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Parashat Bemidbar 5770

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## On Yom Yerushalayim...

### Ha-Tikvah

[Am Ve-Artzo vol. 2, pp. 251-252 - translated by Rabbi Gil Student]

**Question:** There is a custom in the Diaspora, in order to show unity with the State of Israel, to sing Ha-Tikvah on Israel Independence Day and Jerusalem Reunification Day, and at weddings and bar mitzvah parties, together with the anthem for that country. I remember, however, when I studied in Israel that we never sang "Ha-Tikvah" on Israel Independence Day but, rather, "Shir Ha-Ma'alot" with the tune for "Ha-Tikvah." Some say that it is a disgrace to the Nation of Israel that there is no reference to G-d in its national anthem even though many other countries praise G-d, such as Britain's "G-d Save the Queen." I heard an opinion to replace the word "Chofshi" (free) [towards the end of "Ha-Tikvah"] with the word "Kodshi" (holy), thereby hinting to G-d without separating oneself from the general population, since no one can hear this difference while singing...

**Answer:** It is true that there is no mention of G-d in "Hatikvah." There is, however, nothing against G-d either and there is national value in it. Therefore, there is certainly no prohibition against singing this anthem. We definitely have more important songs of faith in G-d and also in nationalism, like "Shir Ha-Ma'alot" and "Shir Ha-Emunah" that Rav Kook wrote. If the entire community is singing "Ha-Tikvah," however, one should not separate from them but should join them, since through this they are demonstrating their connection to the Land and State of Israel, which is a big obligation, even though there are better ways of doing it. There is therefore no need to change "Chofshi" to "Kodshi," since being free is also something of value. There is a mitzvah that this Land [of Israel] should be under our rule and not that of another nation, as the Ramban wrote, so there is certainly a mitzvah to be free in our Land...

## Rav Aviner on... We've Made Progress

[Be-Ahavah U-Be-Emunah – Acharei Mot-Kedoshim 5770 – translated by R. Blumberg]

**Question:** Today, how can it be that we are on a higher level than the Desert Generation, which merited numerous miracles and was led by Moshe? It's true that now, as well, in our Land, we are facing crises regarding the Torah and Eretz Yisrael, but they are nothing compared to the sins of the Golden Calf, the spies and other severe sins.

**Answer:** Indeed, our sages said that our own redemption will be greater, so much so that Ben Zoma declared that in the Messianic era, the Exodus will no longer be mentioned (Berachot 12b). As it says: “Behold, the days will come – says Hashem – when they shall no more say, ‘As Hashem lives, that brought up the Nation of Israel out of the land of Egypt,’ but, ‘As Hashem lives, that brought up and that led the seed of the House of Israel out of the north country and all the countries where I had driven them.’ They shall dwell in their own land” (Yirmiyahu 23:7-8).

In fact, the present ingathering of the exiles is more remarkable than the Egyptian Exodus. Then, the entire Nation left Egypt together for Jerusalem. Now, the entire Jewish People have left all the countries of the world and returned to Eretz Yisrael, as though acting in synch. Moreover, in Egypt we had Moshe. Now, there is no Moshe. Now we are sheep without a shepherd.

This has a disadvantage, but also an advantage. The advantage is that we are sheep who have done amazing things without a shepherd. The entire rebuilding of the Land, the entire return to Zion, the entire establishment of the Jewish State, all of Israel’s wars, the entire return to the Torah to Israel, we accomplished as sheep without a shepherd.

The shepherd will certainly come along, but not to solve problems that the sheep can solve alone. See Rashi at the beginning of Tehillim, Chapter 70, which employs the parable of a king who gets angry, destroys his sheep-pen, exiles the shepherd and banishes the flocks. Afterwards the king calms down, rebuilds the sheep-pen and brings back the flocks. The shepherd asks, “And what about me?” The king answers that he remembers him. Thus, the shepherd is brought back last.

