



Moor Lane More Torah

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Inside Out

By R' Shmuel Oppenheimer

The Passuk tells us that Yaakov was a "simple person who sat in the tent" and Esav was "a man of the field". Asks Rav Shimshon Pincus: "When the Torah defines for us who Yaakov and Esav were, why doesn't it tell us the core and essence of their characters, that Yaakov was righteous, holy and studious whereas Esav was a wicked person?"

It must be, explains Rav Pincus, that what the Passuk tells us **was** the core and essence of their characters. Rashi explains "a man of the field" to mean that he sat idle, wasting time. Esav was a man who adored 'tranquillity' and 'wasting time'. On the other hand, Yaakov was a man who utilised his time to the full, spending it in the 'tent' studying and growing.

The Passuk in Iyov (11:12) says *Ayir pere adam yivaled* [a person is born as a wild ass] which means that a person is naturally prone to be attracted to do any evil, since the evil inclinations of man are bad from his youth. Man is like a field: just like a field which is left and not constantly tended will inevitably bring forth thorns and weeds, so too a man who does not work on self-improvement and doesn't strive for growth will inevitably develop bad character traits and inclinations for evil. If one isn't positively working on growing, then he will naturally decline spiritually.

This is why "a man of the field" is the essence of Esav. Since he wasted his time, naturally he got up to no good. On the other hand, the essence of Yaakov was that he used his time to grow, and that's why he grasped such great spiritual heights.

The Vilna Gaon famously expresses this idea in his

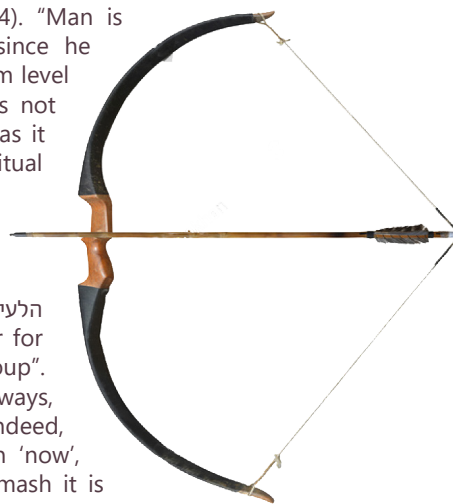
commentary on Mishlei (9:24). "Man is called a holech or mover since he constantly needs to climb from level to level spiritually. If he does not climb then he will fall down as it impossible to stay at one spiritual level..."

Let's end with a beautiful idea. When Esav asked Yaakov for some soup he said (Perek 25 Passuk 30) "הָלֵעִיטָנִי" – "pour for me **now** from this red lentil soup". 'נָא' can be translated in two ways, to mean '**now**' or '**please**'. Indeed, Artsroll translate it to mean 'now', whereas in Rav Hirsch's Chumash it is translated as 'please'.

We know that Esav was a wicked man, so why is he being so polite? I once heard a wonderful explanation; being polite, smiling, saying 'please' and 'thank you' aren't any indication of the person having good character traits. They may purely be formalities. Only actions really prove accurately a person's true character traits.

Unfortunately, this point has continued to prove itself throughout our history, most notably regarding the Nazis. Many thought that their politeness was an indication of upper-class individuals whom would never carry out atrocities. History proved the truth.

This just illustrates the point that we have made: if one doesn't work on oneself then all formalities in behaviour remain external and do not reflect their true character.



The Power of Connection



By R' Aharon Gillis

Harav Zalman Sorotskin in his sefer *Oznayim Latorah* asks why Yitzchak Avinu needed to ask for Esav to prepare him "the delicacies that he loves" before he blessed him? To make the question stronger, he notes that we do not find that Yaakov Avinu or Moshe Rabenu made such a request before they gave Berachot to the Bnei Yisrael.

To answer this, he explains how important it is for the one giving the Beracha to physically be able to see the person he is blessing. This is because the one giving the blessing needs to have a physical, spiritual and emotional connection to the one receiving the Beracha.

He brings a proof to this from Bilam, who waited until he could see Bnei Yisrael before trying to start his curse. Similarly, Hashem only put the blessings in his mouth when he lifted his eyes and saw their tents.

The Tora tells us that Moshe Rabenu didn't lose any of his

vision until he died. Hence, he only needed to see the Bnei Yisrael to connect to them and bless them. Yaakov's eyes were heavy from age; therefore, when it came for him to bless Ephraim and Menashe, he needed to place his hands on their heads and to hug them. This was to replace the loss of connection of not being able to see them properly.

However, Yitzchak, as we know, was completely blind. He had no connection to Esav (unlike Yaakov who could partially see when he blessed Ephraim and Menashe) and therefore needed to connect to Esav with all his four remaining senses. If we go through the episode, we will notice how Yitzchak pays specific attention to Yaakov's voice, what he feels like, and how he smells. It also explains why he requested the delicacies, in order to connect with him also through his sense of taste.

