



Parashat Toldot 5770

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## On the Parashah ~ Sanctifying Hashem's Name in the Field [Tal Chermon p. 58]

When Esav and Yaakov grew up, their different roles became apparent: "And Esav became a man knowledgeable in hunting, a man of the field, and Yaakov was a wholesome man who dwelled in tents" (Bereshit 25:27). Esav was not simply "knowledgeable in hunting" but he was a "man knowledgeable in hunting." His essence was to be a man of the field, a man of this world, a man who courageously confronts wild animals. Yaakov's essence was as a "wholesome man who dwelled in tents." It is possible that he also knew how to hunt; he was able to do so, but it was not an integral part of his nature. His essence was as one who "dwelled in tents," learning Torah and involved in spiritual matters. Esav's role was more difficult. It does not take great wisdom to sanctify Hashem's Name in the yeshivah; there are not many potential pitfalls there. But to contend with all of the world's complications and to overcome them is a great sanctification of Hashem's Name (There is a Chasidic interpretation of the midrash describing Esav's kicking to leave his mother's womb as he passed by sites idol worship which explains as Esav's attempt to sanctify Hashem's Name in the midst of idolatry). Esav was a courageous warrior, who was "a man knowledgeable in hunting," fighting against the wild animals in the field of reality and overcoming them.

### **Rav Aviner on...**

#### Twenty-one Questions about the Messiah

["Be-Ahavah U-Be-Emunah" – Chayei Sarah 5770 – translated by R. Blumberg]

1. Q: What will be the Messiah's task before he becomes the Messiah?

A: He will be king (Rambam, Hilchot Melachim 11:1).

2. Q: Will he really be king, or just in a symbolic, metaphoric sense, like a Torah scholar?

A: He will really be king – the king referred to in the ten chapters of Rambam’s Hilchot Melachim.

3. Q: What will his job be?

A: To restore the David monarchy as of old (ibid. 11:1 elaborates).

4. Q: How will we know who he is?

A: He will have to fulfill six criteria: 1. Be a king. 2. Be from the Davidic line. 3. Be a Torah scholar. 4. Observe the mitzvot. 5. Compel the nation to observe the mitzvot. 6. Fight G-d’s wars (ibid. 11:4).

5. Q: How will he compel mitzvah observance?

A: Like any king who passes laws and makes certain they are fulfilled.

6. Q: What are “G-d’s wars”?

A: Real wars like King David fought: “The first Mashiach [anointed one], King David, saved Israel from their enemies. The last Mashiach, who will emerge from David’s descendants, will save Israel from Esau’s descendants” (ibid. 11:1).

7. Q: Can you elaborate?

A: Rambam wrote (ibid. 4:10): “The king’s intent and goal shall be to exalt the true religion, to fill the world with justice, to smash the power of the wicked, and to fight G-d’s wars. For ideally, we do not crown anyone king unless he is prepared to pursue justice and war, as it says, “Our king will judge us, go forth before us and wage our wars” (Shmuel 1 18:20). Likewise, [David’s wife] Avigail said of David that he fought G-d’s wars (ibid. 25:28).

8. Q: If someone fulfills these six conditions is he the true Messiah?

A: No, he is then the “presumed Messiah.” In other words, as he has fulfilled the six prerequisites, we relate to him as the Messiah until it becomes clear whether or not he really is (Hilchot Melachim 11:4).

9. Q: What conditions must be fulfilled for him to become the true Messiah?

A: There are four conditions: “1. He was successful. 2. He vanquished all the surrounding nations. 3. He built the Temple. 4. He gathered in the dispersed of Israel. Then he is the Messiah for sure” (ibid.).

10. Q: And if he failed, is he then a false Messiah?

A: No. Whoever has fulfilled the six conditions is a reputable king (ibid.).

11. Q: Today, do we have a true Messiah?

A: No. No one has fulfilled these four conditions.

12. Q: Is there anyone who is the “presumed Messiah”?

A: No. Neither is there anyone who has fulfilled the six conditions of the presumed Messiah.

13. Q: When will the Messiah come?

A. We don't know. "One should not calculate the end. Our Sages said, 'Blasted be those who calculate the end'" (ibid. 12:2)

14. Q: How will the Messiah look and how will he operate?

A: No one knows exactly. "Regarding all such matters, no one will know how it will be until it happens" (ibid. 12:2).

15. Q: Won't the Messiah bring the Jewish People to repentance?

A: He will lead the Nation according to the Torah (ibid. 11:4). The one who will bring them to repentance is Eliyahu the Prophet (ibid. 12:2).

16. Q: What known figure is similar to the Messiah?

A. King David (ibid. 11:1).

17. Q: Is there another example?

A. Bar-Kochba, whom Rabbi Akiva and all the sages of his generation said was the Messianic King (ibid. 11:3).

18. Q: But he wasn't?

A. He was the presumed Messiah, but not the true Messiah. When he unfortunately died, it became clear that he was not the Messiah (ibid.).

19. Q: Does the Messiah have to perform miracles?

A. No. One proof is that Bar Kochba was not asked to perform miracles. Otherwise, they would immediately have declared that he was not the Messiah (ibid.).

20. Q: What must we do to bring closer the Messiah's advent?

A. We must become stronger in good traits -- kindness, the fear of G-d, Torah learning, observance of all the mitzvot, those between man and G-d, those between man and man, those associated with agriculture in Eretz Yisrael and those associated with building the Land, Shabbat, Kashrut, loving one's fellow Jew and going to the army, study of Halachah and study of faith.

