

Hashem remembered Rachel. (30:22)

Rachel *Imeinu* was *mevater*, relinquished, that which she deserved in order to preserve her sister's esteem. If Yaakov *Avinu* would have discovered that Leah had been exchanged for Rachel, it would have posed an embarrassing situation for Leah. To spare her the shame, Rachel gave up what was hers. *Horav Yeruchem Levovitz, zl*, adds that Rachel's actions to spare her sister from humiliation also breached the trust Yaakov had in her. The Patriarch knew that Lavan was a swindler who would find some way to break his word at the very last moment. Thus, he made a pact with Rachel, giving her special signs which only she would know. Rachel shared those *simanim* with Leah. Rachel gave up everything – her husband, her self-respect, her position in Matriarchal status – all so that her sister would not feel the pain of humiliation.

When *Horav Itzele Ponovezher, zl*, left *Yeshivas Slabodka*, the *Rosh Yeshivah*, *Horav Nosson Tzvi Finkel, zl*, reverently called the *Alter m'Slabodka*, was challenged with finding a *Rosh Yeshivah* to fill his shoes. He turned to *Horav Isser Zalman Meltzer, zl*, who, although young in years, had developed a reputation as a brilliant mind whose analytic rendering of the subject matter was without peer. *Rav* Isser Zalman considered the position, then demurred because he felt it would cause his mother-in-law, the widow of *Rav Feivel Frank*, undue pain. Apparently, his brother-in-law, *Horav Moshe Mordechai Epstein, zl*, who was the oldest son-in-law, had yet to assume a rabbinical leadership position. *Rav* Moshe Mordechai was a brilliant Torah scholar who simply had not connected with the right position. He did not want to cause his mother-in-law any undue ill will. Thus, *Rav* Isser Zalman suggested to the *Alter* that he hire both himself and *Rav* Moshe Mordechai as *Roshei Yeshivah*. The *Alter* agreed, and the two brothers-in-law reigned as *Slabodka's Roshei Yeshivah*. After a few years, it became obvious to *Rav* Isser Zalman that he and *Rav* Moshe Mordechai had disparate approaches toward elucidating the *sugya*, Talmudic topic, and, since two kings do not reign as one, he offered to leave. It was exactly at that point that the opportunity to open a branch of *Slabodka* availed itself in the city of *Slutzk*. *Rav* Isser Zalman left to establish the *Slutzker Yeshivah*. His *vatranus* led to his imbuing with his Torah such *talmidim* as his future son-in-law, *Horav Aharon Kotler, zl*, and *Horav Elazar M. Shach, zl*, two individuals responsible for the burgeoning of Torah both in America and *Eretz Yisrael*; two *gaonim*, who each became the *gadol hador*, preeminent Torah giant of his respective generation.

Horav Aryeh Levin, zl, was the *chazzan*, led the services, during the *Yamim Noraim* in the *Zaharei Chamah, vasikin minyan*, in *Yerushalayim*. One year, the board informed him that a relative of the *shul's* largest donor was coming to the Holy Land. The donor wanted this relative to lead the services. Without the funds contributed by this donor, the *shul* would suffer. *Rav* Aryeh was upset, but he could do nothing about it. He went to speak with his *Rebbe*, the *Leshem*, *Horav Shlomo Elyashiv, zl*, who told him, "The pain you suffer in this world is greatly beneficial for the soul." When *Rav* Aryeh returned home, he found two students who had recently emigrated to *Eretz Yisrael* from *Slabodka*. They had established a small group of *yeshivah* students who were paving the way for the *yeshivah's* branch in *Chevron*. Would he do them the honor of leading the services on *Yamim Noraim*? This was the beginning of the famed *nusach*, melody, sung in *Chevron* for

years to come, which was amalgamated with the *nusach* made famous by *Horav Sholom Schwadron, zl*. One never loses out due to being *mevater*.

Horav Simchah Shlomo Levin, zl (youngest son of *Rav Aryeh*) asked why it had taken so long before Rachel *Imeinu* was rewarded by Hashem for her act of yielding to her sister. By the time Rachel had her first child, Leah had already given birth to six of her own, which were supplemented by the two sons of Zilpah, her maidservant. Her unprecedented action of forgoing her right to marriage to save her sister from humiliation should have generated an earlier reward. Rachel had suffered enough.

Rav Levin explains that, upon occasion, one may elevate himself to the point that he places his fellow's need before his own. This, however, is not an indication of his innate personality. Only after a considerable period of time elapses – and he continues supporting his act of *vatranus* – does his/her true nature emerge and come to the fore. Rachel *Imeinu* acted in a manner that earned her accolades and served as a merit to protect the Jewish nation in later times. Her patience and forbearance added to her *vatranus* to make it shine, such that it became her hallmark.