

Toldot

A-232

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1. Introduce Sichah idea - mainly based Parshat Hashavua - study, not just read.... *quest speaks...*
2. Toldot - story extremely serious, world-shaking important events and consequences which have to be fathomed from the Biblical tale told in such marvelous simplicity
3. In addition, here we have a domestic crisis, and clues as to how each of us can and should improve domestic lives
4. Describe: Isaac-Rebekka, Esau-Jacob, blind Isaac, story blessings.
5. Isaac seemingly fooled by Esau's guile...Rebekka wants to correct situation...her technique of deception
6. Consequences:
 - *Isaac, in old age, hurt (CHARADAH GDOLAH ME'OD) and fooled
 - *Jacob who is ISH TAM YOSHEV AHALIM becomes partner to deception, and saintly Rebekka too
 - *MIDAH KNEGED MIDAH:Rebekka to leave beloved Jacob forever, Jacob to be fooled and deceived by Laban
 - *charge of the deception always brought against us by intellectual anti-semites, by anti-Zionists, by Bible Critics
7. Rebekka perhaps can be justified morally, tho essentially her guilt is clear. Torah doesn't whitewash heroes, conceal human foibles. Modern states should learn same, esp. Israel
8. But core problem elsewhere: why was Isaac fooled by Esau?
9. Three blessings Isaac gave:
 - *to Jacob in disguise as Esau
 - *to Esau directly
 - *to Jacob directly before leaving for Aram as refugee
10. Contents:
 - *material-agricultural (27: 28,29)
 - * almost identical (27: 39,40)
 - *completely different: (28: 3,4)
 - a) Eretz Israel
 - b) descendants
 - c) blessing of Abraham
11. Result: TRAGEDY OF ERRORS. This is just what the saintly Rebekka wanted for her beloved Jacob - spiritual blessing, BIRCHAS AVRAHAM, which meant spiritual eminence and rootedness Promised Land, the Jewish heritage...and here we discover that Isaac never intended to give this to Esau but to Jacob. So that all of Rebekka's efforts were to naught, were completely unnecessary - that is a true tragedy: for a saint to sin without cause.

12. So: had Rebekka not intervened, all would have gone well, never would have resorted to such disingenuousness, would not have created hatred between both sons and would have retained confidence of her husband. What was it that caused her to make these tragic mistakes, with their historic consequences?
13. Answer, provided by NETZIV, is an important lesson for us moderns daily life: whereas Abraham and Sarah always frank and open with each other, same Jacob-Rachel, never concealing complaints and dissatisfaction on important issues, this was not true with Rebekka. (Examples: Sarah told Abraham openly complaints that she would be ridiculed if he'd take promise of child seriously, and complaint against Hagar and Ishmael; also: Rachel versus Leah and birth Benjamin). Rebekka however was shy and frightened, concealing nature and undue reticence. NETZIV points to first meeting Rebekka and Isaac as indicative of future developments: VA'TIKACH HA'TZEIF VATISKAS - more than just modesty, was an inclination for character-concealment, for lack of openness, excessive shyness, unwillingness discuss problems freely with her husband. It was this lack of openness and frankness that at root of the Tragedy of Errors. Is a lesson for all couples - and all people - in domestic and human relations.
14. Bears out point that unnecessary to overdo talking in terms of modern lingo - marriage counselling etcetera. HAFACH BAH VA'HAFACH BAH? D'KULA BAH.