

Avraham came to eulogize Sarah and to bewail her. Avraham rose up from the presence of the dead. (23:2,3)

Surely, at the first formal funeral mentioned in the Torah, the Father of our nation must have delivered a profound eulogy for our nation's first Matriarch. The first Jewish couple had been through so much. Having been married for decades without a child must have had a powerful effect on their relationship. Yet, the *pasuk* simply states that he came to eulogize, followed by the phrase, "rose up from the presence of the dead." Should he not have said something more personal? The **Tiferes Shlomo** quotes the *Midrash* which explains that, as Avraham Avinu was about to eulogize Sarah, the *Malach HaMaves*, Angel of Death, appeared and attempted to put questions in Avraham's mind: "How is it possible that such a righteous woman died suddenly, following such an epic sacrifice as the *Akeidah*?" "Had Avraham not agreed to the *Akeidah*, perhaps Sarah would still be alive." Avraham felt the *yetzer hora*, evil inclination, creeping up on him, attempting to convince him that the *Akeidah* had been wrong. Surely, it must have left doubts in his mind. When Avraham sensed what might be the result of a long drawn-out eulogy, he opted to switch the subject and concern himself with purchasing a tract of land for Sarah's burial.

The *Tiferes Shlomo* suggests that this idea is alluded to in the *pasuk* (*Shemos* 3:1), *Vayistor Moshe panav ki yarei meihabit el haElokim*, "Moshe hid his face, for he was afraid to gaze towards G-d." When Moshe *Rabbeinu* gazed at the burning thorn bush, he reminded himself that this represented *Klal Yisrael's* travail. He saw the effects of Hashem's *Middas HaDin*, Attribute of Strict Justice, which began to spur questions in his mind. He immediately looked away, fearing that he might give into *taanos*, be overwhelmed by complaints.

During, and following World War II, there were many Jews to whom adversity was no stranger. They had all suffered immeasurably. They knew quite well that, when the *Middas HaDin* prevails, it brings with it *hester Panim*, concealment of the Divine Presence. They understood that this is a perfect scenario for the *yetzer hora* to use his machinations to turn people away from Hashem. They took comfort in the words of the *Tiferes Shlomo* that "now" was not a time to delve into what was occurring; now was not a time to raise questions. Now was a time to look away and accept. This is the only way that we can survive the spiritual impediments that might result from confronting such adversity.