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The Ideal Esav

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1.

ESAV'S SPIRITUAL GROWTH

On the verse,¹ “The boys grew,” *Yalkut Shimoni* comments:² “Esav was included, but through his deeds, he became corrupt.” In other words, when it says that they “grew,” it refers (not only to physical maturity, in age but also) to spiritual maturity. As *Yalkut Shimoni* comments earlier,³ “*The great man among the giants...* — ‘the great’ refers to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, who were called ‘great.’” The reason we later find that Esav was (not spiritually “mature” but, on the contrary, he was) wicked is that “he, through his deeds, became corrupt.”

The *Zohar* also explains that “the boys grew” refers to spiritual maturity. The text reads as follows:⁴ “*The boys grew* — the influence of Avraham caused them to mature spiritually, and his merit helped them. He would educate *them* in {the observance of} mitzvos... including Yaakov and Esav.” The *Zohar* is clearer and emphasizes the above interpretation even more than *Yalkut Shimoni*:

Yalkut Shimoni can be construed to mean (albeit with difficulty) that the term “grew,” when referring to Esav, does not allude to actual spiritual maturity. Instead, it merely means the **capability** to become spiritually mature, “but he, through his deeds, became corrupt.”

The *Zohar*, however, explicitly states that “grew” means that Yaakov and Esav became (spiritually) mature to the extent that they would **actually** perform mitzvos — “he would educate them in mitzvos.”

This needs to be clarified: How can we say that Esav (on his own) was fit to be spiritually mature — and that he actually matured (but **later** “**through his deeds, became corrupt**”) — in light of our Sages’ teaching regarding the verse,⁵ “The children struggled within her” (and the *Zohar* itself⁶ mentions this immediately following the explanation mentioned above in its comments on the phrase, “the boys grew”) that already in his mother’s womb, Esav gravitated towards idol worship?⁷

Moreover, immediately following the clause, “the boys grew,” the verse continues, “Esav became a hunter, a man of the field,” meaning that when it says that Esav “grew,” it

¹ *Bereishis* 25:27.

² *Yalkut Shimoni*, “*Yehoshua*,” sec. 23.

³ *Yehoshua* 14:25.

⁴ On our *parshah* 138b.

⁵ *Bereishis* 25:22.

⁶ On our *parshah* 139a.

⁷ *Bereishis Rabbah*, ch. 63, par. 6; *Rashi* on *Bereishis* 25:22.

means that “Esav became a hunter.” As such, how can we then say that “they grew” refers to **spiritual** maturity?

2.

AN ATTEMPTED EXPLANATION

We could have seemingly answered (the first question mentioned above) as follows:

Our Sages say that in its mother’s womb, a fetus “is taught the entire Torah.... Once it is born, an angel comes and strikes the newborn on the mouth, **making it forget** the entire Torah.”⁸ (Presumably, the main reason is that if the newborn did not forget the entire Torah, its free will would be diminished. Since the Torah says,⁹ “I have placed before you..., life and good, and death and evil,” all of these must be on an equal footing.)

This is also understood in our context: At the time of birth, Esav’s “conduct” (his hankering toward idol worship) was **forgotten** (so that he would have free will), and Avraham’s education, etc., took full effect.

However, this explanation is inadequate, as ultimately, Esav’s conduct in his mother’s womb left an impression on him — his nature drew him toward idol worship — which led him to idol worship in adulthood. As *Zohar* explicitly says, Esav’s turn later to idol worship (in adulthood) came “**as a result**” of it being “the place **that suited** him” since he was inclined toward idol worship in his mother’s womb.

[This is similar to how it is in the realm of holiness, as mentioned above: The reason the entire Torah is taught to a fetus in its mother’s womb, even though the fetus subsequently is caused to **forget** it, is so that he is later drawn towards Torah (since the Torah study in his mother’s womb leaves an impression on the child).]¹⁰

Thus, the question returns: How do we say that “Esav was included (among the ‘great’), but through his deeds, became corrupt”?

⁸ *Niddah* 30b.

⁹ *Devarim* 30:15.

¹⁰ *Or HaTorah*, “*Shir HaShirim*,” p. 73; see commentators on *Ein Yaakov*, *Niddah* 30b; *Likkutei Torah*, “*Shelach*,” 44a; *Or HaTorah*, “*Re’eh*,” p. 638; *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 5, p. 13.

