

## Monumental Presence

”וַתָּמָת רָחֵל וַתִּקָּבֶר בְּדֶרֶךְ אֶפְרַתָּה הוּא בֵּית לְחָם. וַיִּצַּב יַעֲקֹב מִצֵּבָה  
עַל קִבְרָתָהּ הוּא מִצֵּבֶת קִבְרַת רָחֵל עַד הַיּוֹם” (בראשית לה: יט-כ).

תני רבי שמעון בן גמליאל: אין עושין נפשות לצדיקים, דברייהם  
הם זכרוניהם.

דבר אחר: מָה רָאָה אָבִינוּ יַעֲקֹב לְקַבֹּר אֶת רָחֵל בְּדֶרֶךְ אֶפְרַת, אֶלָּא  
צָפָה אָבִינוּ יַעֲקֹב שֶׁהַגְּלוּיּוֹת עֲתִידוֹת לַעֲבוֹר שָׁם. לְפִיכָךְ קִבְרָהּ שָׁם  
כְּדִי שֶׁתְּהֵא מְבַקֶּשֶׁת עֲלֵיהֶם רַחֲמִים, הִדָּא הוּא דְכָתִיב: קוֹל בְּרָמָה  
נִשְׁמָע נְהִי בְּכִי תַמְרוּרִים רָחֵל מְבַכָּה עַל בְּנֵיהָ (ירמיה לא: יד).

*Rachel died and was buried on the road to Ephrat— now Bethlehem. And Jacob affixed a fixed marker on her grave which remains the fixed marker of Rachel's grave to this very day (Genesis 35:19-20).*

Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel taught: One does not make grave stones for the righteous. Their words and deeds are their memorials.

Another way of considering the matter: What did our father Jacob perceive that made him bury Rachel on the road to Ephrat? Our father Jacob foresaw that future exiles would pass through that place. Therefore he buried her there in order that she might pray for mercy on their behalf, as it is written: *A cry is heard in Ramah—wailing, bitter weeping—Rachel weeping for her children. [She refuses to be comforted for her children who are gone. Thus said the Lord: Restrain your voice from weeping, your eyes from shedding tears. There is a reward for your labor—declares the Lord. They shall return from the enemy's land. And there is hope for your future—declares the Lord: Your children shall return to their country.] (Jeremiah 31 14 [-17])*

Genesis Rabbah 82:10