The Global Economy – Toldot

הַשִּׁעוּר מֻקְדָּשׁ לִרְפוּאַת שִׁמְעוֹנָה בַּת שָׂרָה

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וְרִבְקָה אָמְרָה אֶל יַעֲקֹב בְּנָהּ לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה שָׁמַעְתִּי אֶת אָבִיךָ מְדַבֵּר אֶל עֵשָׂו אָחִיךָ לֵאמֹר (בראשית כז, ו).

The Midrash (מדרש אגדה, בראשית כה, כב:ב) explains what it means וַיִּתְרֹצְצוּ הַבָּנִים בְּקִרְבָּהּ (בראשית כה, כב), that the twin fetuses were "running around" inside Rivka's womb –

ד״א וַיִּתְרֹצְצוּ. אָמַר עֵשָׂו לְיַעֲקֹב בּוֹאוּ וְנַחֲלוֹק הָעוֹלָם, אָמַר לוֹ יַעֲקֹב טוֹל אַתָּה הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה, וַאֲנִי אָטוֹל עוֹלָם הַבָּא, וְכֵן עֵשָׂו אָמַר לְיַעֲקֹב טוֹל אַתָּה העוה״ב, וַאֲנִי אָטוֹל עוה״ז. (מדרש אגדה, בראשית כה, כב:ב)

Yaakov and Eisav made a pact while they were still in the womb before they were born. Eisav said to Yaakov "Let us divide up the world between us". Yaakov said to Eisav "You take עוֹלָם הַזֶּה and I will take עוֹלָם הַבָּא. Eisav agreed "You (Yaakov) take עוֹלָם הַבָּא and I (Eisav) will take עוֹלָם הַזֶּה".

And this is in fact the way things turned out.

Yaakov dedicated his life to working on his עוֹלָם הַבָּא, as it says וְיַעֲקֹב אִישׁ תָּם יֹשֵׁב אֹהָלִים, Yaakov was a yeshiva bochur who dedicated his time to studying Torah. Of the 147 years of his life, 20 were spent working full-time for Lavan (7 for Leah, 7 for Rachel and 6 for the sheep) during which Yaakov's Torah study was only part-time. The remaining 127 years were spent studying and teaching Torah full time. 127 is an interesting number, and corresponds to the lifespan of Sarah Imeinu. We can infer from this the same perush of Rashi there (בראשית כג, א), that Yaakov's Torah study was beautiful, and sin free at each stage of his life 7, 20, 100, כֻּלָּן שָׁוִין לְטוֹבָה.

Similarly, וַיְהִי עֵשָׂו אִישׁ יֹדֵעַ צַיִד אִישׁ שָׂדֶה, Eisav dedicated his time to enjoying the pleasures of this world, hunting (פרקי דרבי אליעזר, כד), womanizing (Kli Yakar בראשית כה, כז), gluttonizing (בראשית כה, לז), entertaining himself (מדרש תהילים יד, ד), etc.

Yaakov and Eisav were de facto fulfilling their mutual pact!

The question then is "Why did Rivka feel it necessary to *upset this harmonious balance*, by forcing Yaakov to receive the bracha that Yitzchak intended for Eisav?"

The bracha that Yitzchak *originally intended* for Yaakov and in fact gave to Yaakov (knowing it was Yaakov), before Yaakov left for Charan was –

וְאֵ-ל שַׁ-דַּ-י יְבָרֵךְ אֹתְךָ וְיַפְרְךָ וְיַרְבֶּךָ וְהָיִיתָ לִקְהַל עַמִּים. וְיִתֶּן לְךָ אֶת בִּרְכַּת אַבְרָהָם לְךָ וּלְזַרְעֲךָ אִתָּךְ לְרִשְׁתְּךָ אֶת אֶרֶץ מְגֻרֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר נָתַן אֱ-לֹקִים לְאַבְרָהָם. (בראשית כח, ג-ד)

This was the bracha Yitzchak *intended for Yaakov all along* - the covenant made with Avraham Avinu, passed down to Yitzchak, passed down to Yaakov. To be blessed with abundant wealth. To increase in numbers and become thirteen tribes. To establish the Sanhedrin, whose number is seventy, corresponding to the number of the nations of the world. To inherit the land of Eretz Yisrael promised to Avraham (תרגום יונתן, שם).

