

נְאוֹת דֶּשֶׁה Neos Deshe

An Adaptation of Rabbi Shmuel Dov Asher Leiner's Neos Deshe by Rabbi Reuven Boshnack
Questions? Comments? Dedications? Email ReuvenBoshnack@gmail.com

Vayeitzei

The Pasuk (Bereshis 28:10) states that Yaakov left Be'er Sheva.

Rashi comments that when a righteous person leaves a place, something is missing from that place as a result. Why does Rashi tell us this here and not when Avraham left Charan? Why does it matter?

The Midrash (Bereshis Raba 68:5) explains that Yaakov sought explicit permission from the Torah to leave the land of Israel. Which is why the Torah writes "and Yaakov left Be'er Sheva" Why is the Torah telling him to leave the Land which he and his father and grandfather were promised? How can he leave Israel?

Neos Deshe explains that Yaakov's commandment to leave is the opposite of what Avraham was asked to do. Avraham was told to leave the wicked people in the land of Charan and go to the land of Israel where he'll become a great nation. Yaakov was told to leave Israel go to the wicked Lavan, in the land of Charan. In Charan, Yaakov built his children.

The Midrash (Bereshis Raba 68:6 which Rashi's comments above is based on) says that the word Vayetze means that he took something from the city as well. Instead of **Vayatza**, he left, **Vayetze**, he took something out. When a righteous people live in a city, they are the splendor and glory of the city. Once they leave, they take that with them. The Midrash notes the same structure, when Naomi and Rus left Moav. The Midrash asks, what did they take from the city besides themselves? The Midrash answers, they took the splendor and glory when they left.

This is an even further cause for astonishment! Yaakov took the splendor from Be'er Sheva, from the land of Israel and brought it to Charan.? Furthermore, wasn't Yitzchak Avinu still in Israel?

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Neos Deshe begins his answer by comparing the difference between Yaakov and Avraham. Avraham was commanded to leave as part of one of his ten trials. This was the one of his many tests. After the 10 tests, he reached completion and arrived at Har Hamoriya, the site of the Beis Hamikdash. Avraham's life was leading up to the place of the future Beis Hamikdash, the holiest place on earth.

Yaakov, on the other hand, had no tests. He dealt with pain, but he did not have 10 tests. Yaakov left Beer Sheva after getting the brachos, which seems to indicate that he had reached a state of completion. It is for this reason that we see that Yaakov arrived at Har Hamoriya, the site of the Beis Hamikdash immediately after leaving Be'er Sheva which Avraham only achieved at the end of 10 tests.

Now it sounds like Avraham's life was a direct march toward perfection and purpose, and Yaakov seemingly went from perfection to chaos as Yaakov's life became tremendously difficult in Charan. The Brachos seemed to unravel before his eyes. He was supposed to have children in the land of Israel. Instead he had great pain and was going seemingly in the opposite direction.

If you'll ask why did Yaakov have pain if he had reached completion? Neos Deshe cites the Midrash (Tanchuma Shemos 1) which says that one can only receive the Torah, the Land of Israel and the World to Come through pain. Pain without acceptance is suffering. One way to find this is seeing it as part of a process. This means to see that this pain is taking you somewhere. However, Neos Deshe explains that everywhere Yaakov went, he was going to the land of Israel. Despite the fact that it looked like he was moving away, he took the purpose with him. Hence the Pasuk says Vayetze, as opposed to Vayatza, he took his splendor, with him. What was that splendor? Meaning and purpose. He could not perceive a pattern, or direction, in fact, it seemed like he was moving in the exact opposite direction, but in truth, he was going exactly where he needed to be.

Sometimes we feel that the world is going in the wrong way than "it's supposed to be." It seems chaotic and counterproductive. Yaakov Avinu teaches us that we take "our supposed to be" wherever we are.