The book of Genesis
בר אשייהי

Toldot — תולדות

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For the soul elevation of
Lazar ben Manya

לעילוי נשמת
רב יחיאל שלל בן רב יקבי

For the soul elevation of
Shayna Mindel bat Rav Yechiel Hillel

לעילוי נשמת
יודה בן חיים

לעילוי נשמת
יוקבד הענא בת חיים יהושע פאליק

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Prasha Summary

Tol'dot, Toldos, or Tol'doth (תולדות — Hebrew for "generations" or "descendants," the second word and the first distinctive word in the parashah) is the sixth weekly Torah portion (תפילה, parashah) in the annual Jewish cycle of Torah reading. The parashah tells of the conflict between Jacob and Esau, Isaac's passing off his wife Rebekah as his sister, and Isaac's blessing of his sons.

It constitutes Genesis 25:19–28:9. The parashah is made up of 5,426 Hebrew letters, 1,432 Hebrew words, 106 verses, and 173 lines in a Torah Scroll (ספר תורה, Sefer Torah). Jews read it the sixth Sabbath after Simchat Torah, generally in November, or rarely in early December.

In traditional Sabbath Torah reading, the parashah is divided into seven readings, or עליות, aliyyot. In the Masoretic Text of the Tanakh (Hebrew Bible), Parashat Toledot has two "open portion" (פתוחה, petuchah) divisions (roughly equivalent to paragraphs, often abbreviated with the Hebrew letter פ (peh)). Parashat Toledot has three "closed portion" (סתומה, setumah) divisions (abbreviated with the Hebrew letter ס (samekh)), that further divide the second open portion (פתוחה, petuchah). The first open portion (פתוחה, petuchah) divides the first reading (עלייה, aliyah). The second open portion (פתוחה, petuchah) spans the balance of the parashah. Two closed portion (סתומה, setumah) divisions further divide the fifth reading (עלייה, aliyah), setting apart the discussion of Esau's marriage to the two Hittite women.
Aliya: Kohen-Chessed-Abraham

In the first reading (עליה, aliyah), Isaac was 40 years old when he married Rebekah, and when she proved barren, Isaac pleaded with God on her behalf, and God allowed Rebekah to conceive. As twins struggled in her womb, she inquired of God, who answered her that two separate nations were in her womb, one mightier than the other, and the older would serve the younger. When Rebekah gave birth, the first twin emerged red and hairy, so they named him Esau, and his brother emerged holding Esau's heel, so they named him Jacob. Isaac was 60 years old when they were born. Esau became a skillful hunter and outdoorsman, but Jacob remained a mild man and camp-bound. Isaac favored Esau for his game, but Rebekah favored Jacob. Once when Jacob was cooking, Esau returned to the camp famished and demanded some of Jacob's red stew. Jacob demanded that Esau first sell him his birthright, and Esau did so with an oath, spurning his birthright. The first open portion (פתוחה, petuchah) ends here with the end of chapter 25. As the reading continues in chapter 26, another famine struck the land, and Isaac went to the house of the Philistine King Abimelech in Gerar. God told Isaac not to go down to Egypt, but to stay in the land that God would show him, for God would remain with him, bless him, and assign the land to him and his numerous heirs, as God had sworn to Abraham, who had obeyed God and kept God's commandments.

Chapter: 25

19. And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begot Isaac.

20. And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean, of Paddan-aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to be his wife.

21. And Isaac entreated YHVH for his wife, because she was barren; and YHVH let Himself be entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

22. And the children struggled together within her; and she said: 'If it be so, wherefore do I live?' And she went to inquire of YHVH.

23. And YHVH said unto her: Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples shall be separated from your bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.
24. And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb.

25. And the first came forth ruddy, all over like a hairy mantle; and they called his name Esau.

26. And after that came forth his brother, and his hand had hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob. And Isaac was threescore years old when she bore them.

27. And the boys grew; and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents.

28. Now Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison; and Rebekah loved Jacob.

29. And Jacob sod pottage; and Esau came in from the field, and he was faint.

30. And Esau said to Jacob: 'Let me swallow, I pray thee, some of this red, red pottage; for I am faint.' Therefore was his name called Edom.

31. And Jacob said: 'Sell me first your birth right.'

32. And Esau said: 'Behold, I am at the point to die; and what profit shall the birthright do to me?'

33. And Jacob said: 'Swear to me first'; and he swore unto him; and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.

