

"And Yaakov said sell this day your birthright to me." (25:31)

The *Midrash* cites that Yaakov resorted to self-sacrifice in order to attain the birthright from Eisav. It continues to justify Yaakov's desire for the birthright. This seems puzzling, for we have no indication of self-sacrifice on Yaakov's part in order to gain the birthright. The *Torah* only mentions that Yaakov was able to exact the birthright from Eisav through cunning and guile. We may suggest that Yaakov indeed displayed a magnificent sublime form of self-sacrifice. The attribute which characterized Yaakov, is *emes* (truth) and he excelled in it. For Yaakov to resort to what seems to be subterfuge, even justifiably, goes against the very essence of his personality. His inability to act with complete veracity at that point is tantamount to the most supreme form of self-sacrifice.