In this bracha, Yaakov is assured abundant wealth anyway! Why did Rivka feel that it was necessary for Yaakov to receive Yitzchak's bracha *intended for Eisav* –

וְיִתֶּן לְךָ הָאֱ-לֹקִים מִטַּל הַשָּׁמַיִם וּמִשְׁמַנֵּי הָאָרֶץ וְרֹב דָּגָן וְתִירֹשׁ. יַעַבְדוּךָ עַמִּים וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְךָ לְאֻמִּים הֱוֵה גְבִיר לְאַחֶיךָ וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְךָ בְּנֵי אִמֶּךָ אֹרְרֶיךָ אָרוּר וּמְבָרְכֶיךָ בָּרוּךְ. (בראשית כז, כח-כט)

What is there in Yitzchak's intended bracha for Eisav that is *lacking* in Yitzchak's intended bracha for Yaakov? A list of four elements -

1. Natural resources – dew, rain, oil, agricultural produce.
2. Other nations will serve you and bow down to you.
3. Dominion over your brother (Eisav) and have him bow down to you.
4. Those who curse you will be cursed and those who bless you will be blessed.

Rivka wanted not only that Yaakov will be assured wealth and want for nothing, but also that Yaakov should control the entire wealth of the world, the *global economy*. She wanted Yaakov to have dominion over not only all the nations of the world that were not from her family, but also over Eisav who was from her family. Finally, Rivka wanted reciprocity between Yaakov's descendants – Am Yisrael, and the rest of the world. You get what you give – if you curse Am Yisrael you also get cursed, if you bless Am Yisrael you also get blessed.

The bottom line is that Yitzchak's intended bracha for Eisav embodies *total control* over עוֹלָם הַזֶּה. It is not that Yitzchak's intended bracha for Yaakov had *no* elements of עוֹלָם הַזֶּה in it - there is assured wealth, there is assured inheritance

of land. But that was not enough for Rivka. She wanted Yaakov to have full control over *both* עוֹלָם הַזֶּה and also עוֹלָם הַבָּא. That Eisav, her own son, should have control over *nothing*.

Why upset the balance? Why upset the pact the brothers made between *themselves*? Why meddle with the bracha that *Yitzchak* intended for Eisav, which had been mutually agreed upon by the brothers themselves? Why force Yaakov to do something that he did not want to do? Why deceive her husband Yitzchak? Why cut her eldest son out of everything? Why give the goyim a טַעֲנָה for perpetuity against the children of Yaakov, Am Yisrael – that we are deceivers and crooks?

This seems to be a *very problematic* parsha in the Torah! What was Rivka thinking?

To understand it, we need to revisit a story from the Gemara (Yoma 38a), that takes place towards the end of Bayit Sheini.

The Chachamim (who had Ruach HaKodesh), knew that the 2nd Beit HaMikdash was about to be destroyed. They understood what the aftermath of that would be and they wanted to *preserve the integrity of the Torah* for future generations.

The problem was that some parts of the Torah were decentralized. There was not one *central body* who had access to the *entire* Torah "knowledgebase". Certain parts of the תּוֹרָה שֶׁבְּעַל פֶּה were "classified", entrusted to different functionaries for safekeeping and were not public domain. The reason for this was probably that HKB"H did not *want* them to be public domain for whatever reason. They were too volatile and *potentially dangerous* if they became public knowledge (as we shall soon see).

The Gemara lists four such cases. All of these cases (two families and two individuals) possessed secret, classified knowledge that was known only to them and was not in the public domain.

The first of these was the Garmu Family, a family of bakers from the Tribe of Levi, the family of Kehat (דברי הימים א׳, ט, לב). They were one of the appointed functionaries in the Beit HaMikdash (משנה שקלים ה, א) whose salary was paid from the תְּרוּמַת הַלִּשְׁכָּה, the special fund of the מַחֲצִית הַשֶּׁקֶל, i.e. from public funds. The Garmu Family were the only people who knew the secret recipe/method of preparing the Lechem HaPanim, baked every Friday in the Beit HaMikdash.

