

ParShaT *ToLeDoTh* – One Pager Series

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Rashi #1: Biblical Text Gn25-24: Rivkah's pregnancy was completing; she had *twins* in her womb

Rashi Text #1: Twins: A deficient spelling for a deficient person. One of her two children (Esauv) was not righteous. [The "w" consists of two "v"s corresponding to the two twins. "Twins" is spelled "twins" to teach us that one of the twins was not all there.]

Rashiyomi explanation #1: We have explained many times that deliberate misspellings are a special pun technique (called metaplasmus). We have also explained that even secular authorities believe that puns are a grammatical technique no different from any other grammatical technique. The deliberateness of the misspelling points to author intent. The interpretation is obvious and spontaneous: Deficient spelling implies deficient people; alternatively, the missing of one of the two "v" in the "w" points to the fact that one of her twins (Esau) was not all there. All this is a spontaneous and enjoyable reaction.

Rashi #2: Biblical Text Gn27-19: [Background: Both Esauv and Jacob brought food to Isaac to inspire him to bless them. Biblical Hebrew has two words for I: (*warm/caring*) *I* and (*confrontational*) *I*, just as there are two words for you (you and thou; in French *tu* and *vous*; you would never use *tu* with a stranger).

Gn27-19 [*Jacob disguised as Esauv*] (*Warm/caring*) *I am* _____ *Esauv your firstborn*

Gn27-31 [*Esauv as himself, Esauv*] (*Confrontational*) *I am your son your first-born Esauv*

Rashi text: [Commenting on the contrast] Jacob was a caring person simply fulfilling his father's wishes. Contrastively, Esauv was confrontational: He added (*I am*) *your son* and he reversed sequence: Esauv said *your firstborn, Esauv* while Jacob said *Esauv your firstborn*.

Rashiyomi explanation: This Rashi is clear *provided* we agree that Rashi is commenting on the differences between verse 19 and 31. Rashi is simply pointing out the difference in personalities. To Esauv, this was a business deal without personal feelings: Esauv says "*Look father I am your firstborn; blessings belong to me; I want what is coming to me.*" Contrastively Jacob says, "*Father, I care about your feelings also. You want a pleasant meal; you want this blessing to be a spontaneous expression of mutual feeling.*"

Rashi #3: Biblical Text Gn26-05: [God explains to Isaac that he is giving him blessings] Because Abraham (your father) guarded i) my safeguards, ii) my societal commandments, iii) my symbolic commandments, and iv) my Torah principles.

Rashi Text: i) My safeguards: These are man-made extras that people enact on themselves to assure that Divine commands are not accidentally broken (E.g. You don't wet a rag on Sabbath lest you accidentally wring it of its water (Wringing is biblically prohibited on the Sabbath). ii) Societal commandments: For examples, the prohibitions of murder, theft, and property damage. These are Divine laws which man would have arrived at by reason even if not commanded. Abraham's greatness is that he observed them because of Divine decree. This meant if you lost your temper you wouldn't accidentally violate the commandment "just once". iii) Symbolic commandments: Abraham observed not only the commandments but their underlying symbolic message. He not only circumcised but practiced curtailment of activities connected with that organ. iv) My legal principles: Abraham did not just blindly follow the laws of God; he following the underlying principles applying them to new situations and observing details with greater understanding.