

פרשת תולדות

If you were ever misled when purchasing an object, for example you were told that it had certain capabilities or unique features and it was not true, you were most likely upset. Often the Halacha recognizes your right to be upset, even if you have no legal recourse against the one who took advantage of you.

That legitimate Halachic dismay is called תרעומת. Literally תרעומת means to 'thunder', like the word that is its source, רעם. In Masseches Bava Metzia¹ we learn regarding some instances in which there is no recourse to Beis Din but, nevertheless, a person has a right to feel that he was cheated and to express those feelings quite clearly. The *tar'o'mes* is the halachically validated expression of those feelings².

When the misrepresentation³ is more severe, the entire agreement may be voided. That is what is referred to in Halachah as a מקח טעות. A *meh'kach*⁴ *to'us* is an acquisition that was undertaken with false information. The Halachah decides whether or not the false information was so significant that the party to the acquisition would not have entered into the agreement had he known about the disinformation.

¹ There are numerous instances in Masseches Bava Metzia where there are incidents that allow this level of disappointment. See there, for example, *Daf* 76b regarding issues of hiring various types of workers and when the workers back out of their commitments.

² It follows, of course, that if there is no halachically approved תרעומת, such anger is forbidden.

³ Both in the previous instance when only תרעומת is sanctioned and in the present case, it does not matter whether the deception was deliberate or not. The fact that there was deception causes the agreement to be reviewed and to decide the result of the deception based on its severity.

⁴ In the conversation of the Beis Midrash, this term is expressed as *meh'kach*, with the *segol* vowel underneath the letter *mem*. In proper *l'shon ha'kodesh*, the word is pronounced *mi'kach*, with the *chi'rik* vowel underneath the letter *mem*. See Divrei Hayomim II Perek 19/Posuk 7.

In both of the above instances, it does not matter who was misled: the seller or the buyer. If the case falls within the rubric of ‘significantly misleading’, the status of *tar’o’mes* or *meh’kach to’us* may be applied.

Thus, when we come to a most evident instance of deception in our Parshas Toldos, an instance that had and has far-reaching consequences for our people, we are taken by surprise when the reaction is neither one that is expected or seemingly, appropriate.

We will not discuss here the justification, or lack thereof, regarding Yaakov Ovinu’s impersonation⁵ of Eisav at the behest of his mother, Rivka l’meinu. The sources are replete with such discussions that always leave much to investigate further.

⁵ It is true that Yaakov Ovinu may have avoided a straight-out lie, according to Rashi. That does not mean, though, that Yitzchak Ovinu was not misled.

We read (B’reishis Perek 27/P’sukim 18-19) of the conversation between Yitzchak Ovinu and the son who initially brings him the *מטעמים*, tasty foods:

וַיָּבֵא אֶל אָבִיו אֶת הַמֵּטַעֲמִים וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי אֶתְּבָרַכְנִי נְפֹשָׁהּ:
וַיֹּאמֶר הֲנִי מִי אַתָּה בְּנִי וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל אָבִיו אֲנִי יְעֹשֵׂהְךָ עֲשִׂיתִי

He came to his father and he said, ‘My father’. His father said ‘I am here and ready. Who are you, my son?’ Yaakov said to his father, ‘I am Eisav your first-born; I did that which you spoke to me; please arise and sit and eat from my hunting so that your soul will bless me.’

Rashi writes:

אנכי עשו בכורך - אנכי המביא לך, ועשו הוא בכורך;
I am Eisav your first-born – I am he who brings it to you; and Eisav is your first-born.

That is, Yaakov says, as it were:

I am; Eisav is your first-born.

However this explanation does not take into account the following words of Yaakov:

כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתָּ אֵלַי

Like you spoke with me.

Of course, Yitzchak Ovinu spoke to Eisav, not to Yaakov.

Our goal in this note is neither to besmirch Yaakov Ovinu nor to protect him.

We will discuss the reaction of Yitzchak Ovinu when he discovered the deception.

