

LIKKUTEI SICHOS

On the weekly Torah readings and holidays

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לקוטי שיחות
PROJECT
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THE WORLD BEGINS AT HOME

From the Talks of
The Lubavitcher Rebbe
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1.

The Letter That Stayed in Place

{In this week's Torah portion, G-d changes Avram's name and gives the reason for the new one}:¹

Your name shall no longer be called Avram; rather, your name shall be Avraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.

Rashi on this verse quotes the words “for the father of a multitude of nations” and explains:

These words are the expanded form (notrikon) of his name [אברהם — אב המון]. The reish that was in it at first signified that he was a father only to Aram, which was his place {of origin}. But now {he has become} (a father² to the whole world {— so the reish no longer seems to belong}. Even so, the reish that was in it from the start) did not move from its place. For even the yud of Sarai [שרה — שרי] complained to the Divine Presence until it was added to Yehoshua, as it is written,³ “And Moshe called Hoshea the son of Nun, Yehoshua [יהושע — יהושע].”

The straightforward explanation of Rashi's comment {lies in that word “for.”} By saying “**for** I have made you the father of a multitude of nations,” the verse presents this phrase as the **reason** for the name Avraham. This shows that the idea of “father of a multitude of nations” is alluded to within the name itself. Rashi therefore explains that “father of a multitude of nations”⁴ is “the expanded form of his name (*notrikon*).”

[This also explains why Rashi takes care to include the word “for” when quoting the verse, even though “for” is **not** part of the *notrikon*.⁵ *Notrikon* is not a usual tool⁶ for explaining the plain meaning of Scripture.⁷ Rashi therefore needs something in the verse

1) Bereishis, 17:5.

2) The words in parentheses are absent in the first printing and several manuscripts in my possession; the second printing and several manuscripts read “a father to the whole world (in its entirety), and even so (or: and the *reish*) did not move....” See below, fn. 16.

3) Bamidbar 13:16. (This proof does not appear in the first and second printings or in the Rashi manuscripts in my possession.)

4) Several Rashi manuscripts available omit the word “nations” from Rashi's caption. It **completes**

the word “multitude,” which is why most versions of Rashi include it, but it is not part of the *notrikon*.

5) This is why Rashi does not quote the verse's closing word, “I have made you” (*nesaticha*): it is not part of the *notrikon*.

6) Rashi does cite *notrikon* elsewhere (e.g., Bereishis 15:2), since in the plain meaning it can also denote “headings of ideas” (see Rashi on Shemos 20:12). Acronyms (*roshei teivos*), which he also cites (Bereishis 1:8, and elsewhere), are a separate matter.

7) Note, too, that in our case Rashi does not cite the Gemara's *notrikon* of the name Avraham (*Shabbos*

that compels him to read the name this way, and that is the word “for,” {which implies that there is a message to be inferred from the name}.]

This, however, raises a question: Why did the letter *reish* remain (in Avraham), when it has no connection to the *notrikon*?⁸

Rashi answers this in the continuation of his comment: “The *reish* that was in it at first... did not move from its place.” He supports this with an example (and proof) from “the *yud* of Sarai.” [As stated later in the parsha,⁹ “you shall not call her name Sarai, for Sarah is her name.”] That *yud* “complained to the Divine Presence (about being taken from Sarah) until it was added to Yehoshua.” The same holds in our case: “so that it would not complain to the Divine Presence like the *yud* of Sarai,”¹⁰ {G-d} left the *reish* in the name Avraham.

2.

A Proof That Points the Other Way

However, {two points in Rashi’s comment} need to be understood:

- (a) Seemingly, the example of “the *yud* of Sarai” **undermines** the very point it is brought to prove.¹¹ After all, the *yud* of Sarai did in fact “move from its place.” (It was added both to **another** name and to **another** person: Yehoshua.¹²) In our case, by contrast, the *reish* “did **not** move from its place”!¹³
- (b) Rashi’s wording, “**For even** the *yud* of Sarai...”¹⁴ rather than “And **likewise** the *yud*...,” proves that the *yud* of Sarai had less reason to complain than the *reish* of Avraham. (“For even...” implies that not only the *reish* of Avraham {would have complained}; **even** the *yud* of Sarai complained.)

105a), since it is not in keeping with the plain meaning at all.

8) See the commentators on Rashi here (*Re'em*; *Sefer Zikaron*; *Divrei David*). See also *Bereishis Rabbah* 46:7 (and the commentators there).

