

(25)19:These are the generations of Yitzchak, Avraham's son. Avraham became the father of Yitzchak.

20:Yitzchak was forty years old when he took Rivkah, daughter of Betuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, the sister of Lavan the Aramean, to be his wife.

21:Yitzchak entreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren. The LORD was entreated by him, and Rivkah his wife conceived.

22:The children struggled together within her. She said, "If it be so, why do I live?" She went to inquire of the LORD.

23:The LORD said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples will be separated from your body. The one people will be stronger than the other people. The elder will serve the younger.

24:When her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb.

25:The first came out red, all over like a hairy garment. They named him Esav.

26:After that, his brother came out, and his hand had hold on Esav's heel. He was named Yaakov. Yitzchak was sixty years old when she bore them.

27:The boys grew. Esav was a skillful hunter, a man of the field. Yaakov was a quiet man, living in tents.

28:Now Yitzchak loved Esav, because he ate his venison. Rivkah loved Yaakov.

29:Yaakov boiled stew. Esav came in from the field, and he was famished.

30:Esav said to Yaakov, "Please feed me with that same red stew, for I am famished." Therefore his name was called Edom.

31:Yaakov said, "First, sell me your birthright.

32:Esav said, "Behold, I am about to die. What good is the birthright to me?"

33:Yaakov said, "Swear to me first." He swore to him. He sold his birthright to Yaakov.

34:Yaakov gave Esav bread and stew of lentils. He ate and drank, rose up, and went. So Esav despised his birthright.

19(25) וְאֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדוֹת יִצְחָק בֶּן־אַבְרָהָם אַבְרָהָם הוּא לֵיד  
 אֶת־יִצְחָק: 20 וַיְהִי יִצְחָק בֶּן־אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה בָקָחְתוּ  
 אֶת־רִבְקָה בַת־בְּתוּאֵל הָאֲרָמִי מִפְּדַן אֲרָם אַחֹת  
 לְבִן הָאֲרָמִי לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה: 21 וַיַּעֲתֵר יִצְחָק לַיהוָה לְנֹכַח  
 אִשְׁתּוֹ כִּי עֲקָרָה הוּא וַיַּעֲתֵר לוֹ יְהוָה וַתֵּהָר רִבְקָה  
 אִשְׁתּוֹ: 22 וַיִּתְרַצְצוּ הַבָּנִים בְּקֶרְבָּהּ וַתֹּאמֶר אִם־כֵּן  
 לָמָּה זֶה אֲנֹכִי וַתִּלְקֶה לְדַרְשׁ אֶת־יְהוָה: 23 וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה  
 לָּהּ שְׁנֵי גוֹיִם בְּבִטְנָךְ וּשְׁנֵי לְאֻמִּים מִמֶּעַיֶךְ יִפְרְדוּ  
 וְלֵאמֹם מְלֵאִם יֵאָמְזוּ וְרַב יַעֲבֹד צָעִיר: 24 וַיִּמְלְאוּ יְמֵיהָ  
 לְלֶדֶת וְהִנֵּה תוֹמֵם בְּבִטְנָהּ: 25 וַיֵּצֵא הָרֵאשׁוֹן אֲדָמוֹנִי  
 כָּלוּ כְּאֹדֶרֶת שֵׁעָר וַיִּקְרְאוּ שְׁמוֹ עֵשָׂו: 26 וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן  
 יֵצֵא אָחִיו וַיְדוּ אַחֲזֹת בְּעֵקֶב עֵשָׂו וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב  
 וַיִּצְחָק בֶּן־שְׁשִׁים שָׁנָה בְּלֶדֶת אֹתָם: 27 וַיִּגְדְּלוּ  
 הַנְּעָרִים

וַיְהִי עֵשָׂו אִישׁ יָדַע צִיד אִישׁ שָׂדֵה וַיַּעֲקֹב אִישׁ  
 תָּם יֹשֵׁב אַהֲלִים: 28 וַיֵּאָהֵב יִצְחָק אֶת־עֵשָׂו כִּי־צִיד  
 בְּפִיו וְרִבְקָה אֶהָבֵת אֶת־יַעֲקֹב: 29 וַיִּזַּד יַעֲקֹב נָזִיד וַיִּבֹא  
 עֵשָׂו מִן־הַשָּׂדֵה וְהוּא עֵיֶף: 30 וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו אֶל־יַעֲקֹב  
 הֲלֵעִיטָנִי נָא מִן־הָאָדָם הָאָדָם הִזֶּה כִּי עֵיֶף אֲנֹכִי  
 עַל־כֵּן קָרָא־שְׁמוֹ אֲדוֹם: 31 וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב מְכֹרָה כִּיֹּם  
 אֶת־בְּכֹרְתְךָ לִי: 32 וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ לָמוּת  
 וְלָמָּה־זֶּה לִי בְכֹרָה: 33 וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב הִשְׁבַּעָה לִי כִיֹּם  
 וַיִּשְׁבַּע לוֹ וַיִּמְכֹּר אֶת־בְּכֹרְתוֹ לְיַעֲקֹב: 34 וַיַּעֲקֹב גָּתוּ

לְעֵשׂוֹ לֶחֶם וַיִּנְזֵד עַד שָׁמַיִם וַיֹּאכַל וַיִּשָׁתּוּ וַיִּקָּם וַיֵּלֶךְ  
וַיָּבֹז עֵשׂוֹ אֶת־הַבְּכֹרָה:

(26)1:There was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Avraham. Yitzchak went to Avimelech king of the Philistines, to Gerar.

