

# תּוֹלְדוֹת

## Toldot

Genesis 25:19-28:9

*Haftarah:* Malachi 1:1-2:7

**H**ere is the history *toldot* תּוֹלְדוֹת of *Yitzchak*, *Avraham's* son. *Avraham* fathered *Yitzchak*. Genesis 25:19

*Toldot* means “generations”. In this *Parasha* the messianic lineage is continued through the choice of a man. Divine history is always made with men and women who are willing to answer the calling and consecrated themselves to G-d. *Yitzchak*, the dedicated sacrifice doesn't leave Israel and continue the mission. He finds himself confronted to the same problem that his father encountered with Sarah, the bareness of his wife. As if G-d was looking for the intercession of the spirituals leaders of the mission. The fruit of this intercession will give *Yitzchak*, *Yaakov*, *Yossef*, the key persons in G-d's plan.

From *Rivkah's* womb, two nations will be birthed, two ideologies, two worldviews which will fight in an ancestral war for the redemption of Mankind. As it is related in the *Midrash*<sup>1</sup>, from *Yaakov* will come out the builder of the Temple, *Shlomo*, and from *Esav*, his destructor, Titus Vespasian...

Anti-Semitism can be traced up to this congenital hatred between *Esav* and *Yaakov*. This phenomenon cannot be understood by human reason, and we need to consider the spiritual causes:

And even more to the point is the case of *Rivkah*; for both her children were conceived in a single act with *Yitzchak*, our father; and before they were born, before they had done anything at all, either good or bad (so that God's plan might remain a matter of his sovereign choice, not

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<sup>1</sup> Rabbinic commentary of the Bible using parables or tales to explain some facts  
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*Sefer Bereshit*

dependent on what they did, but on God, who does the calling), it was said to her, and “The older will serve the younger.” This accords with where it is written, “*Yaakov* I loved, but *Esav* I hated.” So are we to say, “It is unjust for God to do this”? Heaven forbid! For to *Moshe* he says, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will pity whom I pity.” Thus it doesn’t depend on human desires or efforts, but on God, who has mercy. For the *Tanach* says to Pharaoh, “It is for this very reason that I raised you up, so that in connection with you I might demonstrate my power, so that my name might be known throughout the world.” So then, he has mercy on whom he wants, and he hardens whom he wants. Romans 9:10-18

How interesting to note that the *Talmud*<sup>2</sup> associates *Esav/Edom* to the Roman Empire. Flavius Joseph<sup>3</sup> states that *Tzefo* (Genesis 36:11) would be the founder of Rome. Rashi<sup>4</sup> thinks that *Magdiel*, a chief of *Edom* mentioned in en Genesis 36:43, would be Rome.

*Esav/Edom* (red) loved hunting and reminds us of another man, another “mighty hunter before G-d”: *Nimrod*, the rebellious.

*Yaakov* preferred studying in the tent, symbol of the House of study (see our *Parasha VaYerah*).

This antagonism between the two brothers will never stop and the story of the lentil soup tells us about the spiritual stake of this fight. Up from the *Midrash*, *Yaakov* had prepared a lentil soup as a usual mourning meal for His grand father’s death *Avraham*. *Esav* was not interested and preferred to go hunting, it is known that he was also hunting after the women from the neighborhood. A discussion starts between the two brothers concerning the spiritual heritage of *Avraham*.

This birth right was not only related to material blessings as we will see later, *Esav* became even richer than *Yaakov*. No it was linked to spiritual blessings, to the divine mission and the survival of the messianic vision.

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<sup>2</sup> Compilation of teachings including rabbinic commentaries

<sup>3</sup> Jewish historian (around 38 - 100) and General of the army. His main writings are *Jewish Antiquities* and *The War of the Jews*.

<sup>4</sup> Rashi, great Jewish commentator of the Bible and the Talmud, 11th century

Which one of the two was the spiritual heir, the one chosen to carry the vision and the promises?

*Esav* decided that day that it was not for him, too many responsibilities, and although he was the elder he was not the one who received the calling or didn't want it. In many other cases in history we will see the same pattern, the elder not being the chosen one: *Yishma-El* and *Yitzchak*, *Reuven* and *Yossef*, *Ephraim* and *Menashe*...

Both *Esav* and *Yaakov* agreed that day and *Yaakov* becomes the next link in this messianic chain who will prepare the way for the Savior of the world, *Yeshua HaMashiach*.

... salvation comes from the Jews. John 4:22

Then the *Parasha* leads us to another event which will speak again of G-d's concern for the purity and holiness of His plan and message to be kept precious.

A new starvation occurred and *Yitzchak* goes to the Philistine king, *Avimelekh*, He does the same mistake and lies as his father did with his wife. How merciful is G-d Who uses us even despite our imperfections. Even if we don't deserve it, He wants to make us participate to His History.

It is the first time that the Jews encounter jealousy and envy, and this jealousy concerns the wells.