Yaakov has received the blessing and then Eisav comes to his father after doing the latter's bidding. The Torah writes (ibid. P'sukim 30-33):

וַיְהִי כַאֲשֶׁר כָּלָה יִצְחָק לְבָרֵךְ אֶת יַעֲקֹב וַיְהִי אַךְ יָצָא יָצָא יַעֲקֹב מֵאֵת פְּנֵי יִצְחָק אָבִיו וַעֲשׂוֹ
אָחִיו בָּא מִצִּידוֹ: וַיַּעַשׂ גַּם הוּא מִטְעָמִים וַיָּבֵא לְאָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר לְאָבִיו יְקָם אָבִי וַיֹּאכַל מִצִּיד
בְּנֹו בַעֲבֵר תִּבְרַכְנִי נַפְשִׁי: וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ יִצְחָק אָבִיו מִי אַתָּה וַיֹּאמֶר אָנִי בֶנְךָ בְּכֹרֶךָ עֲשׂוֹ:
וַיִּחַרד יִצְחָק חֲרָדָה גְּדֹלָה עַד מָאֵד וַיֹּאמֶר מִי אִפּוֹא הוּא הַצֵּד צִיד וַיָּבֵא לִי וְאָכַל מִכָּל
בְּטָרָם תִּבּוֹא וְאִבְרַכְהוּ גַם בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה:

It was when Yitzchak finished blessing Yaakov and it was when Yaakov had just gone away from before Yitzchak his father, Eisav his brother came from his hunting. Eisav, too, made tasty food and he brought to his father and he said to his father, "let my father arise and he should eat from the hunting of his son so that his soul should bless me."

Yitzchak his father said to him, "Who are you?" He said, "I am your son, your first-born, Eisav."

Yitzchak trembled greatly and exceedingly and he said, "Who then was he who hunted and trapped and he brought to me and I ate from everything prior to when you came and I blessed him? Also he should be blessed.

We emphasize the closing words of Yitzchak Ovinu in this selection:

גַּם בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה:

Also he should be blessed.

Was this not an instance of severe deception? Do we not expect תרעומת at the very least, if not a voiding of the blessing?

That is not what occurred. Rather surprisingly Yitzchak said:

גַּם בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה:

Also he should be blessed.

But, we do not wish to ignore the difficulties involved and have it appear that Yitzchak's response to the 'deception' is easily understood. It is not.

We will note at the very outset that Targum Yonoson ben Uziel gives expression to our query by his rendition of this phrase. Though, Targum Onkelos translates these words literally, as we have rendered them, Targum Yonoson writes as follows:

אפילו הכי בריך יהי

Even so, he should be blessed.

It seems that the only way to understand Targum Yonoson is to express his words thusly:

Even though I Yitzchak thought that I was blessing you and even though Yaakov misrepresented himself and thus should not have been the recipient of the blessing – even so, he should be blessed.

Why?

In fact, Rashi understands this reaction of Yitzchak, to which HaKodosh Boruch evidently acceded, to have perplexed our worst enemies.

When Bil'am wishes to curse Israel he says to the dismay of Bolok (B' midbar Perek 23/Posuk 8):

מָה אֶקְבֵּל לֹא קִבְּוֹה קֵל וּמָה אֶזְעַם לֹא זְעַם ה':

What can I curse? G-d did not curse? How can I be angry; G-d did not anger.

Rashi writes there:

מָה אֶקְבֵּל לֹא קִבְּוֹה קֵל...כַּשֵּׁנֶכְנֵס אֲבִיהֶם בַּמְרֵמָה אֲצֵל אֲבִיו הִיָּה רֹאוֹי לְהִתְקַלֵּל, מָה נֹאמֵר שֵׁם גַּם בְּרוּךְ יִהְיֶה.

What can I curse? G-d did not curse – When the father of Israel (Yaakov) came deceitfully to his father (Yitzchak) he deserved to be cursed. But, what does it say there, 'Also he should be blessed!'

It seems that many of the *Rishonim* have a similar understanding of the matter and that as the generations progress their shared⁶ opinion becomes increasingly clear.

⁶ We do not mean to imply that Rashbam, Ramban and Seforno who will be presently cited agree completely. As will be apparent, there are significant differences between them. But, I think that they all come to similar conclusions even though the means through which they arrive at their conclusions differ.

