

# הברכה אחת היא לך אבי?

## Examining the Theft of the Blessing

(1) משלי י, כב

בְּרַכַּת ה' הִיא תַעֲשִׂיר וְלֹא-יוֹסֵף עַצֵּב עִמָּה:

(2) בראשית כד:נט-ס

וַיִּשְׁלַחוּ אֶת-רַבְקָה אַחֲתָם וְאֶת-מִנְקֵתָהּ וְאֶת-עֶבֶד אַבְרָהָם וְאֶת-אֲנָשָׁיו:  
 וַיְבָרְכוּ אֶת-רַבְקָה וַיֹּאמְרוּ לָהּ

אַחֲתָנוּ אֵת הַיּוֹ לְאַלְפֵי רַבְבָּה וַיִּירֶשׁ זֶרְעֶךָ אֶת שַׁעַר שְׁנָאִיו:

- 1) Why is this the ברכה given to רבקה as a “farewell”?

(3) בראשית כה:כח-לד

כח וַיֹּאמֶר יַצְחָק אֶת-עֵשָׂו כִּי-צִיד בְּפִיו וּרְבִקָּה אֶהְבֶּת אֶת-יַעֲקֹב: כט וַיִּזַּד יַעֲקֹב נָזִיד וַיָּבֵא עֵשָׂו מִן-הַשָּׂדֶה וְהוּא עָיִף: ל וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו אֶל-יַעֲקֹב הֲלֵעִיטְנִי נָא מִן-הָאָדָם הָאָדָם הַזֶּה כִּי עָיִף אָנֹכִי עַל-כֵּן קָרָא-שְׁמוֹ אָדָוִם: לא וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב מִכֹּרָה כִּי־סוּם אֶת-בְּכֹרְתֶךָ לִי: לב וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ לָמוֹת וְלִמְהֵרָה לִי בְּכֹרָה: לג וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב הִשְׁבַּע לִי כִּי־סוּם וַיִּשְׁבַּע לוֹ וַיִּמְכֹּר אֶת-בְּכֹרְתוֹ לְיַעֲקֹב: לד וַיַּעֲקֹב נָתַן לְעֵשָׂו לַחֶם וְנָזִיד עֲדָשִׁים וַיֹּאכַל וַיִּשְׂתֵּי וַיִּקָּם וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיָּבֹז עֵשָׂו אֶת-הַבְּכֹרָה:

- 2) Why was it so important for יעקב to get the בכורה?

(4) בראשית כז:א-ד

א וַיְהִי כִּי-זָקֵן יַצְחָק וַתִּכְהַיֵּן עֵינָיו מִרְאֵת וַיִּקְרָא אֶת-עֵשָׂו בְּנֵו הַגָּדֹל וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו בְּנִי וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הֲנִי: ב וַיֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה נָא זָקֵנְתִי לֹא יִדְעֵתִי יוֹם מוֹתִי: ג וַעֲתָה שְׂאֵנָא כְּלִיךָ תְּלִיךָ וְקִשְׁתְּךָ וַעֲצֵי הַשָּׂדֶה וְצוּדָה לִי צִיד: ד וַעֲשֵׂה-לִי מִטְעָמִים כַּאֲשֶׁר אֶהְבֵּתִי וְהִבִּיֵּאתָ לִי וְאָכַלְתָּ בְּעֶבֶר תִּבְרַכְךָ נַפְשִׁי בְּטָרִם אֲמוֹת:

- 3) Why does יצחק only select one son to receive a ברכה?

(4) בראשית כז:ח-טו

ח וַעֲתָה בְנֵי שְׂמֵעַ בְּקוֹלִי לְאִשְׁרָ אֲנִי מְצִוֶּה אֹתְךָ: ט לְךָ-נָא אֶל-הַצֹּאֵן וְקַח-לִי מִשָּׂם שְׁנֵי גְדֵי עֵזִים טְבִים וְאֶעֱשֶׂה אֹתָם מִטְעָמִים לְאֹבִיךָ כַּאֲשֶׁר אֶהְבֵּ: י וְהִבֵּאתָ לְאֹבִיךָ וְאָכַל בְּעֶבֶר אִשְׁרָ יִבְרַכְךָ לְפָנַי מוֹתוֹ: יא וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב אֶל-רַבְקָה אִמּוֹ הֵן עֵשָׂו אָחִי אִישׁ שָׂעֵר וְאָנֹכִי אִישׁ חָלָק: יב אוֹלֵי יְמֵשְׁנֵי אָבִי וְהֵייתִי בְּעֵינָיו כַּמִּתְעַתֵּעַ וְהִבֵּאתִי עָלַי קָלְלָה וְלֹא בְרָכָה: יג וַתֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִמּוֹ עָלַי קָלַלְתָּךְ בְּנִי אֲךָ שְׂמֵעַ בְּקוֹלִי וְלֶךָ קַח-לִי: יד וַיֵּלֶךְ וַיִּקַּח וַיָּבֵא לְאִמּוֹ וַתַּעַשׂ אִמּוֹ מִטְעָמִים כַּאֲשֶׁר אֶהְבֵּ אָבִיו: טו וַתִּקַּח רַבְקָה אֶת-בְּגָדֵי עֵשָׂו בְּנֵה הַגָּדֹל הַחֲמֹדֶת אִשְׁרָ אֲתָה בְּבִית וְתִלְבַּשׂ אֶת-יַעֲקֹב בְּנֵה הַקָּטָן:

- 4) Why does רבקה “recognize” יצחק’s formula?

