



PO Box 1076 Jerusalem 91009 * Tel. 972-2-628-4101

Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim

IN THE HEART OF THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM

From the Teachings of Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner

Parashat Devarim 5768 - #47

Prepared by Rabbi Mordechai Friedfertig

RavAviner-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

archived at www.ateret.org.il/new/home.php

Would you like to ask Rav Aviner a question? E-mail mororty@bezeqint.net and the answer will come from Rav Aviner in 1 of 3 ways: 1. Drawn from his published material. 2. From my own notes of Ha-Rav's answers to questions. 3. If the question has not, to my knowledge, been answered in either of these sources, I will ask the question directly from the Rav.

Laying the Cornerstone for the Temple

[Sefer Le-Mikdashech Tuv, pp. 193-194]

It is known that our Rabbi, Rav Zvi Yehudah, would emphasize the words of the Rambam that the establishment of the Kingship of Israel precedes the building of the Temple, and our current mission is not to build the Temple but to build the Kingship of Israel. Even though, with G-d's help, we have merited a Government which has the status of kingship to a certain extent, it is certainly not a complete kingship, and we need to focus all of our energy in this direction.

The [former] Chief Sephardic Rabbi, Rav Mordechai Eliyahu Shlit"a, accepts the opinion of Rashi (see Rosh Hashanah 30a and Sukkah 41a and Tosafot ibid. based on Shemot 15:17) that the Temple will descend from the Heavens fully built in a miraculous fashion, and there is no place for our endeavors, and certainly not to lay the cornerstone. But even according to those who disagree and hold like the Rambam (see Hilchot Beit Ha-Bechirah 1:1 based on Shemot 25:9) that we are the ones who are to build the Temple, it is incumbent that this mission is begun only by someone who is capable of completing it. The prophet Natan therefore forbade King David to be involved in the building of the Temple and did not even permit him to lay the cornerstone since a symbolic ceremony has no value. The [former] Ashkenazic Chief Rabbi, Rav Avraham Shapira [ztz"l], said that the laying of a cornerstone is only a comedy and theatrics devoid of value in reality, and it is impossible to relate to theatrics and propaganda in such serious matters as the building of the Temple.



Text Message Responsa

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: Does someone who changes his name also change his luck?
A: Together with great repentance. Rambam.
Q: Is it forbidden to look at non-kosher animals?
A: It is permissible. Although the book "Kav Ha-Yashar" says that one should limit one's looking, this is a stringency, not widely accepted.
Q: Can a father go to his son, who is a dentist, for dental work, when the procedure may cause bleeding?
A: It is permissible (Beit Yosef, Yoreh Deah 241).
Q: Should we send aid to different places in the world when disasters occur?
A: It is certainly proper, but we should first provide for Jews in distress.
Q: Does a check that I give to a groom and bride count as tzedakah?
A: Only if they are poor, because tzedakah is for the poor. The amount which you give them over what you would have given them had they not been poor is considered tzedakah.
Q: Should "Kiddush Levana" be recited facing the moon, Jerusalem or does it not matter?
A: It does not matter.
Q: Sometimes I have to interrupt people and tell them exactly what I think about them in order for them to better themselves. Is it better to hold it in and lie?
A: Express your feelings without anger.
Q: Two drinks came out of a pop machine, what should I do?
A: They are both yours, since the second is "hefker – ownerless."
Q: Is a sentence like: "If only the Messiah would redeem us from the Exile" true today? Is our period called "Exile"?
A: We are in intermediate period – the beginning of our redemption. The building of the Land, the return of the exiles, our authority over the Land, the wars of Israel and the return of the Torah to the Land of Israel has already begun.
Q: What is the proper sleeve length for girls?
A: It should always cover the elbow.
Q: Why don't people take on being a "nazir" in our days?
A: Being a "nazir" is a very high level, and before one reaches that level, one must fulfill the mitzvot which we are obligated to perform.

Stories of Rabbenu – Our Rabbi

Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook

Love of Israel

Why was our Rabbi in pain?

It happened in the year 5732 that our Rabbi could not fall asleep. He roamed around his house like a caged lion and screamed: "Something terrible has happened in Israel!" In the morning one of the ministers of the Israeli Government was found dead after he committed suicide following suspicions which were raised against him.