34. And Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentils; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way. So Esau despised his birthright.
1. And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar:

2. And YHVH appeared unto him, and said: 'Go not down unto Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of.

3. Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto your seed, I will give all these lands, and I will establish the oath which I swore unto Abraham your father;

4. and I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and will give unto your seed all these lands; and by your seed shall all the nations of the earth bless themselves;

5. because that Abraham hearkened to My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.'

In the second reading (עליה, aliyah), Isaac settled in Gerar, and when the men of Gerar asked Isaac about his beautiful wife, he said that she was his sister out of fear that the men might kill him on account of her. But looking out of the window, Abimelech saw Isaac fondling Rebekah, and Abimelech summoned Isaac to complain that Isaac had called her his sister. Isaac explained that he had done so to save his life. Abimelech complained that one of the people might have lain with her, and Isaac would have brought guilt upon the Philistines, and Abimelech charged the people not to molest Isaac or Rebekah, on pain of death. God blessed Isaac, who reaped bountiful harvests.

6. And Isaac dwelt in Gerar.

7. And the men of the place asked him of his wife; and he said: 'She is my sister'; for he feared to say: 'My wife'; 'lest the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah, because she is fair to look upon.'
8. And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife.

9. And Abimelech called Isaac, and said: 'Behold, of a surety she is your wife; and how saidst thou: She is my sister?' And Isaac said unto him: 'Because I said: Lest I die because of her.'

10. And Abimelech said: 'What is this thou hast done unto us? one of the people might easily have lain with your wife, and thou wouldest have brought guiltiness upon us.'

11. And Abimelech charged all the people, saying: 'He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death.'

12. And Isaac sowed in that land, and found in the same year a hundred-fold; and YHVH blessed him.

Aliya: Third-Tiferet-Jacob

In the third reading (עליה, aliyah), Isaac grew very wealthy, to the envy of the Philistines. The Philistines stopped up all the wells that Abraham's servants had dug, and Abimelech sent Isaac away, for his household had become too big. So Isaac left to settle in the wadi of Gerar, where he dug anew the wells that Abraham's servants had dug and called them by the same names that his father had. But when Isaac's servants dug two new wells, the herdsmen of Gerar quarreled with Isaac's herdsmen and claimed them for their own, so Isaac named those wells Esek and Sitnah. Isaac moved on and dug a third well, and they did not quarrel over it, so he named it Rehoboth.

13. And the man waxed great, and grew more and more until he became very great.

14. And he had possessions of flocks, and possessions of herds, and a great household; and the Philistines envied him.

15. Now all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth.
16. And Abimelech said unto Isaac: 'Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.'

17. And Isaac departed thence, and encamped in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

18. And Isaac dug again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham; and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.

19. And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of living water.

20. And the herdmen of Gerar strove with Isaac's herdmen, saying: 'The water is ours.' And he called the name of the well Esek; because they contended with him.

21. And they digged another well, and they strove for that also. And he called the name of it Sitnah.

22. And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not. And he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said: 'For now YHVH hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.'

Aliya: Fourth-Netzach-Moses

In the fourth reading (עליה, aliyah), Isaac went to Beersheba, and that night God appeared to Isaac, telling Isaac not to fear, for God was with him, and would bless him and increase his offspring for Abraham's sake. So Isaac built an altar and invoked the Lord by name. And Isaac pitched his tent there, and his servants began digging a well. Then Abimelech, Ahuzzath his councilor, and Phicol, his general came to Isaac, and Isaac asked them why they had come since they had driven Isaac away. They answered that they now recognized that God had been with Isaac and sought a treaty that neither would harm the other.

23. And he went up from thence to Beer-sheba.

24. And the priests anointed the oxen and the fatlings and the fat and the bread; and said: 'Let us call now the people, that they may come and be umpires between me and thee.' And they called the names of the people.
24. And YHVH appeared unto him the same night, and said: 'I am the God of Abraham your father. Fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply your seed for My servant Abraham's sake.'

25. And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of YHVH, and pitched his tent there; and there Isaac's servants digged a well.

26. Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath his friend, and Phicol the captain of his host.

27. And Isaac said unto them: 'Wherefore are ye come unto me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?'

28. And they said: 'We saw plainly that YHVH was with thee; and we said: Let there now be an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee; that thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace; thou art now the blessed of YHVH.'

