



OD YOSEF HAI NEWSLETTER

ROSH YESHIVAH AND COMMUNITY RABBI
DAYAN ABRAHAM DAVID SHLI"TA

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Thoughts on TOLDOT Year 24

by Dayan Abraham David

The parasha elaborates about Esav selling his birthright the '*bechorah*' for a pot of lentils '*nazid adashim*', and ridicules and criticises him for it. '*Al ken kara shemo edom*', '*vayibez Esav et haBechorah*', for this he was called Edom and he despised the rights of the first born. The Midrash tells us that on that day Esav had committed five cardinal sins including murder and rape. This is learned out from a remez in the pasuk '*Vayabo Esav min haSade vehu ayef*'. How is it that these abominable deeds of Esav are not mentioned explicitly and for which the name Edom would have been well suited indicating his bloodthirsty nature? And him being called Edom after a seemingly trivial episode with the pot of red lentils needs explanation.

The Midrash tells us on the pasuk '*Vayomer Esav belibo*', Esav said in his heart, that the wicked are controlled by their hearts. As it says '*Amar nabal belibo ein Flokim*', whereas tzadikim are in control of their hearts as it says '*VeChana medaberet al libah*', Chana spoke to her heart and '*Vayomer David el libo*', and David spoke to his heart. We have a heart and a mind. The heart is the source of our feelings, lusts and yearnings. Our mind the source of intelligence and understanding. A tzaddik is one who is

in control of his lusts and physical yearnings. Using his understanding and intelligence, the message of the soul, controls his basic and animal instincts and urges, that is why it is referred to as '*Vayomer el libo*', the soul speaks and commands the heart turning it to the service of G-d. Whereas the '*Rasha*' is '*beLibo*', with his heart, following the dictates of his heart. The heart of Esav could dictate his beliefs, control even his intelligence and mind. Even though Rashi tells us that it was the red lentils, but lentils when cooked are not quite a red pottage, yet Esav saw them as red, this was the colour that attracted him, the redness of blood and violence, and his yearning for this tinted his vision. He did not see the lentils Yaacov was cooking for his father Yitzhak, who was mourning the death of Avraham, as a food for mourners, as some eat boiled eggs nowadays to remind people of the cycle of life, and like the world which is round, there is no end just transition. He only saw what he wanted, a red mass appetising to his nature. When Yaacov asked him to sell the '*bechorah*' he was quite willing even reasoning with himself that the service of the '*bechorah*', the priesthood, was too dangerous and could cause his demise if he was not careful in the service in the Temple etc. The accompanying blessings of a spiritual life were not rewarding enough for such sacrifice. The red pottage was too much of a temptation. Yet when Yaacov took the '*berachot*

instead of him, he cried bitterly to his father, with seemingly great belief in the spiritual power of his father's blessings, to the extent of wanting to kill his brother, for his heart could even make him believe that he could receive benefit from the spiritual now. The Torah by describing the episode of the pottage of lentils explains the essence of Esav whom Yaakov and his descendants in the future would have to contend with. Esav could be bribed and that is how our Rabbis of blessed memory led us in the galut of EDOM. His physical needs could dictate his thinking.

TORAH GEMS

Yaakov brings his father Yitzhak the delicacies his mother had cooked, so that Yaakov should receive the *Berachot* instead of his brother Esav. Rifka recognised Yaakov as the Tzadik who deserved the blessings and not Esav, she felt she could not convince Yitzhak about it since Esav had trapped his father with his cunning '*Ki Tsayid Befiv*'. She made Yaakov wear the garments of Esav, to appear as Esav so that Yaakov should receive the full hearted *Beracha* of Yitzhak. Initially Yitzhak seemed to have doubts because of Yaakov's manner of speech, but when he felt the hairy goats-skin on Yaakov's neck he was reassured. Before he gave the blessing he asked Yaakov to draw near and to kiss him. The *pasuk* then says '*Vayarach Reyach Begadav Vaybarchehu*' he smelled the odour of his clothes and he blessed him saying the smell of my son is as that of the field G-d has blessed, meaning the smell of Gan Eden. As Rashi explains that when Yaakov drew near to him the fragrance of Gan Eden entered with him and he

was sure this was the one who deserved the *Berachot*. Rebi Yehudah Sadka, the Rosh Yeshivah of Porat Yosef, asks why does it mention he smelled the garments he was wearing, since the fragrance of Gan Eden came; because of Yaakov who was the Tzadik, why not mention the fragrance of his son as he did afterwards? He explains, a Tzadik for himself might be alright but this is not enough to become a father of Klal Yisrael and to receive Abraham's *Berachot*, only when his fragrance also permeates and influences others outside himself, then would he be really worthy. The fragrance on the garments indicated this power of influence. We could answer this question differently with another *Midrash* which reads the words '*Reyach Begadav* as '*Reyach Bogdav*' the fragrance of his rebellious ones, giving examples of the special qualities inherent in even the most rebellious Jews. One reference was Yosef Meshita who consorted with the Romans at the time of the destruction of the second Temple. The Romans after conquering Jerusalem and the Holy Mount, did not want to enter the Holy Temple themselves but to make a bigger '*Chillul Hashem*' they wanted a Jew to go in first, to ransack the Holy Articles. They offered Yosef Meshita to go in and he was allowed to keep what he took out. He went in and took out the '*Menorah Hazahav*' the Golden Menorah, but they would not let him keep it since it was not fit for the use of an ordinary person, but a ruler. They told him to go a second time and keep what he took out but he did not agree for something had stirred in him when he entered the Holy Temple. They offered him much wealth and honour but he refused saying 'it is enough I have