9) 17:15.

10) This is the wording of the *Re'em*.

11) Note that a few manuscripts available (see also the Berliner edition of Rashi) read: “**But** the *yud* of Sarai **did not remain in its place**, and complained ({alternatively,} until it complained)....”

12) Moreover, this happened only **hundreds** of years later, and the *yud* remained in a state of

complaint that entire time. As our Sages put it (*Sanhedrin* 107a): “It was standing and screaming for **several years** until Yehoshua came...”!

13) The Rebbe notes that the commentators’ answers (*Sifsei Chachamim*; *Maskil LeDavid*, based on *Yerushalmi*, *Sanhedrin* 2:6, and *Bereishis Rabbah* 47:1; cf. *Sanhedrin*, *ibid.*) still leave the *yud*, which did move, as no proof for our case. The example must therefore be about how the *yud* was appeased (cf. Rashi on *Vayeitzei* 28:11, *Bereishis* 3:8, and *Shelach* 13:16).

14) See fn. 11.

This is puzzling: What is the difference between them? Seemingly, both have the very same reason and cause for complaint: a letter being taken from the name of a righteous person (*tzaddik*).

3.

A Closer Look at Rashi's Wording

This will be understood by first examining {why} Rashi's wording is so lengthy: "The *reish* that was in it at first signified that he was a father only to Aram, which was his place {of origin}. But now {he has become} a father to the whole world. Even so, the *reish*... did not move from its place."

Notice that Rashi does not mention the name "Avram" at all. Instead, he opens with "**The *reish*** that was in it at first..." (and only as a continuation of this does he explain that "he was a father only to Aram").

[This is especially notable since Rashi **departs** from the wording of our Sages,¹⁵ where the explanation focuses (also) on the name Avram: "Your name shall no longer be called Avram, but your name shall be Avraham" — at first... a father... to all of Aram... and in the end... a father to the whole world."]

This seemingly proves that Rashi is not setting out (to any great extent) to explain the *notrikon* of the (earlier) name Avram. He means (only) to explain the ***reish*** that remained in the name **Avraham**.¹⁶

[It is understandable why Rashi does not undertake to explain the *notrikon* of the name "Avram." For explaining the *notrikon* of the name Avraham, "father of a multitude of nations," it hardly matters whether the earlier name Avram¹⁷ also carries a (similar) meaning. {As noted above, *notrikon* is not a usual tool for explaining the plain meaning of Scripture. Rashi invokes it only when the verse compels him to, as the word "for" does for the name Avraham, while nothing in the verse does so for the name Avram.}]

Now, since Rashi's intent is not to explain the *notrikon* of the name Avram, but only to explain why the *reish* "did not move from its place," he could seemingly have said **briefly**: "This is the expanded form of his name, 'father of a multitude of nations.' The *reish* that

15) *Tosefta*, *Brachos* 1:14. Similarly in *Brachos* 13a (except that there the verse from our parsha is not cited, but rather the verse in *Divrei HaYamim* I {1}:27; Rashi there, however, does cite it).

16) This is clearer still from the first and second printings and the manuscripts available, which lack the repeated phrase "even so, the *reish* that was **in it**

from the start" (cf. fn. 2). In the Berliner edition (see also *Etz Yosef* on *Ein Yaakov*, *Brachos*, *ibid.*), "he was a father... a father to the whole world" is a parenthetical aside.

17) It is not the way of Rashi (in the **plain** meaning of Scripture) to explain the meaning of names (except where necessary). See below, fn. 20.

was in it at first did not move from its place, for even the *yud*....” Why must he explain (a matter, and a name, belonging to (the end of) *Parshas Noach*) that the letter “*reish* that was in it **at first**” (was there because) “he was a father only to Aram”?

We must also explain Rashi’s precise wording, “Even so, the *reish*... **did not move from its place**,” which is an unusual expression in such a context. Seemingly, Rashi should simply have said “it was not taken from him,”¹⁸ or “it was not lacking from his name,”¹⁹ or the like.

4.

Included, Yet in Its Own Place

This may be explained as follows:

As discussed on several occasions,²⁰ the **plain meaning** of Scripture does not compel us to assume that a name alludes to and expresses the nature (and distinction) of the person who bears it²¹ (unless the verse itself emphasizes this,²² as in our case, “your name shall be Avraham, **for** I have made you the father of a multitude of nations,” or at least alludes to it).