29. In the fifth reading (עליה, aliyah), Isaac threw a feast for the Philistines, and the next morning, they exchanged oaths and the Philistines departed from him in peace. Later in the day, Isaac's servants told him that they had found water, and Isaac named the well Shibah, so that place became known as Beersheba. A closed portion (סתומה, setumah) ends here. In the continuation of the reading, when Esau was 40 years old, he married two Hittite women, Judith and Basemath, causing bitterness for Isaac and Rebekah. Another closed portion (סתומה, setumah) ends here with the end of chapter 26 As the reading continues in chapter 27, when Isaac was old and his sight had dimmed, he called Esau and asked him to hunt some game and prepare a dish, so that Isaac might give him his innermost blessing before he died. Rebekah had been listening, and when Esau departed, she instructed Jacob to fetch her two choice kids so that she might prepare a dish that Jacob could take to Isaac and receive his blessing. Jacob complained to Rebekah that since Esau was hairy, Isaac might touch him, discover him to be a trickster, and curse him. But Rebekah called the curse upon herself, insisting that Jacob do as she directed. So Jacob got the kids, and Rebekah prepared a dish, had Jacob put on Esau's best clothes, and covered Jacob's hands and neck with the kid's skins. When Jacob went to Isaac, he asked which of his sons had arrived, and Jacob said that he was Esau and asked for Isaac's blessing. Isaac asked him how he had succeeded so quickly, and he said that God had granted him good fortune. Isaac asked
Jacob to come closer that Isaac might feel him to determine whether he was really Esau. Isaac felt him and wondered that the voice was Jacob’s, but the hands were Esau’s. Isaac questioned if it was really Esau, and when Jacob assured him, Isaac asked for the game and Jacob served him the kids and wine. Isaac bade his son to come close and kiss him, and Isaac smelled his clothes, remarking that he smelled like the fields.

30. And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink.

31. And they rose up betimes in the morning, and swore one to another; and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace.

32. And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac’s servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him: ‘We have found water.’

33. And he called it Shibah. Therefore the name of the city is Beer-sheba unto this day.

34. And when Esau was forty years old, he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite.

35. And they were a bitterness of spirit unto Isaac and to Rebekah.

Chapter: 27

1. And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his elder son, and said unto him: ‘My son’; and he said unto him: ‘Here am I.’

2. And he said: ‘Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death.

3. Now therefore take, I pray thee, your weapons, your quiver and your bow, and go out to the field, and take me venison;

4. and make me savoury food, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die.’
5. And Rebekah heard when Isaac spoke to Esau his son. And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it.

6. And Rebekah spoke unto Jacob her son, saying: 'Behold, I heard your father speak unto Esau your brother, saying:

7. Bring me venison, and make me savoury food, that I may eat, and bless thee before YHVH before my death.

8. Now therefore, my son, hearken to my voice according to that which I command thee.

9. Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make them savoury food for your father, such as he loveth;

10. and thou shalt bring it to your father, that he may eat, so that he may bless thee before his death.'

11. And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother: 'Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man.

12. My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a mocker; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing.'

13. And his mother said unto him: 'Upon me be your curse, my son; only hearken to my voice, and go fetch me them.'

14. And he went, and fetched, and brought them to his mother; and his mother made savoury food, such as his father loved.

15. And Rebekah took the choicest garments of Esau her elder son, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son.

16. And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck.
17. And she gave the savoury food and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jacob.

18. And he came unto his father, and said: 'My father'; and he said: 'Here am I; who art thou, my son?'

19. And Jacob said unto his father: 'I am Esau your first-born; I have done according as thou badest me. Arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that your soul may bless me.'

20. And Isaac said unto his son: 'How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son?' And he said: 'Because YHVH your God sent me good speed.'

21. And Isaac said unto Jacob: 'Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not.'

22. And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said: 'The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau.'

23. And he discerned him not, because his hands were hairy, as his brother Esau's hands; so he blessed him.

24. And he said: 'Art thou my very son Esau?' And he said: 'I am.'

25. And he said: 'Bring it near to me, and I will eat of my son's venison, that my soul may bless thee.' And he brought it near to him, and he did eat; and he brought him wine, and he drank.