When we left Egypt, we were like sheep entirely dependent on a shepherd. Hence, when the shepherd was absent, we committed the sin of the Golden Calf. On many other occasions, we were entirely dependent on the shepherd, like a boy who is dependent on his father and mother. Therefore, we sinned many times.

Now we know how to function without a shepherd, and we accomplish much. Even when we sin, it’s far from the level of sin that there was then.

All the same, our Sages say, “It is not that the Egyptian Exodus will be uprooted [from our awareness], but that our ultimate removal from the exile will be central and the Exodus from Egypt will be secondary” (Berachot ibid.). Here, however, Maharal carried out a Copernican revolution or paradigm shift in the introduction to his book “Netzach Yisrael”. There he explained that the relationship between the Egyptian Exodus and our ultimate liberation from the nations’ yoke is like the relationship between cause and effect. The cause is minor compared to the effect, and yet at the same time, the kernel of the effect is hidden within the cause.

It’s like an apple seed buried in the earth. It’s insignificant compared to a large apple tree, but the potential of a tree is hidden within. Everything we are doing now with such great talent was hidden within us when we left Egypt, just as all of the adult’s talents are stored away in him when he is a child.

Similarly, our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehuda Kook asked his father, Rav Avraham Yitzchak Ha-Cohain Kook, what stage we are at in the Redemption – the start, the middle or the end? His father responded that it depends on whether he was talking about the practical reality or the spiritual potential. In terms of the practical reality, the situation was very weak still. It was only the start of Redemption. Yet the spiritual awakening that was occurring possessed the power to usher the supreme Redemption to completion.

We should not boast about all the wonderful things we are doing now in our country, and look at eye level, or down our noses, at the Desert Generation. The Desert Generation was us, and

everything we are doing now was already stored away in them. It just needed thousands of years of processing.

How fortunate we are to have been so privileged!

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

### On Jerusalem, the Temple Mount and the Temple – Part 2

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

When a Torah scholar brought to our Rabbi researchers of the Temple Mount, whose purpose was to identify the boundaries of the Temple, (since in their view it was permissible to enter there without fear of harming the sanctity of the Temple), our Rabbi said to the scholar: "What is all this for?!" He compared this to a rabbi who gathered many proofs for the existence of G-d, and the Aderet ztz"l [Rav Eliyahu David Rabinowitz-Teomim, former Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem and father-in-law of Maran Ha-Rav Kook], said about this rabbi's book: "For what do we need proofs? (and he quoted the words of our Sages, "Any matter which is not clear, bring sources from the Talmud for it" - Jerusalem Talmud, Berachot 2:3, Eruvin 10:1). We believe in Hashem above all proofs" (Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah, sidra 2 Tazria, Parashat Ha-Chodesh 3-4; Emunah, sichah 15, 8). And so too in our matter: Behold, the Temple Mount's boundary is surrounded by a wall. We do not traverse it, and we have no need for researchers.

After the liberation of the Old City during the Six-Day War, there were extensive excavations of the Kotel Tunnels, which extend under the Temple Mount. Ha-Rav Meir Yehudah Getz, Rav of the Kotel, asked our Rabbi, is it permissible to excavate under the Temple Mount to find the Temple implements? Our Rabbi answered, "No, do not dig." Our generation is still not ready to merit discovering the treasures of the Temple. (The book "Rav Ha-Kotel" p. 306)

When a Torah scholar mentioned to our Rabbi the custom of placing notes in the Kotel, our Rabbi said that one should not do this, and one should even refrain from putting one's fingers into the Kotel [since it is forbidden for an impure person to enter the air of the Temple Mount in even the slightest way]. The Torah scholar said to him, but this is the custom of Israel [minhag Yisrael]. Our Rabbi responded, the word "minhag" [custom] contains the same letters as "gehinom" [purgatory].

When it became known to our Rabbi that archeological excavations were being performed under the Temple Mount, he responded with great distress: "What is all this for?! For what purpose should one fuss there?"

