

**Parsha and Manuscript: *Toldot* – ‘These are the generations of Isaac’**

**Genesis 25:19-34**

And these are the generations of Isaac the son of Abraham; Abraham begot Isaac. And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebecca the daughter of Bethuel the Aramean of Padan Aram, the sister of Laban the Aramean, to himself for a wife. And Isaac prayed to the Lord opposite his wife because she was barren, and the Lord accepted his prayer, and Rebecca his wife conceived. And the children struggled within her, and she said, "If [it be] so, why am I [like] this?" And she went to inquire of the Lord. And the Lord said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two kingdoms will separate from your innards, and one kingdom will become mightier than the other kingdom, and the elder will serve the younger. And her days to give birth were completed, and behold, there were twins in her womb. And the first one emerged ruddy; he was completely like a coat of hair, and they named him Esau. And afterwards, his brother emerged, and his hand was grasping Esau's heel, and he named him Jacob. Now Isaac was sixty years old when she gave birth to them. And the youths grew up, and Esau was a man who understood hunting, a man of the field, whereas Jacob was an innocent man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau because [his] game was in his mouth, but Rebecca loved Jacob. Now Jacob cooked a pottage, and Esau came from the field, and he was faint. And Esau said to Jacob, "Pour into [me] some of this red, red [pottage], for I am faint"; he was therefore named Edom. And Jacob said, "Sell me as of this day your birthright." Esau replied, "Behold, I am going to die; so why do I need this birthright?" And Jacob said, "Swear to me as of this day"; so he swore to him, and he sold his birthright to Jacob. And Jacob gave Esau bread and a pottage of lentils, and he ate and drank and arose and left, and Esau despised the birthright.

**Genesis 25:19**

And these are the generations of Isaac the son of Abraham; Abraham begot Isaac.

***Talmud Bava Metzia 87a***

And still those people were gossiping and saying to each other: Even if Sarah, at ninety years of age, can give birth, can Abraham, at one hundred years of age, father a child? Immediately, the countenance of Isaac's face transformed and appeared exactly like that of Abraham. Everyone exclaimed and said: "Abraham fathered Isaac" (Genesis 25:19). The *Talmud* continues discussing Abraham: Until Abraham, there was no aging, i.e., old age was not physically recognizable. Consequently, one who wanted to speak to Abraham would mistakenly speak to Isaac, and vice versa: An individual who wanted to speak to Isaac would speak to Abraham, as they were indistinguishable. Abraham came and prayed for mercy, and aging was at last noticeable, as it is stated: "And Abraham was old, well stricken in age" (Genesis 24:1), which is the first time that aging is mentioned in the Bible.

## Midrash Tanchuma Toldot 2

Come and observe the importance of peace: Between the time that Sarah left the control of Pharaoh and when she came under the authority of Abimelech, Isaac was conceived. Whereupon people asserted: “It is hardly likely that this centenarian could father a son, she must have conceived either from Pharaoh or Abimelech.” In fact, Abraham also had some misgivings. What did the Holy One, blessed be He, do? He ordered the angel responsible for the formation of embryos to fashion this embryo in the exact likeness of his father, so that everyone would be forced to acknowledge that he was Abraham’s son. We know that this was so from the verse These are the generations of Isaac, Abraham’s son: Abraham begot Isaac (Gen. 25:19). Since the verse states Isaac, Abraham’s son, could we not know from those words that Abraham begot Isaac? Why then does Scripture add the words Abraham begot Isaac? Because everyone who looked at Abraham would exclaim: “Without doubt Abraham begot Isaac, since their countenances are so much alike.” Hence Scripture says: Abraham begot Isaac.