3.

A FIGHT FOR WORLDS

Regarding the verse,¹¹ “The children struggled within her,” our Sages¹² offer another explanation: The “struggle” and conflict between Yaakov and Esav was “over the inheritance of the two worlds” — “for this world and the World to Come.”¹³

This is bewildering:¹⁴ What was behind their **quarrel**? Esav sought this world, while Yaakov sought the World to Come. They had nothing to argue about!¹⁵

We must say that Esav did not desire only this world, and Yaakov did not desire only the World to Come. Each of them desired **both** worlds.

This is bewildering: Why would Esav, **the wicked one**, desire the World to Come?

4.

ESAV’S DESIRE

This will be understood by first clarifying the teaching mentioned above of our Sages that Esav was already predisposed toward idol worship in his mother’s womb. This seems utterly bewildering:

The Patriarchs were a “*merkavah*”¹⁶ to the Divine will. As the Alter Rebbe elaborates in *Tanya*:¹⁷ “**All** their limbs... became a *merkavah* only to the Divine will, **their whole life**.” It is thus readily understood that their offspring were born in the utmost sanctity, with “the strength of their father.” Indeed, the **essence** of their father was embedded in them.¹⁸ So how could it be that Yitzchak’s son should be **instinctively** drawn to idolatry?!

¹¹ {*Bereishis* 25:22.}

¹² *Yalkut Shimoni* and Rashi on *Bereishis* 25:22; *Seder Eliyahu Zuta*, ch. 19 (although in that source, it implies that regarding this matter, there was no struggle).

¹³ {Cf. end of Rashi’s commentary on *Bereishis* 25:22.}

¹⁴ See also *Shelah*, “*Toldos*,” p. 289a.

¹⁵ See *Tanchuma*, “*Terumah*,” sec. 9 (and *Tanchuma*, Buber ed., sec. 7) where it says that Yaakov is a partner with Esav in this world, but Esav is not a partner with Yaakov in the World to Come.

¹⁶ *Bereishis Rabbah*, ch. 47, par. 6; ch. 82, par. 6. {Lit., “chariot,” symbolizes total self-abnegation and submission to Hashem and His will (just as a chariot is absolutely responsive to the will of the charioteer), thereby becoming a vehicle for Divinity on earth.}

¹⁷ *Tanya*, “*Likkutei Amarim*,” ch. 23.

¹⁸ See also *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 15, p. 194 and the sources cited in fn. 35 there.

The fact that Esav later developed into a wicked person does not pose a difficulty because “through his deeds, he became corrupt.” Everyone is granted free will to act as he wishes, and Esav chose (due to his environment, as it says,¹⁹ “The Canaanites among whom I dwell,” his interactions with Nimrod,²⁰ and so forth) a debased path. However, these were “**his** deeds” — (through) his deeds, **Esav** (by his own choice) became corrupt. His character did not originate from Yitzchak, Heaven forbid, but rather (in line with the nuanced wording of our Sages):²¹ “Yitzchak, from whom Esav **departed**.”²² Esav went out and **separated**²³ himself from Yitzchak’s domain.

However, here we are saying that even **before** he was born — meaning, even before he severed his connection with (Yitzchak and) Rivkah — he was already drawn to idol worship!

[This inclination was so deeply ingrained that it would lead him to abandon his religious education and embrace idolatry later in adulthood (as cited above from *Zohar*).]

5.

POWER FOR THEIR PROGENY

The explanation:

It is known,²⁴ regarding the principle, “The actions of the Patriarchs are a sign for their sons,” that “the actions of the Patriarchs” provide strength for the *avodah*²⁵ of (“their sons,”) the Jewish people. From this, it is understood that all forms of *avodah* that the “sons” perform are also (at least in a symbolic manner) present in the Patriarchs’ actions.

Rambam, in his work *Shemoneh Perakim*,²⁶ elaborates on the two forms of *avodah* — that of “the exemplary Chassid”²⁷ (who from the outset only desires good) and that of “the person who conquers his inclination” (who “desires evil actions... and conquers this inclination”).

¹⁹ {*Bereishis* 24:3.}

²⁰ Rashi on *Bereishis* 27:15 (from *Bereishis Rabbah* on the verse; *Pirkei DeRebbi Eliezer*, ch. 24; *Targum Yonassan ben Uziel* on *Bereishis* 25:27; et al).