Therefore, there is no room to explain that the name “Avram” (which {his father} **Terach** gave him²³) is {intrinsically} connected to the life of Avraham.

What compels us (according to the plain meaning) to explain that “Avram” means “a father to Aram” is the fact that the ***reish*** remained in the name **Avraham**, {which G-d gave him}.

To explain: According to the plain meaning, there is no basis for saying that a letter should be kept in a name meant to express a specific meaning {— as with the name

18) **Similar** to Rashi on *Vayikra* 26:42.

19) See, for example, Rashi on *Vayakhel* 35:27.

20) See *Klalei Rashi* (Kehot, 5740), ch. 3, sec. 8 (in the 5751 edition, ch. 2, sec. 15) (and the sources cited there); *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 16, p. 4; and elsewhere.

21) See also Ibn Ezra on *Noach* 10:8, and elsewhere; **Rashi** on *Bereishis* 10:25 (“We learn that Ever was a **prophet**...”); and the commentary (attributed to)

Rashi on *Divrei HaYamim* I 1:23 (“...other names were not given to be expounded...”).

22) Or where the plain meaning compels this, which is why Rashi expounds names (*midrash shemos*) in several places.

23) This is the simple understanding (that parents name their children; see Rashi on *Noach*, *ibid.*). On whether the father or the mother gives the name, see *Daas Zekeinim* and Ramban on *Vayeishev* 38:5, and *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 7, p. 307ff.

Avraham —} merely because the letter has “complaints,” if the letter itself **has no connection** to the meaning (of the name).²⁴

Rashi alludes to this in his wording: “Even so, the *reish* that was in it at first, {which} signified that he was a father only to Aram, which was his place {of origin}....” With this, Rashi indicates that there is a difficulty here: according to the *notrikon*, how does the *reish* come to be in the name Avraham? Consequently, the *reish* too must have a meaning consistent with the meaning of the name Avraham, “father of a multitude of nations.”²⁵

Rashi then explains, “[It signified] that he was a father only to Aram... did not move from its place.” The meaning of the *reish* is that he is “a father to Aram,” and that **remained true afterward as well**. Being “a father to all the nations” **includes** being “a father to Aram” rather than **excluding** it; it is merely an **addition**.²⁶

This is why Rashi chooses the precise wording “**did not move from its place**” (and not “it was not taken from him,” etc., as mentioned above). Even had the *reish* **not** been placed in his name (and his name had been “Avham” [אברהם]), this would not mean that the **meaning** of the *reish* had been taken away. Its meaning (“a father to Aram”) would remain even then. In that case, however, it would mean that the *reish* “remains” in a **different** “place”: only as part of “the world,” within “a father to the whole world” {— being a father to Aram would still be true, but only by implication, the way being a father to the whole world automatically includes any single country, with Aram receiving no mention of its own}.

The emphasis “did not move **from its place**” indicates that even afterward the *reish* remains in its own “place.” “A father to Aram” remains spelled out in the *notrikon* of the name (Avraham) as a distinct matter **in its own right** (even though it is included in “(a father to) the whole world”). {In other words, even as father of the whole world, Avraham remains distinctly a father to his own place.}

24) See **Rashi** on *Bereishis* 5:29; but see *Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 10, p. 93 and fn. 14 there, that the letters of a name need not exactly match its stated reason. Our case differs, since G-d changed the name specifically to emphasize a particular idea.

25) Ibn Ezra here reads the added *reish* as “**mighty** [אביר] of a multitude of nations.” Rashi likely did not,

since the verse says “father,” not “mighty.” See also the Alshich here, by way of allusion.

26) See *Divrei David* here: “and Aram is included.” Note also the *Tzlach* on *Brachos*, *ibid.* (s.v. *Avram hu Avraham*).

5.

Grounded Claim, Mere Complaint

In light of all this, we can also understand Rashi's proof, which argues from the **lesser case to the greater**: “**For even** the *yud* of Sarai complained....”

The *reish* of Avraham has a “claim” with solid grounds. Since the meaning of the *reish* remains in the name in any case, there is no reason to refuse leaving the *reish* itself in the name of the *tzaddik*.

With “the *yud* of Sarai,” however, no such “demand” can be made, for the meaning of the letter *yud* has **no** place in the meaning of the name Sarah (as will be explained in Section 7).

It follows that {the *yud*'s grievance} was merely a matter of plain complaint, {hence Rashi's wording}: “it complained.” (“**For even**” implies that even so, {G-d} “gave in” here too and “added it to Yehoshua.”)

