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Parashat Behar-Bechukotai 5770

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## On the Parashah...

### "And I will lead you upright" (Vayikra 26:13)

Question: Should an individual living in the Land of Israel say, "and lead us upright to our Land (le-artzenu)" in the Bircat Ha-Mazon?

Answer: I have seen three answers to this question:

1. Rabbi Yaakov Chagiz (Shut Halachot Ketanot #185) was asked: Should an individual living in the Land of Israel say, "and lead us upright to our Land (le-artzenu)" or change it to "and led us upright IN our Land (be-artzenu)"? He responds, "This is how people customarily recite it [and led us upright IN our Land], but if one says "le-artzenu - to our Land," he does not lose out" (Rabbi Chagiz also rules that this is the correct wording in the blessing recited before the Shema in the morning, "Ahavah Rabbah," i.e. it should read "And led us upright in our Land" instead of "And lead us upright to our Land." This ruling which is also quoted in Minhagei Eretz Yisrael of Rav Yaakov Galis, p. 31). And Ha-Rav Dov Lior, Rav of Kiryat Arba-Hevron, was once asked the correct formula to recite in the Bircat Ha-Mazon, and he answered: "In Israel, we recite 'in our Land.'"
2. When asked this question, Ha-Rav Chaim David Halevy (Shut Aseh Lecha Rav 3:13) expressed surprise that people ask about this sentence in the Bircat Ha-Mazon, whose recitation is not obligatory, but do not ask it about a phrase in Musaf, which was established by our Sages in the Anshei Knesset Ha-Gedolah (the Men of the Great Assembly during the Second Temple) of which one may not omit even one word: "May it be Your will Hashem...that You bring us up in joy to our Land and plant us within our boundaries." Ha-Rav Halevy explained that this prayer was established for the entire Nation. As long as the majority of Jews remain in the Exile, it is possible to say "And lead us to our Land," "plant us within our boundaries," etc. since it applies to the entire Nation and not only to those of us who dwell in Eretz Yisrael. The same idea applies to the phrase in the Bircat Ha-Mazon (i.e. we continue to say "and lead us upright to our").
3. In this week's parashah, as part of the blessings we will receive for following the Torah, Hashem promises: "And I will lead you upright" (Vayikra 26:13). Our Sages explain this verse: "With upright posture, so that you do not fear any creature" (Sifra). But there is something problematic here: Doesn't the Shulchan Aruch rule, "It is

forbidden to walk with upright posture" (Orach Chaim 2:6), which the Mishnah Berurah (#9) explains: "Because you will press against the feet of the Divine Presence of the Omnipresent"? However, this is not a contradiction: The one refers to the individual who is required to be humble and modest, while the other refers to the entire community which is required to walk upright. Through this posture the honor of the Divine Presence will be revealed. In practice, the prayer books in Israel say, "le-artzenu - to our Land," since it also means that Hashem should lead the Nation to act in an upright posture.

Conclusion: Even in Eretz Yisrael, one should recite "lead us upright to our Land" in the Bircat Ha-Mazon since it also refers to all of the Jewish People and to the upright posture of the Nation. One who wishes to change it to "and led us upright IN our Land" may do so, however, since its recitation in the Bircat Ha-Mazon is a custom and not an obligation.

## Rav Aviner on... I'm Charedi Too

[Be-Ahavah U-Be-Emunah – Emor 5770 – translated by R. Blumberg]

I'm Charedi too. Certainly I am. After all, what is a Charedi? A person who trembles [chared] at the word of G-d, who strives to keep the mitzvot, to learn Torah, to improve his character, to avoid evil and to do good. Surely we were all commanded about these things, and we are all called upon to fulfill them. That's what is on the mind of every Charedi: to be G-d-fearing. Indeed, this is the ideal of us all, that we "desire to fear Your name" (Nechemiah 1:11). I didn't say that I am already G-d-fearing, but I am amongst those "who DESIRE to fear G-d's name".

Obviously, there are a lot of types of Jews who fear G-d, or want to fear Him, or are trying sincerely to fear His name. Yet the common denominator of them all is: fear of G-d. And that common point is infinitely greater than all the elements that divide us. Indeed, it is very essential that all the various types of G-d-fearing people should recognize and feel that commonality. This will lead them all to cooperate. As it says in Pirkei Avot 6:6: "Bearing the yoke with one's fellow Jew" is one of the forty-eight ways by which the Torah is acquired. One may not agree with one's fellow Jew. One may even have some criticism for him. Yet we should still cooperate with him for the majestic common goal of undertaking the yoke of heaven.

One time a new student arrived at the Mercaz Ha-Rav Yeshiva. Our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehuda Kook, turned to him affectionately and said to him something along the following lines: "From now on you are a Charedi. From now on, you won't be busy with hiking and going out to have fun at night, with work and hobbies. Henceforth you'll be busy with Torah and mitzvot. Henceforth you're a Charedi!

