

Tol'dot (History) 25:19-28:9

(Gen 25:19 CJB) Here is the history of Yitz'chak, Avraham's son. Avraham fathered Yitz'chak.

(Gen 25:20 CJB) Yitz'chak was forty years old when he took Rivkah, the daughter of B'tu'el the Arami from Paddan-Aram and sister of Lavan the Arami, to be his wife.

(Gen 25:21 CJB) Yitz'chak prayed to Adonai on behalf of his wife, because she was childless. Adonai heeded his prayer, and Rivkah became pregnant.

(Gen 25:22 CJB) The children fought with each other inside her so much that she said, "If it's going to be like this, why go on living?" So she went to inquire of Adonai,

(Gen 25:23 CJB) who answered her, "There are two nations in your womb. From birth they will be two rival peoples. One of these peoples will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger."

(Gen 25:24 CJB) When the time for her delivery came, there were twins in her womb.

(Gen 25:25 CJB) The first to come out was reddish and covered all over with hair, like a coat; so they named him `Esav [*completely formed, that is, having hair already*].

(Gen 25:26 CJB) Then his brother emerged, with his hand holding `Esav's heel, so he was called Ya`akov [*he catches by the heel, he supplants*]. Yitz'chak was sixty years old when she bore them.

(Gen 25:27 CJB) The boys grew; and `Esav became a skillful hunter, an outdoorsman; while Ya`akov was a quiet man who stayed in the tents.

(Gen 25:28 CJB) Yitz'chak favored `Esav, because he had a taste for game; Rivkah favored Ya`akov.

(Gen 25:29 CJB) One day when Ya`akov had cooked some stew, `Esav came in from the open country, exhausted,

(Gen 25:30 CJB) and said to Ya`akov, "Please! Let me gulp down some of that red stuff — that red stuff! I'm exhausted!" (This is why he was called Edom [*red*].)

(Gen 25:31 CJB) Ya`akov answered, "First sell me your rights as the firstborn."

(Gen 25:32 CJB) "Look, I'm about to die!" said `Esav. "What use to me are my rights as the firstborn?"

(Gen 25:33 CJB) Ya`akov said, "First, swear to me!" So he swore to him, thus selling his birthright to Ya`akov.

(Gen 25:34 CJB) Then Ya`akov gave him bread and lentil stew; he ate and drank, got up and went on his way. Thus `Esav showed how little he valued his birthright.

(Gen 26:1 CJB) A famine came over the land, not the same as the first famine, which had taken place when Avraham was alive. Yitz'chak went to G'rar, to Avimelekh king of the P'lishtim.

(Gen 26:2 CJB) Adonai appeared to him and said, "Don't go down into Egypt, but live where I tell you.

(Gen 26:3 CJB) Stay in this land, and I will be with you and bless you, because I will give all these lands to you and to your descendants. I will fulfill the oath which I swore to Avraham your father —

(Gen 26:4 CJB) I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky, I will give all these lands to your descendants, and by your descendants all the nations of the earth will bless themselves.

(Gen 26:5 CJB) All this is because Avraham heeded what I said and did what I told him to do — he followed my mitzvot, my regulations and my teachings."

(Gen 26:6 CJB) So Yitz'chak settled in G'rar.

(Gen 26:7 CJB) The men of the place asked him about his wife, and out of fear he said, "She is my sister." He thought, "If I tell them she's my wife, they might kill me in order to take Rivkah. After all, she is a beautiful woman."

(Gen 26:8 CJB) But one day, after he had lived there a long time, Avimelekh king of the P'lishtim happened to be looking out of a window when he spotted Yitz'chak caressing Rivkah his wife.

(Gen 26:9 CJB) Avimelekh summoned Yitz'chak and said, "So she is your wife, after all! How come you said, 'She is my sister'?" Yitz'chak responded, "Because I thought, 'I could get killed because of her.' "

(Gen 26:10 CJB) Avimelekh said, "What is this you have done to us? One of the people could easily have slept with your wife, and you would have brought guilt on us!"

(Gen 26:11 CJB) Then Avimelekh warned all the people: "Whoever touches this man or his wife will certainly be put to death."

(Gen 26:12 CJB) Yitz'chak planted crops in that land and reaped that year a hundred times as much as he had sowed. Adonai had blessed him.

(Gen 26:13 CJB) The man became rich and prospered more and more, until he had become very wealthy indeed.

