

Upon discovering that Esau truly hated his brother Jacob for acquiring the birthright blessings, Rebecca commands Jacob to flee to Charan and the house of her brother Laban. She used the word ברה, to flee with urgency, to inform Jacob that Esau intends to kill him. She orders him to escape and save himself, omitting any mention of an ulterior motive of finding a wife. Rebecca employs a pretext of the unsuitability of the local Hittite women to convince Isaac to command Jacob to seek his wife among Laban's daughters. Isaac subsequently grants Jacob Abraham's Blessing, ברכת אברהם, and prays that it should remain in his family. When Isaac commanded Jacob to leave, he used the word לך, simply to go. He omits any mention of the danger of Esau confronting Jacob, and frames his request simply in terms of Jacob departing to find a proper spouse. Why did Rebecca command Jacob to flee from Esau without mentioning the need to find a wife, instead delegating that task to Isaac?

Both mother and father are equally obligated to save and protect their child. The child is required to listen to either parent who directs him to proactively save himself. However, the father is obligated to marry off his son. Isaac, not Rebecca, could command Jacob to pursue the second reason for going to the house of Laban, to find a wife.

Why was it necessary to immediately repeat Isaac's direction to Jacob to travel to Padan Aram to find a wife? Abraham and Sarah jointly converted thousands of men and women to believe in the One G-d. Matriarchs, like the patriarchs, were granted prophetic experiences as well. Our tradition, and the mission to perpetuate it, was given to both patriarchs and matriarchs as a unit. Torah says that Abraham gave everything he had to Isaac before he passed away. It is interesting to note that Abraham gave this gift to Isaac only after he married Rebecca. לו אשר כל refers to the *Mesorah*, ברכת אברהם, the mission to transmit Abraham's tradition. In order for Isaac to assume the role of patriarch, he required a wife as a partner to help him pass on the tradition. Abraham waited to transfer the tradition to Isaac until he was convinced that Rebecca was Isaac's soul mate. Though Isaac intended to confer the first born blessings of לך ויתן upon Esau, he never intended to give Esau ברכת אברהם. That was a separate blessing reserved for the next link in the patriarchal chain responsible for transmitting Abraham's tradition. He recognized that Esau could never be that link. Isaac waited for the appropriate time to present it to Jacob, when he was convinced that Jacob was prepared to assume the role of the third leg of the patriarchal triad. That indication came when Jacob committed to follow Isaac's model and seek his wife within Abraham's family.

Eliezer acted as the emissary of both Abraham and Isaac when he traveled to Charan to find a wife for Isaac. It is clearly evident from the Torah's narrative that Eliezer was Abraham's proxy. He also acted on behalf of Isaac, demonstrated by directly reporting on his successful mission to find a wife to Isaac rather than Abraham. Eliezer's reporting back to his client, Isaac, was similar to the messenger who dispatched the שְׁעִיר לְעִזָּאזֵל, the goat to Azazel, on the Day of Atonement reporting back to the High Priest that he completed his mission. Why does the narrative focus on Eliezer acting as Abraham's proxy and not Isaac's? Apparently Eliezer's mission on behalf of Abraham was more crucial. Abraham directed Eliezer to find not only a wife for Isaac, but also someone who could enable Isaac to inherit his tradition. Such a wife must fit the mold of kindness embodied by Abraham and Sarah. It is noteworthy that Eliezer's tested Rebecca with acts of kindness to verify that she was worthy.

Jacob departed for Laban's house with dual roles. His first was to seek a wife for himself. His second was to represent Isaac, whose paternal role obligated him to seek a wife on behalf of his son to facilitate Jacob being entrusted with the Mesorah. The Torah repeats that Isaac granted Abraham's blessing to Jacob and sent him to Padan Aram as Isaac's emissary, emphasizing that the proper wife was the pre-requisite to inheriting that blessing.

Torah says Abraham transferred (past tense) the tradition to Isaac, וַיִּתֵּן אֲבִרָהָם, אֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר לוֹ לִיצְחָק, after he verified that Rebecca was indeed a worthy wife for Isaac. However, Isaac realized that he might never meet Jacob's spouse. Perhaps she would not be suitable for her role and Jacob would not merit inheriting Abraham's blessing. Isaac says וַיִּתֵּן לְךָ, Gd should give you Abraham's blessing, conditionally in the future, only after you fulfill your mission of marrying a wife suitable to carry on Abraham's tradition.

At the age of 40, Esau married two Hittite women who made life miserable for Rebecca and Isaac. Presumably they were the impetus for Rebecca's diatribe against the local Hittite women and her insistence that Jacob seek his wife elsewhere. Perhaps Rebecca emphasized the decadence of the local Hittite women, in order to emphasize that such women could never be the proper partner to one designated to carry on the Abraham's tradition. It was a not so subtle hint that Esau, who married such women, could never be an appropriate heir to Abraham's legacy that was entrusted to Isaac to pass on to his children.

Esau attempted to prove to his parents that he too could select a non-Hittite wife from Abraham's family, Ishmael's daughter. The Torah contrasts Jacob's

departure to seek an appropriate wife with Esau's feckless attempt to deceive his parents by adding another wife to his collection of deviant women, clearly demonstrating that he was not worthy of Abraham's blessing.

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