Rashbam writes:

גם ברוך יהיה - שמיהר לעובדני. וגם ידע שבעצת רבקה עשה הכל והיא היתה מכרת
בו שראוי לברכות:

He should also be blessed – Because he hurried to serve me. Additionally, Yitzchak knew that it was with the counsel of Rivka that Yaakov did all that he did and that she knew him to be worthy of the blessings.

On the face of it, I do not understand either of the points of the Rashbam.

First, Yaakov did not act with alacrity. It was his mother who prepared the tasty food. Yaakov did not prepare it; he only served it.

Secondly, how does Rashbam know that Rivka was behind the deception? Who told him?⁷

⁷ This approach seems to directly contradict the Netziv's explanation of the initial meeting between Yitzchak Ovinu and Rivka I'meinu and its ramifications.

We read at the end of last week's Parshas Chaye Sarah (B'reishis Perek 24/P'sukim 63-65):

וַיֵּצֵא יִצְחָק לְשׁוּחַ בְּשָׂדֵה לְפָנוֹת עָרֵב וַיֵּשֶׂא עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה גַמְלִים בָּאִים: וַתִּשָּׂא רַבְקָה אֶת עֵינֶיהָ
וַתִּרְאֶה אֶת יִצְחָק וַתִּפֹּל מֵעַל הַגָּמֶל: וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל הָעֶבֶד מִי הָאִישׁ הַלֵּזָה הַהֵלֶךְ בְּשָׂדֵה לְקִרְאֹתֵינוּ וַיֹּאמֶר
הָעֶבֶד הוּא אֲדֹנָי וַתִּקַּח הַצְּעִיף וַתִּתְּכָס:

Yitzchak went out to meditate in the field towards evening and he raised his eyes and he saw and behold camels were coming. Rivka raised her eyes and she saw Yitzchak and she fell from upon the camel. She said to the servant, 'Who is that man who is going in the field to meet us?' The servant said, 'It is my master'; she took her scarf and covered herself.

Chazal and our commentators all say that this 'mediation' was prayer.

Netziv writes there:

ותשא רבקה וגו' וטרא את יצחק. בעודו עומד ומתפלל והיה אז כמלאך א...ל'קים נורא מאד,
וכמבואר ברבה שראתה ידיו שטוחות בתפלה, על כן נבעתה מאד:

Rivka raised...and she saw Yitzchak – She saw while he was praying. At that moment he was like an angel of G-d, most awesome. This is as it is explained in the Midrash B'reishis Rabba that she saw his hands outstretched in prayer. Thus she was very frightened.

ותפל מעל הגמל. מרוב פחד ואימה, אמנם לא ידעה ממי היא מתפחדת...

She from upon the camel – From fear and awe even though in fact she did not know from whom she was fearful.

When I now come to the Ramban's explanation, the event is somewhat easier to understand.

He writes:

בטרם תבא ואברכהו גם ברוך יהיה - אין דרך החרד חרדה גדולה עד מאד וצועק "מי הוא אשר רמני לברך אותו" שישלים צעקתו לאמר מיד "גם ברוך יהיה", אבל היה ראוי שיקללהו, ועוד, כי היה עשו צועק עליו לאמר "ולמה תברכהו עתה אבי", ואיך יאמין עשו כי במרמה היה מתחלה, בראותו כי עתה יברך אותו ברצונו:

והנכון בעיני...טעמו וגם ברוך יהיה על כרחי, שאי אפשר לי להעביר הברכה ממנו, כי מאז שברך אותו ידע ברוח הקדש שחלה ברכתו עליו:

וזהו טעם החרדה הגדולה אשר חרד, כי ידע שאבד בנו האהוב לו ברכתו לעולם. וזה טעם בא אחיך במרמה - כי אחר שאמר מי איפוא, נתן דעתו שהבא אליו היה יעקב, שאי אפשר שתחול הברכה רק בזרעו:

Before you came and I blessed him; he should also be blessed – this is not the manner of one who trembled greatly and exceedingly and who cried out,

