



**Lizechus refuah shleimah my dear niece Hadassa bas Sarah Rivka**

Audio Shiur: "Tu Bishvat & the Plague of the Locusts"  
<https://www.torahanytime.com/#/lectures?a=278614>

When the Bnei Yisrael witnessed the salvation of Hashem at the Yam Suf, they burst out in *shira*. They sang, "*Zeh Keili vi'anvehu Elokei Avi va'aromimenhu*."<sup>1</sup> - This is my G-d and I will glorify Him. The G-d of my father and I will raise Him up.

Hashem revealed his *kavod* upon them. A common *shifcha* (female slave) envisioned at the Yam Suf what the *navi* Yechezkel and his fellow *nevi'im* did not merit to see.<sup>2</sup>

Certainly, a *shifcha* was not on the level of prophecy that surpassed the level of Yechezkel. How is it that she saw what Yechezkel did not see?

Rav Mordechai Gifter<sup>3</sup> revealed the depth of this medrash.

How is it that a non-Jewish *shifcha* went out of Mitzrayim along with the Bnei Yisrael? Who brought her along? The answer is... nobody. The *shifcha* brought herself. She left all that was familiar to her. She left her father's house.

Why did she leave? She saw with her own eyes the uplifted stature of the Bnei Yisrael. She recognized that they were unlike any other people. She witnessed the bond between the Bnei Yisrael and the Creator. There was nothing in her own father's house that compared with the greatness that she saw.

Everything about this holy nation was new to her. The *shifcha* had no experiences of her own to compare them to.

And she wanted it...

And so, it was the soul of the *shifcha* that cried out, "*Zeh Keili vi'anvehu!*" – and she sang, "This is My Own Personal G-d. And I will glorify Him!"

The Bnei Yisrael praised Hashem in their own way by saying, "*Elokei Avi va'aromimenu*." – This is the G-d I am accustomed to from my father's house. I will raise Him up.

This is what is meant when the gemara says, "*Bimakom sheba'alei teshuva omdim sham aflu tzadikim gemurim einam omdim sham*."<sup>4</sup> – In the place that *ba'alei teshuva* stand there, even the perfect *tzadikim* do not stand there.

The approach of *ba'alei teshuva* to *mitzvos* is different. Their mitzva performance originates within themselves. Everything about *avodas* Hashem is new to them. Thus, they view their *avoda* of *kiyum hamitzvos* in a different light. They detect various "shades" and "hues" that go undetected by those

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<sup>1</sup> Shemos 15:2

<sup>2</sup> Rashi ibid, Mechilta, Beshalach,3

<sup>3</sup> Rosh HaYeshiva, Telshe Cleveland

<sup>4</sup> Berachos 34a

who were exposed to *mitzvos* in their father's house. They exist in a unique "place" of their very own.

And the *tzadikim gemurim* do not have access to this individualistic place.

The reward that is given on behalf of *avodas hamitzvos* in this world matches the "place" that one occupied in this world at the time of the *mitzvos*.

Thus, *ba'alei teshuva* have a place all of their own in the *olam ha'emes*.

The *shifcha* who left Mitzrayim was not on a higher level of prophecy than Yechezkel.

Hashem revealed His holy Shechina to all of Yisrael. The *shifcha* saw what only a *shifcha* could see.

And as great of a *navi* that Yechezkel was... he could not see what the holy *shifcha* saw.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Speech delivered by Rav Gifter at the bris se'uda of Yaakov Yisrael Compton, Teves 5746. Yaakov Yisrael was named after the Steipler.