(5) בראשית כז:כו-כט

כו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו יִצְחָק אָבִיו גְּשֶׁה־נָא וְשָׁקֵה־לִּי בְנִי: כז וַיֵּגֶשׁ וַיִּשְׁקֶלְוּ וַיִּרַח אֶת־רִיחַ בְּגָדָיו וַיְבָרְכֵהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר רֵאָה רִיחַ בְּנִי כִּרִיחַ שְׂדֵה אֲשֶׁר בָּרַכְוּ ה':

כח וַיִּתֵּן־לֶךְ הָאֱלֹהִים מִטַּל הַשָּׁמַיִם וּמִשְׁמַנֵּי הָאָרֶץ וְרֹב דָּגָן וְתִירֹשׁ: כט יַעֲבֹדֶךָ עַמִּים וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ לֶךְ לְאֲמִים הַגּוֹה גָבִיר לְאַחֶיךָ וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּ לֶךְ בְּנֵי אִמְךָ אֲרֻרֶיךָ אֲרוּר וּמְבָרְכֶיךָ בָּרוּךְ:

- 5) Why did רבקה risk so much and work so deviously to ensure that יעקב receive this ברכה, intended for עשו?
- 6) What is the nature of this ברכה? What is יצחק "granting" עשו/יעקב?
- 7) Why is the Divine Name used by יצחק in this ברכה – אלקים, whereas he uses אל-אל ("ברכת אברהם")?

(6) בראשית כז:לד-מ

לד כְּשִׁמְעַע עֵשָׂו אֶת־דְּבָרֵי אָבִיו וַיִּצְעַק צַעֲקָה גְדֹלָה וּמָרָה עַד־מָאֹד וַיֹּאמֶר לְאָבִיו בְּרַכְנִי גַם־אֲנִי אָבִי: לה וַיֹּאמֶר בֶּן אַחֶיךָ בְּמַרְמָה וַיִּקַּח בְּרַכְתְּךָ: לו וַיֹּאמֶר הֲכִי קָרָא שְׁמוֹ יַעֲקֹב וַיַּעֲקֹבֵנִי זֶה פַעַמִּים אֶת־בְּכֹרְתִי לְקַח וְהִנֵּה עָתָה לְקַח בְּרַכְתִּי וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלֹא־אֶצְלַת לִי בְרַכָּה: לז וַיַּעַן יִצְחָק וַיֹּאמֶר לְעֵשָׂו הֲנָן גָּבִיר שְׁמָתָיו לֶךְ וְאֶת־כָּל־אָחִיו נָתַתִּי לוֹ לְעִבָדִים וְדָגָן וְתִירֹשׁ סִמְכַתִּיו וְלִכְה אֶפֹּא מָה אַעֲשֶׂה בְנִי: לח וַיֹּאמֶר עֵשָׂו אֶל־אָבִיו הַבְּרַכָּה אַחַת הִוא־לֶךְ אָבִי בְרַכְנִי גַם־אֲנִי אָבִי וַיִּשָּׂא עֵשָׂו קִלּוֹ וַיִּבֶד: לט וַיַּעַן יִצְחָק אָבִיו וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו הִנֵּה מִשְׁמַנֵּי הָאָרֶץ יִהְיֶה מוֹשְׁבֶךָ וּמִטַּל הַשָּׁמַיִם מֵעַל: מ וְעַל־חֲרָבְךָ תַחֲיֶה וְאֶת־אָחֶיךָ תַעֲבֹד וְהָיָה כַּאֲשֶׁר תִּדְרִיד וּפְרֻקָתָ עָלָי מֵעַל צִוְּאָדֶךָ:

- 8) Why did יצחק think that he was "out of blessings"? What was עשו's claim?