26. And his father Isaac said unto him: 'Come near now, and kiss me, my son.'

27. And he came near, and kissed him. And he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said: See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which YHVH hath blessed.
Aliya: Sixth-Yessod-Joseph

In the sixth reading ( العلي, aliya), Isaac blessed Jacob, asking God to give him abundance, make peoples serve him, make him master over his brothers, curse those who cursed him, and bless those who blessed him. Just as Jacob left, Esau returned from the hunt, prepared a dish for Isaac, and asked Isaac for his blessing. Isaac asked who he was, and Esau said that it was he. Isaac trembled and asked who it was then who had served him, received his blessing, and now must remain blessed. Esau burst into sobbing, and asked Isaac to bless him too, but Isaac answered that Jacob had taken Esau’s blessing with guile. Esau asked whether Jacob had been so named that he might supplant Esau twice, first taking his birthright and now his blessing. Esau asked Isaac whether he had not reserved a blessing for Esau, but Isaac answered that he had made Jacob master over him and sustained him with grain and wine, and asked what, then, he could still do for Esau. Esau wept and pressed Isaac to bless him, too, so Isaac blessed him to enjoy the fat of the earth and the dew of heaven, to live by his sword and to serve his brother, but also to break his yoke. Esau harbored a grudge against Jacob, and told himself that he would kill Jacob upon Isaac's death. When Esau's words reached Rebekah, she told Jacob to flee to Haran and her brother Laban and remain there until Esau's fury subsided and Rebekah fetched him from there, so that Rebekah would not lose both sons in one day. Rebekah told Isaac her disgust with the idea that Jacob might marry a Hittite woman, so Isaac sent for Jacob, blessed him, and instructed him not to take a Canaanite wife, but to go to Padan-aram and the house of Bethuel to take a wife from among Laban's daughters. And Isaac blessed Jacob with fertility and the blessing of Abraham, that he might possess the land that God had assigned to Abraham.

28. So God give thee of the dew of heaven, and of the fat places of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine.

29. Let peoples serve thee, and nations bow down to thee. Be lord over your brethren, and let your mother's sons bow down to thee. Cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be every one that blesseth thee.

30. And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting.

31. And he also made savoury food, and brought it unto his father; and he said unto his father: 'Let my father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that your soul may bless me.'
32. And Isaac his father said unto him: 'Who art thou?' And he said: 'I am your son, your first-born, Esau.'

33. And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said: 'Who then is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed.'

34. When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with an exceeding great and bitter cry, and said unto his father: 'Bless me, even me also, O my father.'

35. And he said: 'Thy brother came with guile, and hath taken away your blessing.'

36. And he said: 'Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing.' And he said: 'Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?'

37. And Isaac answered and said unto Esau: 'Behold, I have made him your lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him; and what then shall I do for thee, my son?'

38. And Esau said unto his father: 'Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father.' And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept.

39. And Isaac his father answered and said unto him: Behold, of the fat places of the earth shall be your dwelling, and of the dew of heaven from above;

40. And by your sword shalt thou live, and thou shalt serve your brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt break loose, that thou shalt shake his yoke from off your neck.
41. And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him. And Esau said in his heart: 'Let the days of mourning for my father be at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob.'

42. And the words of Esau her elder son were told to Rebekah; and she sent and called Jacob her younger son, and said unto him: 'Behold, your brother Esau, as touching thee, doth comfort himself, purposing to kill thee.

43. Now therefore, my son, hearken to my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran;

44. and tarry with him a few days, until your brother's fury turn away;

45. until your brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget that which thou hast done to him; then I will send, and fetch thee from thence; why should I be bereaved of you both in one day?'

46. And Rebekah said to Isaac: 'I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth. If Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these, of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?'

Chapter: 28

1. And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him: 'Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

2. Arise, go to Paddan-aram, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother.

3. And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a congregation of peoples;

4. And Rebekah said to Isaac: 'I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth. If Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these, of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?'
4. and give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to your seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land of your sojournings, which God gave unto Abraham.'

**Aliya: Seventh-Malchut-King David**

In the seventh reading (עלייה, aliyah), when Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and charged him not to take a Canaanite wife, Esau realized that the Canaanite women displeased Isaac, and Esau married Ishmael's daughter Mahalath.

5. And Isaac sent away Jacob; and he went to Paddan-aram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Aramean, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

6. Now Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Paddan-aram, to take him a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying: 'Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan';

**Aliya: Maftir**

7. and that Jacob hearkened to his father and his mother, and was gone to Paddan-aram;

8. and Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father;

9. so Esau went unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives that he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebaioth, to be his wife.

- End of Parasha -