

11-17-25 Message to Roeh Israel – *Toldot* (generations)
Torah Portion; Genesis 25:19-28:9
Haftarah: 1 Sam 20:18-42
Suggested Acheron K'tuvim: Heb 12:14-17

Unintended Consequences of Silence

Central question of this message: How could this all have turned out differently if people had just chosen to talk with one another about important things?

We are in *Toldot*. The generations of Yitzhak.

As we read through this parashah, we find that things began well enough, but degenerated quickly into deception and trickery. Why?

Gen 25:19-21

19 Now these are the records of the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham became the father of Isaac; 20 and Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to be his wife. 21 And Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord answered him and Rebekah his wife conceived.

19
 וְאֵלֶּה הַדּוֹלָרוֹת אֲבֹרָהָם בֶּן־יִצְחָק
 And these are the generations of Abraham's son: Isaac,
85 1121 3327 8435 9999 428

אֲבֹרָהָם הוֹלִיד אֶת־יִצְחָק:
 Abraham begat Isaac:
85 3205 853 3327

20
 וַיְהִי וַיְהִי יִצְחָק בֶּן־אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה בְּקִחְתּוֹ אֶת־
 And was Isaac old forty years when he took
853 3947 8141 705 1121 3327 1961

רִבְקָה בַּת־בְּתוּאֵל הָאֲרָמִי מִפְּנֵי אֲרָם
 Rebekah the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padan-aram,
7259 1323 1328 761 6307

אָחֻת לָבָן הָאֲרָמִי לִוְיָאֲשָׁה:
 the sister to Laban the Syrian. to wife,
269 3837 761 802 3807a

And the story continues.

Gen 25:22-26

22 But the children struggled together within her; and she said,
 "If it is so, why then am I this way?" So she went to inquire of
 the Lord. 23 And the Lord said to her,

"Two nations are in your womb;
And two peoples shall be separated from your body;
And one people shall be stronger than the other;
And the older shall serve the younger."

24 When her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. 25 Now the first came forth red, all over like a hairy garment; and they named him Esau. 26 And afterward his brother came forth with his hand holding on to Esau's heel, so his name was called Jacob; and Isaac was sixty years old when she gave birth to them.

Later, as an adult, Yacov was digging wells in the margins of the lands to water the flocks. All was going well. Then he went to Beer-sheva ("well of seven") and something amazing happened to him there.

Gen 26:23-25

23 Then he went up from there to Beersheba. 24 And the Lord appeared to him the same night and said,

"I am the God of your father Abraham;
Do not fear, for I am with you.

I will bless you, and multiply your descendants,
For the sake of My servant Abraham."

25 So he built an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants dug a well.

We now know that he named this place the “well of seven” because they found water again. I have no idea how those two relate, and the sages are no help on this.

So, now we already have two pronouncements directly from the L-rd. One to Rivkah and the other to Yacov. These pronouncements are clear - Yacov is the holder of the family line, and not Esav.

Then we see that Esav takes action to distance himself from the family. This decision will have far-reaching consequences.

Gen 26:34-35

34 And when Esau was forty years old he married Judith the daughter of Beerli the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of

Elon the Hittite; 35 and they brought grief to Isaac and Rebekah.

We don't know whether Esav just got tired of waiting for his father Yitzhak to do something, but during his 40th year, Esav went and got his own bride. In fact, he got two of them. Maybe a he wanted a spare.

How long did it take for these two Hittite women to get on the nerves of Yitzhak and Rivkah? Not long. This passage already gives us a good lesson. The parents should be active in selecting a bride for their sons.

Now focus on the intentions of Yitzhak to bless his sons. It seems that we can discern from the passage that Yitzhak may have had two different blessings in mind for his boys.

Since we know that Yitzhak thought he was blessing Esav, we know what he intended to say, a blessing for wealth and power:

Gen 27:27-29

27 So he [Yacov] came close and kissed him; and when he smelled the smell of his garments, he blessed him and said,

"See, the smell of my son
Is like the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed;

Here comes the blessing part:

28 Now may God give you of the dew of heaven,
And of the fatness of the earth,
And an abundance of grain and new wine;
29 May peoples serve you,
And nations bow down to you;
Be master of your brothers,
And may your mother's sons bow down to you.
Cursed be those who curse you,
And blessed be those who bless you."

Clearly there was a blessing for the other son, Yacov, as well. We will discover that blessing as well.

