

## Devarim 5770 Rabbi Aharon Ziegler

“HaShem’s Love/ HaShem’s Gift-, Which Is More Precious?”

(1:27) **VATEI’RAGNU BE’A’HALEICHEM VA’TO’MERU BE’SINAT HA’SHEM O’TANU HO’TZI’ANU MI’MITZRAYIM** [“**You slandered in your tents and said, because of HaShem’s hatred for us did He take us out of the land of Egypt**]. Moshe here admonishes the people for having claimed that HaShem’s taking them out of Mitzrayim and bringing them to Eretz Yisrael was an act of *hatred*, and not act of **love**.

Rashi explains, that Mitzrayim was a land gifted with a natural source of irrigation. The Nile River would periodically flood the land and irrigate the fields. In contrast, the Land of Israel was dependent upon rain, a very unreliable element for its irrigation. Rashi Relates a parable: A king had two properties, one, which was well irrigated, and one which is not. To the son he loved he gave the well-irrigated field, and to the son he despised he gave the other land. If those are indeed the facts then why does Moshe criticize Bnei Yisrael, their complaints were justified? Yet Rashi concludes, that by giving Bnei Yisrael this type of land, which was not gifted, with a natural source of irrigation, was HaShem’s way of showing His **love** for us.

To comprehend this phenomenon we have to understand what true love really is. A father, who travels a great deal of his time for business asks his young son what gift he would like for his birthday upon his return from his next trip. The young lad looks into his father’s eyes and says, “Daddy, (Abba) I want **you!**” The ultimate display of HaShem’s **love** for our people is His willingness to be close to us. HaShem’s involvement in our daily lives shows His concern for our welfare. HaShem did not want to bring us to a land, which would seem to function independently of Him for this would create a limited involvement between us. However, giving us a land, which requires a constant dependency upon HaShem, binds our relationship with Him and fosters that ultimate act of **love**.

We know that HaShem made it difficult for the Matriarchs, Sarah, Rivka and Rachel to conceive children, and Chazal tell the reason being that HaShem Mit’aveh L’Teffilat Tzaddikim [Ha’Shem longs to hear the prayers of Tzaddikim]. Does that mean that He deprived them because He despised them? No, it means He deprived them because he **loved** them!

The Gemara Ketuvot (110b) states, “One living outside of Eretz Yisrael is akin to a person who worships idols”. The Maharal explains this because living in Eretz Yisrael one is able to perceive and maintain a direct relationship with HaShem. We depend upon Him for our rain, and for our safety and protection, being constantly threatened by our surrounding enemies. Outside Eretz Yisrael, however, HaShem relates to us in an indirect manner, therefore, it is akin to worshipping idols.

Allowing for such a close relationship in Eretz Yisrael is the ultimate manifestation of HaShem’s **LOVE** for us. Rejecting the land, which requires this relationship, is, in reality, rejecting the relationship itself.