

# Chayus

## A Shabbos Stimulus

ערב שבת  
פרשת וישלח,  
ט"ו כסלו, ה'תשפ"ג  
שנת הקהל

### THE EDA AND DAVID SCHOTTENSTEIN EDITION

In Loving Memory of Itta bas Yosef Mordechai ז"ל and Tzvi Daniel ben David ז"ל Ainsworth

Dedicated by David & Eda Schottenstein

הקהל  
Hakhel

From  
Sichos In English

### The Splendor of Torah

The roots of this commandment: Because the entire essence of the Jewish nation is the Torah; and through it are they separated from every nation and language, to be meritorious for everlasting life—eternal pleasure that is not surpassed by any created matter. Therefore, since their entire essence is in it, it is fitting that everyone should gather together at one point in time to hear its words, and for the “discussion” to go out amongst the whole nation—men, women, and infants—saying, “What is the great gathering, that we have all been gathered together?” And the answer would be, “To hear the words of the Torah, which is our entire essence and glory and splendor.”

*Chinuch, commandment 612*

סיפור חסידי

Once Upon a Chasid

By Yanki Tauber  
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### Playing It Safe

*I am unworthy* (Vayishlach 32:11)

A certain chassid was ‘notorious’ for his extreme humility and self-effacement. Once he was asked: “Does not the Talmud<sup>1</sup> say that a Torah scholar must not belittle himself too much? That although he must be humble, he is to retain ‘one eighth of one eighth of pride?’”

Replied the chassid: “Let us assume that you are right, and that when I come to stand before the heavenly court it will indeed be found that I am a ‘Torah scholar.’ ‘Hmm,’ the Supernal Judge will sternly demand, ‘What have we here? I see a Torah scholar. Where is your ‘eighth of an eighth?’” Let us further assume, my friend, that as you claim, I was somewhat deficient in this area. I guess that this would put me into somewhat of a bind. Nevertheless, I am fairly confident I will somehow manage to scrape together enough evidence of ego and pride in my life to satisfy the talmudic requirement.

“But what of the following possibility: I come before the heavenly court to account for my life and I am told: “Eighth of eighth’s we see aplenty, but where is the ‘Torah scholar?’” You see, I’d rather take my chances with the first scenario...”

1. Sukkah 5a.

### *Holy Laziness*

**T**here are two evil inclinations. The first ignites our passion and leads us to sin, while the second has a cooling effect, weighing upon us until we are too lazy to perform Mitzvot.

Both sources of temptation are vanquished by passionate Torah study, per the Talmudic adage: “if that scoundrel accosts you, drag it to the study hall. If it is like a stone, it will be dissolved” (Sukkah 52b). Even the temptation of laziness, which weighs upon us like a stone, is subdued by Torah study.

Although passion can combat laziness, per the Talmudic dictum “be powerful as a lion, to do the will of your Father in heaven” (Avos 5:20), other approaches are tailored to combat laziness, specifically. One involves utilizing our fear and awe of heaven. Another involves utilizing laziness itself to prevent sin. The Talmud teaches that “there are some who are lazy, but receive reward” (Pesachim 50b). Indeed, there are times when one who sits and does nothing receives reward for abstaining from sin, equal to that of one who actively performs a Mitzvah.

The aforementioned concepts are illustrated in our Torah portion, when Yaakov informs his wicked brother, Esav, that he possesses oxen and donkeys (Vayishlach 32:6). “Oxen” refers to Yosef, who is likened to “a firstborn ox” (Devarim 33:17) and a flame (Ovadia 1:18). “Donkeys” refers to his son Yissachar, who is likened to “a strong-boned donkey” (Bereishis 49:14), and associated with heaviness (the Hebrew word for donkey, חמור, shares a root with the word for coarseness).

On a mystical level Yaakov was informing Esav, who represents the evil inclination, that he was prepared to vanquish both types of temptation. For Yaakov had not only “oxen” (Yosef, passion and flame) which can subdue either inclination, but also “donkeys”—“holy” heaviness and laziness, resolute determination, represented by Yissachar, to not perform sinful actions.

Par. 44

### *Like Children Again*

*Yaakov struggled with an angel until dawn, whereupon the angel told him,  
“Your name will no longer be called Yaakov, but Yisrael” (Vayishlach 32:29).*

**G**-d created people to be straightforward, as is readily apparent in very young children. As a person’s mind develops, he begins to strategize that it would be better to lie in order to avoid harm or to attract gain. *Tzaddikim*, however, retain their sense of pure honesty; they employ cunningness only when forced to outsmart the wicked, as Yaakov did with Esav.

When the dawn of redemption rises, wickedness will cease, for even the many nations will walk by the light of G-d, and the *tzaddikim* will be free to maintain their straightforwardness.

The name Yaakov implies outsmarting, while the name Yisrael comes from *yashar*, “straight-forward.” At the rise of dawn, the angel assured Yaakov that his name will be Yisrael, implying that when redemption dawns upon the world, the *tzaddikim* will never again be forced to deal cunningly with the likes of Esav.

Maharam Shik

## *The Dynamics of the Jewish nation and the Edomite nation.*

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### **The Context:**

After the climactic meeting between Eisav and Yaakov, the Torah records a list of Eisav's descendants, as well as the early monarchies that issued from his family—"the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the children of Israel" (Bereishis 36:31).