### Rashi 1

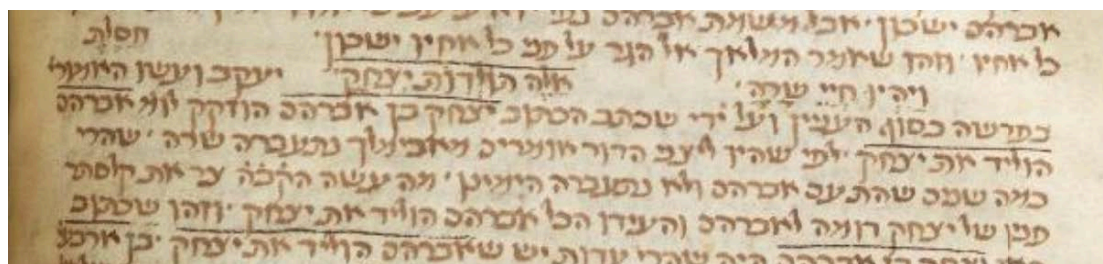
And these are the generations of Isaac the son of Abraham: [Toldot refers to] Jacob and Esau mentioned in this section.

### Rashi 2

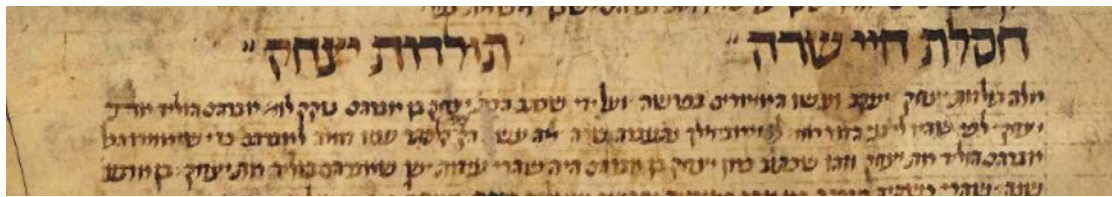
Abraham begot Isaac: Since Scripture wrote: “Isaac the son of Abraham,” it had to say: “Abraham begot Isaac,” because the scorners of the generation were saying that Sarah had conceived from Abimelech, for she had lived with Abraham for many years and had not conceived from him. What did the Holy One, blessed be He, do? He shaped the features of Isaac’s face to resemble Abraham’s, and everyone attested that Abraham had begotten Isaac. This is the meaning of what is written here: “Isaac, the son of Abraham,” because here is proof that “Abraham begot Isaac.”