(Gen 26:14 CJB) He had flocks, cattle and a large household; and the P'lishtim envied him.

(Gen 26:15 CJB) Now the P'lishtim had stopped up and filled with dirt all the wells his father's servants had dug during the lifetime of Avraham his father.

(Gen 26:16 CJB) Avimelekh said to Yitz'chak, "You must go away from us, because you have become much more powerful than we are."

(Gen 26:17 CJB) So Yitz'chak left, set up camp in Vadi G'rar and lived there.

(Gen 26:18 CJB) Yitz'chak reopened the wells which had been dug during the lifetime of Avraham his father, the ones the P'lishtim had stopped up after Avraham died, and called them by the names his father had used for them.

(Gen 26:19 CJB) Yitz'chak's servants dug in the vadi and uncovered a spring of running water.

(Gen 26:20 CJB) But the herdsmen of G'rar quarreled with Yitz'chak's herdsmen, claiming, "That water is ours!" So he called the well `Esek [*quarrel*], because they quarreled with him.

(Gen 26:21 CJB) They dug another well and quarreled over that one too. So he called it Sitnah [*enmity*].

(Gen 26:22 CJB) He went away from there and dug another well, and over that one they didn't quarrel. So he called it Rehovot [*wide open spaces*] and said, "Because now Adonai has made room for us, and we will be productive in the land."

(Gen 26:23 CJB) From there Yitz'chak went up to Be'er-Sheva.

(Gen 26:24 CJB) Adonai appeared to him that same night and said, "I am the God of Avraham your father. Don't be afraid, because I am with you; I will bless you and increase your descendants for the sake of my servant Avraham."

(Gen 26:25 CJB) There he built an altar and called on the name of Adonai. He pitched his tent there, and there Yitz'chak's servants dug a well.

(Gen 26:26 CJB) Then Avimelekh went to him from G'rar with his friend Achuzat and Pikhoh the commander of his army.

(Gen 26:27 CJB) Yitz'chak said to them, "Why have you come to me, even though you were unfriendly to me and sent me away?"

(Gen 26:28 CJB) They answered, "We saw very clearly that Adonai has been with you; so we said, 'Let there be an oath between us: let's make a pact between ourselves and you

(Gen 26:29 CJB) that you will not harm us, just as we have not caused you offense but have done you nothing but good and sent you on your way in peace. Now you are blessed by Adonai.' "

(Gen 26:30 CJB) Yitz'chak prepared a banquet for them, and they ate and drank.

(Gen 26:31 CJB) The next morning, they got up early and swore to each other. Then Yitz'chak sent them on their way, and they left him peacefully.

(Gen 26:32 CJB) That very day Yitz'chak's servants came and told him about the well they had dug, "We have found water."

(Gen 26:33 CJB) So he called it Shiv`ah [*oath, seven*], and for this reason the name of the city is Be'er-Sheva [*well of seven, well of an oath*] to this day.

(Gen 26:34 CJB) When `Esav was forty years old, he took as wives Y'hudit the daughter of Be'eri the Hitti and Basmat the daughter of Elon the Hitti.

(Gen 26:35 CJB) But they became a cause for embitterment of spirit to Yitz'chak and Rivkah.

(Gen 27:1 CJB) In the course of time, after Yitz'chak had grown old and his eyes dim, so that he couldn't see, he called `Esav his older son and said to him, "My son?" and he answered, "Here I am."

(Gen 27:2 CJB) "Look, I'm old now, I don't know when I will die.

(Gen 27:3 CJB) Therefore, please take your hunting gear — your quiver of arrows and your bow; go out in the country, and get me some game.

(Gen 27:4 CJB) Make it tasty, the way I like it; and bring it to me to eat. Then I will bless you [*as firstborn*], before I die."

(Gen 27:5 CJB) Rivkah was listening when Yitz'chak spoke to his son `Esav. So when `Esav went out to the country to hunt for game and bring it back,

(Gen 27:6 CJB) she said to her son Ya`akov, "Listen! I heard your father telling `Esav your brother,

(Gen 27:7 CJB) 'Bring me game, and make it tasty, so I can eat it. Then I will give you my blessing in the presence of Adonai, before my death.'

(Gen 27:8 CJB) Now pay attention to me, my son; and do what I tell you.

