



דרכים בפרשה

חיי שרה



ויאמר בוא ברוך ה' למה תעמד בחוץ ואנכי פניתי הבית ומקום לגמלים

He [Lavan] said, Come, you who are blessed of Hashem, why are you standing outside? I have emptied the house and [prepared] a place for the camels.

The Ramban interprets Lavan's character in the context of the pesukim as basically straightforward and honourable. Rashi however interprets his behaviour based on greed.

The meforshim discuss why Lavan emptied the house. The simple understanding is that he wanted to make more space for his guest. Rashi quotes the Midrash (Rabbah 60:7) that he cleared out all of the Avoda Zara for the guests to enter.

The Meforshim explain a major *yesoid*/principle: Even someone as lowly as Lavan understands that if one wants to bring in *kedusha*, it will not work if the *tumah* is still there. So often we find ourselves trying to reach the next level in *kedusha* only to fall short of our goals. Why? Because we are still holding on to the very things that are keeping us down.

Along the lines of Rashi's understanding that this was greed-based, the Alter of Nevardok sees in Lavan a behaviour which we must use as our very own reality check. "Look how great Lavan's love of money was; for the

prospect of earning only a few dollars, he was willing to get rid of his gods from his home."

We must constantly ask ourselves if we are guilty of the same thing. Are putting our bank accounts first, willing to compromise on whatever we believe in or is our bottom line based on the Torah?

The possuk in Rus states: **והנה בעז בא מבית לחם ויאמר לקוצרים ה' עמכם ויאמרו לו יברכה ה'** *Behold Boaz arrived from Beis Lechem and he said to the harvesters, "HaShem be with you." and they responded, "Hashem bless you."* The Malbim comments that throughout Tanach, the word **והנה** automatically leads way to a chiddush/novelty. The gemara in Mesechta Brochos (63) tells us that on that very day, Boaz and his Beis Din enacted that when greeting a fellow Jew, one should use the name of HaShem. Their reasoning was because in those days, the society was completely corrupt. Surely the people davened three times a day, and they most probably even used the mikvah beforehand as well. However, it seemed that there was no carry-over from the Beis Haknesses to the

workplace. Daily life was devoid of the Ribono Shel Olam. The Sanhedrin concluded that if they can somehow bring HaShem into the workplace as well, the people's conduct would surely change for the better. The joke of "business is business and Moses is Moses" would no longer find any meaning. At that moment, upon greeting the harvesters, Boaz called out "HaShem imachem", to which they responded, *Yivarechicha HaShem*. This was indeed a chiddush because until this point, it was considered as taking HaShem's name in vain. But from now on, this would change. Today as well, we have the custom of greeting others with the words "Shalom Aleichem". (It is well known that one of the names of HaShem is Shalo-m.) The response is Aleichem Shalom. This is in keeping with the custom of greeting with HaShem's name on our lips, to bring HaShem into our daily lives. By greeting them in this manner in a workplace setting, Boaz was reminding them that HaShem is there as well. (*HaShem imachem* actually means that HaShem should be with you, i.e. even here in workplace.)

This past week, the *lomdei hadaf yomi*, together with Klal Yisroel, celebrated a *siyum* on seder Nashim and the first half of shas. There were beautiful *siyums* held in many cities; a true Kiddush HaShem. At our *siyum* here in Toronto, our esteemed Rav, Harav Boruch Lichtenstein shlita, was honoured with the "opening" of the new Mesechta and seder of Shas, *Nezikin-Bava Kama*. I would

like to share some of his words:

The Rav quoted Rashi at the beginning of Parshas Mishpatim, "ואלה" מוסיף על "מה הראשונים מסיני, אף אלו מסיני" just as the *aseres hadibros* were given at Sinai, so too, these *halachos* as well. The Meforshim wonder why someone would think otherwise. They explain that the other laws that we have, *Zeroim, Moed, Nashim, Kodshim, Taharos*- no one would think that they are not from HaShem. But when it comes to monetary laws, one may think that, "the *goyim* also have laws, and we can rely on theirs." *Zugt Rashi*- the *halachos* of money are also from Sinai and we must go *al pi derecho haTorah*. The Torah's perspective on money is that it is not a physical item, but rather a spiritual one.

The Rav then shared a personal story of someone that wanted to do something *nisht-ehrlach*. When the Rav suggested that he ask his own Rabbi, the person responded, "*Luz mich up fun di Bava Kamaund Bava Metzia, ich redt du bizness. (Leave me alone from the Bava Kama and Bava Metzia, I am talking business here).*" The Rav concluded, "And I say, Bava Kama and Bava Metzia is our business, and if we conduct ourselves based on the Torah, the Aibishter will send us more and more!"

מרדכי אפפּעל, Good Shabbos



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