The second were Kohanim (דברי הימים א׳, ט, ל), the Avtinas Family, appointed functionaries in the Beit HaMikdash, in charge of preparing the special

blend of herbs, plants and spices for the Ketoret, the secret formula for which - only they knew.

The third was Hoogras ben Levi, the choir master of the Leviim choir (תפארת ישראל על המשנה), who had a proprietary technique of making special sounds by inserting his finger in his mouth (perhaps whistling? beatboxing??) that he never taught to anyone else.

Finally, the Gemara lists Ben Kamtzar, a sofer stam in the time of Bayit Sheini who had a secret technique of holding four quills in the spaces between the fingers of his hand and writing the Shem HaMeforash י-ק-ו-ק, not one letter at a time, but all four letters simultaneously with the four quills.

The Chamamim did not want all of this secret knowledge to be lost, so they approached all four of these families/individuals in turn and asked them to reveal the secret information so that the Chachamim could record it for posterity and it would not be lost when the Beit HaMikdash was destroyed.

I will continue relating the story in the Gemara only as it pertains to the Garmu Family and the Lechem HaPanim, because that has direct bearing on our shiur.

When the Chachamim asked the Garmu Family to reveal to them the secret of the preparation of the Lechem HaPanim, the Garmu Family refused, initially without giving a reason. The Chachamim did not appreciate their refusal to cooperate, so they fired them all and tried to find replacements for them.

They brought world renowned, expert Egyptian bakers from Alexandria to try bake the Lechem HaPanim. However, try as they might, the Egyptian bakers did not succeed. The bread fell apart and didn't keep its shape. It went moldy a day or two after baking. The Chachamim, recognizing that the Garmu Family had been meriting special siyata di'Shmaya in their work, had no choice but to ask them to return to their posts. The Garmu's agreed but only if the Chachamim double their salary, which they did. The Garmu's returned to work and continued to bake the Lechem HaPanim in the Mikdash.

The Chachamim asked them "Why did you refuse to reveal the secret?", to which the Garmu Family replied "We have a tradition from our forefathers that the Beit HaMikdash will soon be destroyed and to never divulge the secret to anyone outside our family, for fear that the secret may fall into the wrong hands and be used for avodah zara."

This section in the Gemara ends with an addendum that although they are initially mentioned לִגְנַאי, in a derogatory context at the beginning of this sugya, at the end the Chachamim mention them לְשֶׁבַח, in a favorable way – that the Garmu Family would never bake "white" bread in their own home, only dark

bread, in order that nobody would ever suspect them of using the solet flour from the Beit HaMikdash for their *private use*. In other words, the Garmu Family were very strict about מַרְאִית עַיִן, they took extreme measures to ensure that nobody would suspect them of anything untoward.

The ending of the Gemara seems paradoxical to the beginning. If the Garmu Family wanted to maintain total transparency in their work, so that nobody would suspect them of hanky panky, then why not also extend that to the preparation of the Lechem HaPanim? Why not make that transparent? Why the secrecy specifically relating to that?

Initially the Garmu Family gave no reason for not revealing the secret. Later, after the Chachamim asked them why, they *did* give a reason. This flipped the attitude of the Chachamim towards them, from גְּנַאי to שֶׁבַח. Even though they did not reveal the secret, the Chachamim *accepted the reason* they gave for not revealing it.

At the end of the sugya, the Gemara concludes עַל הָרִאשׁוֹנִים נֶאֱמַר ״זֵכֶר צַדִּיק לִבְרָכָה״ (משלי י, ז) וְעַל בֶּן קַמְצָר וַחֲבֵרָיו נֶאֱמַר ״וְשֵׁם רְשָׁעִים יִרְקָב״ (שם). In the end, the Chachamim concluded that the Garmu Family (also the Avtinas Family and Hoogras ben Levi) were tzaddikim. This is also how many Rishonim interpret the Mishna and the Gemara (המאירי, בית הבחירה, יומא לח ע״א; תוספות יום טוב, יומא פרק ג משנה יא).