I believe the blessing Yitzhak was to give to Yacov mirrored the blessing that Yitzhak received as well from G-d.

I believe the actual, *intended blessing* from Yitzhak to Yacov was later delivered, and we find it here:

Gen 28:1-5

28 So Isaac called Jacob and blessed him and charged him, and said to him, "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan. 2 Arise, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father; and from there take to yourself a wife from the daughters of Laban your mother's brother.

And here comes the blessing part:

3 And may God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and multiply you, that you may become a company of peoples. 4 May He also give you the blessing of Abraham, to you and to your descendants with you; that you may possess the land of your sojournings, which God gave to Abraham."

So, we can see now the two blessings for the boys, as I believe they were intended to be given.

We know from the passage that Yitzhak became very angry at the deception. But in this passage we just read, he is a changed man. There

is more to it than forgiveness, in this changed his attitude toward Yacov. We will see that later.

The first blessing given, given under deception, is a wonderful blessing for a firstborn – in the family line for blessings of G-d.

But as we read it, we see something just isn't right. These words are more appropriately given to Yacov, since he is in the G-d – ordained lineage of blessing.

The greatest disconnect comes from comparing this blessing to the promises given by G-d to Rivkah, and the promises given by G-d to Yacov, both of which we have read above.

These just can't co-exist. They are mutually exclusive. If the intended blessing was actually given by Yitzhak to Esav, there would be an irreconcilable conflict with the two prophecies we have already seen.

Let's dig further. But first of all, let's begin with the concept firmly in place that Yitzhak was a man of G-d, and was given over to doing what G-d had directed, just as was his father Abraham. When he knows the right thing, he does it.

So, we might ask, why would one of the patriarchs, Yitzhak, intend to invoke a blessing which would directly defy G-d's instructions?

Although Scripture does not tell us directly, I believe the answer to that question can be discerned with a fair degree of certainty.

The only answer that makes sense to me is this: the family didn't talk to one another. They didn't *really* talk.

Important information was not shared between Rivkah and Yitzhak.
Important information was not shared between Yacov and his parents.
Important information was not shared between the parents and Esav.

And that important information, in every case, would have made all the difference in the outcome. Decisions were made with incomplete information.

Other than the deception of Rivkah in intercepting the blessing of the firstborn for Yacov, there is no deception here.

And I will show that the deception resorted to was unnecessary in the first place.

The poor decisions in this portion are not generally based upon falsehoods... they are based upon *incomplete information*. And so they were the wrong decisions.

Let's begin with the word of the L-rd coming to Rivkah. We read it before, in Gen 25:23, and mark it, because we are going to come back to examine this in some greater detail.

23 And the Lord said to her,

"Two nations are in your womb;
And two peoples shall be separated from your body;
And one people shall be stronger than the other;
And the older shall serve the younger."

There is no evidence at all that she told this vision to her husband Yitzhak. But there is abundant evidence that she did not.

If Yitzhak had heard this information, the last line "And the older shall serve the younger" would have had him thinking for the next 40 years about what blessings would have been more appropriate for the two boys.

Clearly, he was caught off guard by the deception of Rivkah and Yacov at the end of his life. And he was angered by it.

Gen 27:32-34

32 And Isaac his father said to him, "Who are you?" And he said, "I am your son, your first-born, Esau." **33 Then Isaac trembled violently**, and said, "Who was he then that hunted game and brought it to me, so that I ate of all of it before you came, and blessed him? Yes, and he shall be blessed."

How could this have played-out differently? Easily. Rivkah tells Yitzhak of the proclamation by G-d. And he gets some time to ponder the meaning of the pronouncements, and also the appropriate blessings.

When the time comes for blessing, his blessing is consistent with the proclamation to Rivkah.

There is also no evidence that Yitzhak knew that Esav had sold his birthright for the bowl of "that red stuff over there". That information was important.

When Esav was getting "antsy", and was ready for a bride, he should have come to his father and mother to discuss the matter with them. He might

have said, “Mom and Dad, I find myself to be a 40 year-old virgin. You guys got a plan?” It might have turned out very much differently, with a family conversation exchanging important information.

Rather, it seems he had a secret plan to go marry the pretty girls of the land. And that worked out very poorly for him.

Do you remember when G-d appeared to Yacov at the well of Beer-sheva back in Gen 26:23?