One of these kings was "Yovav, son of Zerach of Botzrah" (*Ibid.* V. 33).

Rashi comments on this verse:

*Yovav, son of Zerach of Botzrah*—Botzrah was a Moabite city, as it says: "And to Keriot and to Botzrah, etc" (*Yirmiyahu* 48:24). Since it (Botzrah) appointed a king for Edom, it is destined to be punished with the Edomites, as it says: "For G-d has a slaughter in Botzrah" (*Yeshayahu* 34:6).

### **The Question:**

Why does Rashi identify the city where this king came from? Why is this information necessary in order to understand the straightforward meaning of the verse? In fact, Rashi does not provide any commentary on the other cities mentioned in these passages about the Edomite kings!

### **The Explanation:**

When Rivkah was pregnant with twins, G-d communicated a prophecy to her which said:

*Two nations are in your womb, and two kingdoms will separate from your innards, and one kingdom will become mightier than the other kingdom, and the elder will serve the younger* (Bereishis 25:23).

Commenting on the phrase, "one kingdom will become mightier than the other kingdom," Rashi says, "they will not be equal in greatness; when one rises, the other will fall...."

However, the conclusion of the verse says, without equivocation, that "the elder will serve the younger," implying that Eisav will always be subordinate to Yaakov. Which is it? Will power oscillate between the brothers or not?

To resolve this apparent contradiction, we must parse Rashi's two earlier comments on this verse:

*Two nations are in your womb*—[The word nations, גוים] is written גוים [which is pronounced] like גאים (exalted persons). These were Antoninus and Rebbi [Rabbi Yehudah the Prince], from whose tables neither radishes nor lettuce were lacking, not in the summer nor in the winter.

*And two kingdoms*—the [Biblical] word מלכות always means a kingdom.

The opening of the prophecy thus speaks of two divisions between the twins: "Two nations are in your womb" alludes to the individual descendants of Yaakov and Eisav, such as Antoninus and Rebbi, and "two kings" alludes to the monarchies that will develop from them.

It follows that the two clauses of the verse's conclusion correspond to the distinction made in the beginning of the verse:

"One kingdom will become mightier than the other kingdom" refers to the monarchies which, as Rashi says, "will not be equal in greatness; when one rises, the other will fall." The conclusion of the prophecy "the elder will serve the younger," refers to the individual descendants of the twins—even in those times when Eisav's kingdom reigns supreme, on the individual level, Yaakov's children will always be superior to Eisav's children.

With this explanation in hand, the verse about Eisav's monarchies is challenging: "These are the kings who reigned in the land of Edom before any king reigned over the children of Israel." How can the Torah equate the kings of Edom with the Kings of Israel, implying that their monarchies were similar, differing only in the period of their rulership? Based on the prophecy, there should be some superior aspect in the individual Israelite kings.

Therefore, the Torah mentions the origins of each of the Edomite kings to underscore that they were not actually Eisav's descendants, but rather, they came from other cities to rule over Edom's kingdom.

The one exception is "Yovav, son of Zerach of Botzrah." Zerach is identified as an Edomite chieftain, and Botzrah is often mentioned in connection with Edom. This implies that this king indeed was descended from Eisav himself. Therefore, Rashi comments that this Botzrah is actually a Moabite city, and this king was, like the others, not an actual descendant of Eisav.

And to explain why Botzrah is often mentioned alongside Edom, Rashi continues to explain that "since it (Botzrah) appointed a king for Edom, it is destined to be punished with the Edomites."

### A Deeper Question:

If Yaakov was assured that he and his descendants would never be subjugated to Eisav on an individual level, and only occasionally in matters of state, how, then, could he have prostrated himself before Eisav, called him "my master," and sent him an elaborate gift?

There are two ways to transform a negative entity. You can overwhelm it with illumination and inspiration; in this way, the negativity is dispelled but it is never truly reformed. Or, you can enter the space of negativity itself, work with it on its own terms, and teach it to desire positivity. In this way, you initially become soiled by association, but in the end, the change is genuine and lasting.

In order for Yaakov to truly transform Eisav's negative energy into a force for positivity, he had to fully subject himself to Eisav's reality; he had to "acknowledge" Eisav as stronger and superior, and then, from within, he would be able to extract Eisav's true potential. Thus, at the end of their meeting, Eisav tells Yaakov, "my brother, let what is your remain yours," meaning that "here, he admitted that the blessings belong to Yaakov" (Bereshis 33:9, and Rashi).

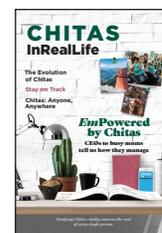
Likkutei Sichos, p. 294 ff.

## מורה שיעור לחת"ת ורמב"ם לשבת

### Shabbos Chitas / Rambam Guide

Book	Section
Chumash – Rashi*	Vayishlach, 7th Aliyah
Tehillim*	Chapters 79 – 82
Tanya*	Kuntres Acharon Essay 7. א"ס ב"ה. עד עמ' 322 - א"ס ב"ה.
Rambam – Sefer Hamitzvos*	Positive Mitzvah #108
Rambam – One Chapter*	Sefer Mishpatim – Hilchos Malveh V'Loveh, Chapter 2
Rambam – Three Chapters**	Sefer Taharah – Hilchos Parah Adumah Chapters 11 – 13

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