As we have seen in the previous *Parasha Chayyeh Sarah*, the well is the symbol for the divine inspiration, the living waters as mentioned in the Bible:

Hope of *Israel*, *Adonai*! All who abandon you will be ashamed, those who leave you will be inscribed in the dust, because they have abandoned

*Adonai* the source of living water *mekor mayim chayim* - מְקוֹר מַיִם

תִּימָה. Jeremiah 17:13

*Avraham* already affirmed his will to keep the well when he made the covenant with *Avimelekh*. But this time, the spiritual fight is much more insidious: the wells are covered up in order to blur the vision, the

integrity of G-d's redemption plan. *Yitzchak* is going to dig again his fathers' wells and will give them the same names:

Keep safe the great treasure that has been entrusted to you, with the help of the *Ruach HaKodesh*, who lives in us. 2 Timothy 1:14

G-d is the same and does not change; His calling and gifting are endless:

...for God's free gifts and his calling are irrevocable. Romans 11:29

By digging his father's wells, *Yitzchak* discovers a living fountain... The revelation of *Yeshua*, the True living fountain of life:

For with you is the fountain of life *mekor chayim* מְקוֹר חַיִּים; in your light we see light. Psalms 36:10

*Yeshua* answered her, "If you knew God's gift, that is, who it is saying to you, 'Give me a drink of water, 'then you would have asked him; and he would have given you living water." John 4:10

But this revelation is not for this time yet. The well of running water is stolen from him, first through quarrel, *Esek* and then through enmity, *Sitna*.

Again, Jewish history is shadowed before us. We are waiting for the third well, *Rehovot*, "wide open spaces", that is the image of the Third Temple where, all, Jews and Gentiles will come back to the Living water, the fountain of life manifested in *Yeshua* and whom *Avraham*, *Yitzchak* and *Yaakov* are the keepers :

"In choruses, bless God, Adonai, you whose source is Isra'el *mimekor*

*yisrael* מְקוֹר יִשְׂרָאֵל Psalms 68:27

This point being made clear, the Scripture brings us back to another confrontation between *Esav* and *Yaakov*. The imperfections of *Yitzchak* and his both physical and spiritual blindness do not allow him to discern in his son *Yaakov* the required qualifications to be the spiritual leader of the Jewish nation, chosen by G-d to carry on the messianic mission. It was the mother, as Sarah, who saw the danger. *Rivkah* remembers the prophecies that were given at the birth of the twins:

“There are two nations in your womb. From birth they will be two rival peoples. One of these peoples will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger.” Genesis 25:23

But why this trick? Wasn't G-d powerful enough to act?

The words *Rivkah* would then pronounce will sound strangely in the history of the Jewish people, echoing to themselves:

But his mother said, “Let your curse be on me my son!” Genesis 27:13

All the people answered, “His blood is on us and on our children!”  
Matthew 27:25

This is a mystery that will be only revealed to us at the end of the times.

Meanwhile, *Yaakov* is legitimated in his calling by the blessings repeated twice on him by his father who understood his mistake as we can see it from the fear he felt when *Esav* came back from hunting. *Yaakov* is blessed and will be blessed forever:

*Yitzchak* began trembling uncontrollably and said, “Then who was it that took game and brought it to me? I ate it all just before you came, and I gave my blessing to him. **That's the truth, and the blessing must stand.**”  
Genesis 27:33

God answered Bil'am, “You are not to go with them; you are not to curse the people, **because they are blessed.**” Numbers 22:12

Yes Israel is blessed with no contest:

...that I could wish myself actually under God's curse and separated from the *Mashiach*, if it would help my brothers, my own flesh and blood, the people of Israel! They were made God's children, the *Shechina* has been with them, the covenants are theirs, likewise the giving of the Torah, the Temple service and the promises; the Patriarchs are theirs; and from them, as far as his physical descent is concerned, came the *Mashiach*, who is over all. Praised be Adonai for ever! Amen!

Romans 9:3-5

BUT:

But as soon as *Yitzchak* had finished giving his blessing to *Yaakov*, when *Yaakov* had barely left his father's presence, *Esav* his brother came in from his hunting. Genesis 27:30

The word says literally in Hebrew "when *Yaakov* gets out of his father's face". We have seen before with the *Parasha VaYerah* that *Yitzchak* was the image of *Yeshua's* sacrifice, the Son. And this verse shows us in a glance all the future: when *Yaakov* got away from the face of the Son, persecution, pictured by *Esav* and exile started and never ended since. We are now waiting for *Yisra-El* to come back before the Son Who is no one else than the Father in order to be transformed from *Yaakov*, "the supplanter" into *Yisra-El* (*Prince of G-d*) to fulfill his calling and be a blessing for the whole world. The next *Parasha* will tell us how...

"In that case, I say, isn't it that they have stumbled with the result that they have permanently fallen away?" Heaven forbid! Quite the contrary, it is by means of their stumbling that the deliverance has come to the Gentiles, in order to provoke them to jealousy.

Moreover, if their stumbling is bringing riches to the world—that is, if Israel's being placed temporarily in a condition less favored than that of the Gentiles is bringing riches to the latter – how much greater riches will Israel in its fullness bring them! However, to those of you who are Gentiles I say this: since I myself am an emissary sent to the Gentiles, I make known the importance of my work in the hope that somehow I may provoke some of my own people to jealousy and save some of them! **For if their casting *Yeshua* aside means reconciliation for the world, what will their accepting him mean? It will be life from the dead.** Romans 11:11-15

The *Haftarah* speaks also of the return to G-d.



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*Sefer Bereshit*