Imagine if Yacov had reported that encounter and that prophecy to his parents. Even then, Rivkah might have taken courage to speak to her husband, and all might have been set on a better path even then. But no.

Imagine... just imagine... if Yitzhak had known all of this at the end of his life. How differently things would have played-out.

Flip back now, and let's take a detailed look at Gen 25:23. There are only a few lines, but they are huge in significance.

Gen 25:18

23 And the Lord said to her,

"Two nations are in your womb;
And two peoples shall be separated from your body;
And one people shall be stronger than the other;
And the older shall serve the younger."

See the part in the proclamation to Rivkah which says that two nations, two people groups, are in her womb? "Nations" is not redundant with "peoples", and I will show you the two interpretations that I favor.

Nations have boundaries against one another. This means that these two boys will not live together in peace. They will separate, they will strive with one another, and so will all those who follow after the separate paths that each shall take.

People groups, even in the same nation, can have different destinies. This invokes a theological aspect that is worthy of examination.

These boys are figureheads for two very different groups of people. Esav is the father of those who rejected not only their worldly birthright, but also their spiritual birthright. These people groups are those who were once called Romans. These are the people who now, more each day, choose Islam and declare Allah to be "greater"... than the One true G-d.

Here, in the “two peoples” statement we see a deep theological point. One people will choose G-d, His Torah, His righteousness, His salvation (Yeshua).

The other people will not choose G-d, His Torah, His righteousness, nor his Yeshua. I don't think it a small thing that the Hebrew word for “hairy” is a close cousin to the word for “demonic”.

Remember, they struggled in the womb? They struggle today. Yacov is destined to become the father of the Hebrew people – a mixed multitude of people who worship the One true G-d.

Esav is destined to become the father of Edom and the Roman empire. Edomites, also called Idumeans, are even to this day hostile to Israel. Antipater the Idumean was the progenitor of Herod the Great, who ruled Israel under Roman authority.

Esav, you recall from Gen 28:7, married a daughter of Ishmael, now combining that lineage in him as well. So, Esav is the father of the mixed multitude which practices Islam.

Some have called Esav the father of modern Christianity as well, because of its traditional ties to Rome, its hostility to Israel as the homeland of Hebrews, the fact that one of its greatest heroes – Martin Luther – was the architect of a body of theology quickly adopted – sometimes almost word for word – by Hitler and the SS so as to justify the extermination of the Hebrews. But beyond that, the church stands apart from Yacov by its zealous rejection of G-d's Torah.

The church seems to accept G-d and Yeshua, but reject Torah, and righteousness. This leaves them in a strange position. And their rejection of the Jewish people and G-d's Torah gives them little chance of finding the path back home, for that pathway is through Torah. It is that very dynamic that will give the Antichrist a lot of influence in the church, and why brother will fight brother, and families divide in the more difficult days to come.

Maybe that tide is beginning to turn. The church may actually look up one day to find itself today somewhat stuck in the middle of these two camps. As the lines between them become sharper and sharper in these days, it is my prayer that the church will join the camp of Yacov in full measure, and quit trying to keep one foot in the world of darkness and one foot in the world of light.

The bottom line is that when you choose the path of evil, and rejecting G-d and His Torah, then you might well find yourself in a position from which you *cannot return*.

Paul distinguishes the path of peace, and the paths of evil.

Heb 12:14-17

14 Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. 15 See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; 16 that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal. 17 For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.

There is a time beyond which repentance is not effective. It was for that reason that our sages said, “Repent one day before you die”. Since we do not know the date of our death, then we should repent daily.

The blessing Yitzhak finally did give to Esav is coming true in full measure.

Gen 27:38-40

And Esau said to his father, "Do you have only one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, O my father." So Esau lifted his voice and wept. 39 Then Isaac his father answered and said to him,

"Behold, away from the fertility of the earth shall be your dwelling, And away from the dew of heaven from above.
40 "And by your sword you shall live,
And your brother you shall serve; But it shall come about when you become restless, That you shall break his yoke from your neck."

The Islamic world is that of desert regions, the most inhospitable areas of the globe. The most universal sign of Islam is the crescent sword.

In the Quran, the sword is the preferred method of “persuasion”:

Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Apostle, nor acknowledge the religion of Truth, (even if they are) of the People of the Book (Christians and Jews), until they pay the jizya [tribute] with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued. (9:29).