## Manuscripts

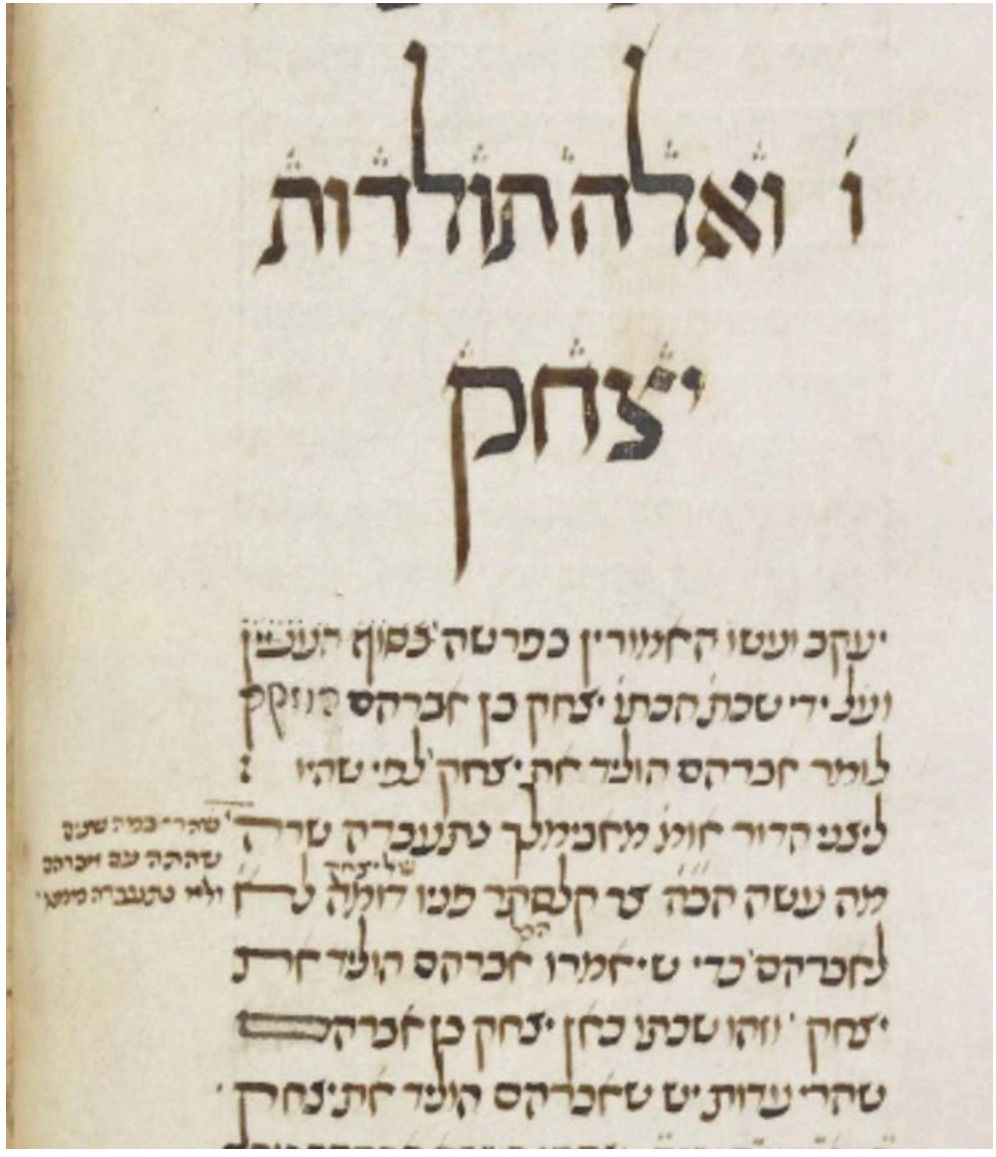
CCCMS165 fol. 18



MS. Oppenheim 34 (1201-1225) fol. 15



MS. Canon. Or. 81 (1396) fol. 23





חטות ויחיישנה  
אלה תגדלות יצחק

יעקב ועשו החמודים בסוף  
הענין ועל ידי סבת יצחק בן אברהם הוזהק לומר אברהם הוליד את יצחק לבן  
שהיו לעצמו הדור אומריין מאברהם נשענה שיהיה מקשה הקבה עקלסטר  
פשוט של יצחק דומה לאברהם שיעשו הכל שאברהם הוליד את יצחק וזהו שכתב  
כאן יצחק בן אברהם שקרי עבית יש שאברהם הוליד את יצחק: בן ארבעים שנה  
שדי נשקה באברהם מהר המורה עגאר שנוטה רבקה ויצחק היה בן

אברהם ושל חסות ויהיו  
חלואת יצחק יעקב ועשו  
האזורים כפולה ועל ידי ש  
שכתוב הכת' יצחק בן אברהם נזקה לומר אב  
אברהם הוליד את יצחק לפי שהיו לי עני הד  
הדור אומריין מאברהם נשענה שיהיה מקשה  
קבה עקלסטר פשוט של יצחק דומה לאברהם  
שיעשו הכל שאברהם הוליד את יצחק וזהו שכתב  
כאן יצחק בן אברהם שקרי עבית יש שאברהם  
הוליד את יצחק: בן ארבעים שנה שדי נשקה  
באברהם מהר המורה עגאר שנוטה רבקה ויצחק  
היה בן

ואלה תלדות יעקב בן אברהם יעקב  
ועשו האומרים כסוף הענין ועל  
ידי שכתב הכתוב יעקב בן אברהם  
נזקק לנו אברהם הוליד את יעקב  
לפי שהיו ליעקב הדור אומ' מאפי...  
...מלך טעברה שרה שהרי כמה  
ימים שהתה עם אברהם ולפי אט

נתעברה הימנו מה עשה הקב"ה  
ער את קלמ'ת פנו של יעקב ז"ל  
דומה לאברהם כרי שיאמרו הכל  
אברהם הוליד את יעקב וזה טעם  
כאן יעקב בן אברהם היה שהרי  
שרות יש אברהם הוליד את יעקב