²¹ *Pesachim* 56a; et al.

²² {In the nuanced Hebrew original, “יִצְחָק מִיָּצָא מִיָּדוֹ עֵשָׂו”; the straightforward meaning is that Esav was produced (fathered) by Yitzchak, biologically. However, the unusual wording is expounded to mean that Esav left, or departed from, the holy influence of Yitzchak.}

²³ *Likkutei Torah*, “*Vaeschanan*,” 5a; “*Shir HaShirim*,” 9d; et al.

²⁴ See *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 5, p. 79, fn. 20; vol. 15, p. 76, fn. 12 (et al); **and the sources mentioned there.**

²⁵ {Divine service.}

²⁶ Rambam’s *Shemoneh Perakim*, ch. 6.

²⁷ {In this context, a righteous person.}

This needs to be clarified: Since “the Patriarchs are the *merkavah*,” as mentioned above, where is the “sign for their sons” from “the actions of the Patriarchs” regarding this *avodah* of a person “conquering his inclination”?

Moreover, “one who conquers his inclination,” at the very least, does not commit any evil acts. He merely **desires** “evil actions,” but in actuality, “he (only) performs good deeds.” However, the Jewish people have the *avodah* of *teshuvah*²⁸ to correct **actions** that are not good. How is the concept of *teshuvah* (in the **simple** sense) applicable in “the actions of the Patriarchs,” which would serve as a “sign (and provide strength) for their sons”?

6.

AN IRONCLAD BOND

We could have answered that even though the Patriarchs had no inner obstacles, Heaven forbid, they encountered external obstacles from their environment (as mentioned above), which they had to “conquer.”

It follows that their *avodah* was divided into two categories: The *avodah* of ascending from level to level within holiness itself; and overcoming external obstacles. This strength and “conquest” in the Patriarchs’ *avodah* provide strength (a sign for their sons) in a person’s *avodah* of “conquering his inclination.”

However, this explanation is seemingly inadequate because, in several respects, it is harder for a person “to conquer **his inclination**” (to overcome his internal obstacles) than to overcome external obstacles. If this is the case, how do the actions of our Patriarchs provide strength for **this** *avodah* of the Jewish people?

One explanation is as follows: The virtue of “one who conquers his inclination” is that this “strength” to fight his inclination demonstrates how strongly connected he is with Hashem. Although he may be drawn to immoral behavior, his resolve to follow Hashem and do only good is not weakened.

Similarly, and even more so, is the virtue and “strength” of a *baal teshuvah*,²⁹ who,³⁰ despite having fallen and transgressed, possesses such a strong **inner** connection with

²⁸ {Repentance.}

²⁹ {A penitent.}

³⁰ See *Mishneh Torah*, “*Hilchos Teshuvah*” (ch. 7, par. 4), “he has tasted sin and yet, separated himself from it, conquering his {evil} impulse.... they overcome their {evil} impulse more than them (the righteous). See *Maamarei Admor HaZaken 5569*, p. 214.

Hashem that it brings him to conquer the evil — to feel remorse for having transgressed, and to return to serving Hashem.

Therefore, the adage, “The actions of the Patriarchs are a sign for their sons,” also relates to the *avodah* of “conquering his inclination” and the *avodah* of *teshuvah*. This is because this strong bond with Hashem, which can **never** be weakened, was inherited from the Patriarchs, who were always a *merkavah* to Hashem in such a manner that for it to cease for “even one moment”³¹ was **impossible**.

Therefore, even though the Patriarchs’ “strength” was practically expressed only concerning external obstacles, the **source** of this “strength” — this strong connection with Hashem — fortified their sons to overcome their inner obstacles.

7.

ESAV’S HOLY SIDE

Since the *avodah* of the Patriarchs was divided into the two categories mentioned above, these two categories were also manifest in their offspring: The Patriarchs had two categories of “offspring,” aligning with the two types of *avodah*³² — “the exemplary Chassid” and “one who conquers his inclination.”

In our context, these were “*the offspring of Yitzchak*”³³ — Yaakov and Esav³⁴ who are discussed in the *parshah*.³⁵ Yaakov was “a wholesome man, a tent-dweller {one who is engaged in Torah-study}”³⁶ — the exemplary Chassid, whereas Esav was “a hunter...” — corresponding to the *avodah* of one who overcomes his impulses. This division began even as “offspring” — and they struggled within their mother’s womb.

