



## **Personal Parsha: Toldot Esau**

How do you think you deal with life's disappointments? Go around the table and give an example of a disappointment you experienced this week.

In this week's Torah reading, we see Esau facing a huge disappointment: his father gave his brother, Jacob, HIS blessing! Isaac asked Esau to prepare a meal for him to eat, after which he will bless him. But then Rachel tells Jacob to go prepare the meal and get that blessing instead!

When Esau realizes that his brother was blessed with the blessing that was intended for him, the Torah tells us that he "shouted out a great bitter cry" (27:34). Now that's disappointment! What would you have done if you were Esau?

We see, actually, that Esau does three things:

1. He asks his father: "Well, can you bless me anyway?"
2. After Isaac says he gave everything to Jacob in the blessing, Esau says: "Well, can you bless me anyway", i.e. so think of something else!
3. He threatens revenge (planning to kill Jacob).

These three responses Esau has are really the three ways in which we all face disappointment and frustration. Can you see how?

1. We just keep at it and don't accept the problem, frustration or challenge (like, saying "so what?" or "Where was I?")
2. We accept the fact that this is not going to turn out the way we expected, so on to Plan B. We ask ourselves: "What can I do instead?"
3. We get angry and make someone pay! We take revenge and get back at the one who caused me this disappointment,

Can you relate to all of these reactions? Can you give an example of one, two or all three of them – from your last week or two? Which one is best? Does it depend on the situation? How so?

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