What a wonderful world! This is a wonderful world that has sustained the Jewish People for thousands of years, and will continue to sustain them. This is a world that was built by the Men of the Great Assembly, who generated masses of Jews "who are set apart from the impurity of the nations of the lands" (Ezra 6; Nechemiah 10; Sefer Orot, page 110). And you can see the marvelous continuation to this very day of that same G-d-fearing, Charedi Jew. So much Torah! So much mitzvot! So much sterling character! So much familial contentment! So little divorce – and thank G-d for that.

Don't expect to find anything else amongst those marvelous people. That isn't their expertise. It's not their mission. Don't expect to find in them the rebirth of our nation

in its land, in the Jewish State, and in the army. That isn't their job. Each Jew has his own mission and task. Just as you won't go looking for breakfast rolls in a hardware store. Among them, what you'll look for is love and Torah and mitzvot, and that you will find.

Our master Ha-Rav Avraham Yitzchak Kook warned in his famous Letter 378, published before the appearance of Orot Ha-Teshuva: "One must be careful to ensure that all the ideals of fortitude and valor, joy and rebirth, which claim so much relevance at present, not weaken our fear of G-d to the slightest degree. Quite the contrary, we need to have even more fear of G-d."

Living together as a nation is infinitely more complicated than living as individuals. Thus, we have to have even more fear of G-d. G-d forbid that we should dispense with any of the fear of G-d of the Charedim. Quite the contrary, we ourselves have to be Charedim. We have to be more Charedi than the Charedim. We must build an additional level of marvelous piety. We need the piety of building the land, of the return to Zion, of the establishment of the State, and of Israel's wars. Obviously, ours is not some new kind of piety, but an old type that was forgotten because of the Exile, and now it has to be reawakened, in accordance with Megillah 3a which refers to principles that were "forgotten and then reinstated".

Yet all this is in accordance with that same fine, blessed piety that has existed for two thousand years. What, after all, is piety? It is the first levels of the book Mesillat Yesharim – avoiding all sin, alacrity to fulfill all mitzvot, being clean of the slightest hint of wrong-doing. All these are traits relevant to everyone. And the same applies to the higher levels: "purity" – acting with sincere intent; "separation" and "saintliness", as we ascend further and further in holiness.

Fortunate is the person who trembles at G-d's word. Fortunate is the person who fears G-d and walks in His pathways.

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

### On Jerusalem, the Temple Mount and the Temple – Part 1

[From Sefer Le-Mikdashech Tuv, pp. 11-14 unless noted otherwise]

A student related: When I asked our Rabbi the well-known question whether reciting the content of the prayer "Nachem," which is recited on Tisha Be-Av [in the Shemoneh Esrei in the prayer for rebuilding Jerusalem,] is speaking falsely in our time because of the passages of the "bitterness of our situation," he responded: "Jerusalem is still scorned and desolate, since the essence of Jerusalem is the Temple. Furthermore, the Old City of Jerusalem is in a state of desolation without inhabitants. It is impossible to approach the Old City and see piles of stones of synagogues and not burst into weeping!" (Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, addendum at the end of the talk "U-le-minim al tehi tikvah - And for the slanderers let there be no hope").

When I came to request permission and a blessing from our Rabbi (see Sanhedrin 5b, Eruvin 63a and Rambam, Hilchot Talmud Torah 5:3) in order to establish a yeshiva in the heart of the Jerusalem, he rejoiced with great joy and encouraged me.

In the twilight of his years, when I asked him - in the name of my colleagues - if we should request that the guarding of the gates of the Temple Mount be placed in the hands of Tzahal and not in the hands of non-Jews, he did not see this as a pressing matter; he responded: "Slowly, slowly [Redemption arrives]" (see Jerusalem Talmud Yoma 3:2).

When I continued and asked if should we request the presence of our army on the Temple Mount, he again cooled with his glance what he considered as an impure burning desire and said sternly: "Slowly, slowly [redemption arrives]."

At the same meeting, when I mustered the courage, I asked - in the name of my colleagues who greatly pressed me to do so - if should we request that the flag of the State of Israel be flown on the Temple Mount, he looked at me with a dreadful glance of pain and amazement that I had sunk so low to the point of asking such questions, and he said forcefully: "We will raise a banner in the Name of our G-d!" (Tehillim 20:6). Despite this, "It is Torah and I need to learn it" (Berachot 62a), I therefore asked again, "Certainly, we will raise a banner in the Name of our G-d, but won't it be by way of the flag of the State of Israel?" Our Rabbi patiently repeated: "I told you: we will raise a banner in the Name of our G-d," with his absolute rejection of all the comparisons between any infringement of the holiness of the Temple Mount and the building of the Land of Israel.

At the end of this meeting, I told our Rabbi how we are continuing with the acts of redeeming the heart of Jerusalem, house after house, and then the stern and dreadful facial expression disappeared, and a full smile of eternal kindness enlightened his face. When I detailed the names of the streets, he said that I need not bother, because all of these places were etched in his memory from his youth.

