



From the teachings of the
Rosh Yeshiva of Ateret Yerushalayim
Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner

Parashat Simchat Torah 5770

Prepared by Rabbi Mordechai Friedfertig

Visit our blog: www.ravaviner.com

Would you like to ask Rav Aviner a question? E-mail mororly@bezeqint.net

On the Second Day of Yom Tov -

[Tzvi Kodesh, pp. 59-60]

In his youth, our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, had difficulty learning in Eretz Yisrael, since he was the famous son of Maran Ha-Rav Kook. After consulting with his father and Ha-Rav Binyamin Menasheh Levin, he decided "to be exiled to a place of Torah" (Pirkei Avot 4:14 and see Igrot Re'eiyah vol. 2, letter 567 #2). He traveled to learn and teach in Halberstam, Germany. On the second day of Yom Tov, our Rabbi would act like those who live in Eretz Yisrael regarding Tefillin and Havdalah but he would do so in private (One who is temporarily located in a different place than his home acts according to the stricture of the place from which he left and according to the strictures of the place to which he came - Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 468. He must therefore put on Tefillin in private on his weekdays, and similarly perform Havdalah in private without extinguishing the candle - Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 493 and Mishnah Berurah #13, Chayei Adam 103:4 and see Shut Orach Mishpat #157-159 at length.

Despite all of our Rabbi's efforts to conceal his ways, the matter became known to the youths because of their great interest in him. They were not experts in the laws, and they did not know that there is only one day of Yom Yov in Eretz Yisrael. They were shocked: Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah is putting on Tefillin on Yom Tov! He was concerned that the matter could impinge on the holiness of the Second Day of Yom Tov, and he therefore explained to them that there is only one day in Eretz Yisrael. Afterwards he heard them saying: If there is a difference between the Jews of Eretz Yisrael and the Jews outside of the Land, the Jews of Eretz Yisrael are obviously correct because of the abundant holiness of Eretz Yisrael, and we should therefore act like them. Our Rabbi responded: On the contrary, out of the faith of the holiness of the Land of Israel, one must understand that it is not possible to have the same order in Eretz Yisrael and outside of Eretz Yisrael, and there must be two days outside of the Land. The youths were not convinced. Our Rabbi then said that we must know that there can only be definite and clear Judaism in the Land of Israel since there can only be an ordained Beit Din in Israel, while there is doubtful Judaism outside of

Israel. The observance of two days of Yom Tov outside of the Land expresses the belief in the holiness of the Land of Israel. One who is satisfied with one day of a holiday outside of Israel and disgraces the Second Day of Yom Tov is a heretic regarding the holiness of Eretz Yisrael. He ended with the strong words at the end of Massechet Berachot (63) that it is impossible to sanctify months outside of Israel and to create an independent Judaism which stands on its own outside the Land.

One young man explained the words of our Rabbis that in Eretz Yisrael one day contains the holiness of both days of Yom Tov outside of the Land. Our Rabbi pointed out that the holiness of the Land is not based upon human, emotional, societal values but upon essential, Divine values, and Eretz Yisrael is the Land of Hashem (from Tzemach Tzvi, igeret 27).

Much later when our Rabbi was with Maran Ha-Rav Kook in Switzerland, he related that on the Second Day of Yom Tov when they davened with the community, his father told him to skip over some of the verses in Hallel based on the statement of our Sages (Shabbat 118b): "Anyone who recites Hallel every day blasphemes" (from Le-Sheloshah Be-Elul [Mehadurat 5763], p. 54, #50).

Stories of Rabbenu — Our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook

Simchat Torah

Our Rabbi would carry a Sefer Torah that was given to him during the Hakafot until the end of the Hakafah, even if it went on for a long time. And when they wanted to make it easier for him and take it from him, he explained that a Sefer Torah is in the category of "a living being which carries itself." (Gadol Shimusha p. 91)

The davening would become longer each year. They would take the Sifrei Torah outside and go to visit the Chief Rabbis. During the dancing, the students would stop traffic and our Rabbi would justify their actions, since one must honor the Torah when it is in the street.