וַיְהִי רָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הָרָעַב הָרִאשׁוֹן אֲשֶׁר  
הָיָה בְיַמֵּי אַבְרָהָם וַיֵּלֶךְ יִצְחָק אֶל־אֲבִימֶלֶךְ  
מִלְכֵי־פְלִשְׁתִּים גְּרָרָה: מִצְרַיִם <sup>2</sup>וַיֵּרָא אֵלָיו יְהוָה וַיֹּאמֶר

2:The LORD appeared to him, and said, "Don't go down into Egypt. Dwell in the land which I will tell you.

אֶל־תֵּרַד מִצְרַיִמָּה שָׁכֵן בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֹמַר אֵלֶיךָ:  
<sup>3</sup>גֹּר בְּאֶרֶץ הַזֹּאת וְאֶהְיֶה עִמָּךְ וְאַבְרַכְךָ כִּי־לָךְ

3:Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you, and will bless you. For to you, and to your seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to Avraham your father.

וְלִזְרַעְךָ אֲתֹן אֶת־כָּל־הָאֲרָצוֹת הָאֵל וְהִקְמֹתִי אֶת־  
הַשְּׁבֻעָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם אָבִיךָ: <sup>4</sup>וְהָרַבִּיתִי  
אֶת־זְרַעְךָ כְּכֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנָתַתִּי לְזְרַעְךָ אֶת כָּל־  
הָאֲרָצוֹת הָאֵל וְהִתְבָּרְכוּ בְזְרַעְךָ כָּל גּוֹיֵי הָאֲרָץ:

4:I will multiply your seed as the stars of the sky, and will give to your seed all these lands. In your seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed,

# Toldot Aleph

[Genesis]

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20:Yitzchak was forty years old when he took Rivkah, daughter of Betuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, the sister of Lavan the Aramean, to be his wife.

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34:Yaakov gave Esav bread and stew of lentils. He ate and drank, rose up, and went. So Esav despised his birthright.

וְאֵלֶּה הַדּוֹרוֹת אֲבִרְהָם אֲבִרְחָם יִצְחָק תּוֹלְדוֹת יִצְחָק בֶּן־אֲבִרְהָם אֲבִרְחָם הוֹלִיד  
אֶת־יִצְחָק׃ וַיְהִי יִצְחָק בֶּן־אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה בָקָחְתּוּ  
אֶת־רִבְקָה בִּתְּבֻיָּאֵל הָאֲרָמִי מִפְּדַן אֲרָם אָחוֹת  
לְבִן הָאֲרָמִי לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה׃ וַיַּעֲתֶר יִצְחָק לַיהוָה לְנֹכַח  
אִשְׁתּוֹ כִּי עֲקָרָה הוּא וַיַּעֲתֶר לוֹ יְהוָה וַתֵּהֵר רִבְקָה  
אִשְׁתּוֹ׃ וַיִּתְרַצְצוּ הַבָּנִים בְּקִרְבָּהּ וַתֹּאמֶר אִם־כֵּן  
לְמָה זֶה אֲנֹכִי וַתֵּלֶךְ לְדַרְשׁ אֶת־יְהוָה׃ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה  
לָּהּ שְׁנֵי גֵוִים בְּבִטְנְךָ וּשְׁנֵי לְאֻמִּים מִמֶּעַיְךָ יִפְרְדוּ  
וּלְאֵם מִלְאֵם יֶאֱמָץ וְרַב יַעֲבֹד צָעִיר׃ וַיִּמְלְאוּ יְמֵיהָ  
לְלֶדֶת וְהִנֵּה תוֹמֵם בְּבִטְנָהּ׃ וַיֵּצֵא הָרֵאשׁוֹן אֲדָמוֹנִי  
כָּלוּ כְּאֹדֶרֶת שֶׁעַר וַיִּקְרְאוּ שְׁמוֹ עֵשָׂו׃ וַאֲחֵרֵי־כֵן  
יֵצֵא אָחִיו וַיְדוּ אֹחוֹת בְּעֵקֶב עֵשָׂו וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב  
וַיִּצְחָק בֶּן־שְׁשִׁים שָׁנָה בְּלֶדֶת אֹתָם׃ וַיִּגְדְּלוּ הַנְּעָרִים  
וַיְהִי עֵשָׂו אִישׁ יָדָע צִיד אִישׁ שָׂדֵה וַיַּעֲקֹב אִישׁ  
תָּם יֹשֵׁב אֲהָלִים׃ וַיֵּאָהֵב יִצְחָק אֶת־עֵשָׂו כִּי־צִיד  
בְּפִיו וְרִבְקָה אֲהָבָת אֶת־יַעֲקֹב׃ וַיֵּזֶד יַעֲקֹב נֹזֵד וַיִּבֵּא  
עֵשָׂו מִן־הַשְּׂדֵה וְהוּא עֵיֶף׃ וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו אֶל־יַעֲקֹב  
הֲלֵעִיטָנִי נָא מִן־הָאָדָם הָאָדָם הַזֶּה כִּי עֵיֶף אֲנֹכִי  
עַל־כֵּן קָרָא־שְׁמוֹ אֲדוֹם׃ וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב מְכַרָּה כִּיּוֹם  
אֶת־בְּכֻרְתְּךָ לִּי׃ וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ לָמוֹת  
וְלָמָּה־זֶה לִּי בְכֻרָה׃ וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב הִשְׁבַּעָה לִּי כִּיּוֹם  
וַיִּשְׁבַּע לוֹ וַיִּמְכַר אֶת־בְּכֻרְתּוֹ לְיַעֲקֹב׃ וַיַּעֲקֹב גָּתָן

לְעֵשׂוֹ לֶחֶם וַיִּנְזֵד עַד שָׁיִם וַיֹּאכַל וַיֵּשֶׁת׃ וַיֵּלֶךְ  
וַיָּבֹז עֲשׂוֹ אֶת־הַבְּכֹרָה׃

(26)1:There was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Avraham. Yitzchak went to Avimelech king of the Philistines, to Gerar.