However, the difference {between the Patriarchs and their children} is as follows: For the Patriarchs, who were the *merkavah*, evil could not **exist**, Heaven forbid. Conversely, evil was possible among their offspring, who were not the “Patriarchs” but **departed** from them.

³¹ Wording of *Tanya*, “*Likkutei Amarim*,” beg. of ch. 34.

³² As this is the meaning of “offspring” in the spiritual sense, for “the offspring of the righteous are good deeds” (Rashi on *Bereishis* 6:9 from *Midrash Rabbah* and *Tanchuma* on that verse; see *Sotah* 46a: “What is fruit...? Mitzvos”).

³³ {*Bereishis* 25:19.}

³⁴ And similarly, this also applied with regard to Avraham’s offspring — Yitzchak and Yishmael. Yaakov’s offspring also exhibited a resemblance of these two categories, akin to the distinction between Yissachar and Zevulun (see *Or HaTorah*, “*Toldos*,” p. 154a). See *Bereishis Rabbah* (ch. 84, par. 19) regarding Reuven: “You began with **repentance**.”

³⁵ Wording of Rashi on *Bereishis* 25:19.

³⁶ {*Bereishis* 25:27.}

But, being that they were the offspring of the Patriarchs, this (was not literal and utter evil; rather, this evil) existed in a way that its existence was only intended to facilitate the **conquering** of one's **evil inclination**.

[This is similar to the idea behind our Sages's teaching:³⁷ {The Midrash declares:} “I do not know which one of them I want — the actions of these (the actions of the wicked) or the actions of these (the actions of the righteous).” This is puzzling: What is behind the supposition that Hashem might want the actions of the wicked?

The explanation given³⁸ is that Hashem's desire for the actions of the wicked refers to His desire for those who transgress to conquer those actions — the *avodah* of **teshuvah**. From Hashem's perspective, “no evil can abide with You.”³⁹ Consequently, for Hashem, the reality of “the actions of the wicked” is (not the evil, Heaven forbid, but) His desire for the *teshuvah* that arises through it.]⁴⁰

Similarly, regarding Esav: Esav's natural inclination toward idol worship both as a fetus and after being born was (from **Yitzchak's** perspective) only to enable Esav to carry out the *avodah* of conquering his evil inclination.

However, since Esav had free will, he became corrupt “through his deeds” and departed from the path of his father, Yitzchak. Esav separated himself from (the holiness of) Yitzchak and, moreover, brought evil from potential into actuality.

8.

ESAV'S ORIGINAL INTENT

We can also understand the struggle and quarrel between Yaakov and Esav regarding “the inheritance of the two worlds.” Since this discussion refers to Esav while he was still in his mother's womb — meaning, within the domain of holiness, as mentioned above — it is understood that his desire for this world at that time had a holy motive, something **positive**, stemming from his being the “offspring” of Yitzchak.

One of the differences between the *avodah* of “the exemplary Chassid” and “one who conquers his inclination” is as follows: An “exemplary Chassid,” whose *avodah* involves ascending from level to level within holiness itself, feels that the primary and ultimate goal is

³⁷ *Bereishis Rabbah*, end of ch. 2.

³⁸ *Or HaTorah*, “Eikev,” p. 505 (see *Yeifei Toar* on *Bereishis Rabbah*, ch. 2); see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 15, p. 178, fn. 49.

³⁹ *Tehillim* 5:5; see *Likkutei Torah*, “Bamidbar,” 3c.

⁴⁰ Note *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 16, p. 412, et passim.

complete ascension — **the World to Come** (a refined world without any [mixture of good and] evil; it is entirely holy). This is the goal he desires and strives for.

In contrast, a person who conquers his evil inclination discerns that the primary virtue lies in the *avodah in this world*, where there are obstructions and concealments that he overcomes and conquers.

Therefore, the struggle between Yaakov and Esav was over “the inheritance of the **two** worlds”: Each method of *avodah* includes aspects of the other. The “exemplary Chassid” must also perform his *avodah* specifically in this world. Conversely, the person who conquers his evil inclination must ascend from level to level within holiness. He must tear himself away from this world (even from the *avodah* by which he engages this world, refining and transforming it to holiness) and devote himself (at least occasionally) to the *avodah* of (“the World to Come” within this world) — “a tent-dweller” {one who is engaged in Torah-study}.

