



The Community

Boruch Hashem

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From The Rebbe's Teachings -Lik'S Vol 15, Toldos 5

Who Saw What When?

Our Torah-portion concludes with Esau seeing that his father Isaac sent his brother Jacob to *Padan-aram*, where Laban the brother of Rebecca lives, in order to find a wife, because the girls of Canaan were displeasing to Isaac, therefore, Esau too married a relative woman from outside of Canaan, Mahalath, the daughter of his half-uncle Ishmael. Here are the verses and their Rashi commentary:

"And Esau saw that (a) Isaac had blessed Jacob (b) and sent him away to Padan-aram, to take himself a wife from there, and that when he blessed him, he commanded him, saying, "You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan."

"(c) And Jacob listened to his father and his mother, and he went to Padan-aram.

Rashi: "And Jacob listened': This is connected to the aforementioned topic. When Esau saw that (a) Isaac had blessed [Jacob] and that (b) he had sent him off to Padan-aram, and that (c) Jacob listened to his father and went to Padan-aram, and that (d) the daughters of Canaan were displeasing [to his father], then he, too, went to Ishmael."

"(d) And Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan were displeasing to his father Isaac.

"So Esau went to Ishmael, and he took Mahalath, the daughter of Ishmael, the son of Abraham, the sister of Nebaioth, in addition to his other wives as a wife."

Note: The reason for the underlined words, and the alphabetically enumeration, will become clear further on in the article.

Simply, Rashi is telling us that the words, "And Jacob listened," cannot be to tell us that Jacob listened to Isaac in that he went to *Padan-aram*, for (i) of course Jacob listened to his father!, and (ii) the verse explicitly then tells us, "and he went to Padan-aram." Hence, we must say that this, "And Jacob listened," which is in the midst of the verses speaking of *Esau* ("And Esau saw that Isaac...," "And Esau saw that the daughters...," and "So Esau went to Ishmael") is speaking of Esau's seeing ("the aforementioned topic") that Jacob listening to Isaac, and therefore, he too went to Ishmael, in order to marry a woman not from Canaan.

However, this then leads us to numerous questions on Rashi's commentary:

- (1) This that, "And Jacob listened," is (not about Jacob, but) about, "And Esau saw," is quite obvious, and for this it would suffice if Rashi would have just simply said, "This is connected to the aforementioned topic," without going on to list all of the details written explicitly in the verse ("Isaac had blessed [Jacob] and that he had sent him off to Padan-aram, and that Jacob listened to his father and went to Padan-aram, and that the daughters of Canaan were displeasing [to his father].")?
- (2) Why did Rashi omit the verse's detail of, "he commanded him, saying, 'You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan'?"
- (3) "Aforementioned," applies only to that which is listed in the verse prior to, "And Jacob Listened." Hence, why does Rashi list, "the daughters of Canaan were displeasing [to his father]," from the verse after, "And Jacob listened"?
- (4) Why does Rashi at all mention, "then he, too, went to Ishmael," which is not of the details of, "And Esau Saw," but the outcome of what Esau did because of what, "Esau saw." --And this that "then he, too, went to Ishmael," was an outcome of the, "And Esau saw," is not something that Rashi has to explain, since it is self-understood, that what, "Esau saw," was the impetus to, "So Esau went to Ishmael"!

The answer to question (4) is, that from Rashi's first stating, "This is connected to the aforementioned topic," is understood that all the details listed, and the detail, "So Esau went to Ishmael," all makes sense only after we understand that, "This is connected to the aforementioned topic." Therefore, Rashi concludes his comment with, "So Esau went to Ishmael." Hence, let us understand what Rashi is coming to clarify for us with telling us, "This is connected to the aforementioned topic."

Why, after already telling us once that, "And Esau saw," does the verse than once again state, "And Esau saw"? Thus, we must say that the verses are telling us that the details of the first, "And Esau saw," and the details of the second, "And Esau saw," are of two different categories.

