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לז"נ הילד אהרן בן שלום יעקב ז"ל. נולד כ"ז שבט תשס"ז ונפ' בזמן מתן תורה יום א' דשבועות תשס"ח

The Zera Emes Project by Rabbi Moshe Hubner was created to honor and share the Torah of over 250 Gedolim who weren't zocheh to descendants of their own. Their legacy lives on through their words of Torah and emunah that continue to inspire and touch countless lives. By bringing their timeless divrei Torah and wisdom to life, we create a powerful connection to the past to help inspire today's generation.

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Rus

On Shavuos, we read Megillas Rus.

The Megillah opens with pain. Naomi returns to Eretz Yisrael shattered and alone. Once, she had left as part of the aristocracy of Klal Yisrael — the wife of Elimelech, one of the leaders of the generation. Now she returns after nearly a decade in Moav, widowed, bereft of both sons, carrying nothing but heartbreak and a Moabite daughter-in-law named Rus.

MOMENTS

Everyone's personal life has moments that change the trajectory of their entire lives. The moment one meets a spouse is a prime example.

These momentous occasions occur on a national level as well. And even on a global level, there are days that pass quietly through history, and there are days that alter the course of the world forever.

Shavuos is one of those days.

The day Klal Yisrael stood at Har Sinai and accepted the Torah, the world was forever changed. Chazal teach that the world's continued existence depended upon that moment.

Here, in the opening of the second *perek* of

Megillas Rus, we encounter another one of those days — which may explain why we read Megillas Rus on Shavuos.

GREETINGS

At the beginning of chapter 2, the story begins to shift. We learn how Rus goes out to the fields to gather forgotten stalks alongside the poor, and suddenly Boaz arrives. Chazal note that this was unusual; he did not ordinarily come personally to the fields.

But before the Megillah tells us about the encounter between Boaz and Rus, before Boaz notices her, before he asks, "Whose young woman is this?" the *passuk* pauses to record what seems like an ordinary exchange.

"Hashem imachem," Boaz says to his workers. (Hashem should be with you — his version of "Shalom Aleichem.")

Rav Yosef Zev Lipowitz, in his *Nachalas Yosef* explains why this conversation is recorded in a *sefer* of Nevuah.

He notes that no word in Tanach is incidental. If this exchange is here, it is foundational.

And the Mishnah (*Berachos* 54a) reveal something astonishing: this was the first time such a greeting had ever been used!



NACHALAS YOSEF: RAV YOSEF ZEV LIPOWITZ

Boaz and his *bes din* had enacted that people should greet one another using the Name of Hashem.

To us, it hardly sounds revolutionary. We live with "Shalom Aleichem," "Baruch Hashem," and "Im yirtzeh Hashem." But the Mishnah proves how revolutionary this was by adding that Heaven agreed with this enactment.

Such language implies that this was no simple innovation. It was radical enough that one may have feared it bordered on inappropriate. It needed consent from Shamayim itself.

HASHEM IS WITH US

Rav Yosef Zev explains why there might be

a backlash to it and why Boaz felt it was important.

Boaz was teaching a broken generation –through this new form of greeting – something they desperately needed to internalize: Hashem is with you.

Not only in holy endeavors but in the mundane too, like a field where people are working or poor people are taking the leftovers. This is true in the marketplace and in ordinary conversations. In the lives of people recovering from famine and tragedy.

A nation reeling from loss needed to hear that Hashem had not abandoned them.

But Rav Yosef Zev explains that it went even deeper than encouragement.

When a person trains himself to see Hashem within another Jew, to know that Hashem is with us every second, his entire perspective changes. Human beings are no longer ordinary. One cannot dismiss, embarrass, or degrade another person so easily when he recognizes the tzelem Elokim within him.

RUS AND BOAZ

This is how the continuation of the story of Boaz –and our nation – becomes possible.

Rav Yosef Zev emphasizes how these words in the Megilla are placed here – not only as a chronological recounting of the events but because what the attitude that came along with what these words represented was the prerequisite for Boaz meeting Rus.

Before Boaz could marry Rus, Klal Yisrael needed a new way of seeing people.

Rus was a convert from Moav — a nation viewed with disdain and suspicion. Humanly speaking, the possibility that the gadol hador would marry such a woman was almost unimaginable.

But after Boaz introduced this new outlook — after people learned to look deeper, to recognize greatness hidden beneath externals, to see the presence of Hashem within another person — only then could they recognize who Rus truly was.

EPILOGUE

Immediately after Boaz made the enactment to change the mindset of the people, Hashem arranged for him to physically meet Rus.

Only now could Boaz see why her greatness was necessary to further the mindset of this new world.

Only now could Klal Yisrael accept their leader would marry this convert.

And only now, unbeknownst to everyone, could Malchus Beis Dovid begin to emerge.

This marriage was much more than just two strangers meeting and marrying.

The monumental day that began with a new enactment helped set up the meeting of the couple that would marry to then produce the Messianic Dynasty.

As we prepare for the monumental day of Shavuot, perhaps this lesson should be part of the avodah.

To remember that Hashem walks among us not only in moments of grandeur, but in ordinary interactions, quiet greetings.

To look at another Jew differently.

The Torah was given by Hashem to a nation of converts.

And the Torah will ultimately bring us to the day when the descendant of Rus and Boaz — Mashiach — will redeem Klal Yisrael במהרה בימינו.

ר' יוסף זאב ליפוביץ

Rav Yosef Zev Lipowitz (1889 - 8 Nisan 1962) was born near Bialystok to Rav Baruch a chasid of Kotzk. At 16 he joined the Slobodka Yeshiva where Rav Moshe Mordechai Epstein recognized the dazzling talents and allowed him into his inner circle. He became Rav Moshe Mordechai's substitute in the town shiur when Rav Moshe Mordechai was unavailable. He was also very close with the Altar of Slobodka and lived with his approach of *gadlus ha'adam* and aspire to greatness. Because of these two relationships he became great in torah and halachah and deep thinking mussar.

In 1912, Rav Yosef Zev spent time with the Meshech

Chochmah when the latter came to Kovna (across the bridge from Slobodka). In the back of Nachlas Yosef they published the handwritten letter with it's glorious titles that the Meshech Chochmah bestowed upon Rav Yosef.

He married Baila from Rutiva and when married, she opened a store and with the money they earned, he opened a yeshiva there that produced great talmidim.

In 1924 they emigrated to Tel Aviv - and fulfilled his mission to bring people closer to Torah. When Rav Ehrenson opened a yeshivah he became a leading rebbi there until 1935 when health issues prevented him from continuing. But he continued giving shiurim including in Yeshivas Ohr Zoreah in Yafo.

His original thoughts continued to flow from him. The shiurim enthralled the listeners. The peoples inner souls connected to his passionate words that captured them.

To earn money, they opened their home as a "room and board" which became a place for talmidei chachamim to gather and enjoy each other's company.

After he passed, his wife sold her belongings to help publish his sefarim. This sefer uses the Midrash to bring out the beauty of the story of Rus and it's underlying practical lessons that we can use today. Rav Aaron Lopiansky gave shiurim on Rus from this sefer and published it under the title, Seed Of Redemption.