However, the distinction is as follows: For the exemplary Chassid, the descent into this world is for the sake of **the World to Come** — to merit the highest ascent in holiness through his *avodah* in this world. Conversely, the opposite is valid for one whose *avodah* is to conquer his evil inclination. His involvement in the *avodah* of the “tent-dweller” is so that his *avodah* with (and in) **this world** reaches ultimate perfection.

Therefore, due to Yaakov’s quality as a “tent-dweller,” he decided that we must desire the World to Come and that this world is also for the sake of the World to Come. However, from Esav’s perspective, the primary focus is **this world** (the virtue that emerges from *avodah* in this world). And (the *avodah* of) the World to Come is for the sake of the *avodah* in this world.

9.

“A MAN OF THE FIELD”

In light of this, we can also clarify the teaching of our Sages — that “the boys grew” means spiritual maturity — and the teaching of the *Zohar*, which goes beyond this teaching of our Sages — that Avraham (also) educated Esav in the practice of mitzvos, to the extent that he **actually** became (spiritually) mature:

Since Avraham could “command his children and his household after him that they keep the way of Hashem...,”⁴¹ he influenced Esav **actually** to conquer his evil inclination.

⁴¹ Bereishis 18:19.

This sheds light on the continuation of the verse where Esav's "growing up" is explained to mean that "Esav became a hunter, a man of the field" — since (from the perspective of Avraham and Yitzchak) **this** was also something positive.

Esav was a "man of the field." Accordingly, he performed his *avodah* in **the world**. To overcome and conquer the concealment of "the field," he **had** to be a "hunter." As Rashi explains,⁴² {Esav knew how} "to ensnare and deceive." As elucidated in several places,⁴³ a person must utilize "deception," so to speak, to carry out his *avodah* in this world. He must wear "the clothing of the entity being refined." This means that a soul must engage in worldly matters, such as eating and drinking, even though it is inherently disconnected from them. And by engaging in these matters for the sake of Heaven, the soul refines and elevates the holy sparks found within these physical things.

However, this is all from the perspective of Avraham and Yitzchak. In actuality, however, after Avraham's educational influence on Esav ended and Esav "departed," Esav severed his connection with Yitzchak. Esav became corrupt and "a hunter, a man of the field" **in the simple sense** of this description — he went astray.

10.

YITZCHAK'S BLESSING

The above explanation that Esav was born good since Yitzchak had fathered him aligns with the Alter Rebbe's explanation⁴⁴ as to why Yitzchak wanted to confer the blessings on Esav.

The Alter Rebbe explains that Yitzchak had seen Esav in Esav's **root** state, his "head."⁴⁵ From that perspective, as explained above, one discerns the virtue and advantage of *avodah* in the world when a person is not affected by the world's concealments.⁴⁶ On the contrary, the person conquers the world, refining and elevating it to holiness.

⁴² Rashi on *Bereishis* 25:27.

⁴³ See *Sefer HaMaamarim* 5703, s.v., "Padah Beshalom," ch. 2 ff.; **et al.**

⁴⁴ *Torah Or*, "Toldos," 20c; *Maamarei Admor HaZaken* 5565 (vol. 1) p. 17 ff.; *Maamarei Admor HaZaken Al HaTorah (Bereishis, Shemos)*, "Toldos," p. 162 ff.; *Toras Chaim*, "Toldos," 19d ff.; *Or HaTorah*, "Toldos," 151b ff.

⁴⁵ {See *Targum Yonasan ben Uziel* on *Bereishis* 50:13 describing Esav's ignoble demise for maliciously delaying the burial of Yaakov, etc. See there.}

⁴⁶ {The elements in the world that conceal the world's G-dly source.}

Nevertheless, the blessings were given to Yaakov specifically because, in reality, only he could refine this world.⁴⁷ Precisely, by being a “tent-dweller” (possessing the power of the Torah), a person can refine this world and transform it into a dwelling place for Hashem.

11.