Why did the Chachamim accept the reason of the Garmu Family – "for fear that the secret may fall into the wrong hands and be used for avodah zara"?

Who cares if someone bakes the Lechem HaPanim with the correct, authentic recipe/method and uses it for avodah zara? It will not be the first time a technique in the Mikdash has been used for avodah zara!

A quick example. When a Kohen is inaugurated into service in the Mikdash, they do מְשִׁיחָה, spread oil on his forehead in the pattern of a letter X, or as it says in the Gemara כְּמִין כִּי יְוָנִי (מנחות עה, ע״א), resembling the Greek letter Chi χ. Basically, they spread oil on the forehead of the Kohen in the shape of a "cross". The Christians later adopted this shape and made it a central feature of their religion. Why did the Kohanim not keep the pattern of מְשִׁיחָה *secret*, for fear that it would be used for avodah zara?

The answer is that it doesn't matter if a Christian "deifies" the shape of a cross. By them doing hand movements in the air in that pattern nothing happens, they may just as well be spinning circles in the air with their finger. We are not allowed to *copy them* or *possess artifacts* they use in that shape, because it is copying their acts of avoda zara, but that does not nullify the pattern of the Greek letter Chi for any other use. When the 3rd Beit HaMikdash is rebuilt, we will still be spreading oil on the Rekikim in that pattern and still be spreading oil on a newly

inaugurated Kohen's forehead in that pattern. Just because the goyim used that pattern for some of their acts of avodah zara does not posel that shape/pattern for ever more.

So, what is the difference with the Lechem HaPanim? Why is it a *disaster* if idol worshippers copy the Lechem HaPanim and use it for their avodah zara? The answer is that the Shulchan with the Lechem HaPanim on it in the Mikdash is a conduit, a gateway!

All the material wealth in the world originates up in Heaven with HKB"H. According to the Zohar (זהר, בהעלותך יג ע״ב-ע״ג) every element of material wealth in this world is stored in "storehouses" up in Heaven behind gates תַּרְעִין. Rain, minerals, precious metals, fossil fuels, etc. etc. all originate from HKB"H.

In order to *distribute* this material wealth throughout the world, HKB"H "channels" it all through the Shulchan, with the Lechem HaPanim on it (מלבי״ם, יחזקאל מא, כב). Radiating out from the Beit HaMikdash are "veins of wealth" to all corners of the world (שערי אורה, השער הראשון, הספירה העשירית, אותיות עד–עו).

When you think about it, the Lechem HaPanim is a very powerful "weapon". It controls every drop of rain that falls on every millimeter point in the earth. It controls every grain and every fruit that grows on every field and tree. It controls where in the world there will be precious minerals in the earth and how much will be mineable at every given point in time and by whom. It controls every drop of oil that is pumped from the bowels of the earth, every cubic millimeter of natural gas. It controls every diamond that flows through the diamond exchanges around the world, every ounce of gold. Every dollar/euro/yen/etc. that shuttles between the banking systems and stock exchanges, …. In a word, the *entire global economy is dependent on the Lechem HaPanim*.

The question is why does HKB"H need the mechanism to work in this way? If HKB"H wants a specific dollar to end up in a specific pocket, He certainly can find a way to ensure that this is where it will end up. You might think that by skimping on giving tzedakah to someone who knocks on your door that you are saving money, but that is not how it works. That dollar that you thought you were saving, eventually will go to a plumber you need to unclog your drain, or to the dentist who fills the hole in your tooth. The plumber or dentist will in turn give that dollar to someone else who will give it to someone else and eventually that dollar will end up in the pocket of that tzedakah collector who knocked on your door in the first place. By giving that extra dollar in tzedakah, you could be preventing a clogged drain or a cavity in your tooth, mamash. This is the way HKB"H runs His world. Every living creature/plant/etc. gets *exactly* what they need at every exact point in time, from HKB"H.

So, who needs the Shulchan and the Lechem HaPanim if this is the case anyway?