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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2023 ★ כסלו תשפ"ד Shabbat Candle Lighting: 5:13 PM Kabbalat Shabbat: 5:30 PM SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2023 ★ ה' כסלו תשפ"ד TORAH READING: Toldot (Genesis 25:19-28:9) · HAFTORAH: Malachi (1:1-2:7) Shacharit: 9:30 AM · Mincha: 5:00 PM · Shabbat Ends: North Miami: 6:07 PM WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2023 ★ ט' כסלו תשפ"ד BIRTHDAY & YAHRZEIT: <i>The Mittler Rebbe</i> ; Rabbi Dovber Schneerson (1773-1827) THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2023 ★ י' כסלו תשפ"ד LIBERATION: <i>The Mittler Rebbe</i> ; Rabbi Dovber Schneerson, released from Czar's prison in 1826	This Week...
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The difference between these two categories of details are as that of an earlier comment of Rashi (-Genesis 18:2) upon the verse's, "And he lifted his eyes and saw... and he saw," that, "Why is 'and he saw' written twice The first is to be understood according to its apparent meaning [i.e., and he saw], and the second means 'understanding.'" So too, it is here with the two, "And Esau saw"'s of our verses. The details of the first, "And Esau saw," was that Esau simply saw what was taking place between two other people (Isaac and Jacob), not related to himself: "(a) Isaac had blessed [Jacob] and that (b) he had sent him off to Padan-aram, and that (c) Jacob listened to his father and went to Padan-aram." However, the detail of the second, "And Esau saw," was in the nature of (-Rashi, ibid), "He observed... and he understood": "(d) And Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan were displeasing to his father Isaac," which concerns him, being that his father is displeased, hence, he has to now, "then he, too, went to Ishmael."

However, this leaves us with a question: Being that all of what, "Esau saw," is only to tell us as to why, "So Esau went to Ishmael," then why does the verse have to tell us at all about the first, "And Esau saw," and all its details, being that they had nothing to do with, "So Esau went to Ishmael"? --Or the verse should have told us only the detail of, "he (Isaac) commanded him (Jacob), saying, 'You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan'?" The reason is because the Torah, by all of this elaboration of what, "Esau saw," is to answer an obvious question: Isaac gave Jacob two commandments: (i) Go to Padan-aram, and (ii) Do not take from the daughters of Canaan. If so, in Esau's desire to show that he is no less than Jacob, why did he only act on the, "Do not take from the daughters of Canaan," but not on the, "Go to Padan-aram"?! And this question is answered by the Torah telling us that there are two categories within the, "And Esau Saw".

Esau's understanding was that the detail (a detail of the first, "And Esau saw"), "(b) and sent him away to Padan-aram, to take himself a wife from there, was not because only there can the offspring of Isaac find an appropriate wife, but rather, this command is only connected with the, "(a) Isaac had blessed Jacob... and that when he blessed him." Therefore, this command does not apply to Esau ("And Esau saw:" Simply saw what was taking place between two other people (Isaac and Jacob)), as it was Jacob who Isaac blessed. However, the command of, "You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan," was because of, "the daughters of Canaan were displeasing to his father Isaac," thus, this (the detail of the second, "And Esau saw") does apply to Esau, as well, and therefore ("And Esau saw:" "He observed... and he understood"), "then he, too, went to Ishmael."

With this we can now understand why Rashi states the details, and the wording he uses:

- (i) [Answer to opening questions (1) and (2)] Rashi, after telling us that, "And Jacob listened," is connected to the aforementioned, goes on to list the aforementioned details of the first "And Esau saw," which is connected to Esau's seeing as to what Isaac did specifically with Jacob "(a) Isaac had blessed [Jacob] and that (b) he had sent him off to Padan-aram, and that (c) Jacob listened to his father and went to Padan-aram), omitting the, "he commanded him, saying, 'You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.'" With this Rashi explains Esau's understanding that Isaac's wanting Jacob to specifically go to Padan-aram --Esau thinking that this is connected to the blessings that Jacob received, was not applicable to him.
- (ii) Rashi places the detail, "And Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan were displeasing to his father Isaac," after the detail of, "(c) Jacob listened to his father and went to Padan-aram," [Answer to opening questions (3)] and Rashi quotes here from the next verse, connected with the second. "And Esau saw ("He observed... and he understood"), "And Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan were displeasing to his father Isaac," (and not the previous verse's (first, "And Esau Saw"), "he (Isaac) commanded him (Jacob), saying, 'You shall not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan"), [Answer to opening questions (4)] which was the reason for, "then he, too, went to Ishmael."

Additionally, this explains why Rashi omits the word, "And he (Isaac) commanded," in explaining --Not only why Esau did not go to Padan-aram-- but in pointing out as to why in Esau's mind he was showing that he was far better than Jacob, by going to Ishmael's daughters for a wife, being that:

- (1) Jacob's going to Padan-aram was (in Esau's understanding) not specifically to fulfill Isaac's, "And he commanded him," but for Jacob's own benefit of being able to receive Isaac's blessings. While he, Esau, was doing it solely for the reason of, "And Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan were displeasing to his father Isaac," hence, going to Ishmael's daughter and not to Padan-aram.
- (2) He, Esau, is taking a non-Canaanite wife, even though his father did not explicitly command him to do so.