There was a certain street famous for the desecration of Shabbat which occurred on it. Our Rabbi went around it on Simchat Torah, and he said that he avoids walking on it on Shabbat. (Gadol Shimusha p. 96)

On Simchat Torah, even though our Rabbi was elderly and suffered great pain in his foot, he went with all of the students dancing to the Kotel. One student suggested: "Ha-Rav is tired. Perhaps he should rest a little and afterwards say some Divrei Torah." These words startled our Rabbi: "Fatigue is not in our lexicon." (Iturei Cohanim #265 in the name of Ha-Rav Tzvi Kostiner)

On Simchat Torah, our Rabbi would begin the Hakafot at eight in the morning and finish at five in the afternoon. In order to strengthen the Chief Rabbinate, he would dance to the houses of the Chief Rabbis. The students would try to convince our Rabbi to shorten them, but he would not agree. During the entire time he would

dance without a break, and he would encourage others with come with him, even though they wanted to end quickly and sit to learn Torah. He danced with vigor the entire time, even at the age of 80-90, and even though he had throbbing pain in his feet. One time at the end of the day when he removed his socks there was blood inside, but there was no sign of it on his face; rather he was happy the entire time. (Iturei Cohanim #265 in the name of Ha-Rav Tzvi Kostiner)

On Simchat Torah of the year 5738 or 5739, our Rabbi came to the old Yeshiva building on Ha-Rav Kook Street, without any strength, dragging his feet, and they were sure that he would not place a foot in the street. This was not so, however, and even though in the Yeshiva he succeeded in standing with difficulty, he went from there to King George Street to the building of the Chief Rabbinate and danced four straight hours, with great strength. After a half an hour, however, the students were spent, their strength was already gone. (Iturei Cohanim #265 in the name of Ha-Rav Tzvi Kostiner)

He would not make Kiddush before the Hakafot of the morning. They explained that he acted this way because he did not want to drink wine before Birkat Cohanim of Musaf. (ibid. p. 95)

One year on Simchat Torah, the students were singing "Next year in Jerusalem." Our Rabbi stopped everyone and said: "This year!" (Ha-Rav Yechezkel Greenwald – Iturei Yerushalayim #3)

He explained the meaning of the second "Hakafot" (on the night after Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah concludes in Israel) in two ways: 1. Identification with the Jews in Exile (who celebrate Simchat Torah on that night). 2. The state of joy to which we reached in the string of holidays: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret, brings us to an exalted state of joy, and this level does not end with nightfall. (Gadol Shimusha p. 119)

*From Rav Aviner's Commentary on Birkat Ha-Mazon,
entitled Shir Ha-Ma'a lot*

"He who makes peace in His heights"

The Holy One Blessed Be He makes peace between Michael, the angel of water, and Gavriel, the angel of fire. They are joined together, the water does not extinguish the fire, and the fire does not ignite the water. Just as there is peace in the wars between the angels and between the supreme ideas, so too will there be peace between the Jews below, who hold different opinions. Our Sages discuss the importance of peace hundreds of times. The intention is always peace among Jews. We should be willing to devote our central efforts for this goal.



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

Connecting

It is really not good to be alone. I agree. "It is not good for man to be alone" (Bereshit 2:18).

We are no longer alone. We married. We are together.

Not exactly. The "together" can separate. This is not necessarily an eternal connection. You must connect – "And he cleaved to his wife" (ibid. 2:24) - with continuous activities: connect through words, connect through smiles, connect through gifts, connect through help, connect through discussion, connect through understanding, connect through listening, connect all the time. Perhaps it would be more pleasant if we were connected in a way that we could not separate? The world was not created this way, rather the responsibility lies upon us to build the connection (Ha-Emek Davar ibid.). The philosopher Plato tells about a couple who comes from their wedding, hugs and out of great love cannot separate, until they die from hunger. This is very moving but not so realistic. We have to exert great effort. We have to work at it. Hard work, but so pleasant.

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



Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim P.O.B. 1076 Jerusalem 91009 Tel.02-6284101 Fax.02-6261528

www.ateret.org.il To subscribe, send e-mail to: mororly@bezeqint.net

