



בסייעתא דשמיא / פרשת תולדות תשפ"א / Parshas Toldos

“ורבקה אהבת את יעקב” בראשית כה:כח / “ורבקה שמעת בדבר יצחק אל עשו בנו” בראשית כז:ה

“...Rivka favored Yaakov” / “Rivka heard when Yitzchok spoke to Eisav his son...” Bereishis 25:28 / 27:5

The Malbim and many others explain Yitzchok’s motives when he expressed his wish to bestow material blessing upon Eisav. Yitzchok envisioned an ideal partnership between his two sons, akin to that of Yissachar and Zevulun. Ideally, Eisav would go out to work and support Yaakov materially as Yaakov sat and studied the Torah day and night. Rivka however, was all-too familiar with her son Eisav and his greedy, evil nature. She knew that if Eisav were to receive the material blessing from Yitzchok he would keep his wealth to himself like the miser that he was, and leave Yaakov out on the street to starve. Therefore she understood that it would be best for Yaakov instead to be blessed with wealth and majesty, for it is possible (with much effort) to fuse both material success and spiritual prowess if the beholder utilizes his physical wealth strictly for the purpose of perfecting his soul.

As we know, Rivka was successful in her scheme and Yaakov indeed secured the material blessing. Perhaps the ramifications of this event are graver than we may think. The Nefesh HaChaim (פרק ט) relates that the דור המדבר – the generation that lived through the Wilderness, were responsible to spend every waking moment seeking out Hashem and poring over His Torah. If they let their minds stray for even a moment they would be held accountable for not fulfilling the will of Hashem. The reason for this is because they did not have the worry of providing a living for themselves and their families on their shoulders. They were afforded every luxury by the hand of Hashem. They ate Manna that fell from the heavens, and their clothes grew along with them. Without the need to work for their livelihood, they were expected to devote their entire existence to immersing themselves in Torah.

Rivka cared only for the success of Yaakov and the proliferation of his Torah. Right from the start the pasuk states that “Rivka favored Yaakov” The pasuk is referring to her nepotism towards her righteous son, and if we may suggest, that the language of the pasuk is an allusion as well, to the אהלי יעקב, the בתי מדרשים and houses of Torah Study that she so strongly defended, even if it meant plotting and strategizing around her husband, all to ensure the success of Yaakov and his Torah. Rivka managed to procure the material blessing for Yaakov to the extent that we, in our days perhaps more than ever before, live in a fashion that views total instant comfort as standard. We are currently living on a level similar to that of the generation of the Wilderness past while previewing the perfection of the future world to come. It is therefore incumbent upon us to learn without pause. We have everything taken care of. All we have to do is learn. Or else. And one more thing; it never hurt anyone to take a page out of Rivka’s legacy and “cook up” schemes to stay out late and learn one more Daf.