

וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָם אֶת־סָרַי אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאֶת־לוֹט בֶּן־אָחִיו וְאֶת־כָּל־רְכוּשָׁם אֲשֶׁר רָכָשׁוּ וְאֶת־הַנַּפְשׁ אֲשֶׁר־עָשׂוּ בְּחָרָן
וַיֵּצְאוּ לָלֶכֶת אֶרְצָה כְּנַעַן כו' (בראשית יב,ה)

ABRAM TOOK SARAI HIS WIFE, LOT HIS NEPHEW, ALL HIS ACQUISITIONS HE HAD ACQUIRED, AND THE SOULS
THEY HAD MADE IN CHARAN, AND THEY LEFT TO GO TO CANAAAN.... (Bereshit 12:5)

רש"י: אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בְּחָרָן. שֶׁהִכְנִיסוּם תַּחַת כַּנְפֵי הַשְּׁכִינָה. אַבְרָהָם מְגִיר אֶת הָאֲנָשִׁים וְסָרָה מְגִירַת הַנָּשִׁים,
וּמַעְלָה עָלֵיהֶם הַכְּתוּב כְּאִלּוּ עָשׂוּם.

Rashi: THAT THEY HAD MADE IN CHARAN. That they had brought under the wings of the Shechinah.
Abraham converted the men, and Sarah converted the women. Scripture holds them up as if they had
made them.

Siach Sarphei Kodesh

And the souls they had made in Charan. In the name of
the Chiddushei HaRIM of blessed memory.

Rashi's interpretation is surprising: Abraham and Sarah
made converts!? We don't find this in Torah. "Israel" is
the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Where
were all these converts? Where did they go?

He said it was thus: So long as Abraham was alive, they
would attach themselves to him, and were Israelites.

But when Abraham died and Isaac began to lead the
world, showing them God's ways, they separated from
him, not wanting to stick with him.

For his way seemed wrong to them, because he did not
lead in his father's way, but in a different way, as we
know: Abraham is Chesed; Isaac is Gevurah.

So, when his way did not seem holy to them (for he
didn't lead in his father way), they reasoned that he
lacked his father Abraham's greatness, and they left him.

They became simple people, bit by bit, until they had
reverted to their former ways and become complete
gentiles.

He concluded: From this we see that you can only go to
the Tzaddik of your own generation, even if his way
seems wrong

For if not, you will fall from your rung, despite what you
had had had from the first Rebbe. Understand this.

שיח שרפי קדש

וְאֶת הַנַּפְשׁ אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בְּחָרָן. בְּשֵׁם
הַחֲדוּשֵׁי הַרִי"מ זצ"ל

תְּמוּהַ פְּרוּשׁ רִש"י שֶׁפָּרַשׁ דְּאַבְרָהָם מְגִיר
אֶת הַגֵּרִים וְכֵן שָׂרָה, דְּלֹא מְצִינוּ בַּתּוֹרָה
שֶׁיִשְׂרָאֵל רַק בְּנֵי אַבְרָהָם יִצְחָק וְיַעֲקֹב, וְהֵיכֵן
כָּל הַנִּי גֵרִים וְלֹאן הִלְכוּ,

וְאָמַר כֵּן דְּכָל זְמַן שֶׁאַבְרָהָם הָיָה חַי הָיוּ
דְּבוֹקִים אֶצְל אַבְרָהָם וְהָיוּ יִשְׂרָאֵלִים,

אֲבָל כְּשִׁמַּת אַבְרָהָם וְהִתְחִיל לְנַהֵג יִצְחָק
אֶת הָעוֹלָם וְלַהוֹרָה לָהֶם דְּרָכֵי ד' נִפְרְדּוּ
מִמֶּנּוּ וְלֹא הָיוּ רוֹצִים לְהִיּוֹת דְּבָקִים אֶצְלוֹ

כִּי לֹא נִרְאָה לָהֶם דְּרָכּוֹ לְאִשְׁרָאֵל כִּי לֹא נִהַג
כְּדֶרֶךְ אָבִיו רַק כְּדֶרֶךְ אַחֵר, כִּי־דוּעַ
דְּאַבְרָהָם חֲסֵד וְיִצְחָק גְּבוּרָה,

וְלִזְאוֹת כְּאִשְׁרָאֵל לֹא נִרְאָה לָהֶם דְּרָכּוֹ בְּקִדּוּשׁ
לְאִשְׁרָאֵל לֹא נִהַג כְּדֶרֶךְ אָבִיו הָיוּ סְבוּרִים
שֶׁאֵינְנוּ גְדוֹל כְּאַבְרָהָם אָבִיו וְהִלְכוּ מִמֶּנּוּ

וְנִעְשׂוּ אֲנָשִׁים פְּשוּטִים מְעַט מְעַט עַד
שֶׁחִזְרוּ לְסוּרָן וְנִעְשׂוּ גוֹיִם גְּמוּרִים,

וְסִיִּים מִזֶּה נִרְאָה שֶׁאֵין לְאִישׁ לְנִסְעַ רַק
לְצַדִּיק דּוֹרוֹ אִם כִּי לֹא נִרְאָה לוֹ דְּרָכֵי

דְּאֵי לֹא יִפֹּל מִמִּדְרַגְתּוֹ וְגַם בְּמָה שֶׁהָיָה לוֹ
מִהַרְבֵּי הָרֵאשׁוֹן וְהַבּוֹ,

LECH L'CHA

Similarly, I heard that R. Hanokh of Alexander said at the beginning of his leadership:

Behold the Gerer Rebbe [meaning, the Chiddushei HaRIM] was the foundation for holy service.

However, a foundation alone is nothing if one does not build walls and a roof around it,

For then even the foundation rots and comes to nothing

As our own eyes see.

One must immediately build walls around the foundation.

לְרֵ-לְךָ

וְכֹן שְׁמַעְתִּי שְׁאָמַר שְׂרִיר הָעֵנִיף
מֵאֶלְכֶסֶד זַ"ל בְּתַחֲלַת הַנְּהָגָתוֹ

הִנֵּה הַרְבֵּי מַגוּר הָיָה יְסוּד לְעִבּוּדַת ה'
וְתַבְרָךְ

אָמְנָם יְסוּד לְבַד אֵינוֹ כְּלוּם אִם לֹא יִבְנֶה
לְהַקְפּוֹ חוֹמוֹתָיו וְגַג

כִּי אִזּוֹ גַם הַיְסוּד נִרְקַב וְלֹא נַעֲשֶׂה כְּלוּם,

כְּאֲשֶׁר עֵינֵינוּ רוֹאוֹת

וְצָרִיךְ תְּקַף וּמִיד לְבָנוֹת סָבִיב הַיְסוּד
חוֹמוֹתָיו:

The Wheel and the Innermost Point

On an evening in late summer, Rabbi Yitzhak Meir [the Chiddushei HaRIM] was walking back and forth in the court of the House of Study in the company of his grandson [Rabbi Yehuda Aryeh Leib of Ger, the Sefet Emet]. It was *Rosh Chodesh* Elul and the new moon was in the sky. The *tzaddik* asked whether they had blown the *shofar*, for this should be done a month before *Rosh Hashana*. Then he said: “When one becomes a leader, all the necessary things must be at hand: a House of Study and tables and chairs, and one person is made the manager, one the servant, and so on. And then Satan comes and wrests out the innermost point, but everything remains just as it was and the wheel keeps on turning, only that the innermost point is missing.” The rabbi raised his voice: “But, so help us God, we must not let it happen!”

~Adapted from Buber's *Tales of the Hasidim*