מי האיש הלזה. אשר אני מתפעל ומפחד ממנו... על כן כששמעה ממנו שהוא אישה, ותקח הצעיף ותתכס. מרוב פחד ובושה כמו שמבינה שאינה ראויה להיות לו לאשה, ומאז והלאה נקבע בלבה פחד ממנו, ולא היתה עם יצחק כמו שרה עם אברהם, ורחל עם יעקב, אשר בהיות להם איזה קפידא עליהם או שינוי דעה לא בושו לדבר רתת לפניהם, מה שאין כן רבקה. וכל זה הקדמה להסיפור שיבוא בפרשת תולדות שהיו יצחק ורבקה מחולקים בדעות, ומכל מקום לא מצאה רבקה לב להעמיד את יצחק על דעתה בדברים נכוחים כי היא יודעת האמת כי עשו רק ציד בפיו, וכן בשעת הברכות...

Who is that man – from whom I am so emotional and fearful.

When Rivka heard from Eliezer that this man, Yitzchak, was to be her husband she took the scarf and covered herself from fear and embarrassment – as if she understood that she was unworthy to be his wife.

From that time on, fear and awe from Yitzchak was affixed in her heart and her relationship with Yitzchak was not like that which was between Sarah with Avraham or Rachel with Yaakov. In these latter relationships, when they were upset with their husbands or thought differently from them, they were not embarrassed to speak strongly before them. Rivka was different.

All of this is a preface to the event that will come in Parshas Toldos when Yitzchak and Rivka had differing opinions. Nonetheless, Rivka did not have the courage to raise her opinion before Yitzchak and say correct ideas because *she* knew the truth that Eisav was a deceitful person and so it was [that she did not speak up] when Yitzchak decided to confer the blessings.

‘Who is it that deceived me to bless him’ that he would complete his outcry saying immediately – ‘he should also be blessed’.

It would have been more in keeping that Yitzchak should have cursed the deceiver.

Additionally, if while Eisav was crying out against him and saying, ‘why should you bless him now, my father?’ – How could Eisav believe that in the beginning the event occurred by deception when he sees that now his father is blessing Yaakov on his own volition?

That which is correct in my eyes is...the explanation that ‘he should also be blessed’ even against my will. It is impossible for me to remove the blessing from Yaakov because when Yitzchak blessed Yaakov, Yitzchak knew with his *Ruach HaKodesh* that the blessing was successful.

And this is the reason for the exceedingly great trembling that took ahold of Yitzchak because he knew that this son who was beloved by him, Eisav, lost the blessing forever.

This is why that immediately afterwards Yitzchak said, ‘your brother came deceitfully’, because when he said, ‘who then’ [meaning that Yitzchak himself was attempting to understand what happened] Yitzchak thought about it and realized that it must have been Yaakov who deceived him because it is was impossible that the blessing would be successful for someone who was not his seed.

Rashbam and Ramban teach us that the reason that the blessing given in error to Yaakov was vindicated and reiterated was that Yitzchak knew or discovered that it was correct to bless Yaakov.

How does Seforno express it?

גם ברוך יהיה. אם כן מי הוא שהביא לי ציד במרמה ועם זה יזכה שיהיה ברוך כי אמנם הרגיש בברכתו שחלה הברכה על המבורך כמו שאמרו על ר' חנינא כשהיה מתפלל על החולים (ברכות לד ב):

He should also be blessed – ‘If so, who brought me the hunted food in deceit and even so merited that he should be blessed?’

In truth, Yitzchak felt that his blessing was granted on the one to whom he blessed. This is similar in idea to what we read in the Mishnah regarding Rabi Chanina when he prayed for the sick.

The Mishnah there (Masseches B'rachos Perek 5/Mishnah 5) writes

המתפלל וטעה סימן רע לו ואם שליח צבור הוא סימן רע לשולחיו מפני ששלוחו של אדם כמותו אמרו עליו על רבי חנינא בן דוסא כשהיה מתפלל על החולים ואומר זה חי וזה מת אמרו לו מנין אתה יודע אמר להם אם שגורה תפלתי בפי יודע אני שהוא מקובל ואם לאו יודע אני שהוא מטורף:

It is a bad omen for one who errs in his prayers. If he is the *shliach tzibbur* it is a bad omen for the congregation who sent him because a representative is the same as the one[s] who appointed him.