This also resolves the difference regarding “the *yud* of Sarai,” namely, that it did “move from its place”:

The comparison and proof show only that a letter's “complaint” earns it appeasement. The **manner** of appeasement, of course, varies in each case according to its circumstances.

In our case, the meaning of the letter *reish* remained {in Avraham's name} afterward as well, so its claim achieved that it “did not move from its place.” With “the *yud* of Sarai,” by contrast, the meaning of the *yud* is **absent** from the new name. The *yud* therefore cannot be left “in its place,” because it is no longer its “place.”

Consequently, the appeasement must take a different form. The *yud* is placed in the name of another *tzaddik*, a name that becomes “its place,” where the *notrikon* of the *yud* is a new element **in** the name (and in the person) {— the *yud* adding a meaning suited to that person}. [“It was added to Yehoshua, as it is written, ‘And Moshe called Hoshea the son of Nun, Yehoshua.’” As **Rashi** himself explains there: “He prayed for him: ‘May G-d [יְיָ]’²⁷ save you [from the counsel of the spies].” {Yehoshua needed precisely this meaning, so the *yud* found a fitting place in his name.}]

27) This also explains why there is no complaint about the fact that the *yud* was taken from Sarai by G-d, while it was added to Yehoshua by Moshe. For

what Moshe added to Hoshea was G-d — the *yud* {of the Divine Name, יְיָ}.

6.

A Stronger Claim for the *Yud*

But why does the meaning of the letter *yud* in “Sarai” have no place in the name “Sarah”? Seemingly, the **very opposite is true**:

Rashi on the next verse quotes the words “you shall not call her name Sarai, for Sarah is her name” and explains:

“You shall not call her name Sarai,” which implies {by its final yud} “a princess to me,” and not to others. Rather, “Sarah,” unqualified, shall be her name, meaning that she will be a princess over all.

Accordingly, this is exactly like the change from “Avram” to “Avraham.” Being “a princess over **all**” surely includes the particular case of “Sarai, a princess to me.” Why, then, did the *yud* “move from its place”?

Moreover, precisely according to **Rashi’s** own explanation of the difference between “Sarai” (“a princess to me”) and “Sarah” (“a princess over all”), the “*yud* of Sarai” should have an **even stronger** claim and demand (to remain in the name Sarah) than the *reish* of Avram:

The Gemara’s wording:²⁸ “At first she became Sarai, a princess to **her own nation**, and in the end she became Sarah, a princess to the entire world.” On that reading, the change is exactly like the difference between “Avram” (a father to Aram, his nation) and “Avraham” (a father to the whole world).

Rashi, however, **departs** from the wording of our Sages and says that “Sarai” implies “(a princess) **to me**.” The verse speaks of **Avraham** as the one calling her by this name (as its precise wording indicates: “And G-d said to Avraham, ‘**Sarai your wife — you shall not call her name...**’”). It follows that “Sarai” means she is a “princess” over **Avraham**.²⁹

[This is similar to what the Midrash says:³⁰ “She was mistress (*gevurah*) over her husband. Everywhere {else}, the man decrees, but here (with Sarah): ‘All³¹ that Sarah says to you, listen to her voice.’”]

28) *Brachos* 13a; *Tosefta* there (1:14). *Bereishis Rabbah* 47:1 reads “to herself” [לעצמה], but *Yefeh To’ar* (complete edition) and *Yalkut Shimoni* on this verse read “to her people” [לעמה]; see Maharzu and *Rashash* there, and the Theodor-Albeck edition.

29) The commentators (*Re’em*; *Levush*; and others) read Rashi as “to her nation,” like the Gemara, but that contradicts the **plain** sense of “to me.” (Rashi

on the Talmud, *Brachos*, *ibid.*, cited in the *Re’em*, writes “implying ‘my princess’ [שרתי],” not “**to me**.”) See also the Alshich and the *Shach* on this verse.

30) *Bereishis Rabbah*, *ibid.* (*Yefeh To’ar* there, however, takes this as an explanation of the name Sarah, not “Sarai.” See fn. 38.)

31) *Bereishis* 21:12.

Accordingly, the opposite seems more logical. In the name Avraham, the letter *reish* cannot have a strong demand, even if it were **not** placed in his name, since its meaning remained (as part of “(a father to) the whole world”).

