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Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim

IN THE HEART OF THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

The Torah of Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner

Parashat Bamidbar 5768 - #38

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Would you like to ask Rav Aviner a question? E-mail mororly@bezeqint.net and the question will be brought to Ha-Rav and I will e-mail you the answer.

In honor of Yom Yerushalayim

Redeeming Houses in Yerushalayim

[Part 3 of 3]

Sefer Le-Mikdashech Tuv, pp. 223-228

[Dealing with the question if there is a halachic obligation to redeem houses and land in Yerushalayim]

8. Furthermore, the Halachah says that the connection to Yerushalayim even prevails over the connection between a husband and his wife, as the Gemara says "everyone ascends to Yerushalayim" (Ketubot 110b). This means that if one member of a couple desires to establish their residence in Yerushalayim and the second refuses, then the financial results of the divorce regarding the Ketubah favors the one who desires living in Yerushalayim. We also find this Halachah regarding making aliyah as it says "all ascend to the Land of Israel" (ibid.), since settling in the Land of Israel is an obligation. The Ramban even writes that a woman who refuses to come with her husband to Israel will be considered as rebellious (Ramban on the Torah, Bamidbar 33:53). While there is no obligation to live particularly in Yerushalayim, since we must settle the entirety of our Land, the merit of settlement in Yerushalayim contains implications which do not exist in the other parts of the Land.

9. The famous halachic authority, the Chatam Sofer, therefore wrote that just as the poor of the Land of Israel take precedence over the poor of outside of the Land, so too do the poor of Yerushalayim take precedence over the poor of the remaining cities in the Land (Shut Chatam Sofer #233-234). He explained, however, that this precedence is only to precede and not to reject others. For example, if there is not enough bread and water for everyone, then Yerushalayim takes precedence, but once the residents of Yerushalayim have bread and water, we do not give them everything while the remaining residents of Israel die from hunger and thirst. The intent is that the residents of Yerushalayim take precedence in all matters over

those who live in the remaining cities in the Land of Israel (Igrot Re'iyah vol. 1, 34). The current reality is that the living conditions of the Jewish settlement which is renewing itself in the Old City of Yerushalayim and its surrounding area are more difficult than in the other cities of Israel. Maran (our revered teacher) Rav Kook also emphasized that while we should not make divisions in the Land of Israel and we must certainly strengthen the entire Land, we must also remember that Yerushalayim takes precedence and that the holiness of all of the cities of Israel is drawn from Yerushalayim (Igrot Re'iyah vol. 1, 34).

10. I heard that one of the great sages of our generation, Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Ahron Soloveitchik, was once asked: if a philanthropist wanted to donate a hundred million dollars to Torah institutions and he left the decision to you, where would you recommend? He responded: To build Yerushalayim within the walls (from Ha-Rav Yaakov Marcus). This is true all the more so when we unite the settlement of Yerushalayim with the Torah learning of the yeshiva, and the light of Torah continues to burst forth from the ruins which continue to be built. Fortunate is the one who merits being a partner with the Holy One Blessed Be He in the fulfillment of the great promise "and build Yerushalayim, the Holy City, speedily in our days" (Birchat Ha-Mazon).



Ha-Rav answers hundreds of text message questions a week. Some appear in the parashah sheets "Ma'ayanei Ha-Yeshu'ah" and "Olam Ha-Katan." Here's a sample:

Q: It is permissible to wear tzitzit if one of the strings ripped off?

A: It is permissible after the fact until you get it fixed, but this is only if the knots are still intact.

Q: It is permissible for a boy to wear a bracelet in support of Sederot even though it is red?

A: Yes. Because it is popular and many people have them, it does not attract one's attention.

Q: Is it permissible to learn the book "Chadarav" which are personal thoughts of Rav Kook?

A: It is permissible in small doses.

Q: Where was G-d during the Holocaust?

A: This is too deep of a question to belittle by answering on a text message.

Q: I am in the process of repenting. Is it permissible to recite the "Vidui" (confession) outside of the regular davening during the month of Nisan?

A: It is very good.

Q: I found a supermarket shopping cart in the street. Am I obligated to return it?

A: It is enough to call and tell them where it is.

Q: Is it permissible for a ten year old boy to swim in a pool where there is mixed swimming?

A: No, all prohibitions begin at the age of education which is approximately six years old.

Q: Is it permissible to make a vow that if Hashem heals someone, I will accept upon myself a certain practice?

A: Yes, this is called a vow during a distressful time. You must obviously fulfill the vow.

Q: Should a blessing be recited for using on a mint-favored toothpick?

A: No, it is not food.

Q: Am I obligated to taste from the Kiddush wine or is it enough for me to hear the Kiddush?

A: You are not obligated, but it is mitzvah from the outset to drink. The general custom is to pass out some of the Kiddush to everyone.