They said regarding Rabi Chanina ben Dosi that when he would pray for the sick he would say [following his prayer], 'this one will live and this one will die.' They said to him, 'How do you know?' He answered them, 'if my prayer is flowing naturally in my mouth I know that it was accepted; if not, I know that it was torn.'

The *Ruach HaKodesh* of Yitzchak Ovinu allowed him to discern the efficacy of his blessing, no less than the Tanna Rabi Chanina ben Dosi was able to do many centuries later. Since the blessing 'worked', explained Seforno, it became evident that it was effective because its recipient was deserving of it.

The Midrash (B'reishis Rabba Parshata 67/3):

אמר רבי יצחק בא לקללו אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא הזהר שאם את מקללו לנפשך את מקלל דאמרת אורריך ארור:

Rabi Yitzchak said, 'Yitzchak was going to curse Yaakov. Hashem said to him, "Be careful, if you curse him you will be cursing yourself as it says, 'those who curse you will be cursed.'"

The verse to which the Midrash refers is found in the very beginning of Parshas Lech Lecha and it is among the first words that Hashem tells Avraham Ovinu.

We read there (B'reishis Perek 12/Posuk 3):

וְאַבְרָמָה מְבָרְכֶיךָ וּמְקַלְלֶיךָ אֶאָר וְנִבְרַכְוּ בְּךָ כָּל מְשֻׁפָּחֵת הָאָדָמָה:

I Hashem will bless those who bless you and I will curse those who curse you; all the families of the land will be blessed due to you⁸.

Thus, if a Jew curses another Jew, and certainly if Yitzchak would curse Yaakov for his deceitfulness, the curse would boomerang against his own family and harm the descendants of Yaakov.

At first, the Midrash seems to be in opposition to the commentaries that we brought. The three sources that we shared all agree that Yitzchak blessed Yaakov. Can those *meforshim* be understood to be in consonance with the Midrash?

In fact, the Midrash provides us with the background for the commentators that we have cited and for many others.

If Yitzchak would have understood all from the beginning and would have discounted Eisav's complaints from the start, he would not have had to say:

גם ברוך יהיה

He should also be blessed.

⁸ This Midrash provides us with insight regarding the blessings that Yaakov himself bestowed upon his own children.

We read at the conclusion of Sefer B'reishis in Parshas Vayechi (Perek 59/P'sukim 5-7):

שמעון ולוי אחים קלי חמס מכרתיהם: בסדום אל תבא נפשי בקהלם אל תחד כבדי כי באפם הרגו איש וברצונם עקרו שור: ארור אפם כי עז ועברתם כי קשתה אחלקם ביעקב ואפיצם בישראל:

Shimon and Levi are brothers, vessels of violence is their birth right. Let my soul not enter their counsel, in their gatherings, do not unite, my honor; because with their anger they have killed a man and willingly they removed the hooves of the oxen. Let their anger be cursed because it was brazen and their anger because it was harsh; I will divide them among Yaakov; I will scatter them in Israel.

Rashi writes:

ארור אפם כי עז - אפילו בשעת תוכחה לא קלל אלא אפם, וזהו שאמר בלעם (במדבר כג/ח) מה אקוב לא קבה קל:

Cursed is their anger because it is brazen – Even at the time of rebuke Yaakov only cursed their anger – not them. That is what Bil'am said, "How can I curse; G-d did not curse.

Any curse that Yaakov would have imposed upon his sons would have reverberated back to him.

Rather, the Midrash tells us that there was a moment of terror that grasped Yitzchak Ovinu.

The blessings that Yitzchak Ovinu was conferring were not only the loving and personal wishes that a father has for a son.

The blessings that Yitzchak Ovinu conferred were the continuity of the line from the founding patriarch, Avraham Ovinu⁹ that were passed down to his successor, Yitzchak and that would be given to the final and choicest of the Ovos¹⁰ who would be the successor of the first patriarchs and who bring their task as founders of a nation to the culmination of its first stage.

An error in the conferring of those blessings would be catastrophic!