With “Sarah,” by contrast, the fact that she became “a princess over **all**” offers no proof that this also includes “Sarai, a princess **to me**.” Such authority runs contrary to what was established (by the Torah), namely that the **husband** holds authority (as cited above from the Midrash), as the verse states **earlier**:³² “and he shall rule over you.” It follows that removing the *yud* from Sarah **removes** the meaning of the *yud* (that is, “Sarai, a princess to me”) {— an authority G-d evidently did grant her, as the verse states, “All that Sarah says to you, listen to her voice”}!

One could answer, with great difficulty, that Avraham had by then ascended to a higher level, as G-d told him, “Walk before Me and **be perfect**,”³³ so that after his ascent³⁴ Sarah was **no longer**³⁵ a “princess” over Avraham ({and no longer} “Sarai, a princess to me”).

This, however, cannot be said, for two reasons:

- (a) It would then follow that the change of name, “Sarai your wife — you shall not call her name Sarai, for Sarah is her name,” was (also) a **descent** for her!
- (b) The verse “All that Sarah says to you, listen to her voice” appears **later**, in *Parshas Vayeira*, **much time** after G-d said, “you shall not call her name Sarai, for Sarah is her name.” {Clearly, then, even after Avraham’s ascent and the change of her name, Sarah still held this authority over him.}

7.

An Implication, Not a Status

This will be understood in light of Rashi’s precise wording on the verse “you shall not call her name Sarai”:

...which implies “a princess to me,” and not to others. Rather, “Sarah,” unqualified, shall be her name, meaning that she will be a princess over all.

32) *Bereishis* 3:16. See also Radak on our parsha, 17:15.

33) *Bereishis* 17:1.

34) Note the distinction Rashi draws between Avraham’s laughter and Sarah’s (**Rashi** on *Bereishis* 17:17).

35) The *Shach* on the Torah, on this verse, somewhat implies this: “And I have made you the father of a multitude of nations’... and she is secondary to you.”

For seemingly, Rashi should have said (**similar** to our Sages' wording³⁶): "At first {she was} 'a princess to me,' and now she will be 'a princess over all.'" This would parallel **Rashi's** wording regarding Avraham: "At first... a father... to Aram... and now a father to the whole world."

The answer is as follows:

According to Rashi's interpretation (which follows the plain meaning of Scripture), Sarah indeed was **not** a "princess" over Avraham (even when she was called "Sarai"). As discussed earlier, in the **plain meaning** of Scripture there is no necessity at all for people's names to relate to (the life of) the person who bears them. The same applies in our case. The name "Sarai" (which {her father} **Haran** gave her³⁷) did not mean that she was an exception to the decree "and he shall rule over you," as if, on the contrary, she was a "princess" over her husband³⁸ (Avraham)!

[As for the verse "All that Sarah says to you, listen to her voice": (a) it was said years later, and (b) **more importantly**, it was said as a **novel** directive.]

This is why Rashi chooses his words precisely: "You shall not call her name Sarai, which **implies** 'a princess to me,' and not to others. Rather, Sarah... meaning that she will be a princess over all." Rashi does not mean that "at first" she actually was "Sarai, a princess to me." That is merely what the name implies,³⁹ {not a description of her actual status}.

Yet even this implication had to be ruled out. Being that G-d now wishes to grant her authority (as a "princess") and to express it in her name, she therefore cannot remain with the name "Sarai" (even though "Sarai" too derives from the word for authority⁴⁰). That name "**implies** (at least) 'a princess **to me**,' and **not to others**," while the authority G-d is granting Sarah is that of "a princess over all." {Unlike the *reish*, whose meaning, "a father to Aram," fits within "the whole world," the *yud* contributes only a limitation, "to me, and not to others," which contradicts "over all." Its meaning, then, has no place in the name Sarah.}

36) Cited above, Section 6.

37) As **Rashi** himself states on *Bereishis* 11:29, "Yiskah — this is Sarah," and Haran is "the father of Yiskah" (*Noach*, *ibid.*). See above, fn. 23.

38) This requires slight further analysis, since Rashi on *Bereishis*, *ibid.*, writes that "Sarah is an **expression of authority**." The Rebbe notes that

"Sarah" there (and in "Yiskah — this is Sarah"; cf. *Megillah* 14a; *Sanhedrin* 69b; *Targum Yonasan*) is a copyist's "correction" for "Sarai," as in the verse.

39) Had it meant "a princess to me," she should have been called "my princess" [שרתי]. See fn. 29.

40) See fn. 38.

8.