Q: I have had an unpleasant experience during my "Sherut Leumi – National Service." Am I obligated to relate this to a young woman who comes to look at my position for next year?

A: Yes, with the condition that it is balanced and truthful, and that you also relate the positives.

Q: May women recite the blessing over the new moon?

A: They are exempt and the custom is for them not to recite it.

Stories of Rabbenu – Our Rabbi

Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook

The Famous Speech – "Mizmor Yud Tet"

Each year on Yom Ha-Atzmaut, our Rabbi delivered a speech discussing the year of the State of Israel and the corresponding number Psalm. On the Yom Ha-Atzmaut before the Six-Day War (three weeks earlier), our Rabbi, delivered his nearly prophetic speech "Mizmor Yud Tet" (Psalm 19). Who could have imagined that three weeks later, Israel would return to the Sinai, the Golan, Yehudah, Shomron and the entire city of Yerushalayim?!

Nineteen years ago, on the first night when news of the decision of the non-Jews [the United Nations' vote in favor of the establishment of Jewish sovereignty in part of the Land of Israel - 17 Kislev 5708 - Nov. 29, 1947], reached us, "Then the nations will say" (Tehillim 149:2), I was unable to go out to the rejoicing on Yafo Street and throughout the surrounding areas of Yerushalayim. There is no need to tell how all of us are connected. I am bound with a holy connection, a connection of holiness, of life and of soul, to the State, but I could not participate in the rejoicing at these hours [Our Rabbi cried when he said this sentence]. I sat alone and silent, a burden lay upon me. During those first hours, I could not resign myself to what had been done with the words of Hashem in the prophecy "They divided My Land" (Yoel 4:2). It was not possible for me with all of my 248 limbs and 365 sinews, with all of my soul, my spirit and my being, to go out, "They divided My Land!" Where is our Hebron - have we forgotten her?! Where is our Shechem - have we forgotten her?! Where is our Yericho - have we forgotten her?! Where is all that lies beyond the Jordan River?! Where is each and every clod of earth, each and every part, each four cubits of the Land of Hashem?! Is it in our hands to relinquish even one milimeter of it? G-d forbid! I was therefore unable then, in that state, when I was completely wounded, torn to pieces. They divided My Land! They divided the Land of Hashem! Political considerations...I could not go out to dance and rejoice. Thus was my state on this night and during these hours. The next day or two, the man of the covenant of our holiness, Ha-Gaon Rav Yaakov Moshe Charlap z"l, came. He felt a need to come and how could he not come, and where would he go if not to this place? He came to us, to that small and holy room [the room that had been the study of Maran Ha-Rav Kook in the old building of the yeshiva - "Beit Ha-Rav"]. We were in silence. We both sat in shock, in an awestruck state. We were in silence for a few moments, we regained our strength and both of us said together those words of holiness: "This is the Hashem's doing, it is a wonder in our eyes" (Tehillim 118:23). The seal has been affixed! (Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah - Eretz Yisrael, pp. 259-266)

On the holiday of Shavuot after the Six-Day War, on the way to the Kotel, when our Rabbi walked with great effort because his legs exceedingly hurt him, a student asked him: "How did our Rabbi know?" Our Rabbi responded: "I did not prepare a speech, I just spoke." (Tzvi Kodesh, p. 269)

After the famous talk "Mizmor Yud Tet" which was followed by the Six-Day War, we asked our Rabbi: how did you know to mention the wholeness of the Land and your response to the decision to divide it particularly at this time (since he gave a talk every Yom Ha-Atzmaut)? He answered: It is truly wonderful since for nineteen years I did not tell this story, and I only recalled it this year. (Gadol Shimusha p. 89)

A woman said to our Rabbi that she bemoans the fact that she was not there on the Yom Ha-Atzmaut before the Six-Day War during the talk when our Rabbi announced: "Where is our Hevron? Where is our Shechem?" Our Rabbi responded to her in a fatherly voice: "You were!" (Iturei Cohanim #242 in the name of Geulah Cohen)

Sometime after the talk, a young man from Etzel visited our Rabbi and told him how distressed he was about the truncated and divided State. Our Rabbi said to him: "Why are you sad? This is the beginning of the Redemption. One needs to rejoice," and he greatly encouraged him. It only became known to him later that our Rabbi himself was also sad over this, but he nonetheless encouraged others. (Tzvi Kodesh, p. 269)

Along with his sorrow, our Rabbi saw in this UN decision a great miracle of the intermingling of Hashem with human free choice. (Gadol Shimusha, p. 30)



Shut She'eilat Shlomo - Questions of Jewish Law

Visiting the Cemetery

Q: Is it permissible to visit a "kever tzadik – grave of a righteous person" during the first year of marriage? Is it permissible for a pregnant woman?

A: One may visit a cemetery in both cases.

Special thank you to Fred Casden for editing the Ateret Yerushalayim Parshah Sheet