



Entering & Exiting

Although *parashat Ki Tavo* is known for the terrible curses enumerated therein, it also lists many beautiful *brachot* that are promised to those who follow Hashem's commandments. "*Baruch ata be'voecha u'Baruch ata be'tzeitecha* – Blessed will you be when you come and blessed will you be when you go." (*Devarim 28:6*) Obviously, we must explore what this means. What is the "coming" and "going" alluding to here? Further, shouldn't the order be reversed, don't we first leave and then come back?

The *Yalkut Shimoni* explains that one should leave this world as one who has come into this world, i.e., without sin. This refers to a *tzadik*, whose coming into this world is regarded as a blessing, in contrast to those about whom the Gemara states that it would have been better had they not been created. This blessing serves as a reminder to us right before Rosh Hashanah, a clarion call to work on ensuring that our existence is one that brings blessing to the world through the observance of mitzvot and Torah living.

Another interpretation offered by the *Chida* is that one whose child follows in

the path of Torah modeled by the parent continues the parent's legacy, thus, it is as if the parent never dies even after he physically passes from this world. One who is alive is referred to as a "*holech*," someone who is constantly moving forward, accumulating more Torah and mitzvot. One who leaves this world is called an "*omed*," one who stands still, unable to accrue more merit. However, one who teaches his child Torah has a share in the child's achievements and continues to gain merit from the Torah and mitzvot the child observes. Hence, we can understand this blessing to mean just as one who comes into this world gains blessing for performing mitzvot, one who leaves this world with children who follow the Torah way, is continually blessed. This directs us to examine our priorities, to focus and stay aligned with what is ultimately valuable in this world.

A third interpretation is found in *Midrash Devarim Rabbah*. One will be blessed in their "coming and going," referring to their business ventures. This is like what Dovid Hamelech prays, "*Hashem yishmor tzeitecha u'voecha mei'ata ve'ad olam* - Hashem will guard your departure and your arrival from now until forever." Yet the order here is reversed, first "your departure" and then "your arrival." The Tosher Rebbe *ztz'l*, in *Avodat Avodah* explains that

our sustenance all comes from Hashem. Working for a living is a punishment effected from the sin of *Adam Harishon*. It is a way to purify ourselves from the consequences of the sin. Simultaneously, however, one must realize that it is not our efforts that bring in the money, everything is from Hashem. Thus, the Midrash teaches that when we “come in” from our business dealings, the money had already been decided when we left to do our business! Our “coming and going” is merely technical with no bearing on the outcome. When we grasp this, we will realize that it is more prudent to spend time on spiritual values instead of focusing on schemes to further our material gains. Let us take this message to heart as we prepare for the new year more spiritually attuned and aware. ■

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