(7) בראשית כח:א-ה

א וַיִּקְרָא יִצְחָק אֶל־יַעֲקֹב וַיְבָרֶךְ אֹתוֹ וַיְצַוֵּהוּ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ לֹא־תִקַּח אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת כְּנָעַן: ב קוּם לֶךְ פְּדִנְהָ אֲרָם בֵּיתָה בְּתוּאֵל אָבִי אִמְךָ וְקַח־לְךָ מִשָּׁם אִשָּׁה מִבְּנוֹת לְבֵן אָחִי אִמְךָ: ג וְאֵל שְׂדֵי יַבְרֶךְ אֶתְךָ וַיִּפְרֹךְ וַיִּרְבֶּךָ וְהָיִיתָ לְקַהֲל עַמִּים: ד וַיִּתֵּן־לֶךְ אֶת־בְּרַכְתּוֹ אַבְרָהָם לֶךְ וּלְזָרַעְךָ אֶתְךָ לְרִשְׁתֶּךָ אֶת־אָרֶץ מִגְּרִיךָ אֲשֶׁר־נָתַן אֱלֹהִים לְאַבְרָהָם: ה וַיִּשְׁלַח יִצְחָק אֶת־יַעֲקֹב וַיִּלְךְ פְּדִנְהָ אֲרָם אֶל־לְבָן בֶּן־תּוּאֵל הָאֲרָמִי אָחִי רַבְקָה אִם יַעֲקֹב וְעֵשָׂו:

- 9) What is ברכת אברהם?
  - a. Is this a different ברכה than the previous 2?
  - b. Is it about something else?
- 10) Why is this ברכה given as a "farewell"?

1) *Mishlei 10:22*

It is the blessing of Hashem that enriches, And no toil can increase it.

2) *Beresheet 24:59-60*

So they sent off their sister Rebekah and her nurse along with Abraham's servant and his men. And they blessed Rebekah and said to her,

“O sister! May you grow Into thousands of myriads;  
May your offspring seize The gates of their foes.”

3) *Beresheet 25:28-34*

Isaac favored Esau because he had a taste for game;- but Rebekah favored Jacob. Once when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from the open, famished. And Esau said to Jacob, “Give me some of that red stuff to gulp down, for I am famished” —which is why he was named Edom. Jacob said, “First sell me your birthright.” And Esau said, “I am at the point of death, so of what use is my birthright to me?” But Jacob said, “Swear to me first.” So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob. Jacob then gave Esau bread and lentil stew; he ate and drank, and he rose and went away. Thus did Esau spurn the birthright.

4) *Beresheet 27:1-4*

When Isaac was old and his eyes were too dim to see, he called his older son Esau and said to him, “My son.” He answered, “Here I am.” And he said, “I am old now, and I do not know how soon I may die. Take your gear, your quiver and bow, and go out into the open and hunt me some game. Then prepare a dish for me such as I like, and bring it to me to eat, so that I may give you my innermost blessing before I die.”

5) *Beresheet 27:8-15*

Now, my son, listen carefully as I instruct you. Go to the flock and fetch me two choice kids, and I will make of them a dish for your father, such as he likes. Then take it to your father to eat, in order that he may bless you before he dies.” Jacob answered his mother Rebekah, “But my brother Esau is a hairy man and I am smooth-skinned. If my father touches me, I shall appear to him as a trickster and bring upon myself a curse, not a blessing.” But his mother said to him, “Your curse, my son, be upon me! Just do as I say and go fetch them for me.” He got them and brought them to his mother, and his mother prepared a dish such as his father liked. Rebekah then took the best clothes of her older son Esau, which were there in the house, and had her younger son Jacob put them on;

6) *Beresheet 27:26-29*

Then his father Isaac said to him, "Come close and kiss me, my son"; and he went up and kissed him. And he smelled his clothes and he blessed him, saying, "Ah, the smell of my son is like the smell of the fields that the LORD has blessed.

"May God give you Of the dew of heaven and the fat of the earth, Abundance of new grain and wine. Let peoples serve you, And nations bow to you; Be master over your brothers, And let your mother's sons bow to you, Cursed be they who curse you, Blessed they who bless you."

7) *Beresheet 27:34-40*

When Esau heard his father's words, he burst into wild and bitter sobbing, and said to his father, "Bless me too, Father!" But he answered, "Your brother came with guile and took away your blessing." [Esau] said, "Was he, then, named Jacob that he might supplant me these two times? First he took away my birthright and now he has taken away my blessing!" And he added, "Have you not reserved a blessing for me?" Isaac answered, saying to Esau, "But I have made him master over you: I have given him all his brothers for servants, and sustained him with grain and wine. What, then, can I still do for you, my son?" And Esau said to his father, "Have you but one blessing, Father? Bless me too, Father!" And Esau wept aloud. And his father Isaac answered, saying to him,

"See, your abode shall enjoy the fat of the earth And the dew of heaven above. Yet by your sword you shall live, And you shall serve your brother; But when you grow restive, You shall break his yoke from your neck."

8) *Beresheet 28:1-5*

So Isaac sent for Jacob and blessed him. He instructed him, saying, "You shall not take a wife from among the Canaanite women. Up, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel, your mother's father, and take a wife there from among the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother.

May El Shaddai bless you, make you fertile and numerous, so that you become an assembly of peoples. May He grant the blessing of Abraham to you and your offspring, that you may possess the land where you are sojourning, which God assigned to Abraham."

Then Isaac sent Jacob off, and he went to Paddan-aram, to Laban the son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, mother of Jacob and Esau.