angered my G-d once by entering His Holy Place, I will not do so again'. They tortured him to force him to go in again, by scraping his flesh with a metallic plane. He died in agony crying words of regret that he had angered his Maker. And another 'Yakum Ish Serurot' a 'rasha' the nephew of Rebe Yosi Ben Yoezer, even taunted his uncle when he was being taken to be crucified by the Romans for teaching Torah and keeping *mitzvot*. But when his uncle rebuked him sharply, the rebuke penetrated his heart and he did *Teshuva* and carried out on himself the four death penalties for *Kaparah*. This is what Yitzhak smelled in the garments, that even the rebellious *Rashayim* of Yaakov's children have in them that spark of truth, which can suddenly ignite their being to *Teshuvah*. They are all worthy of Abraham's *Beracha*.

STORIES OF TZADDIKIM

Before every judgement in Beth Din, Rabbi Mordecai Eliyahu z"l was very careful to say a prayer that G-d should help them to come to the truth. His fellow Dayanim once asked him, what was the nature of this prayer. He answered '*Elokim Nitsav be adath El*', G-d is present at the time of Din judgement, hence I turn to Him for help to come to the truth! That very day a difficult judgement came before them in the Beth Din Hagadol. It had been passed on from the Lower Beth Din who did not want to come to a very difficult decision to '*pasel*' six children as '*mamzerim*'. The story was as follows: A man claimed that the six children born to him from his wife were not really his since he was incapable of having children. Hence he would not have to pay for their maintenance. According to Torah Law he would be believed. He brought doctors and

professors from 'Hadassah' who supported this that he could never have had children. He brought other papers and testimonies as well from other medical papers stating that with his illness he could never have, or had, the ability to have children. It seemed like an open and shut case that the Beth Din would have to declare his children '*mamzerim*' who would not be able to marry into '*Kahal Yisrael*'.

Rabbi Eliyahu asked for a delay and that the Dayanim carry on with other cases. They asked what the delay was for and he told them, '*Siyata D'Shamaya*', for the help from Heaven. He then left the room and asked his secretary to bring a certain Sefer from the library as he wished to do some research. She went and asked the librarian, who by mistake gave her another Sefer which she took to him. He immediately realized it was not what he had asked for but since it was brought to him he said to himself, G-d has sent this to me on purpose. He opened it at a certain page and there he found what he was looking for. The responsa brought the case of an illness where a person cannot have children, however, if they do a certain procedure they are able to, for a limited amount of time. It gave the name of the illness and everything in great detail. The Rabbi went back to the Dayanim. He called the husband back, stood up and pointed his finger at the husband. "You have lied and fooled everyone. You can have children and these are yours! You have such and such illness (he gave the name) and with this procedure you can have children!" The husband fainted on the spot; they revived him and again he looked at the Rabbi and fainted again. He eventually blurted out: "This Rabbi must be a magician, how could he know what I did? Nobody found out only him, he must be a magician!"

The Rabbi turned to the other Dayanim: "You heard him admit, now

let us write a Pasak that the children are his and they are permitted. The Dayanim asked him how he found this Sefer. He answered them: "I did not, it was help from Heaven, the librarian sent a Sefer which I did not ask for, 'Si yata D'Shemiah'".

Shabbat Shalom

HALACHOT

1) The Mitzvah of Tefillin is an exceptionally important mitzvah for the Tefillin contain verses of the Torah expressing the unity of G-d and the acceptance upon our self of His duty; verses of the miracles of Yetzeyat Mitzraim basic tenets of our faith. Harsh warnings are said about those who do not put them on.

2) We have in mind when we put the Tefillin on our arm placing the box facing our heart, that our heart the source of our will is to his service and the Tefillin on our heads to remember all the miracles He has done for us and all we owe Him.

3) We put on the Tefillin only after we have put on the Tallit. We should have them on at the beginning of Shaharit for the Shema Yisrael we say before the Akeda when possible. We say the parasha of 'Kadesh Li Kol Bechor' after we have put on the Tefillin but if we do not have time it can be said after the Tefilah while we still have the Tefillin on. But if we forgot and took off the Tefillin we do not need to put them on again just to say the Kadesh Li.

4) The Ben Ish Hai says that if someone who did not have a Talit Gedolah with him and puts on the Tefillin, when he later gets the Tallit, he should take off his Tefillin, put on the Tallit and then put on the Tefillin again but without a beracha.

***Avot vu banim is one and a half hours after Shabbat
Please try to attend***

***If you wish to sponsor a
Kiddush
Please contact
Nathaniel Bendayan 07825
871749
For Seuda Shlishit
or to rent the
Nancy Reuben Hall
for a Simcha
Please contact
Yanky David 07725 408724***

***We have a regular Youth
Minyan organised by
Jason Ibrahim and David Douer
followed by a kiddush***

SHABBAT TIMES

Shabbat commences	4:04 pm
Shabbat terminates	5:12 pm
Mincha Erev Shabbat	3:50 pm
Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat	
Shacharit	8:30 am
Mincha on Shabbat followed by Seuda Shlishit & Arbit	3:40 pm
Shacharit Weekdays	6:50 am
Shacharit Sundays	7:00 am
Mincha	1:30 pm
Arbit	7:30 pm