amein! Shavua Tov Alekhem : Have a Blessed week.