When they asked our Rabbi if there is a need to organize tours which encircle the Temple Mount in order to strengthen the fact that it belongs to us, he responded: "The Temple Mount is in our hands - there is no need for tours." They said to him that not everyone knows that the Temple Mount is ours. To this, he responded that if this is so, there is positive value in the tours in order to strengthen the proof of our ownership.

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

### Physical Therapy and Skirts

Question: Is it permissible for a woman to wear pants/shorts during physical therapy, as a skirt often gets in the way and sometimes even leads to immodesty (as the skirt can rise up)?

Answer: You should wear an Aladdin skirt - wide on the top with pants on the bottom.

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

### I Do Not Insult

*I have problems with my husband. His behavior is inappropriate in many areas, so I point it out. We got married in order not to keep everything inside and obviously to help one another improve. But I point it out in a non-insulting way.*

*When we were first married, I did say it in an insulting way, and he called me a witch and he was kind of right. I then learned not to point it out in front of other people, even if he said something stupid or acted in an inappropriate matter. I also learned not to say anything when I am angry. I noticed that when I did this, I did not speak about what happened. I was frustrated and just tried to prove I was correct. I now wait until I calm down. And before I say anything, I make it clear to myself that the goal is to build a shared life together.*

*I also try to give him the benefit of the doubt. Many times I scolded him only to find out that I did not see the whole picture. I now try to see if I can understand the situation in a different way, perhaps I am taking things out of context. Only if I am unable to give him the benefit of the doubt do I say anything – gently.*

## 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:

### Suffering

Q: Does lovingly accepting suffering mean that I cannot cry?

A: It is permissible to cry but you must believe that Hashem is sending them for our benefit (see Berachot 5a).

### A Woman Learning Torah

Q: Can a woman learn Torah without reciting the blessings for learning Torah?

A: A woman is obligated to recite the blessings for learning Torah every day (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 47:14).

### Tachanun on Yom Ha-Atzmaut

Q: Who rules that we do not recite Tachanun on Yom Ha-Atzmaut against the great Rabbis of the generation including Ha-Rav Elyashiv?

A: The question is incomprehensible. Ha-Rav David Cohain told me that in his youth he davened at the Tiferet Bachurim shul and when they wanted to recite Tachanun on Yom Ha-Atzmaut, Ha-Rav Elyashiv did not allow it.

### "Double-dating"

Q: Is it permissible to date for the purpose of marriage two men at the same time?

A: Certainly not. It is unethical. If there is an exceptional problem, you should ask a Rabbi.

#### Better Not to Have Been Created

Q: If it were better for man not to have been created, then why should we live and what is the purpose? Can I have sources?

A: In order to serve Hashem, and then it is good that we were created. See ibid. Eruvin 13, Tosafot and Rashi, Ein Yaakov and Mesilat Yesharim chap. 3.

#### Modesty in a Clothing Store

Q: Is it permissible for a husband to accompany his wife into a women's clothing store?

A: It is immodest. There are all types of women who may enter, and all the more so if there are women it will make them uncomfortable (see Gan Na'ul).

#### Kindness for a Non-Jew

Q: Should one perform a kindness for a non-Jew?

A: "His mercies are on all of His works" (Tehillim 145:9).

#### Difficult Mother

Q: I have a difficult mother and it is hard to me. What should I do?

A: Patience and flexibility. It is great practice of humility for your entire life (see Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah 240:8).

#### Palm Reading

Q: Is there any truth to palm reading?

A: It is nonsense.

#### Modesty

Q: Is it permissible to walk around an apartment with only male roommates dressed in only a little clothing?

A: Modesty is always required both when alone and at home. Kitzur Shulchan Aruch chap. 2.

#### Woman Receiving an Aliyah

Q: What should I do if the shul in which I daven calls up a woman for an aliyah?

A: Leave (Gittin 61a).

#### Stealing Drugs

Q: I stole my friend's drugs. Should I return them?

A: Return the money anonymously.

#### Modest Clothing

Q: I wear beautiful clothing at home for my husband. What should I wear out?

A: Clothing which does not draw the attention of others (see Gan Na'ul).

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