We should learn from here how important it is to feel connected to each other - especially through how we behold others - and to always have an Ayin Tova towards each other to enable us to pass on our Berachot. Even through these challenging times.

Wishing everyone a beautiful and uplifting Shabbat of connection.



Kosher Through and Through

R' Shmuel Livshin

At the age of forty Eisav decided it was high time to get married. His father married at forty so Eisav thought he would follow suite. Except there was a big difference: Eisav had spent most of those forty years living an immoral life, doing as he pleased, unlike his father. Getting married was just a facade to pretend to everyone that he was a decent fellow. Rashi compares Eisav to a pig, which has only one of the two signs necessary to make an animal kosher: it has split hooves but does not chew the cud. When it lies down to rest it spreads out its hooves as if to say 'Look at me, I'm kosher! I have split hooves!' Externally it looks kosher, but inside it conceals its very un-kosher innards. Eisav acted the same way, putting on a show as if he were righteous, when really, he lived a life full of sin.

The exile in which we currently find ourselves is called the galut of Edom. Edom is Eisav. There is a prevalent trait of 'putting on a good show' – people who appear upright and decent, polite and

well mannered; they smell good; they seem put together. On the outside, they seem worth emulating. But they are the epitome of Eisav. It's all just external. Their true middot lie buried behind their politeness. It would be quite short-sighted to believe that these people live moral lives. Only in the public sphere do they care about such things. Privately, they do as they please and just try not to get caught.

Our job in this galut is not to be influenced by this mindset. We must not get trapped in focusing on externals. Our mission is to develop a real, deep, internal, personal connection to Hashem, not to practice a superficial form of religion, based on other people's perceptions. Everyone has to find the truth and cling to it as if their life depends on it. There is plenty of material available to us which will show us how to live like a real Jew. Choosing the right friends is imperative because whether or not we like to admit it, we are influenced by our surroundings.

Through withstanding this test, we will have the spiritual strength to be worthy of Mashiach. It takes hard work and effort, but it's worth it. After all, that's why we're here.

General idea heard from R' Gershon Miller Shalita, Mashgiach of Gateshead Yeshiva Gedola.

HALACHAH



Talking Over a Cuppa

R' Moishe Wieder

Many people try to avoid drinking tea from a teabag on Shabbat: this is because there are many halachic issues one may run into. It is also because there are many "safer" alternatives, like instant granules for example. Nonetheless, as a tool to focus on the many fascinating Halachot involved, I would like to metaphorically "talk over a cuppa" on Shabbat -remotely! - with you.

If someone were to pour water into a cup from an urn, that cup now has the status of a "secondary vessel". That would mean that we are concerned that things which cook easily may get cooked in it. However, there is an exception: the Shulchan Aruch describes how "spices" may be put into such a vessel. The reason is that spices do not cook in a secondary vessel*. However, even so, there is normally a problem of "appearing to be involved in the act of cooking". This problem also does not exist with spices, as one does not cook spices, one adds them to the item being cooked! This therefore takes away the issue of "appearing to be involved in the act of cooking".

Perhaps tea would have the status of "spices", since after all, spice flavours food and tea flavours water! The Ginat Veradim suggests that this is not the case. Since tea is the main ingredient of the brew, it cannot possibly have the status of a spice. The Or Zorua also doesn't like the idea of tea taking on the status of a spice, since he says that the character of the spice discussed in the Shulchan Aruch is one which is occasionally enjoyed with a cold product.

Ok, so that's the issue of putting tea into a secondary vessel.

What about putting tea into "tertiary vessel"? Once hot water is put into a third *keli*, halachically this has the status of a fluid which can no longer cook**. The Aruch Hashulchan writes, however, that since we can see the teabag

being cooked- as the hot water changes colour- we regard this situation as cooking. By contrast Reb Moshe Feinstein zt"l writes that since tea, if left long enough in cold water, also eventually colours the water, this change of colour we see in a third *keli* is not regarded as cooking. However, Reb Elyashiv zt"l did not agree with Reb Moshe on this point and sided with the Aruch Hashulchan. I also heard Reb Falk zt"l during my days in Gateshead, side with the Aruch Hashulchan, that cooking tea in any vessel is very problematic. The psak of R Ovadia Yosef is to allow putting a teabag into a third *keli*.

So, it would seem to be that the best option is in fact to use granulated tea or tea essence to avoid these issues. This article, however, is not for the purpose of providing halachic directives, rather to discuss the relevant Torah ideas at hand. Consultation with one's Rabbi is always advised!

I hope the article provided you with plenty of food for thought. If you're like me, you'll enjoy thinking over it with your favourite beverage at hand, and since it is Sunday night as of writing, it'll definitely be a brew!

*Some say this leniency only applied to the spices of the days when they were not as finely ground as nowadays.

**If the water is hot enough to burn, there are halachic authorities who say that cooking may occur.

