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ב' כסלו תשפ"ו
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A VORT FROM THE ROSH YESHIVA

מורינו הרה"ג ר' אברהם גורביץ שליט"א

פרשת תולדות

וַיִּגַּשׁ וַיִּשָּׁק לוֹ וַיִּרַח אֶת רֵיחַ בְּגָדָיו וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ וכו'. וַיֵּתֶן לָהּ הָאֱלֹקִים מִטֵּל הַשָּׁמַיִם וּמִשְׁמַנֵּי הָאָרֶץ וְרֵב דָּגָן וְתִירֵשׁ.
(בראשית כז, כז-כח)

So he drew close and kissed him; he smelled the fragrance of his garments and blessed him... And May Hashem give you of the dew of the heavens and the fatness of the earth, and abundant grain and wine.

(Bereishis 27:27-28)

This week's *Sidrah* teaches that as Yitzchok Avinu neared his death, he decided to bestow the Patriarchal blessings upon Eisav. However, Rivkah, through Ruach HaKodesh, saw things differently. She orchestrated a plan so that Yitzchok would bless Yakov instead. To carry out this plan, Yakov donned Eisav's special garments and covered himself with goat skins. He then approached Yitzchok with a meal prepared for him. When Yitzchok felt Yakov and smelled the fragrance reminiscent of Gan Eden, he proceeded to give Yakov the vital blessings that would shape the eternal fate of Klal Yisroel.

The *possuk* begins Yitzchok's *brochah* with the words: וַיֵּתֶן לָהּ הָאֱלֹקִים, **And may Hashem give you**. The Meforshim ask that since this *possuk* begins the text of the blessings, which is a new topic, the conjunction "ו", meaning *and*, seems unnecessary. In response, Rashi cites the Midrash, explaining that it indicates a continuous and repetitive action. Yitzchok was blessing Yakov with the notion of וַיֵּתֶן וַיִּחַזֵּר וַיֵּתֶן, *May He give, and give again*.

The Rosh Yeshiva *shlita* emphasises that this assurance of Hashem's ongoing giving is crucial. No one can be fully assured of anything; even those endowed with great wealth and power constantly rely on Hashem's blessing. Just as Hashem can make a person rich, He can also impoverish him in an instant. Therefore, with this blessing of וַיֵּתֶן וַיִּחַזֵּר וַיֵּתֶן, Hashem was affirming the enduring nature of His *brochah*.

Rabeinu Avrohom ben HaRambam offers an alternative interpretation to resolve the seeming superfluity of the prefix "ו". He writes that there was a hidden blessing, even more significant than the one revealed in the Torah. Therefore, Yitzchok began with וַיֵּתֶן to allude to this unspoken blessing that was not verbalised.

The primary blessing was a נְפֻשִׁית, *soul-blessing*, meaning that Yitzchok conveyed an unspoken message from his soul to that of Yakov. This is reflected in Yitzchok's phrase: בְּעֵבוֹר תְּבָרְכֶךָ נַפְשִׁי, *so that my soul may bless you* (27:4). Through this unstated blessing, Yitzchok bestowed upon Yakov his spiritual abilities, which he had inherited from Avrohom, who was blessed by Hashem. Accordingly, the promise of material success and influence over enemies was given solely to support this primary spiritual blessing, which remained unexpressed.

Yitzchok, with his phrase of לָהּ הָאֱלֹקִים וַיֵּתֶן, provided an opening to convey a veiled message for Yakov. Yitzchok stated: וַיֵּתֶן, **and May Hashem give...**, meaning to say, "May Hashem give you material success to assist you with utilising the primary spiritual blessing." This idea also clarifies Yitzchok's choice of words when he explained to Eisav what he had blessed Yakov. He stated: וְדָגָן וְתִירֵשׁ סִמְכָתִיו, *with grain*

and wine I have supported him (27:37). The material blessing was only to enable Yakov to fulfil the truly valuable spiritual inheritance he had received.

The Rosh Yeshiva explains the choice made by Yitzchok in concealing the primary and significant spiritual blessing he bestowed upon Yakov by drawing upon an insight of the Rambam. In his introduction to Pirush HaMishnayos, the Rambam writes that a person of elevated stature should only share his superior knowledge with those who are either greater than him or at the same level. He derives this principle from a *possuk* in Mishlei (23:9), which states: **בְּאָזְנֵי כֶסֶל אַל תִּדְבֵּר, כִּי יְבֹז;** *Speak not in the ears of a fool, for he will scorn the intelligence of your words.*

The reasoning here is that someone who does not appreciate the significance of another's words will likely ridicule them. Therefore, Shlome HaMelech advises withholding information that is beyond the listener's understanding. The underlying message – that all material blessings are only meaningful when used as a means for spiritual growth – is profoundly nuanced. Yitzchok only hinted at this idea. If Yakov were on the level to grasp this subtle message, that would be ideal; if not, Yitzchok did not wish to share it for fear of having a "fool scorn the intelligence of the wise."

R' Elyah Lopian explains that the above idea sheds light on the obscure dialogue between Yitzchok and Eisav after they learned that Yakov had received the *berachos*. Yitzchok's response to Eisav - **וְיָדַגְן** - *With grain and wine I have supported him, and for you, where – what can I do, my son?* (27:37) – requires some explanation. Surely, Yakov was not meant to be blessed with all the grain and wine in the world! Why couldn't Eisav also receive a blessing of material wealth?

R' Elyah clarifies that, in Yitzchok's eyes, material blessings were closely linked to the spiritual. He appreciated that material wealth was only significant when it served to assist growth in *ruchniyus*. Thus, if Eisav were to receive any physical bounty, it would have to be connected to the spiritual blessing. This was impossible, as the spiritual blessing had been entirely conferred upon Yakov.

In response, Eisav pleaded: **הֲבָרְכָה אֶחָת הוּא לְךָ אָבִי, בְּרַכְתִּי גַם אֲנִי אָבִי**, *"Have you but one blessing, Father? Bless me too, Father!"* He was arguing that there isn't just one blessing focused on spiritual gains, with the physical merely serving as support. Eisav insisted, "Bless me too!" implying that, for him, material success holds meaning even when it is not accompanied by *ruchniyus* benefits. In reply, Yitzchok provided Eisav with a blessing: **הִנֵּה מְשַׁמְנֵי הָאָרֶץ יִהְיֶה מִוֶּשְׁבְּךָ וּמִטֵּל הַשָּׁמַיִם מֵעַל**, *Behold of the fatness of the earth shall be your dwelling and of the dew of the heavens from above.* He granted Eisav's wish, but from his own perspective, that blessing did not hold any real value.

Yitzchok's primary blessing of spiritual nature that was conferred to Yakov, emphasises an important lesson: material success holds value only when it contributes to our spiritual growth. May Hashem bless us with all our physical needs, allowing us to develop and achieve true success in life, in our spiritual endeavours!

הקדמה לסוגיא עשה דוחה לא תעשה מסכת יבמות

הקדמה א'

פירוש הרמב"ן על התורה שמות פרק כ' פסוק ח'
השמטות רב ניסים גאון מסכת שבת – קלג.

הקדמה ב'

קובץ הערות סימן ט' – אות א', ב', ג', ד'