⁹ When, later on, Yitzchak tells Yaakov to go to Lovon to find a wife, he speaks as follows (Perek 28/P'sukim 1-4):

וַיִּקְרָא יִצְחָק אֶל יַעֲקֹב וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתוֹ וַיִּצְוֶהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לֹא תִקַּח אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן: קוּם לֵךְ פְּדִנָה אָרֶם בֵּיתָה בְּתוּאֵל אָבִי אִמְךָ וְקַח לְךָ מִשָּׁם אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת לְבֵן אָחִי אִמְךָ: וְקַח שׁ...ד...י... יְבָרַךְ אֶתְךָ וַיְפָרֶךְ וַיְרַבְּךָ וְהֵייתָ לְקַהֲל עַמִּים: וַיִּתֵּן לְךָ אֶת בְּרַכְתּוֹ אֲבֹרָהֶם לְךָ וּלְזַרְעֶךָ אֶתְךָ לְרִשְׁתָּךְ אֶת אֶרֶץ מִגְרִיךָ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן אֲלֶיךָ לְקִיּוֹם לְאַבְרָהָם:

Yitzchak called to Yaakov and he blessed him and commanded him and said to him, 'Do not take a wife from the Canaanite women. Arise and go to Padan Aram, to the house of Besuel the father of your mother and take from there a wife from the daughters of Lovon, the brother of your mother. Almighty G-d will bless you and you will be fruitful and multiply and become an assembly of nations. He should give you the blessings of Avraham, for you and for your children to inherit the land of your dwelling that G-d gave to Avraham.

Thus, the blessings that Yitzchak bestowed represented a continuity of those blessings that began with *his* father Avraham.

Whether or not the blessings uttered in these verses are a reiteration of those that are said earlier in our Parsha or new ones is a matter of discussion.

¹⁰ The Midrash Shochar Tov (B'reishis Vayishlach 33) writes:

יעקב בחיר האבות, דכתיב ביה, (תהילים קלה/ד) כי יעקב בחר לו י...ה י[שְׂרָאֵל לְסִגְלָתוֹ]:
Yaakov is the choicest of the patriarchs as it says, 'G-d chose Yaakov; [he chose Yisroel] as is treasure.

Thus, the Midrash is really the *p'shat* of the verse:

וַיִּחַרַד יִצְחָק חֲרָדָה גְדֹלָה עַד מְאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר מִי אֶפְּוֵא הוּא הַצֹּד צִיד וַיָּבֵא לִי וְאָכַל מִכָּל
בְּטָרִם תָּבוֹא וְאַבְרָכָהּ גַּם בְּרוּךְ יְהִי:

Yitzchak trembled greatly and exceedingly and he said, “Who then was he who hunted and trapped and he brought to me and I ate from everything prior to when you came and I blessed him? Also he should be blessed.

Rashi writes:

ויחרד - כתרגומו ותוה לשון תימה. ומדרשו ראה גיהנם פתוחה מתחתיו:

He trembled – the meaning is as Onkelos rendered it ‘he was perplexed’, an expression of questioning.

The Midrash explains that Yitzchak saw hell opened up beneath him.

Who is the ‘him’ that underneath ‘him’, Gehinom opened?

Maharal in *Gur Aryeh* explains that it opened underneath Eisav and thereby Yitzchak knew that his initial decision to curse the imposter was incorrect and that he, Yitzchak, was spared from making a grievous error.

When Yitzchak came to that realization he then retracted this thought of cursing Yaakov and said the opposite:

גם ברוך יהיה:

However, we will note that Rashi himself does not explain under whom *Gehinom* was opened and why. And thus we note that *Pesikta D’Rav Kahana* knows the same Midrash but gives us a different viewpoint than that of *Maharal* who lived many centuries later.

The *Pesikta* (*Pesikta V’zos HaBrachah*) writes:

ויחרד יצחק חרדה וגו'. אמר רבי אלעזר בן פדת למה נזדעזע יצחק אבינו באותה שעה, מיום הדין, שבשעה שבא יצחק לברך את עשו, ולא היה יודע שיצא לתרבות רעה, שהיה עשו בא ושואל את אביו מים ומלח צריכין מעשר או לאו, והיה יצחק אומר ומה מים ומלח הוא רוצה לעשר, שאר מעשרות על אחת וכמה, וכיון שנתגלו לו מעשיו נזדעזע מיום הדין, שנא' ויחרד יצחק חרדה וגו':

Yitzchak trembled a trembling –Rabi Elazar ben P’dos said, ‘Why was Yitzchak Ovinu shaken at that moment? He was shaken from the Day of Judgment [that would come at the end of life].