(Gen 27:9 CJB) Go to the flock, and bring me back two choice kids. I will make it tasty for your father, the way he likes it;

(Gen 27:10 CJB) and you will bring it to your father to eat; so that he will give his blessing to you before his death."

(Gen 27:11 CJB) Ya`akov answered Rivkah his mother, "Look, `Esav is hairy, but I have smooth skin.

(Gen 27:12 CJB) Suppose my father touches me — he'll know I'm trying to trick him, and I'll bring a curse on myself, not a blessing!"

(Gen 27:13 CJB) But his mother said, "Let your curse be on me. Just listen to me, and go get me the kids!"

(Gen 27:14 CJB) So he went, got them and brought them to his mother; and his mother prepared them in the tasty way his father loved.

(Gen 27:15 CJB) Next, Rivkah took `Esav her older son's best clothes, which she had with her in the house, and put them on Ya`akov her younger son;

(Gen 27:16 CJB) and she put the skins of the goats on his hands and on the smooth parts of his neck.

(Gen 27:17 CJB) Then she gave the tasty food and the bread she had prepared to her son Ya`akov.

(Gen 27:18 CJB) He went to his father and said, "My father?" He replied, "Here I am; who are you, my son?"

(Gen 27:19 CJB) Ya`akov said to his father, "I am `Esav your firstborn. I've done what you asked me to do. Get up now, sit down, eat the game, and then give me your blessing."

(Gen 27:20 CJB) Yitz'chak said to his son, "How did you find it so quickly, my son?" He answered, "Adonai your God made it happen that way."

(Gen 27:21 CJB) Yitz'chak said to Ya`akov, "Come here, close to me, so I can touch you, my son, and know whether you are in fact my son `Esav or not."

(Gen 27:22 CJB) Ya`akov approached Yitz'chak his father, who touched him and said, "The voice is Ya`akov's voice, but the hands are `Esav's hands."

(Gen 27:23 CJB) However, he didn't detect him; because his hands were hairy like his brother `Esav's hands; so he gave him his blessing.

(Gen 27:24 CJB) He asked, "Are you really my son `Esav?" And he replied, "I am."

(Gen 27:25 CJB) He said, "Bring it here to me, and I will eat my son's game, so that I can give you my blessing." So he brought it up to him, and he ate; he also brought him wine, and he drank.

(Gen 27:26 CJB) Then his father Yitz'chak said to him, "Come close now, and kiss me, my son."

(Gen 27:27 CJB) He approached and kissed him. Yitz'chak smelled his clothes and blessed Ya`akov with these words: "See, my son smells like a field which Adonai has blessed.

(Gen 27:28 CJB) So may God give you dew from heaven, the richness of the earth, and grain and wine in abundance.

(Gen 27:29 CJB) May peoples serve you and nations bow down to you. May you be lord over your kinsmen, let your mother's descendants bow down to you. Cursed be everyone who curses you, and blessed be everyone who blesses you!"

(Gen 27:30 CJB) But as soon as Yitz'chak had finished giving his blessing to Ya`akov, when Ya`akov had barely left his father's presence, `Esav his brother came in from his hunting.

(Gen 27:31 CJB) He too had prepared a tasty meal and brought it to his father, and now he said to his father, "Let my father get up and eat from his son's game, so that you may give me your blessing."

(Gen 27:32 CJB) Yitz'chak his father said to him, "Who are you?" and he answered, "I am your son, your firstborn, `Esav."

(Gen 27:33 CJB) Yitz'chak began trembling uncontrollably and said, "Then who was it that took game and brought it to me? I ate it all just before you came, and I gave my blessing to him. That's the truth, and the blessing must stand."

(Gen 27:34 CJB) When `Esav heard his father's words he burst into loud, bitter sobbing. "Father, bless me too," he begged.

(Gen 27:35 CJB) He replied, "Your brother came deceitfully and took away your blessing."

(Gen 27:36 CJB) `Esav said, "His name, Ya`akov [*he supplants*], really suits him — because he has supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright, and here, now he has taken away my blessing!" Then he asked, "Haven't you saved a blessing for me?"

(Gen 27:37 CJB) Yitz'chak answered `Esav, "Look, I have made him your lord, I have given him all his kinsmen as servants, and I have given him grain and wine to sustain him. What else is there that I can do for you, my son?"

