



לזכות
החייל בצבאות ה'
מאיר שלמה שיחי'
לרגל האפשרעניש' שלו
כ"ו כסלו גר'ב' דחנוכה ה'תשפ"ה

נדפס ע"י הוריו
הרה"ת ר' לוי זוזגנו מרת
מנוחה מינדל שיחי'
לברטוב

The Grand Departure

IN HONOR OF 60 YEARS SINCE THE REBBE INTRODUCING HIS REVOLUTIONARY APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING RASHI, 5725—5785, THIS MONTHLY COLUMN WILL FEATURE AN ADAPTATION OF ONE OF THE REBBE'S "RASHI SICHOS."

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וַיֵּצֵא יַעֲקֹב מִבְּאֵר שֶׁבַע וְגו' (כה, י)

וַיֵּצֵא: לֹא הָיָה צְרִיךְ לִכְתֹּב אֱלֹא וַיֵּלֶךְ יַעֲקֹב חֲרָנָה, וְלָמָּה הַזְכִּיר יֵצִיאָתוֹ? אֱלֹא מוֹגִיד שֶׁיֵּצִיאָת צְדִיק מִן הַמְּקוֹם עוֹשֶׂה רָשָׁם, שֶׁבְּזִמְנֵן שֶׁהַצְּדִיק בְּעִיר, הוּא הוֹדָה הוּא זִיוָה הוּא הַדְּרָה; יֵצֵא מִשָּׁם, פְּנֵה הוֹדָה פְּנֵה זִיוָה פְּנֵה הַדְּרָה... (רש"י)

“And Yaakov left: The possuk should only have written: ‘And Yaakov went to Charan.’ Why did it mention his departure? But this tells [us] that the departure of a tzaddik from a place makes an impression, for while the tzaddik is in the city, he is its beauty, he is its splendor, he is its majesty. When he departs from there, its beauty has departed, its splendor has departed, its majesty has departed...” (Rashi)

Rashi’s words require explanation: How can we say that with Yaakov’s departure from Charan, its “beauty,” “splendor” and “majesty” departed with him? Yaakov may have left Be’er Sheva, but Yitzchok and Rivka remained behind!

Actually, the Midrash in Bereishis Rabbah—which is the source for Rashi—raises this very question, and answers that “the merit of one *tzaddik* is not the same as that of two *tzaddikim*”; more *tzaddikim* equals more merit, and when one *tzaddik* leaves some of the merit departs with him. Rashi, however, does not make any mention of this answer. Why not?

To clarify this, we must also point out that Rashi differs from the Midrash in another aspect: The Midrash says only “הוא הודה, הוא זיווה,” while Rashi adds “הוא הודה.”

We find something similar in Rashi’s own commentary: On our *possuk* Rashi writes “פנה הודה, פנה זיווה, פנה הדרה”, whereas in Megillas Rus—regarding the departure of No’ami and Rus from the “fields of Moav”—Rashi writes “פנה זיווה, פנה הדרה, פנה שבחה”

The difference between “שבחה” and “הודה” is that “שבחה” means the city is glorified by the very presence of the *tzaddik*; the merit of the *tzaddik* protects the city and its inhabitants



and brings them an abundance of *brachos*. On the other hand, "הודה" means that the saintliness of the *tzaddik* causes a spirit of awe to descend upon the people (as we find with Moshe Rabbeinu, that when the Yidden saw the splendid rays of beauty ("קרני הוד") radiating from his countenance, "they were afraid to come near him"). This, in turn, has a positive impact on people's conduct, for as long as the *tzaddik* is in the city the people feel bashful in his presence and strive to follow his ways.

According to this, we can answer our first question: It is true that Yitzchok and Rivka remained in Be'er Sheva, and their *zechus* definitely gave the city an extra layer of protection. However, with regard to influencing people's *behavior*, they faced limitations: About Yitzchok, Rashi writes (on *posuk* 13) that "his eyes had become dim, and he was confined in the house," and Rivka (in addition to the fact that she was generally in her house, due to "*kol kevuda bas melech penima*—the glory of the daughter of the king is from within"), was probably preoccupied with attending to Yitzchok's needs. Clearly, then, they were limited in their ability to have any influence on the city's affairs.

It was specifically Yaakov who bestowed "הוד" upon the city, effecting a positive change in the conduct of the locals.

The Midrash, on the other hand, does not take into consideration the *tzaddik's* influence on the city's conduct (which is why the Midrash doesn't mention anything about "הודה"), but rather only the blessings which come to the city due to the *tzaddik's* very presence.

We can answer our second question: According to Rashi, the question of the Midrash ("How can we say that Yaakov's departure from Charan caused a void if Yitzchok and Rivka remained behind?") doesn't exist, since Yaakov *did*, in fact, possess a quality which Yitzchok and Rivka did not: "הוד." But according to the Midrash, which does not discuss this concept (as explained above), it is, indeed, a valid question.



The Ohr HaChaim explains that the *possuk* יֵצֵא יַעֲקֹב מִבְּאֵר שֶׁבַע is also a description of the *neshama's* descent from its Heavenly abode to the Earth below—from "Be'er Sheva" all the way to "Charan." It is precisely because of this great descent that the *neshama* (through its *avoda* on earth) attains the ability to reach the greatest of heights—greater even than where it had been.

According to this, Rashi's question and answer take on a whole new meaning: We know that the primary novel accomplishment of the *neshama* is to be in "Charan"—a materialistic world filled with distractions and disturbances which hide the truth of Torah and *mitzvos*—and, nevertheless, to overcome the challenges, and carry out its mission of making a *dira b'tachtonim*.

Why, then, does the *possuk* mention the *neshama's* departure from "Be'er Sheva"—i.e. its sublime and heavenly source—a feat that seems insignificant compared to its primary accomplishment?

We see from here, Rashi answers, that the departure of the *neshama* from its heavenly source *does* have an impact. The "going out" of the *neshama* from its pristine state of oneness with Hashem is in and of itself a great accomplishment. For the *neshama* to leave a state where it is constantly basking in Hashem's "beauty," "splendor" and "majesty" is *mesirus nefesh*.

Takeaway:

In the *zechus* of this *mesirus nefesh* alone every *Yid* deserves that Hashem should bring him back to his true home, with the *Geula ho'amitis v'hashleima* through Moshiach Tzidkeinu, *teikef umiyad mamash!*

(Likkutei Sichos vol. 35, p. 119)