21. Q: Will this take time?

A. We don't know. We await the Messiah whichever day he comes (Rambam's 13 Principles of Faith and see Hilchot Nezirut 4:11).

## Stories of Rabbenu — Our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook

### Honoring Torah Scholars

Our Rabbi immensely loved every Torah scholar. He would mention a Torah scholar with an awe of holiness and rejoicing of the heart. When he met many Torah scholars, whether or not they were his students, he would hug and kiss them – just as Yehoshafat, King of Yehudah did (Ketubot 103b). He rejoiced in their honor, and was distressed when they were the subjects of derision or worse, when they scorned others. He was exceedingly severe with one who shamed a Torah scholar, and would not be silent until he objected, even with Torah scholars who stumbled in this matter.

Our Rabbi stood before his students who were Torah scholars, and would say that the honor of Torah scholars requires one to be fastidious.

Our Rabbi honored every Torah scholar, even he if he disagreed with him, and he instructed his students to act in the same manner. When he heard a student repeat an expression which he himself had used disagreeing with another Torah scholar, he chastised him: "That which is permissible to me is not permissible to you." Occasionally when he thought that a Torah scholar erred, he spoke harshly, but on subject and with respect.

[In this context, our Rabbi relied on what is related in the book "Keter Shem Tov" that the Ba'al Shem Tov, founder of the Chasidic movement, had a fierce opponent, Rabbi Nachman of Horodneko, who would constantly criticize him. One time that same rabbi heard his students speaking against the Ba'al Shem Tov, and he castigated them, saying, "How dare you speak that way against a holy man!" They responded, "But you yourself spoke out against him." He then replied with exceeding severity, "The way that is permissible for me to speak is not permissible for you." He then told a story of two craftsmen who worked together for twenty years in order to fashion the king's crown. In the end, when the time came to set the diamonds in the crown, one said it should be one way and the other countered that it should be another. The argument grew in intensity until one craftsman called the other an idiot. A passerby who witnessed the argument injected his own words and called the man an idiot as well. The first craftsman, who had called the other an idiot, then said, "Are you aware that we are friends and that we have worked together for twenty years, making the king's crown? Our lives depend on this last detail, and that is why we are expressing ourselves so sharply. But you! Have you lifted even a finger for the king's crown? Have you ever in your life seen the king? YOU are the idiot!" Even when Torah scholars argue over Halachah, we - the insignificant - must stand in fear and awe and honor them all.]

In all of his stories about his experiences with people, he had a completely different style of relating to Torah scholars. "Torah scholar" was the most important of titles in his eyes, without any distinction which group he was connected.

During a class, when our Rabbi saw a Torah scholar standing in the outer room, he would call to him to enter and to sit close to him, and would say: "There is room," even though the bench next to him was full. He once explained that one must honor a Torah scholar and make room for him.

*From Rav Aviner's Commentary on Birkat Ha-Mazon,  
entitled Shir Ha-Ma'a Lot*

On the Sheva Berachot – "Who created the man in His Image"

What is the image of God? The Rambam explained at the beginning of the Moreh Nevuchim (Guide for the Perplexed) that this is the human intellect. We have emotion as well, but animals also have emotion. And, on the contrary, what causes the human emotion to be exalted higher than the emotion of angels is the human intellect which refines and purifies that emotion. Both man and woman are in the image of God, both of them are bearers of intellect. This obviously does not refer to

basic intellect which is required to fix an object, but to the highest form of intellect which is utilized for ethical and spiritual matters to reach a knowledge of Hashem. This is the fundamental equality of a man and a woman - both of them were created in the image of God. There are all types of physiological and psychological differences, but these are completely offset compared with the common denominator. There are even differences between the intellect of a man and the intellect of a woman. On the one hand, there is a certain advantage to the male intellect in that it is not especially intermingled with emotion; the constitution of a woman is therefore weaker than that of a man (Shabbat 33b). On the other hand, there is a certain advantage to the female intellect in that it is more intermingled with emotion, the understanding of a woman is therefore greater than that of a man (Niddah 45b). There is a difference, but do not forget the common denominator. It is therefore not enough for a couple to love one another, they also need to value each other as being a bearer of intellect. At the end of the Moreh Nevuchim, the Rambam returned to these words, a part of which is brought by the Rama in his introduction to the Shulchan Aruch: The way that a person acts when he is alone in his room cannot be compared to the way that he acts in front of a great king. But, behold, a person is constantly in a state of being in front of an awe-inspiring king, his intellect, the Divine spark which is in him, which attaches him to the Master of the Universe.

### *Family Matters*

*Ha-Rav writes weekly for the parashah sheet "Rosh Yehudi" on family relationships*

#### Happiness in Marriage

Question: I am not happy in my marriage. Every time I ask my husband to do something it causes endless arguments. What should I say to him?

Answer: Happiness is not something we receive but something we give. If you give, you will be happy. And the greatest kindness you can give is not with your mouth but with your ears. In order to make him happy, you have to listen to him. Obviously, you should not listen with impatience but with affection and understanding. And when you listen to him, speak to him about things which interest him.

It is true that he is sometimes quiet, but his silence also says something, and you must translate his silence into words. It is for this reason that Hashem gave women nine kavim of speech, so you can pleasantly express his words. In fact, you should think ten times before you say something unpleasant.

And regarding your unfulfilled requests for help, we hope that when you create a pleasant atmosphere, he will soften and come towards you. We hope. If not, we will consider it again.

Special thank you to Fred Casden for editing the Ateret Yerushalayim Parshah Sheet



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