A student was once scheduled to give our Rabbi a ride but was late because all of the traffic and he expressed his distress. Our Rabbi said: On the contrary, I am happy that Jerusalem is filled with people.

### **Shut She'eilat Shlomo - Questions of Jewish Law**

Lag Ba-Omer on Motza'ei Shabbat

Question: Often, non-Torah-mandated holidays are moved to avoid desecration of Shabbat. Why not Lag B'Omer? There will definitely be kids lighting bonfires well before Shabbat ends.

Answer: The problem is that it is not exactly a holiday with mitzvot but a popular custom. In Shut Sha'arei Tzion (#14), Ha-Rav Shmuel Rabinowitz - Rav of Kotel and Holy Places in Israel - discusses this question regarding the celebrations at Kevar Rashbi on Meron and he says that the bonfires should be started later in the night and this is the custom of the Admor of Boyan, but he also refers to a letter from Ha-Rav Zalman Nechmiah Goldberg (Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach's son-in-law) that the

bonfires should be done during the day for the reasons you mentioned. The Chief Rabbi of Israel, Ha-Rav Yonah Metzger, also called for the bonfires to be lit of Sunday during the day.

## 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:

### Women and Talit

Q: Is it permissible for a woman to wear a Talit?

A: It is forbidden. 1. Because of "Yehura" (religious arrogance). Even if she is known for her piety, there is another issue. 2. It is forbidden for a woman to wear men's clothing, and a Talit is uniquely male clothing (see Shut Igrot Moshe Orach Chaim 4:49).

### No Lifeguard

Q: It is permissible to go up to your waist in the water where there is no lifeguard?

A: It is forbidden, since sometimes a strong current can pull one in (Shut She'eilat Shlomo 1:473).

### The Name "Rachel"

Q: I have a lot of troubles and people tell me that it is because of my name: Rachel. Should I change it?

A: It is a wonderful name. Do not change it (Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 335:10).

### Messiah in Tel Aviv

Q: Is the Messiah really in Tel Aviv?

A: Nonsense. See Rambam Hilchot Melachim 11:4 for the criteria to be the Messiah.

### The President of Israel

Q: How should we relate to the President to the State of Israel who is nothing and has done nothing?

A: You are nothing and have done nothing. The President is a lot of things and if he only had the merit of developing Israel's nuclear bomb, he would be worth it (Rambam, Hilchot Teshuvah 3:1).

### Waiting 3 Hours

Q: Is there a source for the custom to wait three hours between eating meat and milk?

A: It is a German custom, a stricture on the position mentioned by the Rama (Yoreh Deah 89:1. See Rabbenu Yerucham in Isur Ve-Heter #39).

### Electric Shabbat Candles

Q: Is it permissible to light an electric "candle" for Shabbat candles?

A: Yes. Piskei Teshuvot (263:2).

### Reincarnation

Q: Is the belief in reincarnation a true belief?

A: It is a dispute among the Rishonim. The Zohar says that it is true (vol. 1 186b and vol. 2 98b). But the Arizal says that it is not to be understood in its literal sense (Sha'ar Ha-Gilgulim of Rabbi Chaim Vital. See Sefer Ha-Ikarim of Rabbi Yosef Albo and Emunot Ve-Deot of Sa'adia Gaon).

#### Mother's Milk

Q: Is a mother's milk dairy?

A: It is parve (Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 87:4).

#### Honoring Parents

Q: How do I relate to my father after he called me garbage?

A: Patience. Humility (see Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 240:8).

#### Stealing from a Hotel

Q: Is it permissible to take towels from a hotel since everyone does it?

A; G-d forbid. Just because everyone does something does not make it right.

Q: What about the small soap and shampoo?

A: This is allowed.

#### Mezuzah with Glue

Q: Is it permissible to put up a Mezuzah with glue?

A: Yes, if it is strong. Shut Yechaveh Daat (6:58).

#### Prayer

Q: What right do we have to ask things from Hashem?

A: Every right, but not as demands, rather as petitions.

#### Sport

Q: Is there any value to playing sports?

A: What is necessary for the body's health (see Orot Ha-Techiya chap. 34).

#### Shehechyanu on a Uniform

Q: I am volunteering for the police and received a uniform, which brings me great joy. Can I recite the Shehechyanu?

A: Absolutely (see Mi-Chayil El Chayil vol. 1 p. 320).

#### Hebrew Pronunciation

Q: What is the most precise pronunciation of Hebrew?

A: We do not know. Everyone should follow the tradition of their ancestors (see Shut Igrot Moshe Orach Chaim 3:5).

#### Unclean Dreams

Q: I am having many inappropriate dreams despite the fact that I have improved in not looking at women. Why is this happening? What should I do?

A: A known phenomenon. The evil inclination is feeling beaten by you and it is fighting for its life. Crush him (Mesillat Yesharim, chap. 11).

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