The final prophecy regarding “breaking his yoke from your neck”, it could be speaking of the final rise of Islam in this day, where the constraints of the Jewish people no longer work to keep the peace. Or it could be that because the Hebrew word for “yoke” and word for “law” are so closely related, that all those who follow Esav, who follow Torah-less-ness (as shall the Antichrist), will simply cast-off G-d’s Torah.

See the part in the proclamation to Rivkah which says that one people will be stronger than the other. It doesn’t tell us which will be stronger. That is intentional, and important.

This indicates that the two people groups who spring from the lines of these two boys will never be equal in power. One will always be stronger, dominating the other. There will be times when one side is greater, and then the other will prevail. But there is more.

Remember the final statement in the proclamation to Rivkah, which said the older shall serve the younger. There is a reason that is placed last in the prophecy. It is because... in the end... the Hebrews (and all those who have joined to them as true sons of Abraham, Yitzhak and Yacov) will be the eventual – and eternal – victors in this struggle.

In the end, the deception plan hatched by Rivkah, and participated in by Yacov should have been *totally unnecessary*. What made it necessary was a tragic family dynamic where important information was not being shared.

Why was Yitzhak a changed man when he finally did give the intended blessing to his son Yacov? I suspect that a family conversation followed the blessing-disaster, and finally he got all the necessary information. He finally understood. He was at peace. He saw G-d's hand in all of it.

The lesson for us today is simple. If G-d is coming to you with a word, test it and be certain it's not the whispers of the evil one.

But if after prayer you are certain that it is of G-d, then *don't keep that kind of important information to yourself if it involves others*. Let G-d's word go forth and do what it will do with the participation of others, not against their wills.

Keep an active dialog with your family, and with your family of faith.

Here is a story giving us an example of how withholding full and accurate information can affect the outcome of important decisions.

A number of Messianic Jewish families formed a chavurah group, which would meet every week at a different home in the group, to study Scripture, and have havdallah.

The host home was responsible to prepare the main meal, and other families brought side dishes and such. It was time for the Goldbergs to host the chavurah.

Mrs. Goldberg decided to make mushroom smothered steak. At the store, she discovered the price for even a small can of mushrooms was much more than she wanted to pay. She's Jewish, remember.

She then told her husband, "We aren't going to have mushrooms because they are too expensive." But since he's also Jewish, he said, "I know a place up in the foothills where mushrooms grow right in the creek bed. Why don't you go pick some of those mushrooms? There are plenty of them, and they are free. I'll give you directions."

"No," she said, "I don't want to do that, because I have heard that wild mushrooms are poisonous." He then said, "I don't think so. I see the small animals eating them all the time and they are fine."

Mrs. Goldberg was reluctantly convinced. She followed her husband's directions and drove to where the road neared the creek. She picked a nice bowl of mushrooms, more than she would need.

She brought the wild mushrooms back home and washed, sliced and diced them to get them ready to go over her smothered steak.

Then, just to be sure, she went out on the back porch and got her dog Spot's bowl, and gave him a double handful. She had already mixed-in some scraps from the trimmed steaks to make them tasty. Spot didn't slow down until he had eaten every bite.

After shul, for hours, Mrs. Goldberg closely watched Spot and the wild mushrooms didn't seem to affect him, so she decided to use them.

As was the Goldberg family custom, the doors to the home were left open as the guests from shul came over for the chavurah. Spot greeted everyone at the curb as they got out of their cars, as frisky as ever.

The chavurah meal was a great success. After everyone had finished, they all began the Torah study.

Then, about fifteen minutes into the study, the doorbell unexpectedly rang. One of the people closest to the door went to answer it. The neighbor was standing there, reporting Spot was dead.

With this news, Mrs. Goldberg went into hysterics. She called the doctor and told him what had happened.

Soon the ambulance arrived, and so did the doctor. One by one, every person at the chavurah went into the master bathroom, got an enema and also their stomach pumped. It was horrible, at best.

After the last one was finished, the doctor came out and said, "I think everything will be fine now", and he and the paramedics left.

All the chavurah participants were still feeling violated, and beginning to gather up their coats to leave when the same neighbor came back to the front door and once again rang the bell.

This time Mrs. Goldberg answered the door, and the neighbor told her, “I put Spot in the back of my pickup. I thought it best not to leave him out in the road. You know, that fellow who ran over him never even stopped his car!”

Ms. Goldberg also lacked complete, timely, important information in her decision-making.

Don’t withhold important information, especially in circumstances where G-d’s plan involves important decisions involving others.