

"And they made their father (Lot) drink wine on that night and the first-born went in and lay with her father." (19:33)

Rashi notes that regarding the younger sister, the *Torah* simply states, "And she lay with him, the younger (sister)." He explains that the younger sister did not initiate the immoral and forbidden act, but was rather "taught" by her older sister. The *Torah*, therefore, is lenient in not specifying her act. The repulsive act of the first-born sister, however, who also initiated it, is explicitly noted.

The *Talmud* in *Bava Kama 38b* seems to imply the opposite of what *Rashi* is suggesting. The *Talmud* states that one should make *mitzvah* performance his greatest priority. Since the older daughter preceded her sister by one night, she merited that her descendant, Rus, join *Klal Yisrael* four generations before Naamah, who descended from the younger daughter. How are we to understand *Rashi's* statement in light of *Chazal*?

Horav Eliyahu Meir Bloch, z.l., observes that reward and punishment in the Heavenly court functions somewhat "differently" than it does in our judicial system. Hashem views every action we perform from both its positive and negative vantages. An individual will be rewarded for positive and constructive actions. On the other hand, Hashem will respond negatively to the unfavorable aspects of any action.

Both of Lot's daughters were clearly righteous. They had learned in Avraham's house to love Hashem. After witnessing the destruction of four large cities and the earth's swallowing up all the inhabitants of Tzo'ar, they were under the impression that a second deluge had swept the world, leaving them the sole survivors. They acted as they did in the hope that Hashem would rebuild the world. Their acts, however, indicated a level of moral indecency on their part. With unabashed immodesty, the older daughter named her child Moav, which means "born of the father." She obviously surpassed her sister in brazen shamelessness, as she surpassed her in her desire to propagate the world for the sake of Hashem's Name. She was rewarded for her positive act, while her indecent subconscious intentions did not go "unnoticed."