וַיְהִי רָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הָרֵעִב הָרֵאשׁוֹן אֲשֶׁר  
הָיָה בְיַמֵּי אַבְרָהָם וַיֵּלֶךְ יִצְחָק אֶל־אֲבִימֶלֶךְ

2:The LORD appeared to him, and said, "Don't go down into Egypt. Dwell in the land which I will tell you.

מִלְּךָ־פְּלִשְׁתִּים גְּרָרָה׃ וַיֵּרָא מִצְרַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר  
אֶל־תָּרֵד מִצְרַיִמָּה שְׁכֵן בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֹמַר אֵלֶיךָ׃

3:Sojourn in this land, and I will be with you, and will bless you. For to you, and to your seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore to Avraham your father.

גֹּר בְּאֶרֶץ הַזֹּאת וְאֵהְיָ עִמָּךְ וְאַבְרַכְךָ כִּי־לָךְ  
וְלִזְרַעְךָ אֶת־כָּל־הָאֲרָצוֹת הָאֵל וְהִקְמֹתִי אֶת־

4:I will multiply your seed as the stars of the sky, and will give to your seed all these lands. In your seed will all the nations of the earth be blessed,

הַשָּׁבַע אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם אָבִיךָ׃ וְהִרְבִּיתִי  
אֶת־זְרַעְךָ כְּכּוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנָתַתִּי לְזְרַעְךָ אֶת־כָּל־  
הָאֲרָצוֹת הָאֵל וְהִתְבָּרְכוּ בְּזְרַעְךָ כָּל־גּוֹיֵי הָאֲרָץ׃

וְאֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת יִצְחָק בֶּן־אֲבִרָהָם אֲבִרָהָם הוֹלִיד  
 אֶת־יִצְחָק׃ וַיְהִי<sup>20</sup> בֶּן־אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה בְּקָחְתוֹ  
 אֶת־רַבְקָה בִּתְּבֹאֵל הָאֲרָמִי מִפְּדֹן אֲרָם אַחֹת  
 לְבִן הָאֲרָמִי לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה׃ וַיַּעֲתֶר<sup>21</sup> יִצְחָק לַיהוָה לְנֹכַח  
 אִשְׁתּוֹ כִּי עָקְרָה הוּא וַיַּעֲתֶר לוֹ יְהוָה וַתֵּהָר רַבְקָה  
 אִשְׁתּוֹ׃ וַיִּתְּלַצְצוּ<sup>22</sup> הַבָּנִים בְּקַרְבָּהּ וַתֹּאמֶר אִם־כֵּן  
 לָמָּה זֶה אֲנֹכִי וַתִּלְךְ לְדֶרֶשׁ אֶת־יְהוָה׃ וַיֹּאמֶר<sup>23</sup> יְהוָה  
 לָּהּ שְׁנֵי גֵימִים גֵּימִים בְּבִטְנָךְ וּשְׁנֵי לְאֻמִּים מִמֵּעֶיךָ יִפְרְדוּ  
 וְלֹאִם מְלֹאִם יֵאָמְזוּ וְרַב יַעֲבֹד צָעִיר׃ וַיִּמְלְאוּ<sup>24</sup> יְמֵיהָ  
 לְלֶדֶת וְהִנֵּה תוֹמָם בְּבִטְנָהּ׃ וַיֵּצֵא<sup>25</sup> הָרֵאשֹׁן אֲדָמוֹנִי  
 כָּלוּ כְּאֲדָרֶת שֶׁעַר וַיִּקְרָאוּ שְׁמוֹ עֵשָׂו׃ וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן  
 יֵצֵא אָחִיו וַיְדוֹ אַחֹת בְּעֵקֶב עֵשָׂו וַיִּקְרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב  
 וַיִּצְחָק בֶּן־שְׁשִׁים שָׁנָה בְּלֶדֶת אֹתָם׃ וַיִּגְדְּלוּ הַנְּעָרִים  
 וַיְהִי עֵשָׂו אִישׁ יָדַע צִיד אִישׁ שָׂדֵה וַיַּעֲקֹב אִישׁ  
 תָּם יֹשֵׁב אֱהָלִים׃ וַיֵּאָהֵב<sup>28</sup> יִצְחָק אֶת־עֵשָׂו כִּי־צִיד

בְּפִיו וְרַבָּקָה אֶהְבֶּת אֶת־יַעֲקֹב׃<sup>29</sup> וַיִּזְדַּ וַיַּעֲקֹב גִּזִּיד וַיִּבֹא  
עָשׂוּ מִן־הַשָּׂדֶה וְהוּא עֵיף׃<sup>30</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר עָשׂוּ אֶל־יַעֲקֹב  
הַלְעִיטָנִי נָא מִן־הָאָדָם הָאָדָם הַזֶּה כִּי עֵיף אָנֹכִי  
עַל־כֵּן קָרָא שְׁמוֹ אָדָוּם׃<sup>31</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב מִכְרָה כִּיּוֹם  
אֶת־בְּכֹרְתְךָ לִי׃<sup>32</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר עָשׂוּ הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ לָמוּת  
וְלָמָּה־זֶּה לִי בְכֹרָה׃<sup>33</sup> וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב הַשְּׂבַעָה לִי כִּיּוֹם  
וַיִּשְׁבַּע לוֹ וַיִּמְכֹּר אֶת־בְּכֹרְתוֹ לְיַעֲקֹב׃<sup>34</sup> וַיַּעֲקֹב נָתַן  
לְעָשׂוּ לֶחֶם וּנְזִיד עַד־שָׁיִם וַיֹּאכַל וַיִּשְׁתַּ וַיִּקָּם וַיֵּלֶךְ  
וַיִּבֹז עָשׂוּ אֶת־הַבְּכֹרָה׃

