



INTRODUCTION— CHINUCH AND HASHPAAH: TWO TYPES OF EDUCATION

Megilas Rus depicts the extraordinary tragedy that grips the family of Elimelech, as one trauma seems to follow another. The family uproots itself to find sustenance in years of famine. Then, while living in an alien environment, Na’ami finds herself facing the death of her husband and then of her two sons. Left with but an echo of her family’s legacy, she turns to her two devoted, yet foreign, daughters-in-law, Orpah and Rus, and declares that they should return to their homes and to their lives. Na’ami

explains that she has no additional sons with whom they can rebuild this family, and that the most prudent path forward is to dissolve their relationship. Orpah embraces her mother-in-law and departs the family to return to her roots. Rus, in contrast, steps forward with an overwhelming declaration of comradery and commitment:

וְהֵאמֶר רוּת אֶל תִּפְגַּעִי בִּי לְעֻזְבֵּךְ לְשׁוּב
מֵאֶחָרֶיךָ כִּי אֵל אֲשֶׁר תִּלְכִּי אֶלַּךְ וּבְאֶשֶׁר תִּלְיִנִי
אֶלֵּין עִמּוֹךְ עַמִּי וְאֶלְקִיךָ אֶלְקֵי. בְּאֶשֶׁר תִּמְוֹתֵי
אָמוֹת וְשֵׁם אֶקְבֹּר כֹּה יַעֲשֶׂה ה' לִי וְכֹה יִסְיֶף בִּי
הַמָּוֶת וּפְרִיד בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ.

But Ruth replied, “Do not urge me to leave you, to turn back and not follow you. For wherever you go, I will go; wherever you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus and more may the Lord do to me if anything but death parts me from you.”

Rus 1:16-17

R’ Yaakov Kaminetsky, *Emes L’Yaakov*, *Avos* 1:12, asks: What was the catalyst for Rus’s decision? What did Rus see in remaining with Na’ami? Her entire association with the

Jewish people had been completely saturated with death and destruction! From where does Rus derive the inspiration to remain with the Jewish people? Where in the megilah do we encounter the magnetism of Na'ami to inspire such a deep and profound commitment on behalf of Rus?

Rav Yaakov explains that there are two types of influence in the world: One is referred to as *chinuch*, and the other is identified as *hashpaah*. *Chinuch* refers to influence through direction and guidance. It is proactive, intentional, and at times even interventional. It is the modality through which parents and educators strive to instill specific ideals and practices into their children. However, notes Rav Yaakov, *chinuch* is not the exclusive source of influence for children, or for us as adults. There is another dimension known as *hashpaah*, which comes from the word “*meshupah*,” meaning “slanted.” A roof is slanted so that the rain that falls on it will slide off the sides of the home. The roof is not designed to intentionally move water from its structure to another place; this happens naturally because of its shape, and as a result, the individual or object below will become drenched. *Hashpaah* refers to the standing example that is set by those living a life of sanctity and nobility. Independent of the teachings that are conveyed, there is an independent flow of influence that “drenches” everyone in proximity to those who lead their lives personifying what we stand for. Perhaps Rus’s commitment

evolved from the standing example that Na’ami set in how to contend with and overcome the vicissitudes of life. Na’ami was a *mashpia* whose entire being radiated the values that would ultimately inspire Rus to join the Jewish people, and eventually lay the foundation for Malchus Beis David.

From where can we benefit not from the intricacies of expectations but from basking in the legacies of how the heroes of the Jewish people faced their challenges throughout our history?

We invest a staggering amount of time, energy, and resources into the study of Torah Shebaal Peh, our Oral Tradition. Undoubtedly, the Gemara and its related sources provide us with clarity of belief and instruction in engaging in our religious lives. From where do we derive the broader *hashpaah* of Yahadus? From where can we benefit not from the intricacies of expectations but from basking in the legacies of how the heroes of the Jewish people faced their challenges throughout our history?

We can suggest, that to this end, that we have been given the extraordinary world of Tanach. Tanach chronicles

the history of the Jewish people, not only by providing specific directives, but by conveying the stories of the personalities who shaped our history. Throughout Tanach, we experience the triumphs and failures of Am Yisrael. The Gemarah in *Megilah* 14a, writes:

ת"ר ארבעים ושמונה נביאים ושבע נביאות נתנבאו להם לישראל ... ותו ליכא ... טובא הוו כדתניא הרבה נביאים עמדו להם לישראל כפלים כיוצאי מצרים אלא נבואה שהוצרכה לדורות נכתבה ושלא הוצרכה לא נכתבה.

Our rabbis taught: There were 48 male prophets and seven female prophets for Israel ... Were there no more? ... It seems that there were many more, as the beraisa states: There were many prophets in Israel, double the number of people who left Egypt. Rather, prophecies that were relevant for all generations were recorded and those that were not relevant were not recorded.

The narratives and prophesies of Tanach are those that are relevant for all generations. The study of Tanach allows us to internalize how to live the principles and ideals of Torah, both as individuals and as a nation. In this issue of the Benjamin and Rose Berger *Torah To Go*, we devote several articles to deepening our appreciation for Tanach as an essential element of Kabalas HaTorah. May we all merit to grow from the *chinuch* of our tradition and from its *hashpaah* as well.



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