THE LESSON

This also teaches us a lesson relevant to our practical *avodah*:

Even though the Jewish people are **Yaakov**’s children, this does not mean that their *avodah* must be exclusively that of the “tent-dweller.” Our Sages say:⁴⁸ “Whoever says, ‘I only have Torah,’ does not even have Torah.” Instead, the Jewish people are expected to also engage in the *avodah* of “a man of the field,” as **this** *avodah* was also given to Yaakov.

As alluded to⁴⁹ in Rashi’s commentary on the verse, “*These are the offspring* — Yaakov and Esav who are discussed in the *parshah*,” a Jew must recognize the necessity of **both** “offspring” (both types of *avodah*): both (the *avodah* of) Yaakov and (the *avodah* of) Esav. However, it is not Esav’s conduct as it was in actuality, Heaven forbid, that needs to be integrated into our *avodah*. Instead, it is Esav in the manner as he is “discussed **in the parshah**” — how Esav (and his *avodah*) should be according to **Torah**.

To achieve this, we must first engage in the *avodah* of Yaakov — “A wholesome man, a tent-dweller” [as also alluded to in Rashi’s commentary mentioned above, where he **switches** the order of birth and mentions Yaakov **before** Esav]: We must first devote ourselves to learning Torah, and we must do so by exemplifying the qualities of “a **wholesome** man.” Doing so means learning Torah in a **wholesome** way — not to attempt to distort what the Torah says, nor to read “his evil inclination” into the Torah, Heaven forbid, but to seek the **truth** of Torah.

Along with this, we must know that we cannot stop here. The *avodah* of the “tent-dweller” must extend into the “field” to “capture” the quarry⁵⁰ of worldly affairs and transform them into “delicacies”⁵¹ for Hashem,⁵² our Father in Heaven. —

⁴⁷ Hence, we find the concept of “deception” also attributed to Yaakov, as {the verse states} “your brother came with **cunning**” (*Bereishis* 27:35), and {as Rashi writes} “if he comes to deceive me, then I, too, am his brother {a match for him} in deception” (Rashi on *Bereishis* 29:12).

⁴⁸ *Yevamos* 109b.

⁴⁹ See also *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 15, p. 198; later on {*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 20,} p. 341 ff.; to reference *Or HaTorah*, “*Toldos*” (vol. 4) 799b ff.

⁵⁰ {Cf. *Bereishis* 27:3.}

⁵¹ {*Bereishis* 27:4.}

⁵² See *Tanya*, “*Likkutei Amarim*,” ch. 27.

And to carry out this *avodah*, we must be “hunters” — we must “wear” mundane garments and understand what society is passionate about. When speaking with a Jew who, Heaven spare us, is found in “the field” and needs to be brought closer to Judaism, we cannot speak with him in the Holy Tongue⁵³ or a style suitable for “tent-dwellers.” Instead, we must converse with this Jew in the vernacular, and the subject matter must be dressed in a “garment” suitable for a “man of the field.” In the words of Rambam:⁵⁴

Encourage the child with things he likes in keeping with his age... with nuts.... And when he gets older — with nice shoes. After his intellect develops, encourage him with money... with {the expectation of receiving} honor. All this is distasteful yet necessary due to man’s deficient intellect.

Although, in the meantime, his teacher uses nuts, etc., as a motivator, since this is done **in continuation** to his *avodah* as a “tent-dweller,” this ensures that his *avodah* in the “field” remains according to the ways of Torah⁵⁵ — “*the offspring of Yitzchak... discussed in the parshah.*”

By carrying out the *avodah* of “the offspring of Yitzchak” — employing both types of *avodah* mentioned above — we will very soon merit to witness the onset of the time when the Jewish people will declare to Yitzchak, “For *you* are our Patriarch.”⁵⁶ This will come about with the true and complete redemption by our righteous Mashiach.

— From a talk delivered on Shabbos *parshas Toldos*, 5741 (1980)

⁵³ {In the original, לשון הקודש, a term used in rabbinic literature to refer to biblical Hebrew.}

⁵⁴ Rambam’s *Commentary on Mishnah*, “*Sanhedrin*,” beg. of ch. “*chelek*.”

⁵⁵ Note Rashi on *Bereishis* 27:35: *with cunning* — **with wisdom**.

⁵⁶ *Shabbos* 89b; *Torah Or* 17c; 21c; *Toras Chaim*, “*Toldos*,” 10c ff.; “*Vayeitzei*,” 24d; et al.