<sup>(26)</sup> וַיְהִי רָעַב בְּאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הָרָעַב הָרֵאשִׁוֹן אֲשֶׁר  
הָיָה בְיַמֵּי אַבְרָהָם וַיֵּלֶךְ יִצְחָק אֶל־אֲבִימֶלֶךְ  
מִלְּךְ־פְּלִשְׁתִּים גְּרָרָה׃<sup>2</sup> וַיִּרְא וַיֹּאמֶר וַיֹּאמֶר  
אֶל־תִּרְד מִצְרַיִם שָׁכֵן בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֵלֶיךָ׃  
<sup>3</sup> גִּוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ הַזֹּאת וְאֶהְיָ עִמָּךְ וַאֲבָרְכְךָ כִּי־לָךְ  
וְלִזְרַעְךָ אֶת־כָּל־הָאֶרֶץ הַזֹּאת וְהִקְמַתִי אֶת־  
הַשְּׂבַעָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאַבְרָהָם אֲבִיךָ׃<sup>4</sup> וְהָרַבִּיתִי

אֶת־זֶרַעְךָ כְּכֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנָתַתִּי לְזֶרַעְךָ אֶת כָּל־  
הָאָרֶץ הָאֵל וְהִתְבָּרְכוּ בְזֶרַעְךָ כָּל גּוֹיֵי הָאָרֶץ:

ואלה תולדות יצחק בן אברהם אברהם הוליד  
את יצחק ויהי יצחק בן ארבעים שנה בקוזתו  
את רבקה בת בתואל הארמי מפרץ ארם אזות  
לבן הארמי לו לאשה ויעתר יצחק ליהוה לנכוז  
אשתו כי עקרה הוא ויעתר לו יהוה ותהר רבקה  
אשתו ויתרצצו הבנים בקרבה ותאמר אם כן  
למה זה אנכי ותלך לדרש את יהוה ויאמר יהוה  
לה שני גי'ם בבטןך ושני לאמים ממעיך יפרדו  
ולאם מלאם יאמן ורב יעבד צעיר וימלאו ימיה  
ללדת והנה תומם בבטנה ויצא הראשון אדמוני  
כלו כאדרת שער ויקראו שמו עשו ואחרי כן  
יצא אחיו וידו אזוזת בעקב עשו ויקרא שמו יעקב  
ויצחק בן ששים שנה בלדת אתם ויגדלו הגערים  
ויהי עשו איש ידע ציד איש שדה ויעקב איש  
תם ישב אהלים ויאהב יצחק את עשו כי ציד



בפיו ורבקה אהבת את יעקב ויזד יעקב גזיד ויבא  
עשו מן השדה והוא עיף ויאמר עשו אל יעקב  
הלעיטני גא מן האדם האדם הזה כי עיף אנכי  
על כן קרא שמו אדום ויאמר יעקב מכרה כיום  
את בכרתך לי ויאמר עשו הגה אנכי הוכך למות  
וכלמה זה לי בכרה ויאמר יעקב השבעה לי כיום  
וישבע לו וימכר את בכרתו ליעקב ויעקב גתן  
לעשו לחזם וגזיד עדשים ויאכל וישת ויקם ויכך  
ויבז עשו את הבכרה

ויהי רעב בארץ מלבד הרעב הראשון אשר  
היה בימי אברהם ויכך יצחק אל אבימלך  
מלך פלשתים גררה וירא אליו יהוה ויאמר  
אל תרד מצרימה שכך בארץ אשר אמר אליך  
גור בארץ הזאת ואהיה עמך ואברכך כי כך  
וכלרעך אתן את כל הארצות האל והקמתי את  
השבעה אשר גשבעתי לאברהם אביך והרביתי

את זרעך ככוכבי השמים ונתתי לזרעך את כל  
הארצות האל והתברכו בזרעך כל גוי הארץ

# Toledot Haftarah

[Malachi]

(1)1:The burden of the word of the LORD to Yisrael by Malakhi. 2:I have loved you, says the LORD. Yet you say, Wherein have You loved us? Was not Esav Yaakov's brother, says the LORD: yet I loved Yaakov;

3:but Esav I hated, and made his mountains a desolation, and gave his heritage to the jackals of the wilderness.

4:Whereas Edom says, We are beaten down, but we will return and build the waste places; thus says the LORD of Hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and men shall call them the border of wickedness, and the people against whom the LORD has indignation forever.

5:Your eyes shall see, and you shall say, the LORD be magnified beyond the border of Yisrael.

6:A son honors his father, and a servant his master: if then I am a father, where is My honor? and if I am a master, where is My fear? says the LORD of Hosts to you, priests, who despise My name. You say, Wherein have we despised Your name?

(1) מִשָּׂא דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּיַד מְלָאכִי: 2 אֶהְבֵּתִי אֶתְכֶם אָמַר יְהוָה וְאַמַּרְתֶּם בְּמַה אֶהְבַּתְנוּ הֲלוֹא־אֶח עָשׂוּ לְיַעֲקֹב נְאֻם־יְהוָה וְאֶהֱב אֶת־יַעֲקֹב: 3 וְאֶת־עֵשׂוּ שָׂנְאֵתִי וְאֲשִׁים אֶת־הָרָיו שְׂמֵמָה וְאֶת־נַחְלָתוֹ לְתַנּוֹת מִדְּבַר: 4 כִּי־תֹאמַר אֲדוֹם רָשָׁנוּ וְנָשׁוּב וְנִבְנֶה חֲרֻבוֹת כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת הַמָּה יִבְנוּ וְאֲנִי אֶהְרֹס וְקִרְאוּ לָהֶם גְּבוּל רְשָׁעָה וְהָעַם אֲשֶׁר־זָעַם יְהוָה עַד־עוֹלָם: 5 וְעֵינֵיכֶם תִּרְאִינָה וְאַתֶּם תֹּאמְרוּ יִגְדַל יְהוָה מֵעַל לְגְבוּל יִשְׂרָאֵל: 6 בֶּן יִכְבֵּד אָב וְעַבְד אֲדֹנָיו וְאִם־אָב אֲנִי אֵינִי כְבוֹדִי וְאִם־אֲדוֹנִים אֲנִי אֵינִי מוֹרְאֵי אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת לָכֶם הֲפִתְּנִים בּוֹזֵי שְׁמִי וְאַמַּרְתֶּם בְּמַה בּוֹזִינוּ אֶת־שְׁמֶךָ:

(1) מִשָּׂא דְבַר־יְהוָה אֶל־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּיַד מְלָאכִי: 2 אֶהְבֵּתִי אֶתְכֶם  
 אָמַר יְהוָה וְאָמַרְתֶּם בְּמָה אֶהְבֵּתֵנוּ הֲלוֹא־אֵח עָשׂוּ לִיעֲקֹב  
 נְאֻם־יְהוָה וְאֶהֱבֶה אֶת־יַעֲקֹב: 3 וְאֶת־עָשׂוּ שָׁנֵאתִי וְאֲשִׁים  
 אֶת־הָרִיוֹ שְׂמֵמָה וְאֶת־נַחֲלָתוֹ לְתַנּוֹת מִדְּבָר: 4 כִּי־תֹאמַר  
 אָדָּם רַשְׁעָנוּ וְנָשׁוּב וְנִבְנֶה חֲרִבּוֹת כִּהָ אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת  
 הֲמָה יִבְנוּ וְאֲנִי אֶהְרוֹס וְקִרְאוּ לָהֶם גְּבוּל רַשְׁעָה וְהָעַם  
 אֲשֶׁר־זָעַם יְהוָה עַד־עוֹלָם: 5 וְעֵינֵיכֶם תִּרְאִינָה וְאַתֶּם תֹּאמְרוּ  
 יִגְדַּל יְהוָה מֵעַל לְגְבוּל יִשְׂרָאֵל: 6 בֶּן יִכְבֵּד אָב וְעַבֵּד אֲדֹנָיו  
 וְאִם־אָב אֲנִי אֵיךְ כְּבוֹדִי וְאִם־אֲדֹנָיִם אֲנִי אֵיךְ מוֹרָאִי אָמַר  
 | יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת לָכֶם הַכֹּהֲנִים בּוֹזֵי שְׁמִי וְאָמַרְתֶּם בְּמָה  
 בּוֹזֵנוּ אֶת־שְׁמִי:

TOLEDOT 25:19-28:9 תולדות

SYNOPSIS

REBEKAH IS BARREN, SO ISAAC PRAYS TO God on her behalf. God responds to Isaac's plea and Rebekah conceives twins. She experiences a difficult pregnancy. The twins have already begun a struggle within the womb which will continue for many years once they are born. The first twin to emerge is red and hairy and is named Esau; the other, born holding Esau's heel, is called Jacob. Esau is a hunter; Jacob is a quiet individual who chooses to stay in camp. Isaac favors Esau, but Rebekah loves Jacob.

One day while Jacob is cooking a stew, Esau comes in starving and demands some food. As payment, Jacob insists that Esau sell him his birthright. Esau does so without hesitation.

A famine occurs in the land. But God commands Isaac to remain in Canaan and not travel to Egypt so that Isaac may receive the blessings bestowed on his father Abraham (i.e., a great nation and land). Isaac remains in Gerar and tells the inhabitants that Rebekah is his sister. One day Abimelech, ruler of the area, sees Isaac and Rebekah being intimate together. When questioned, Isaac states that he called her his sister in order to preserve his life. Isaac becomes very wealthy in Gerar, and is ultimately asked to leave. He settles first in the wadi of Gerar, but the local herdsmen quarrel with Isaac's servants about the ownership of the water in the wells they have dug. Isaac moves to Rehovot (meaning "expansive"), so named in gratitude for its ample room to expand without complaint and quarrel from the local people. A series of wanderings ensue, but eventually Isaac settles in Beersheva and makes a peace treaty with the Philistines.

Esau takes two wives from among the Hittites. This makes Isaac and Rebekah bitter.

Isaac grows old. The time of blessing his offspring is at hand. Isaac directs Esau to hunt game and prepare a meal for him after which Isaac will

bless Esau. Rebekah overhears the conversation. She convinces Jacob to deceive his father by putting on skins and pretending to be Esau. Jacob does so and receives Isaac's blessing for himself. Rebekah, fearing that Esau plans revenge against Jacob, tells Jacob to flee to Haran, to her brother Laban. In order to have Isaac approve of Jacob's journey, Rebekah convinces Isaac that Jacob should be sent to Laban to find a bride from among their kin. Esau sees that his brother obeys their parents regarding the choice of a bride, so he, too, chooses a bride from among their kin — Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael.

INSIGHTS FROM THE TRADITION

**A** *Toledot* means "generations." This portion begins by recounting the family background of Isaac in preparation for its description of his adult life.

**B** When, in the previous portion, Rebekah prepared to leave her home, her mother and brother blessed her. "But the blessings did not come from the bottom of their hearts. Indeed, as a rule, the blessing of the impious is a curse, wherefore Rebekah remained barren for years" (*Legends of the Jews* by Louis Ginzberg, Vol. I, p. 296).

*Yebarnot* 64a deals with the issue of barrenness, a condition which affected Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel. The passage states that God longs to hear the prayers of the righteous. What does this mean? Radak explains: "Such prayers publicize the efficacy of prayer. God therefore gives them cause to pray so that [God] can miraculously fulfill their requests publicly."

Why is having children such an important theme in the Book of Genesis?

For the Matriarchs, what purpose does barrenness followed by childbirth serve? (to show the working

of God in human life, that older parents are better able to pass on the tradition, to show how important each individual really is).