Drawn Down, Yet Undiminished

The “wine of Torah” {— the inner dimension —} in Rashi’s commentary is as follows:

The explanation above of why the *reish* “did not move from its place” (namely, that the **meaning** of the *reish* remained afterward as well) also accords with the inner explanation of the two names “Avram” and “Avraham.”

The Alter Rebbe explains in *Torah Or*⁴¹ that “Avram” consists of two words, *av ram* [אב רם],⁴² meaning “intellect hidden from all thought.” “Father” (*av*) alludes to wisdom (*Chochmah*),⁴³ and “lofty” (*ram*) indicates a high, transcendent intellect, “hidden from all thought.”

The change from “Avram” to “Avraham” (“father of a multitude of nations”) alludes to **revelation**. Avraham was given the power to draw down the “intellect hidden from all thought” all the way to “a multitude of nations.” He could explain even a “wondrous intellect”⁴⁴ (even one that is (in itself) “beyond the capacity of human intellect to contain”⁴⁵) in a manner that “even the simplest person can understand it.”

It follows that the meaning of the letter *reish* (“(*av*) *ram*”) is present in the name Avraham as well. The “intellect hidden from all thought” is there, but as it shines and is revealed below, all the way to “a multitude of nations.”⁴⁶

One might think, however, that when the “intellect hidden from all thought” is drawn down to “a multitude of nations,” it undergoes a descent, G-d forbid. To this Rashi says that the *reish* “**did not move from its place.**” It remained in its “place” **and level**,⁴⁷ exactly as in the name “Avram” (“intellect hidden from all thought”). {Even as the simplest person grasps it, what he receives is not a diluted version but that same lofty wisdom itself.}

For this is Avraham’s achievement (and therefore an elevation {— the change from Avram to Avraham is an ascent, not a descent}): through him, “above” and “below” are joined, so that the “intellect hidden from all thought” is drawn down, **as it is**, into “a

41) Beginning of our parsha. At length in *Maamarei Admur HaZaken, Parshiyos*, vol. 1, beginning of our parsha (and the sources cited in the marginal notes there). And elsewhere.

42) See *Zohar (Sisrei Torah)*, our parsha, 79b.

43) *Tanya*, ch. 3.

44) The *maamar* beginning *Kol HaNehneh*, 5689 (in *Sefer HaMaamarim Kuntreisim*, vol. 1), ch. 9.

45) The *maamar* beginning *Mi Heir*, 5703, beginning of ch. 9.

46) See also *Torah Or*, our parsha, end of the *maamar* beginning *VeLo Yikarei Od*.

47) See Rambam, *Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah* 2:6.

multitude of nations.”⁴⁸ {The highest wisdom reaches the simplest people without losing any of its loftiness, and that union of highest and lowest is greater than the wisdom remaining hidden above.}

9.

A Father to One's Own Place First

The lesson from this for our Divine service is as follows:

As is known,⁴⁹ the qualities of the three Patriarchs were passed down to every Jew as an inheritance.⁵⁰ The same applies to the quality of “Avraham,” “father of a multitude of nations.” Every Jew has the power to make an impact on “a multitude of nations,” i.e., **throughout the entire world.**

He must know, however, that “the *reish*... a father... to Aram, which was **his place**... did not move from its place”:

Although a Jew must make an impact throughout the entire world, he must know that first and foremost he has an obligation to influence **his own place and surroundings.**⁵¹ Only afterward, once he has become “a father to his own place,” can he be “a father to the whole world.”

From a Sichah delivered on Shabbos Parshas Lech Lecha, 5744 [1983]

48) See at length *Torah Or*, beginning of our parsha (11b–c; *Maamarei Admur HaZaken*, *ibid.*), which explains that this is not a “descent.” On the contrary, specifically “this descent is a very great elevation, for the light of *Kesser* {the Divine ‘crown’} is drawn down.”

49) See *Torah Or*, beginning of *Va’eira*, and elsewhere.

50) For “only three are called ‘Patriarchs’” (*Brachos* 16b; *Torah Or*, *ibid.*).

51) As in the ruling {regarding *tzedakah*}, “the poor of your own city take precedence” (*Bava Metzia* 71a, top; Rambam, *Hilchos Matnos Aniyim* 7:13; *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch*, *Choshen Mishpat*, beginning of sec. 97; *Shulchan Aruch Admur HaZaken*, *Choshen Mishpat*, beginning of *Hilchos Halva’ah*).