

She sent and summoned Yaakov, her younger son and said to him, “Behold, your brother Eisav is consoling himself regarding you to kill you”... Rivkah said to Yitzchak, “I am disgusted with my life on account of the daughters of Cheis.” (27:42,46)

Apparently, Rivkah was conveying two distinctly different messages. When she spoke to Yaakov, she instructed him to leave home, because Eisav was planning to kill him at the first opportune moment. However, she asserted to Yitzchak that Yaakov should leave, because the time had come for him to marry, and the daughters of Cheis were inappropriate, pagans of base character. Why did Rivkah not tell Yitzchak the truth, that Eisav was intent upon killing Yaakov? Given the situation, it would make sense for Yaakov to take an extended leave. *Horav Yitzchak Zilberstein, Shlita*, writes that he once heard an incredible exposition for Rivkah’s failure to tell Yitzchak the whole truth.

Let us ask: How did Rivkah know that Eisav was planning to kill Yaakov? The answer is simple: *Nevius*, prophecy. Hashem had blessed Rivkah with a special gift: *Ruach Ha’kodesh*, Divine Inspiration. She was granted the ability to see what others could not, to look beyond into the future. If Rivkah were to tell Yitzchak that Eisav was out to harm Yaakov, she would be implying that she was privy to prophetic vision, whereas he was not. Rivkah felt it was improper for a woman to tell her husband that she is more proficient than he, that she has access to the future, while he is limited to knowledge of the present. Rivkah considered it inappropriate to imply to Yitzchak that she was in some way greater than he. This is the epitome of respect for a mate! One-upmanship does not belong in a marriage. Mutual respect is something that is earned and developed. Attempting to outdo one’s mate – and to make a point to call this to his attention – undermines mutual respect. This is especially crucial in today’s society when people, plagued by a self-inflicted, lowered self-esteem will view this lesson as a threat to their self-image.