

## Perhaps my father will feel me, and shall seem to him as a deceiver. (27:12)

*Chazal* derive from the Torah's use of the word *k'masate'a*, as a deceiver, that one who disguises his speech, so that he would not be recognized, is considered as if he worships idols. The **Meiri** explains that *machlif b'diburo*, the term used by *Chazal* for one who disguises his speech, applies equally to one who does not keep his word. They cite the *pasuk* in *Yirmiyahu* 10:15, which employs the root of *titua*: *heimah maaseh tatuim*, "They (idol worship) are vanity, the work of deception," as support for this statement. The connection between Yaakov *Avinu's* act of "misrepresentation" and idol worship seems questionable. The idol is the creation of a deceiver; the idol deceives. The idol worshipper is nothing more than a gullible fool who believes in a stone god. How is one who deceives others to be compared with an idol worshipper?

I think the answer lies in the act of deception. One succeeds in deceiving someone who wants to believe in him. The deceived individual, thus, plays a role in the deception. Yitzchak *Avinu* wanted very much to believe that it was Eisav who stood before him. What about the "voice of Yaakov"? Perhaps Eisav repented. Is that not what every father wants? Likewise, the idol worshipper gives license to the idol and its creators to fool him. He wants to believe that the stone standing before him has miraculous powers.

In any event, *machlif b'diburo*, one who outright deceives or does not keep his word, is acting immorally. His deception is no less iniquitous than one who worships idols. What about Yaakov, the paradigm of *emes*, truth? In his commentary to the *Talmud Makkos* 24A, *Rashi* writes that Yaakov acted under the direction of his mother, who supported her request with a prophetic vision. In other words, she intimated to him that Hashem had given His blessing to this subterfuge. **Horav Avraham Grodzenski, zl**, supports this, citing the *pasuk* in *Malachi* 2:6 *Toras emes haysah b'fihu v'avlah lo nimtzah b'sfasav*, "The Torah of truth was on his (Aharon's) mouth and iniquity was not found on his lips" as a reference to Aharon *HaKohen*, who was the *ohaiv sholom*, the one who loved peace and pursued peace. When we take into account the tactic that Aharon employed in order to achieve peace between disputants, it seems far from the "truth." He would tell each one that the other one was remorseful and regretted the breakup. In the end, they would agree to make up. Yet, Aharon is called a man of truth.

Apparently, there is more to the "truth" than meets the eye. We may suggest that it depends on what the misrepresentation of the truth is attempting to achieve. In the case of Yaakov, the Patriarch was trying to retrieve the blessing which was his by right. He had purchased the birthright from Eisav. Thus, by apparently bending the truth, he was actually sustaining the truth. For Eisav to receive the blessings would have been a lie!

Likewise, every Jew wants to get along with his fellow. Circumstances and situations are created in which something gets in the way, preventing the truth from being actualized. Enter Aharon with

his little ruse which will achieve the truth. A lie is a lie if it supports and sustains a lie. If it is the only means for validating the truth – it is not a lie.

The *Chafetz Chaim* once asked a prominent lay person to participate in a specific endeavor which would involve time on the man's part. The *Vaad Ha'Yeshivos*, conference of *yeshivos*, was in dire need of someone to represent them before the government. The man demurred, claiming ill-health. A number of years later, **Horav Elchonon Wasserman, zl**, met the man and was shocked to see that he was gravely ill. He could hardly get out of bed, and he was dependent on aides to care for him round the clock. Later, *Rav* Elchonon ruminated that earlier, this man had refused the *Chafetz Chaim* because of ill health. Hashem arranged that he would not be considered a deceiver, by sending him this illness. When we lie, Hashem sees to it that we are transmitting the truth.