

**Parshat Toldot**  
**Eliana Ruben (Class of 2019)**

**Summary:**

Toldot is a Parsha full of classic stories, like the birth of Yaakov and Eisav, the selling of the birthright and Yaakov stealing Eisav's blessing. Some significant details include: Rivkah praying for a child and then feeling her two sons fighting in her womb, which Hashem explains is because they are two nations. They're born, and one likes hunting and one likes praying, but both love lentils. One day, Yaakov is (possibly purposely) making lentils so enticing, that a hungry Eisav, after coming home from a hunt, sells away his birthright for some yummy red soup. There's a side story about Rivkah and Yitchak travelling away to escape a famine, and lying to Avimelech about the nature of their relationship, prompting him to get MAD at them. Later, Yitzchak is dying and wants to bless his (favorite) firstborn son, so Rivkah decides that the reasonable course of action would be to trick her dying, blind husband into blessing her less hairy, younger son. Eisav is understandably angry and Yaakov has to run away.

**Commentary:** Rashi , France, 1040-1105

25:32

הנה אנכי הולך למות. (מתנודדת והולכת היא הבכורה שלא תהא כל עת העבודה בבכורות, כי שבט לוי יטל אותה, ועוד) אמר עשו: מה טיבה של עבודה זו? אמר לו: כמה אזהרות וענשין ומיתות תלויין בה כאותה ששנינו, אלו הן שבמיתה: שתויי יין ופרועי ראש; אמר: אני הולך למות על ידיה, אם כן מה חפץ לי בה?

BEHOLD I AM IN PERIL TO DIE — The birthright is something unstable, for not always will the sacrificial duties be performed by the first-born, for the tribe of Levi will assume this. Further Esau said: What is the nature of this Service? Jacob replied, “Many prohibitions and punishments and many acts involving even the punishment of death are associated with it — just as we read in the Mishna, (Sanhedrin 22b): The following priests are liable to death: those who carry out their duties after having drunk too much wine and those who officiate long-haired. He said: If I am going to die through it, why should I desire it.

I chose this one because it has always been a question to me as to why Eisav would be so willing to sell his birthright, only to get upset about being exploited later. This gives a good reason as to why, in that moment, he was focused more on the present than the future.

**“Parsha Playlist”:** a playlist of songs that connect to the mood, images, storyline, or laws in the Parsha.

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL4u4vEuPkufM\\_OPJF7LD4TJNwLEhCcRZf](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL4u4vEuPkufM_OPJF7LD4TJNwLEhCcRZf)

*Hot N Cold Katy Perry*

(Bereishit 23:25)

A huge theme in this parsha is how completely opposite Yaakov and Eisav are. It is foretold during Rivka's pregnancy that she will be giving birth to two nations, and sure enough, her twin boys are utterly dissimilar. I chose this song because it was the first song I thought of for portraying this theme of opposites. Though the tone is obviously off, the lyrics describe how different the men were from each other.

*Favorite Son- Greenday*

Veyigdelu Hanaarim ( Bereishit 25:27-28)

This song spoke to me because it tells of a father who puts a lot of love and support into his relationship with his 'favorite son', only to have him grow up to be someone he is not proud of. I thought of the connection between Yitzchak and Eisav in my choosing this song for that reason. He loves Eisav unconditionally, and is obviously partial to his more hunting inclined child, but perhaps he was wrong about him. We see that Eisav is not necessarily a great influence or person, so maybe Yitzchak's favoritism was misplaced.

*Rude- magic!*

(Bereishit 27:34-35)

A story that takes place in this parsha that is not often one that sticks in many people's minds is Eisav's marriage to Yehudit, a woman his parents do not approve of. The line in this song that stood out to me was "I'm gonna marry her anyway"- Eisav did not care about his parent's rejection of her, he did what he wanted. It says that that was a source of bitterness for his family, much like the father in Magic!'s song.

*Carry on my Wayward Son- Kansas*

( Bereishit 27:43-45)

This song, I felt, is the perfect closer for this parsha. It ends with Rivka sensing Yaakov off, lest he is killed by the furious Eisav. This song has everything, from the tone of a chapter ending, to a mention of blindness (like Yitzchak's). To me, it was the perfect ending to this week's parsha.