

# פרשת חיי שרה / Parashat Toledot

Shabbat Kislev 4, 5770, November 21, 2009  
32:1-32:52 MATSATI.COM / Rightly Dividing The Word of G-d  
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## G-d's Choices and Our Attitudes

### השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week's Reading

תורה: Genesis 25:19-28:9  
הפטרה: Malachi 1:1-2:7  
הברית: Romans 9:1-31  
החדשה

10 According to the Parashah reading this week, it appears that Yitzchak prefers Esau over Yaakov (Jacob) when he had decided to bless his sons. Analyzing the Torah text from Parashat Lech Lekha using a linguistic technique called a "theme," the first apparent major constituent that indicates the subject matter of the text (from Parashat Lech Lekha to Toledot) is that G-d has chosen Avraham to become a special nation and the process of choosing continues through to Yaakov. There is however an underlying theme that may not be so obvious but one that deals with G-d's process of choosing.

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## בראשית 27:28-36

28 אֲשֶׁר בָּרַכְוּ יְהוָה: וַיִּתְּן־לָהּ הָאֱלֹהִים מִמַּלְּ שָׁמַיִם  
29 וּמִשְׁמַנֵּי הָאָרֶץ וְרֹב דָּגַן וְתִירֹשׁ: יַעֲבֹדֶה עַמִּים וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה  
לָהּ לְאֲמִים הִנֵּה גִבּוֹר לְאַחִיָּה וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לָהּ בְּנֵי אִמָּה  
30 אַרְרִיָּה אֲחִיו וּמִבְּרִכָּהּ בָּרוּךְ: וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר כָּלָה יַעֲחֹק  
לְבָרְךָ אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וַיְהִי אָךְ יָצָא יַעֲקֹב מֵאֵת פְּנֵי  
31 יַעֲחֹק אָבִיו וַעֲשׂוֹ אֲחִיו בָּא מִצִּידוֹ: וַיַּעַשׂ גַּם־הוּא  
מִטְעָמִים וַיָּבֵא לְאָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר לְאָבִיו יָקָם אָבִי וַיֹּאכַל  
32 מִצִּיד בְּנֵו בַעֲבֹר תִּבְרַכְנִי נַפְשָׁה: וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יַעֲחֹק אָבִיו  
33 מִ־אֶתָּה וַיֹּאמֶר אָנֹכִי בְנֶךָ בְּכָרְךָ עֲשׂוֹ: וַיִּחַדֵּד יַעֲחֹק  
חֲרָדָה גְּדֹלָה עַד־מָאֵד וַיֹּאמֶר מִ־אֲפֹא הוּא הִצִּיד־צִידִי  
וַיָּבֵא לִי וַאֲכַל מִכָּל בְּטָרָם תָּבֹא וְאַבְרָכְהוּ גַם־בְּרוּךְ  
34 יְהוָה: כִּשְׁמַע עֲשׂוֹ אֶת־דִּבְרֵי אָבִיו וַיַּעֲשֶׂק צַעֲקָה גְּדֹלָה  
וּמְרָה עַד־מָאֵד וַיֹּאמֶר לְאָבִיו בְּרַכְנִי גַם־אֲנִי אָבִי:  
35 וַיֹּאמֶר בָּא אַחִיָּה בְּמִרְמָה וַיִּקַּח בְּרִכְתְּךָ: וַיֹּאמֶר הֲכִי  
36 קָרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב וַיַּעֲקֹבֵנִי זֶה פְּעַמִּים אֶת־בְּכֹרְתִי לָקַח  
וַהֲנִה עִתָּה לָקַח בְּרִכְתִּי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלֹא־אֶצְלַת לִי בְרִכָּה:

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### Bereshit / Genesis 27:28-28:9

27:28 Now may God give you of the dew of heaven, And of the fatness of the earth, And an abundance of grain and new wine; 27:29 May peoples serve you, And nations bow down to you; Be master of your brothers, And may your mother's sons bow down to you. Cursed be those who curse you, And blessed be those who bless you.' 27:30 Now it came about, as soon as Isaac had finished blessing Jacob, and Jacob had hardly gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting. 27:31 Then he also made savory food, and brought it to his father; and he said to his father, 'Let my father arise and eat of his son's game, that you may bless me.' 27:32 Isaac his father said to him, 'Who are you?' And he said, 'I am your son, your firstborn, Esau.' 27:33 Then Isaac trembled violently, and said, 'Who was he then that hunted game and brought it to me, so that I ate of all of it before you came, and blessed him? Yes, and he shall be blessed.' 27:34 When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, 'Bless me, even me also, O my father!' 27:35 And he said, 'Your brother came deceitfully and has taken away your blessing.' 27:36 Then he said, 'Is he not rightly named Jacob, for he has supplanted me these two times? He took away my birthright, and behold, now he has taken away my blessing.' And he said, 'Have you not reserved a blessing for me?' (NASB)

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25 There was a divine reason G-d had for choosing only one son over the other. This reason I believe can be categorized as a sub-theme that may characterize the reasons G-d has for choosing each particular offspring of Avraham to become a special nation. To bring this into perspective, I want to look at sefer proverbs and what the apostle Shaul (Paul) has to say about G-d's choice and the heart of men in sefer Romans.

