חסידות

From the Chassidic Courts

LIZHENSK · TOLDOT, NOAM ELIMELEKH

Why did Rivkah send Yaakov after material blessings?

Noam Elimelekh

Drawing on the Talmudic and Zoharic idea that Yitzchak intended the material blessings for Esav and the spiritual reward for Yaakov, the Noam Elimelekh reads Rivkah's doubled "lemor" as her intention to speak on a different level: she sent Yaakov after material blessings so that the spiritual sparks hidden within the material would be sustained, since nothing physical can have life without holy sparks from the upper worlds. AI SUMMARY

"And Rivkah spoke to Yaakov her son, saying: Behold, I heard your father speak to Esav your brother, saying." The early sages already raised a difficulty about the word "lemor" (saying). It has no basis here, as it does elsewhere, where it is explained as "saying to another." Moreover, "lemor" appears twice.

It seems to me that I should explain the first "lemor," and the other will then be resolved on its own. This rests on what is found in the books: How could it enter our minds that Yitzchak our father, peace be upon him, wanted to bless Esav and not Yaakov? They explained that in truth he wanted to bless Esav in this world, with material things, and to bless Yaakov in the World to Come. Yitzchak wanted all four exiles to be under the hand of Esav; see there. Now Rivkah our mother wanted to sustain the children of Israel in exile, so that they too would have a little in this world.

And it is the way of the tzaddik (righteous one) that even when he speaks of material things, his kavanah (intention) is in the upper worlds, in spiritual matters. This is the meaning of "And Rivkah spoke to Yaakov her son, saying." That is to say, when she told Yaakov to receive material blessings from his father, her kavanah was in the upper worlds, for the sake of the spiritual within the material. For there is no material thing that does not contain spiritual nitzotzot (holy sparks). This is "lemor": her kavanah was for a different saying, for the sake of the spiritual, as above.

"Speak to Esav your brother, saying." Rivkah feared that Yaakov would not want to receive the material blessings, since the tzaddik has no desire for material things. Therefore Rivkah said, "I heard your father, etc.," also "saying." That is, when your father speaks of wanting to bless him materially, his kavanah is also to say a different saying, for the sake of the spiritual, as above: that in the material too there be spiritual nitzotzot. For there is nothing material in the world that can have vitality without the nitzotzot kedoshim from the upper worlds.

Translation: translated by AI (anthropic/claude-sonnet-5.5)