The reason that HKB"H designed it work through the Lechem HaPanim is that HKB"H wanted every human on the planet to recognize that they are receiving what they are receiving ONLY by virtue of Am Yisrael, אֹרְרֶיךָ אָרוּר וּמְבָרְכֶיךָ בָּרוּךְ. Those who bless Am Yisrael will be well provided for, those who curse and harm Am Yisrael will themselves be cursed.

Hang on though, today there is *no* Beit HaMikdash and *no* Lechem HaPanim, so how does everyone get what they are supposed to get?

The answer is that today the world is in a mess, it is not in the idyllic equilibrium that HKB"H planned. The Heavenly abundance is not reaching its allotted destination as it should. It is being hampered along the way.

Today 10% of the world's population own 75% of the world's wealth. 50% of the world's population are poor, owning only 2% of the world's wealth. The middle class, about 40% of the world's population, own only 23% of the world's wealth (according to the World Inequality Report 2026).

In other words, three quarters of the world's wealth is owned by a very small number of people (only 10% of the total population of the world). The remainder make do with "scraps" or starve.

Today, there is no *visible* Heavenly abundance.

Crops are infested by pests and microorganisms. If not sprayed with chemical pesticides, up to 40% of the agricultural yield around the world would be lost (FAO). Between 50-60% of the food eaten around the world today is ultra processed (industrially formulated - containing flavorings, emulsifiers, colorings, modified starches and other additives) and bears little resemblance to its natural form or origin (Annual Review of Nutrition Volume 46, 2026).

The state of abundance in the world is in a mess because it is in the hands of the very people that Rivka feared it would fall into, the hands of Eisav and idol worshippers. Thugs that hold the world economy to ransom, by hijacking international waterways. Ultra rich financiers and tycoons rigging the system to make them richer and us poorer, while engineering our consciousness via the media (which they own) that we are "well off" and "affluent".

The characteristic of Eisav is יֶשׁ לִי רָב (בראשית לג, ט), that we will read in two weeks in parshat Vayishlach when Yaakov meets up again with Eisav - "I have a lot רָב, but never enough!" As opposed to Yaakov whose characteristic is יֶשׁ לִי כֹּל (שם יא), "I have everything I need, I don't need anything more!"

Rivka does not want Yaakov to *own* the wealth of the entire world. She wants Yaakov to have the *hand on the tap* that controls the distribution of wealth in the world, to make sure it is being done according to HKB"H's plan, like it was during the period of the Beit HaMikdash. All the nations of the world made sure the Beit HaMikdash was in place and fully functioning, not because they love Am Yisrael, but because it benefited them. They became exceedingly wealthy as a result of it, a more balanced distribution of wealth, not 75% of the world's wealth in the possession of 10% of the population. The only people who wanted to destroy the Beit HaMikdash were that 10% who were like Eisav, who wanted to fleece the global economy for themselves.

The problem with Eisav is that he is a deceiver. Outwardly it looks like he is humane, moral, caring. Eisav says all the right things that people (like Yitzchak) want to hear. Rivka can recognize it because she grew up in a home with it, with a brother like Lavan, with a father like Betuel. Yitzchak, an עוֹלָה תְּמִימָה, is deceived by such devious wiles. The only way to defeat a deceiver is to use his own tricks against him, hence the ruse to dress Yaakov in Eisav's clothing.

The historic irony is that those in the world today who claim to seek equality and balanced distribution of wealth, the Woke movement, are doing the exact opposite to achieving their vision. They are siding with Eisav, the thugs of the world, when instead they should be siding with Yaakov. Only through Yaakov and Am Yisrael will their "vision" be realized. The world needs to understand this, Am Yisrael need to understand this.

From the reality around us it appears that Rivka failed and that Eisav won after all. But appearances are deceiving. It is true that Eisav has had his "hand on the tap" for almost the last 2000 years, until this very day. However, that is just a *blip in history*, in the eternity that is HKB"H's timeline. Rivka was interested in the endgame, not just the blips. The endgame is that when HKB"H sends Mashiach and the Mikdash is rebuilt, the hand on the tap will be Yaakov's – for all eternity.

בביי"א.

Shabbat Shalom

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