**C** Rebekah becomes pregnant, but feels a great struggling (*va'yitrotzitzu*) within her. Rashi felt this "struggling" needed a *midrashic* explanation. "Our Rabbis explain that *va'yitrotzitzu* has the meaning of running, moving quickly. Whenever Rebekah passed by the school of Shem and Eber, Jacob moved . . . to be born. But whenever she passed by the gate of a pagan temple, Esau moved . . . to be born" (*Genesis Rabbah* 63).

In what ways are you different from your brothers and sisters?

What do you think accounts for these differences?

**D** The text states that "Rebekah went to inquire of the Lord." Various commentators suggest that Rebekah consulted Shem, a teacher of Torah. Through divine inspiration, Shem became God's mouthpiece (*Yalkut Me'am Lo'ez* by Yaakov Culi, Vol. II, p. 455). Shem explained that Rebekah was carrying twins who were beginning a power struggle in the womb which would continue after their birth.

If you were looking for answers to very difficult questions, who would you ask?

If you had a problem which really bothered you, would you pray for help? What traditional prayer would you recite? Would you feel free to make up a prayer in your own words?

**E** At birth, the first twin to emerge was red and hairy and he was named Esau. Esau is a synonym for Seir, a wordplay on *sayar* — hair (Genesis 25:25). The second infant to emerge was holding the heel of Esau. He was named Jacob, a play on the word *aykev* — heel.

How are the names Esau and Jacob (given at birth) an accurate reflection of the kind of people these two became?

In what ways are you like Esau?

In what ways are you like Jacob?

**F** Jacob conspired to take Esau's birthright. The birthright entitled Esau to inherit first. At the moment of Esau's physical weakness, Jacob asked him to give up the rights of the firstborn. In return, Esau got some of the red pottage (stew). This also alludes to his name since the pottage was called *Adom* (red) and Esau was known as "Edom."

Can it be said that Esau let himself be cheated because he didn't want the responsibility of being a Patriarch of the Jewish people?

What would you not want to take responsibility for at this stage in your life? Do you expect this to change as you grow older? In what way might this be similar to Esau's selling of his birthright?

**G** A famine broke out in Canaan, but Isaac, unlike Abraham his father, was commanded by God not to go down to Egypt. Rashi provides a reason for this: "Do not go down to Egypt for you are a burnt offering without blemish and residence outside the Holy Land is not befitting you." Because Isaac followed God's command, he and his descendants would continue to merit the blessing of land and of being a great nation. Instead, Isaac goes to Gerar, then controlled by the Philistines under King Abimelech.

Isaac follows his father's example and claims Rebekah is his sister rather than his wife. The *midrash* states that Isaac was afraid of being killed if his relationship to Rebekah should be discovered.

The commentary *Tzenah Ur'enah* compares Abimelech's reaction to that of Pharaoh's: "Abimelech said, 'What have you done to us?' while Pharaoh asked, 'What have you done to me?'" (p. 135). Pharaoh took this as a personal insult for had he known, he would not have touched another man's (Abraham's) wife, yet his people might. Abimelech on the other hand said that both he and his nation were moral and no one would touch Rebekah.

Is the Torah already hinting at the immorality of Egypt?

Is this another instance of Isaac's misjudgment of character?

**H** Some commentators suggest that Isaac actually knew that he was blessing Jacob, but pretended to be fooled in order not to destroy his relationship with Esau. The key factor seems to be Isaac's becoming blind. It is ironic that when he had his sight, he favored Esau, and it was only with his blindness that he was able to give Jacob the blessing.

If Jacob already had the birthright, why did he have to "steal" his father's blessing?  
Did Jacob do the right thing in fooling his father?  
Would you have done it under the circumstances?

**I** Fox points out the incredible use of the physical senses as Jacob receives the blessing intended for Esau. Seven times we hear of the game to be caught; six times of the delicacy or tasty dish to be prepared; three times, as Jacob draws near his father, Isaac touches him; four times smell and hearing are brought into play; and it is around Isaac's defective sight that the story revolves. Isaac's blindness enables the ruse which leads to the blessing (*The Five Books of Moses* by Everett Fox, pp. 105-107).

There is a saying: "Love blinds the eye." How does this apply to Isaac? To Rebekah?

If an individual loses one physical sense, other senses often compensate. Why didn't this happen in Isaac's case, or did it?

**J** Esau is described as a red and hairy individual who becomes a hunter and a man of the outdoors. He is considered by Jewish tradition as wild and uncouth. He spurned his own birthright because of his appetite. There is nothing in the text that lets us see any other side to this person. Yet, when he learns that he has been tricked out of

his blessing, he lets out a cry of such intensity that we finally do see the human in Esau. As Norman J. Cohen says, "His very human response elicits our sympathy and we see him as a deeply moving figure, the victim of a terrible plot" (*Self, Struggle & Change* by Norman J. Cohen, pp. 108-109).

Cohen then suggests that not only do we sympathize with Esau, we can also identify with him. If we are members of families with more than one child, we, too, have at times felt ignored, unloved, and unimportant.

Do you ever feel as though your sibling(s) get more than you, that your parents are unfair and show favoritism?

Do you ever feel as though you receive more than your sibling(s)?

**K** A logical question based on this portion is whether or not Rebecca loved Esau. If you base your response on the text, it appears that very likely she did not. Ellen Frankel in *The Five Books of Miriam* (pp. 47-48) has Rebecca speaking directly to us: "Didn't you hear me cry out when I urged Jacob into exile to escape Esau's revenge: 'Let me not lose you both in one day' (Genesis 27:45). How clearly I understood what a high price I'd pay for my actions: losing Esau's love in exchange for Jacob's blessing. From the moment that God told me the destiny awaiting my two sons . . . 'The older shall serve the younger' — I devoted myself to forcing that blessing from Isaac's lips . . . when I finally succeeded . . . I heard Isaac tell Jacob: 'Be master over your brothers, and let your mother's sons bow to you,' I'd also lost. Jacob's curse was now on me just as I'd set it up. For the next 20 years, I suffered Esau's revenge: my beloved Jacob's absence."