30 Proverbs directs our attention to the heart of men. In proverbs there are two major literary forms (i) exhortation and motivating statements, and (ii) descriptive. Theological descriptive proverbs are based primarily on G-d's revelation rather than experience or observation of the world. Awareness of the literary descriptive form, principal/observation, is useful here within the context of our study because it directly has application on the sub-theme on G-d's choosing Yitzchak over Ishmael and Yaakov over Esau. *Proverbs 15:11 Sheol and Abaddon lie open before the Lord, How much more the hearts of men!* (NASB) (*שאול ואבדון נגד יהוה אף כי לבות בני אדם:*) According to this proverb, G-d knows the depths of death and destruction and how much more the heart of man. Note how a parallel is constructed in *15:11* and used here contrasting death (hell) and destruction (abaddon). Placing these into one sentence and connecting them through a parallelism shows us how G-d perceives the heart of men as places of death and destruction.

40 Rav Shaul (Paul) directs our attention to the "divine choice," concerning the process of choosing that does not contradict G-d's word of promise to His people. In the history of Yitzchak we find clearly what choice is about. Yitzchak was chosen over Ishmael and Yaakov over Esau. There is no arbitrariness looking back on history in the Bible. The choices G-d makes are not based upon man's decision but rather it is based upon the choosing a person who will accomplish His purpose here on earth. Shaul alludes to this in *Romans 9:7* that the children of the flesh are not the children of G-d rather it is the children of the promise which are reckoned by G-d as seed: *Romans 9:7 nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: 'through Isaac your descendants will be named.'* *9:8 That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants.* (NASB) Here we find the revelation of G-d's plan in the choice and the heart of the men He has chosen to fulfill His promise (by faith).

55 We read from *Malachi 1:2* that G-d loved Yaakov and hated Esau. Why is this so? Reading on in *Romans 9:8-13*, Shaul explains that G-d's choice was made before Yaakov and Esau were even born. This is interesting because before the birth of Yaakov and Esau, before they had committed any form of moral indifference, G-d had known and made a choice. Did this choice then have nothing to do with the "good or evil" they have committed or did G-d already know what they were going to do? Now we know that G-d has promised Avraham that through Sarah he would make a nation and not through Ishmael. However, Ishmael took from the daughters of Canaan which demonstrated a heart and attitude that stands contrary to the command of G-d. Likewise, Esau when he heard that Yitzchak wanted Yaakov to not take from the daughters of Canaan he did the same. The attitude behind Ishmael and Esau decisions for taking from the people G-d had forbidden was clearly to stand against the command of the Lord.

The sub-theme of G-d's choosing I feel is related to our attitude and mindset. Choice is related to our place in accomplishing the divine purposes of human redemption in the Messiah Yeshua. The decisions we make, the things that we do, our attitude, how should we behave if we are representatives for Yeshua in this world? How are we reaching out and ministering to the lost? Are you praying for your enemies? When was the last time you led someone in a prayer to believe upon and receive Yeshua the Messiah? For that matter, when was the last time you shared Yeshua with someone? Now ask when was the last time you complained about someone? Asking these questions gives us an idea of our personalities and priorities. Previously in the *Bereshit / Genesis 27*, we get a description of Yaakov and Esau that sheds light on their personalities and priorities.

## בראשית 27:11

לפני מותו: ויאמר יעקב אל־רבקה אמו הן עשו  
אחי איש שער ואנכי איש חלק: אולי ימשנו אבי  
והייתי בעיניו כמתעתע והבאתי עלי קללה ולא ברכה:

The scriptures describe Yaakov as a smoothed-skinned man whereas Esau was red and hairy. Esau enjoyed the outdoors and Yaakov enjoyed the indoors where he probably engaged in more intellectually skillful activities. Yaakov's description as a mild-man in Hebrew suggests that he was a complete person. In other words, he was a well rounded emotionally and mentally (personality) and was capable of dividing his energy among various projects of interest (he was able to set this priorities correctly). The question for us today do we have well rounded personalities and the right priorities in life? Esau's priorities showed that he had a very low regard for the worth of his birthright. In fact, he valued his life far above his inheritance. Do you value your life above your inheritance in Yeshua? In this week's parsha, we see that one's attitude and choices are known by G-d even before we are born. Now the choice of Yaakov over Esau was not based upon either of their personal piety, because Yaakov was quite a deceiver which is not really a quality of piety. G-d used Yitzchak and Yaakov as a conduit to bring a special nation into existence and ultimately the Messiah into the world. So what I am saying is this, though it is "not by works but by him who calls" (*Romans 9:12*) we still have a choice in life and our choices will determine the direction on how G-d will use us. It was G-d's sovereign decision to choose Yaakov over Esau but looking at the history of their life and choices it becomes clear why G-d chose who He did. Choosing to be a part of the covenant promise by faith in Yeshua, we need to cultivate a mindset and attitude that shows us to be followers of Yeshua. Let's pray.

110 Heavenly Father,

Help me to cultivate a mindset that is not fake or temporary but true, honest, and passionate for You Lord. I recognize in myself things which are not pleasing to you according to the stories of the lives of Yitzchak and Yaakov.  
115 Help me to make the right choices and to set the correct priorities in my life Lord. I believe and trust in Yeshua and His shed blood for the forgiveness of my sins. Please create in me a new heart and restore to me the joy of Your salvation. Thank you for all you have done. I give you all of the glory, the honor, and the praise.

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In Yeshua's name I pray, Amen.

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**Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!**

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הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:  
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,  
"Yeshua" King Messiah forever and ever

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