(Gen 27:38 CJB) `Esav said to his father, "Have you only one blessing, my father? Father, bless me too!" `Esav wept aloud,

(Gen 27:39 CJB) and Yitz'chak his father answered him: "Here! Your home will be of the richness of the earth and of the dew of heaven from above.

(Gen 27:40 CJB) You will live by your sword, and you will serve your brother. But when you break loose, you will shake his yoke off your neck."

(Gen 27:41 CJB) `Esav hated his brother because of the blessing his father had given him. `Esav said to himself, "The time for mourning my father will soon come, and then I will kill my brother Ya`akov."

(Gen 27:42 CJB) But the words of `Esav her older son were told to Rivkah. She sent for Ya`akov her younger son and said to him, "Here, your brother `Esav is comforting himself over you by planning to kill you.

(Gen 27:43 CJB) Therefore, my son, listen to me: get up and escape to Lavan my brother in Haran.

(Gen 27:44 CJB) Stay with him a little while, until your brother's anger subsides.

(Gen 27:45 CJB) Your brother's anger will turn away from you, and he will forget what you did to him. Then I'll send and bring you back from there. Why should I lose both of you on the same day?"

(Gen 27:46 CJB) Rivkah said to Yitz'chak, "I'm sick to death of Hitti women! If Ya`akov marries one of the Hitti women, like those who live here, my life won't be worth living."

(Gen 28:1 CJB) So Yitz'chak called Ya`akov, and, after blessing him, charged him: "You are not to choose a wife from the Hitti women.

(Gen 28:2 CJB) Go now to the home of B'tu'el your mother's father, and choose a wife there from the daughters of Lavan your mother's brother.

(Gen 28:3 CJB) May El Shaddai bless you, make you fruitful and increase your descendants, until they become a whole assembly of peoples.

(Gen 28:4 CJB) And may he give you the blessing which he gave Avraham, you and your descendants with you, so that you will possess the land you will travel through, the land God gave to Avraham."

(Gen 28:5 CJB) So Yitz'chak sent Ya`akov away; and he went to Paddan-Aram, to Lavan, son of B'tu'el the Arami, the brother of Rivkah Ya`akov's and `Esav's mother.

(Gen 28:6 CJB) Now `Esav saw that Yitz'chak had blessed Ya`akov and sent him away to Paddan-Aram to choose a wife from there, and that as he blessed him he charged him, "You are not to choose a Kena`ani woman as your wife,"

(Gen 28:7 CJB) and that Ya`akov had listened to his father and mother and gone to Paddan-Aram.

(Gen 28:8 CJB) `Esav also saw that the Kena`ani women did not please Yitz'chak his father.

(Gen 28:9 CJB) So `Esav went to Yishma`el and took, in addition to the wives he already had, Machalat the daughter of Yishma`el Avraham's son, the sister of N'vayot, to be his wife.

Haftarah Tol'dot: Mal'akhi (Malachi) 1:1-2:7

(Mal 1:1 CJB) A prophecy, the word of Adonai to Isra'el through Mal'akhi:

(Mal 1:2 CJB) "I love you," says Adonai. But you ask, "How do you show us your love?" Adonai answers, " `Esav was Ya`akov's brother. Yet I loved Ya`akov

(Mal 1:3 CJB) but hated `Esav. I made his mountains desolate and gave his territory to desert jackals."

(Mal 1:4 CJB) Edom says, "We are beaten down now, but we will come back and rebuild the ruins." Adonai-Tzva'ot answers, "They can build, but I will demolish. They will be called the Land of Wickedness, the people with whom Adonai is permanently angry.

(Mal 1:5 CJB) You will see it and say, 'Adonai is great, even beyond the borders of Isra'el.' "

(Mal 1:6 CJB) "A son honors his father and a servant his master. But if I'm a father, where is the honor due me? and if I'm a master, where is the respect due me? — says Adonai-Tzva'ot to you cohanim who despise my name. You ask, 'How are we despising your name?'

(Mal 1:7 CJB) By offering polluted food on my altar! Now you ask, 'How are we polluting you?' By saying that the table of Adonai doesn't deserve respect;

(Mal 1:8 CJB) so that there's nothing wrong with offering a blind animal as a sacrifice, nothing wrong with offering an animal that's lame or sick. Try offering such an animal to your governor, and see if he will be pleased with you! Would he even receive you?" asks Adonai-Tzva'ot.

