

And he said, “Blessed is Hashem, the G-d of Shem. (9:26)

Noach did not directly bless Shem; rather, he said that the G-d/Hashem of Shem be blessed and glorified. By saying this, Noach intimated the mission of Shem/ his descendants, of whom the standard bearer is *Klal Yisrael*. Their primary goal is to serve Hashem and glorify His Name in the world. Thus, when people bless Hashem, we, His children, are – by extension – blessed. *Horav S.R. Hirsch, zl*, points out that Hashem is the universal G-d. He is everyone’s G-d. (Indeed, when the accursed Nazi held his gun to the head of the *Telzer Rav* and asked, “Jew, where is your G-d now?” the *Rav* replied, “He is your G-d too.”) It is just that we are His most trusted servant and that He is especially manifest in our history. The mere fact that we continue to exist, despite the many calamities that we have endured, is testament to this verity. Furthermore, who else but *Klal Yisrael* has recognized, acknowledged and proclaimed Hashem’s greatness?

Our mission in the world is to glorify Hashem’s Name, so that the nations of the world will, upon seeing our behavior, bless the “G-d of Shem,” the *Ribono Shel Olam*. When the *Chafetz Chaim, zl*, was *niftar*, passed away, one of the gentiles who lived in the vicinity of Radin (the *Chafetz Chaim’s* home) came to be *menachem avel*, comfort the family. When he was asked concerning his relationship with the saintly deceased, who was one of the *gedolei ha’dor*, leaders of the generation, the man related that he was a shepherd by profession. He had occasion to pasture his herd in one of the grassy forests near Radin. Suddenly, he heard bitter weeping. He strained his ears and focused his eyes to identify from where the sounds were emanating. He searched until he came to a clearing and saw an elderly Jew standing beside a tree, weeping bitterly.

As he moved closer to hear what the man was saying, he was shocked to hear the man pleading with (he assumed) G-d that no mishap/stumbling block arise as a result of the books that he had authored. He later reported, “I stared at this man who stood before me. Here, before my eyes, stood an honest man, a man whose integrity was so pristine, his veracity so deeply committed to his G-d, that he found it necessary to shelter himself in the forest where no one would stop him. By us gentiles, such a person is unheard of. It is only by the Jews that such a person could exist and thrive.

“From that day on, I did everything within my power to get close to this holy man. I followed him and watched his mannerisms closely and saw that everything about him was ingrained in his psyche. This was not some elaborate show. He was not trying to garner attention for himself. He was the real thing.”

Furthermore, the gentile related how impressed he was that the *Chafetz Chaim* did not recognize the appearance of the *ozeres*, woman who helped out in the house. Despite the fact that she had been working in his house for a number of years, the *Chafetz Chaim* never looked at her. This was unheard of in his world. Thus, he felt that he must come and share his emotions with the saintly man’s family.