

And he [Yaakov] said, “Gather yourselves together and I will tell you that which will befall you in the end of the days.” (49:1)

Rashi tells us that Yaakov *Avinu* wanted to reveal to his children the time of the Final Redemption, but the Divine Spirit suddenly left him. Why did Hashem remove His spirit from Yaakov? While it may be true that Hashem had no desire that the time of the *Geulah Ha'asidah*, Final Redemption, be revealed, this is no reason to remove His spirit from him. He could have simply not disclosed this date to Yaakov. Why did He remove his prophetic powers?

The *Radomsker Rebbe, z.l.*, gives a profound explanation for *Rashi's* statement. He says that actually Hashem did not revoke Yaakov's powers at all. On the contrary, Yaakov saw only too clearly what the future would bring. He saw both from a physical and spiritual vantage the events that would precede Redemption; the terrible ordeals that his descendants would endure; the cataclysmic destruction that they would sustain, the near decimation of European Jewry, and its ensuing tragedies. This prophetic vision saddened him to such an extent that Yaakov lost an essential prerequisite for receiving *Nevuah*, Divine Prophecy. He lost the attribute of *simchah*, joy. *Chazal* tell us in the *Talmud Shabbos 32b* that the *Shechinah*, Divine Presence, rests on a person only amidst joy. The absence of *simchah* negates *Ruach HaKodesh*, Divine Inspiration.

The message is clear: We must learn to triumph over adversity, or we may lose what Divine Inspiration is still within us. In a way, we have an advantage over Yaakov *Avinu*. We experienced what he viewed prophetically. We survived, endured and continued on. We searched for strength, groped for inspiration, found it, and kept going. We lost six million brethren, an entire Jewish culture and lifestyle, *yeshivos*, *gedolei Yisrael* and their *Talmidim*. Yet, we persevered and rebuilt. We had the advantage of learning from Yaakov our ancestor that, if we will permit adversity to crush us, we may lose whatever Divine Inspiration we possess, and without the Divine – the inspiration is worth very little.

Our strength lies in our obstinacy, in our refusal to capitulate and yield to those who would destroy us. It is this obstinacy that gives us the fortitude to maintain joy in our hearts and express it, even though it follows devastating losses. Yaakov *Avinu* taught us well.