Could Rebekah have chosen another path, or was it divine intention that left her no other options? Is she simply the instrument through which God achieves the preordained aim of having Jacob receive the blessing?

**L** Esau is seen as a dark character. Yet, what did he do that was so bad? He respected his parents. He went out immediately to hunt a favorite food for his father. He waited to mourn his father's death before setting out after Jacob. Despite knowing that it would not be as grand as the one received by Jacob, Esau desperately sought his father's blessing. He married a Hittite woman, but when he saw it displeased his father and mother, he took an Ishmaelite woman to wife. So what was his sin? He despised his birthright for a pot of stew. In needing that which is material, he lost that which is spiritual. He squandered the future for the desires of the present.

Have you ever wanted something so much that you would do anything or give anything for it? If so, what was it? What did you do?

Is it possible that this story contains hints of the superiority of settled folk over nomadic peoples? Explain.

What common elements can be found in this story and in the account of Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:1-15)?

## STRATEGIES

### ANALYZING THE TEXT

**1** Review these verses: Genesis 26:34-35, 28:6-9. Examine the character of Esau. Was Esau completely wicked? Was he a victim of circumstances? How did he treat his parents? Give specific examples. Take this activity a step further and do a parallel study of Jacob. (See Genesis 25:29-34, 27:5-29; also read through the portions *Vayaytzay* and *Vayishlach* to learn more about Jacob's life.)

**2** In *Toledot*, Jacob receives two blessings. The first (Genesis 27:28, 29) was the blessing intended for Esau. The second blessing (Genesis 28:3-4), given him by Isaac on his departure for Paddan-aram, was the only one meant specifically

for him. Compare the two blessings. Note how the first blessing is more concerned with material well-being, whereas the second blessing is directed toward spiritual matters and the future of the Jewish people. Which son of Isaac is named in these blessings to carry out the legacy of Abraham? What does a comparison of these blessings suggest to you about Isaac's "blindness"? Can you argue on the basis of this comparison that Isaac was aware of the differences between his sons and their divergent futures?

**3** *Toledot* contains three interesting examples of Hebrew wordplay. Read Genesis 26:8 and 27:36 in Hebrew to find the wordplay in each (compare the wordplay in 26:8 to the similar one in 21:9). Then explain what insight each wordplay gives about the character described and/or the speaker.

**4** Organize a "Scavenger Hunt" of the portion *Toledot*. Working in two or more teams, come up with a list of 15 questions that can be answered after a careful reading of the story (for example, the name of the king of the Philistines; Isaac's age when he married Rebekah). Trade lists with the other team and have a timed race to answer the questions. If desired, do this activity utilizing Hebrew.

**5** Write a thumbnail sketch of Rebecca based on your reading of this portion and Insight K. How would you describe her as a wife and mother? Consider: What was your opinion of Rebekah before you read about her? Did reading and discussion change your feelings? How much of an impact did God have on her actions?

### EXTENDING THE TEXT

**6** Expand Strategy #5 by doing the following: Discuss and write a different version of this



portion so that the end result, Jacob getting the blessing, does not split the family apart and cause so many bad feelings.

**7** Write first person accounts of the story of Jacob's deception of Isaac. Choose one or more of the following main characters and retell the story through his/her eyes: Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, Esau.

**8** Certain events in Rebekah's life invite comparison with Sarah. Both women left their families to live in strange lands with their husbands, both were able to deceive local leaders about their true relationship with their husbands, and both experienced conflict and concern over their sons and took an active role in assuring that the favored son would receive the blessings God conferred upon Abraham.

Imagine that Sarah had lived to observe how Rebekah handled these events. Write and stage a conversation between the two women that might have occurred after the departure of Jacob. Have them reminisce about their lives and evaluate their success as Matriarchs.

**9** Esau plotted to avenge the wrong that Jacob had done to him. Jacob fled to Haran, but the text never states that Esau knew where his brother had gone. Imagine that you are the private detective hired to locate Jacob. Do a character analysis of Jacob based on interviews with other biblical figures. You may want to add a few fictional elements, characters, and events. Formulate a number of plausible places for Jacob to have gone.

**10** Rewrite the story as if Esau had received the blessing. Speculate on how Jewish history might have been different.

**11** Without question, Jacob did carry out a deception with the aid of his mother. Imagine what would have happened had Jacob been brought to trial for his wrongdoing. Arrange

a mock trial for Jacob. Include judge, jury, lawyers for the defense and prosecution, court reporter, and all of the characters and spectators.

**12** Throughout the Book of Genesis, the passing on of blessings to the firstborn and the content of the those blessings is clearly detailed. Research the rights of the firstborn in different cultures.

References: *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, "First Born," Vol. 6, p. 1306; in secular encyclopedias, see "Primogeniture," "Inheritance," "Intestacy," and "Law of Succession."

**13** In light of Jacob and Esau's relationship, discuss these two verses from the Talmud: "Show no partiality among your sons. Treat them all alike" (*Shabbat* 10); "Honor thy father and thy mother — including, also, thine older brother" (*Ketubot* 103).

## PERSONALIZING THE TEXT

**14** There are several instances in this portion when lies are told. Identify these instances. Is the lying justified? There are times when telling the truth would do more harm than telling a lie. Can you describe such situations? Have you, as an individual, ever been put in that position?

