

ONLY THE GOOD DIE YOUNG

Background

After months of witnessing HASHEM's mastery over nature, the Jewish people were commanded to commit the ultimate affront to the Mitzrim: to take their very god, tie it to the bedpost, and prepare it to be slaughtered on the 14th of Nissan. They were then to take the blood of the *korbon* and smear it on their doorposts as a sign to protect them. Additionally, they were told that since all firstborn Mitzrim were to be killed, no Jew should leave his house that night. Rashi explains that even though the blood on the doorpost was a sign that the house belonged to a Jew, if a Jew were to walk in the street, he would be in danger. **“Once permission is given to the destroyer to destroy, he doesn't distinguish between the innocent and the guilty.”**

ספר שמות פרק יב

כב) ולקחתם אגדת אזוב וטבלתם בדם אשר בסף והגעתם אל המשקוף ואל שתי המזוזות מן הדם אשר בסף ואתם לא תצאו איש מפתח ביתו עד בקר

And you shall take a bundle of hyssops and dip it in the blood in the basin, and you shall touch it to the lintel and the two doorposts, and you shall not go out – no man from the entrance of his home that night, until the morning.

רש"י על שמות פרק יב פסוק כב

ואתם לא תצאו וגו' - מגיד שמאחר שנתנה רשות למשחית לחבל אינו מבחין בין צדיק לרשע ולילה רשות למחבלים הוא שנא' (תהלים קד) בו תרמוש כל חיתו יער

Rashi: And you shall not go out: *This teaches us that once permission has been given to the destroyer to destroy, he doesn't distinguish between the tzadik and the rasha.*

Questions

It seems that Rashi is saying that had a Jew remained in his house that evening, he would not have been killed, but had he left his house, he might die – not because he was guilty of any sin, and not because he deserved to die, but because **“once the destroyer is given permission to kill,”** then anyone in his path is in danger.

This Rashi is quite difficult to understand. If someone was innocent, then how is it possible that he would die? The basis of our entire belief system is that there is no power in this world other than HASHEM. We accept that all decisions are directly guided and carried out by Him alone. So how is it possible that someone undeserving of death would have been killed anyway, just for going outside that evening? Where is the justice?