(Mal 1:9 CJB) So if you pray now that God will show us favor, what your actions have accomplished is that Adonai-Tzva'ot asks, "Will he receive any of you?

(Mal 1:10 CJB) Why doesn't even one of you shut the doors and thus stop this useless lighting of fires on my altar? I take no pleasure in you," says Adonai-Tzva'ot, "and I will not receive an offering from you.

(Mal 1:11 CJB) For from farthest east to farthest west my name is great among the nations. Offerings are presented to my name everywhere, pure gifts; for my name is great among the nations," says Adonai-Tzva'ot.

(Mal 1:12 CJB) "But you profane it by saying that the table of Adonai is polluted, so that the fruit and food offered deserve contempt.

(Mal 1:13 CJB) You also say, 'It's all so tiresome!' and sniff scornfully at it," says Adonai-Tzva'ot. "Then you bring animals that were taken by violence, or they are lame or sick. This is the sort of offering you bring. Am I supposed to accept this from you?" asks Adonai.

(Mal 1:14 CJB) "Moreover, cursed is the deceiver who has a male animal in his flock that is damaged, but vows and sacrifices to Adonai anyway. For I am a great king," says Adonai-Tzva'ot, "and my name is respected among the nations.

(Mal 2:1 CJB) "Now, cohanim, this command is for you.

(Mal 2:2 CJB) If you won't listen, if you won't pay attention to honoring my name," says Adonai-Tzva'ot, "then I will send the curse on you; I will turn your blessings into curses. Yes, I will curse them, because you pay no attention.

(Mal 2:3 CJB) I will reject your seed; I will throw dung in your faces, the dung from your festival offerings; and you will be carted off with it.

(Mal 2:4 CJB) Then you will know that I sent you this command to affirm my covenant with Levi," says Adonai-Tzva'ot.

(Mal 2:5 CJB) "My covenant with him was one of life and peace, and I gave him these things. It was also one of fear, and he feared me; he was in awe of my name.

(Mal 2:6 CJB) The true Torah was in his mouth, and no dishonesty was found on his lips; he walked with me in peace and uprightness and turned many away from sin.

(Mal 2:7 CJB) A cohen's lips should safeguard knowledge, and people should seek Torah from his mouth, because he is the messenger of Adonai-Tzva'ot.

B'rit Hadashah suggested readings for Parashah Tol'dot: Romans 9:6-16; Messianic Jew (Hebrews) 11:20; 12:14-17

(Rom 9:6 CJB) But the present condition of Isra'el does not mean that the Word of God has failed. For not everyone from Isra'el is truly part of Isra'el;

(Rom 9:7 CJB) indeed, not all the descendants are seed of Avraham; rather, "What is to be called your 'seed' will be in Yitz'chak."

(Rom 9:8 CJB) In other words, it is not the physical children who are children of God, but the children the promise refers to who are considered seed.

(Rom 9:9 CJB) For this is what the promise said: "At the time set, I will come; and Sarah will have a son."

(Rom 9:10 CJB) And even more to the point is the case of Rivkah; for both her children were conceived in a single act with Yitz'chak, our father;

(Rom 9:11 CJB) and before they were born, before they had done anything at all, either good or bad (so that God's plan might remain a matter of his sovereign choice, not dependent on what they did, but on God, who does the calling),

(Rom 9:12 CJB) it was said to her, "The older will serve the younger."

(Rom 9:13 CJB) This accords with where it is written, "Ya`akov I loved, but Esav I hated."

(Rom 9:14 CJB) So are we to say, "It is unjust for God to do this"? Heaven forbid!

(Rom 9:15 CJB) For to Moshe he says, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will pity whom I pity."

(Rom 9:16 CJB) Thus it doesn't depend on human desires or efforts, but on God, who has mercy.

(Heb 11:20 CJB) By trusting, Yitz'chak, in his blessings over Ya`akov and Esav, made reference to events yet to come.

(Heb 12:14 CJB) Keep pursuing shalom with everyone and the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

(Heb 12:15 CJB) See to it that no one misses out on God's grace, that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble and thus contaminates many,

(Heb 12:16 CJB) and that no one is sexually immoral, or godless like Esav, who in exchange for a single meal gave up his rights as the firstborn.

(Heb 12:17 CJB) For you know that afterwards, when he wanted to obtain his father's blessing, he was rejected; indeed, even though he sought it with tears, his change of heart was to no avail.