**15** Many commentators have suggested that Isaac was not just physically blind, but that he was also blind to the natures of his two sons. When Jacob came and stole the blessing, Isaac was unable to identify him correctly. Isaac "blindly" trusted Jacob. Test your ability to trust by participating in a "Blind Walk." Choose a partner and blindfold one of you. With the other functioning as a caring guide, take a walk outside and inside. Include some obstacles, such as climbing over an obstruction, negotiating stairs, etc. When the walk is complete, review it in discussion.

- How did each partner feel (nervous, powerful, etc.)?
- How did the element of trust fit in?
- Can you now more fully appreciate Isaac's position? Explain.

**16** Isaac dug a number of wells providing water for his family and herds. Isaac was not carrying out a sophisticated irrigation project, but he was in a way reclaiming the land and making it more fertile. A major project in Israel has been reclaiming desert lands and making them bloom. The work has largely been carried out by the Jewish National Fund. Contact your local J.N.F. representative for information, brochures, program materials, and films. Mount a campaign to raise funds for trees in Israel.

**17** The red pottage for which Esau begged and which he received at such a dear price must certainly have been delicious. Try the following recipe:

Mujeddrah  
(Rice with Lentils, Jacob Style)

- 1 cup brown lentils
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 cup long-grain rice
- 2 cups water
- 2 large onions, sliced in rings
- 2 tablespoons vegetable or olive oil

  - Pick over the lentils; wash and drain. Boil in water with one teaspoon salt for about 30 minutes, or until tender.
  - In another pan, bring water to a boil. Add the rice and the remaining one teaspoon salt. Turn off the heat and let sit until the lentils are ready.
  - Drain and rinse the lentils and rice. Combine. Bring about 1½ cups water to a boil. Put in the lentils and rice, cover and simmer slowly about 20 minutes, or until the rice is cooked.

- Sauté the onions in oil until golden. Add to the cooked rice and lentils.  
(From *The Jewish Holiday Kitchen* by Joan Nathan.)

**18** In Genesis 26:34-35 we read that Esau's Hittite wives "were a source of bitterness to Isaac and Rebekah." As the portion goes on, however, we see that Esau continues to seek the love of his parents. View and discuss the video *Intermarriage: When Love Meets Tradition*.

### OTHER RESOURCES

**19** Read, act out, and discuss the skit for *Toledot* in *Sedra Scenes: Skits for Every Torah Portion* by Stan J. Beiner, pp. 32-38.

**20** Complete page 48 in *Bible People Book One* by Joel Lurie Grishaver. Check the accompanying Leader Guide for procedures and additional activities.

**21** View the episode for *Toledot* from *Torah Toons I: The Video*.

**22** Use "Parent-Child Interchange" from *Jewish Identity Games* by Richard J. Israel.

**23** Listen to, discuss, and sing "Brother on Brother" from *Sounds of Creation: Genesis in Song*.

**24** Read and discuss the illustrated commentary for *Toledot* in *American Torah Toons* by Lawrence Bush.

**25** Read, act out, and discuss the play "Inter-marriage" in *Class Acts* by Stan J. Beiner, pp. 221-231.

**26** For creative movement activities, see "Jacob Emerges" and "Jacob: One Who

Disguises" from *Torah in Motion* by JoAnne Tucker and Susan Freeman, pp. 32-35.

## INVOLVING THE FAMILY

Note: When assigning Strategy #27, please be sensitive to the fact that some participants may be children of, or partners in, mixed marriages.

**27** Interdating and intermarriage are extremely sensitive issues for Jewish families today. In some ways, our situation is not all that different from that of Isaac and Rebekah and their family. We, too, live surrounded by people who do not share our religion and our values. Most of us want to balance our Jewish values and the values of secular society. As a family, discuss the portion as it reflects these issues. Do you think that Esau's actions show indifference to his parents' values? Was Esau being openly defiant of Isaac and Rebekah? What options did Esau have to change the final outcome of the situation? What options did Isaac and Rebekah have?

## BAR/BAT MITZVAH PROJECT

**28** Preparing for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah can take its toll on a family. Work with your family

members to establish and nurture *sh'lom bayit* — a peaceful, loving home. There are several suggested activities listed here designed to get parents and children talking, sharing, and working toward understanding each other.

With your parent(s) watch the video version of one or more films which deal with family relationships. After seeing the videos, share thoughts, feelings, and reactions. Some suggested titles: *What's Eating Gilbert Grape*, rated PG13; *Miss Rose White*, NR, made for television; *Dad*, rated PG; *Family Prayers*, rated PG; *King of the Hill*, rated PG13. These videos are available at video rental stores.

Sometimes verbal communication has its drawbacks. Writing letters gives some distance so that the correspondents can fully express themselves without interruption. Have parent(s) and the upcoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah student write letters to each other explaining personal preferences and desires for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah learning process, the ceremony, and the celebration.

Read the one of the following books to gain some additional insight about the Bar/Bat Mitzvah process. Suggested titles include: *Putting God on the Guest List* by Jeffrey Salkin; *Bar/Bat Mitzvah Basics: A Practical Guide to Coming of Age Together*, edited by Helen Leneman; *A Spiritual Journey: Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah Handbook* by Seymour Rossel.

## HAFTARAH TOLEDOT

*Malachi 1-2:7*

The *Haftarah* is from the Book of Malachi. The last of the Prophets, Malachi speaks his message around 450 B.C.E. Although the Second Temple has been rebuilt by now, Malachi is unhappy about the weakness of the people in their religious faith and responsibility.

In the *Haftarah*, Malachi especially criticizes the Priests who are in charge of the Temple. They have not been good religious leaders among the people. They are not serious about their responsibility. Sacrifice of animals is not all that God asks of His People. They must uphold truth and righteousness. This is the real purpose for which Jacob and his descendants have been chosen by God over Esau and those that came after him. The Priests must remember this and they must lead the people back to God and an ethical life.

Have we not all one Father?  
Hath not one God created us?  
Why do we deal treacherously every man  
against his brother . . . ?