When Yitzchak came to bless Eisav, Yitzchak did not know that Eisav would go out to evil. That is because Eisav would come and ask his father – ‘do water and salt require tithing?’¹¹ Yitzchak thought to himself, ‘If he is asking about water and salt [that do not require tithing and yet he inquires about them] certainly his careful with that which requires tithing.

When the actions of Eisav were revealed to Yitzchak he was shaken by thinking of the Day of Judgment as it says, ‘Yitzchak trembled a trembling’.

The Midrash tells us that Yitzchak was shaken to his core because the error that he almost committed would have delivered him to a most severe punishment at the end of days.

He came a millimeter away from falling into the pit. As anyone who has ever been threatened by an immediate and present danger that would have been

¹¹ We read in the beginning of our Parsha (Perek 25/P’sukim 27-28):

וַיִּגְדְּלוּ הַנְּעָרִים וַיְהִי עֵשָׂו אִישׁ יָדַע צִיד אִישׁ שָׂדֵה וַיַּעֲקֹב אִישׁ תָּם יָשֵׁב אֹהֲלִים: וַיֶּאֱהָב יַצְחָק אֶת עֵשָׂו
כִּי צִיד בְּפִיו וַרְבֵּקָה אֶהְבֶּת אֶת יַעֲקֹב:

The lads grew; Eisav became a person who knows how to capture, a man of the field; Yaakov was a pure person, dwelling in tents. Yitzchak loved Eisav because the capturing was in his mouth and Rivka loves Yaakov.

Rashi writes:

יודע ציד - לצוד ולרמות את אביו בפיו, ושואלו אבא היאך מעשרין את המלח ואת התבן, כסבור אביו שהוא מדקדק במצות:

בפיו -...ומדרשו בפיו של עשו שהיה צד אותו ומרמהו בדבריו:

He knows how to capture – to trap and deceive his father with his mouth. Eisav would ask, ‘Father, how does one tithe salt and straw?’

With his mouth – the Midrash of this verse is that ‘his’ mouth refers to that of Eisav. Eisav’s ‘mouth’ would trap Yitzchak and deceive him with his words.

The fact that Rashi quotes this source may be an indication that he interprets the opening of *Gehinom* like the Pesikta that we bring here and not like Maharal.

catastrophic knows, that the shock of that truly potential danger is overwhelming. The first thought is what could have been.

A moment after we regain our composure somewhat we realize how fortunate we were. Thank G-d. Boruch Hashem הגומל לחייבים טובות. He Yisborach gives us benefits of which we are undeserving.

The potential catastrophe that faced Yitzchak Ovinu was not one that was limited to this world alone. The implications and ramifications of such a catastrophe would bring him retribution in the World to Come, perhaps eternally.

At that moment, Yitzchak Ovinu realized that grace of G-d that was upon him and that spared him from an error that was perhaps irreversible.

After he caught his breath, after the initial shock of what almost transpired was eased somewhat – what are the initial words that Yitzchak Ovinu utters?

גם ברוך יהיה

He, Yaakov, should also be blessed.

The blessings that I already bestowed are Yaakov's. That is incontestable. HaKodosh Boruch Hu directs the universe and He made sure that the blessings would be received by their rightful recipient.

But now I have an additional blessing to bestow upon my son Yaakov, he who will be the completion of the era of the Patriarchy of our budding people.

Just as the Ribbono Shel Olom blessed me and prevented me from committing an error of the gravest consequences, so may He bless my son to lead the people that he is forming without error.

May He Yisborach bless my son Yaakov and all of his progeny to that which is correct and righteous and when, because of their ignorance and foibles that are at the brink of disaster, may He bless them and prevent their sins of commission and omission.

גם ברוך יהיה.

וגם ברוך נהיה!

Shabbat Shalom

Chodesh Tov

Rabbi Pollock