

# EAT YOUR HEART OUT

*by Torah.org*

I have never been to an engagement party, a wedding, or even a birthday party that didn't have refreshments, if not a full course meal. What's a party without food and drinks? Of course, the reason for this staple of merriment is that the hosts of the party want the celebrants to be in a positive mood so they can celebrate the occasion together. Rabbi Shimshon Pincus zt"l highlighted another purpose for offering food, from this week's Torah portion.

When Yitzchok (Isaac) saw his final days approaching, he summoned Esav (Esau) to bestow upon him the special blessings of the first-born. But before blessing his son, he instructed him, "Go out to the field to hunt ... prepare delicious food for me, the kind I like, bring it to me, and I will eat it. This so I can bless you before I die (Genesis 27:3-4)." Why did Yitzchok need to eat dinner before giving his blessing?

When someone invites you to join him for a meal, it's an invitation to connect, soul to soul. By eating together, the host and guest experience a shared moment of satisfaction that enhances the bonds of their relationship. That moment of positive connection is also a prime opportunity to express gratitude to the host, and to offer them your good wishes, your blessings.

Yitzchok wanted to bless his son, but he wanted to do so by first connecting with him, soul to soul, so that his blessing, which was a prayer, would be as positive and genuine as possible.

The host of a party prepares food to share his joy with the guests, but in so doing makes that soul connection which enables the diners to offer their most heartfelt blessings of "Mazel Tov," congratulations. The well wishes are transformed from a mere exercise in proper etiquette to blessings infused with the power of love, sincerity, and connection, and are that much more effective. The feelings of closeness and joy stem in part from sharing the meal and refreshments together.

May we all share in many joyous occasions together with our loved ones and friends, and may all their wholehearted blessings come true. Now, let's eat!