On a Friday at the beginning of Adar 5742, two weeks before he ascended on high, our Rabbi's fever rose without an understandable reason and intense pain racked him. The doctors could not explain it. Our Rabbi was then informed that the Minister of Defense established checkpoints so that no one could get to Yamit in the Sinai Desert. Despite his weakness, our Rabbi wanted to detach the IV so that he could go to Yamit. He yelled: "Is he the owner of the Land of Israel?" and he forcefully said that we must display self-sacrifice for every four amot of the Land of Israel. (Ha-Rav Yosi Bedichi – Iturei Yerushalayim #22)

After our Rabbi's surgery, his situation was stable and he was resting comfortably in the hospital. Suddenly, he began sighing terribly. When they asked what was hurting, he responded: "The Nation of Israel hurts me." Later on, it became known that the Israeli athletes were murdered by terrorists at the Munich Olympics at that exact moment. This is despite the fact that our Rabbi later said in pain: "What were they searching for on this cursed, impure land?"

Personal and communal suffering

When our Rabbi was informed about the murder of the Israeli athletes in Munich, he groaned and yelled in great pain. The doctors said, however, there was no reason for this amount of pain from the wound in his foot. Our Rabbi said: "What do you know? I do not know where my suffering ends and the suffering of Klal Yisrael begins." (Ha-Rav Yosef Kelner – Iturei Yerushalayim #22)

A Rabbi does not have privacy

It once happened that the door between our Rabbi bedroom and where he gave classes in his house was open. A student pointed it out and said that perhaps they should close the door to ensure our Rabbi's private life. He responded: "A Rabbi needs to know that he is not a private individual." (Ha-Rav Binyanim Eisner – Iturei Yerushalayim #22)



Shut She'eilat Shlomo - Questions of Jewish Law

Reusing stamps

Q: The postal service in America crosses lines through the stamps on a letter to show it was processed and therefore not allowing you to reuse these stamps. Sometimes are no lines through the stamps, can you reuse these stamps?

A: It is certainly forbidden. Rav Menashe Klein in Shut Mishneh Halachot (vol. 6 #288) wrote that a stamp is how a Government charges a person for the service provided of delivering mail. If a Government - as the Government of the United States does - has equal laws for all of its citizens, the laws of "Dina De-Malchuta Dina" (the law of the land is the law) apply. Therefore, it is certainly forbidden to reuse a stamp as the law states that you must pay a fee for sending a letter through the post office.

Tearing a garment for a parent and the Temple Mount

Q: If a person has a funeral of his mother or father on Har Ha-Zeytim (Mount of Olives) and before he tears his garment for his parent and he sees the Temple Mount for which he has not torn his garment yet, how should he act? Tear for both? Can he extend the tear for his parent or does he need a new tear for the Temple?

A: After the Six-Day War in 1967, our Rabbi, Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook held that there is no longer an obligation to tear one's garment upon seeing the Temple Mount. Here is a quote from Rav Aviner's book "Tal Chermon" (Moadim, p. 218) on the issue: "Loss of an independent State in the Land of Israel is the halachic definition of destruction. According to Halachah, "One who sees the cities of Yehudah in their destruction must tear his clothes"

(Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 561). Rav Yosef Karo wrote, "As long as the cities are ruled by non-Jews – even if they are settled by Jews – they are termed 'destroyed'" (Beit Yosef on the Tur, Orach Chaim ibid. and cited in the Magen Avraham and Mishnah Berurah). In other words, despite the fact that the cities of the Land of Israel are populated by Jews, if non-Jews rule them, their halachic status is one of "destruction." If, however, Jews control the cities, they are considered "built," even if no one lives there. Therefore, we do not tear our clothes today over the sight of any cities, standing or destroyed, that are under Israeli jurisdiction. After the Six Day War, our Rabbi, Rav Tzvi Yehudah Kook, ruled that we should no longer tear our clothes upon the sight of the Temple Mount, since it is under Israeli jurisdiction. We have the political power to rebuild the Beit Ha-Mikdash today. The fact that we have no immediate plans to do so, for various religious, political and other reasons (justified or not), does not negate the fact that it is our decision not to build the Beit Ha-Mikdash, and therefore we no longer tear our clothes when we see the Temple Mount, as we would if it were under non-Jewish domination" (Be-Ma'arachah Ha-Tizburit, p. 55).



Family Matters - Ha-Rav writes weekly for the parashah sheet "Rosh Yehudi" on family relationships

Without Romantic Love

Q: I am almost 40 years old, as is this man that I know. We get along really well and are good friends, but neither of us has a romantic pull for the other. We both dream about romantic love. Since I am already older, do I settle for second fiddle?

A: Get married tomorrow! Your biological clocks are ticking. Do not rely on a miracle of the expectation that you will find a man who you love with the depth of your soul. This man is not second fiddle. He is first fiddle! He is wonderful! The foundation of marriage is friendship. You will be happy. It is true that many couples marry on account of romantic love, but this romantic love wanes among the overwhelming majority – 85% - of them, but many remain best friends, true friends. Therefore, hurry up and get married. Even though you are not in love with him, you love him. This is the exact same advice that I would give to this man. Mazel tov!

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