



Parashat Ki Tisa 5771 - #176

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On the Parashah...

Do Not Ascend Onto the Mountain – Part 3

Recorded from two conversations with our Teacher and Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Tau Shlit"a –
Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat Har Ha-Mor in Yerushalayim
[Sefer Le-Mikdashech Tuv, pp. 177-187]

Q: This is similar to the words of the Sefer Ha-Chinuch against those who teach that we are not suitable for the Mitzvah of Tefillin (Mitzvah #421)!

A: The Temple Mount is a completely different level than Tefillin. Baseless hatred is what destroyed the Temple Mount (Yoma 9b), and this is the level of correction which is required.

Q: "You shall seek out His Presence and come there" (Devarim 12:5)!

A: By igniting a thirst for it and expanding the understanding of what it is.

Q: The Sforno explains: For prostration.

A: Until the Kotel. For our generation until the Kotel. Are we more righteous than Maran Ha-Rav Kook who would not even place fingers between the stones of the Kotel? The great Torah authorities in earlier generations did not allow approaching there. In order to permit entering the Temple Mount one needs very broad shoulders. No rabbi can argue with Ha-Rav [Kook] ztz"l regarding this issue, any time in which he does not have the authority to rule in matters relating to the entirety of Israel. And the natural holiness of the Nation must be revealed and only then may they approach the Temple Mount.

Q: If we follow this logic we also deny Zionism?

A: Rav Tzvi Hirsch Kalisher held that we may enter the Temple Mount, but Rav David of Karlin argued with him (She'eilat David, Kuntres Derishat Zion Virushalayim). Ha-Rav [Kook] ztz"l disagreed (with Rav Kalisher) and this did not prevent him from being a great Zionist and waging war for the settlement of the Land of Israel - but only until the Temple Mount ("Committee of Investigation. Testimony of the Chief Rabbi Ha-Rav Ha-Gaon Avraham Yitzchak Ha-Cohain Kook." Yerushalayim 5689 [1929]). This was not in order to reject the claims of the British, but rather because this is what he really held, as he mentions in various places (Shut Mishpat Cohain #96). This is an essential matter in faith to understand the difference between the Nation of Israel on the level of the Temple and the Nation of Israel now. One who does not differentiate between the two, minimizes the entire issue and lowers himself to the level of kindergarten.

We do not currently stand before the building of the return of the Second Temple, like one Torah scholar stated, rather before the Third Temple, which is more supreme. Before all else prophecy needs to appear in Israel (She'eilat David, Kuntres Derishat Tzion Virushalayim) and afterwards we may approach the Temple Mount. Prophecy is not a peripheral condition which can be circumvented. And there is also the requirement of a King (Rambam, Hilchot Melachim 1:3).

Q: There wasn't a King during the Second Temple?

A: This was a unique temporary ruling (She'eilat David, Kuntres Derishat Tzion Virushalayim). We are currently before the Third Temple. Kingship is a completely different level of the Nation of Israel. And so too a world which contains prophecy within it is a completely different world. If we are lacking a King or Prophet, we are not lacking a detail, rather this is a completely different level of the entire character of the Nation of Israel, a different environment, a different generation, different concepts...

Q: All of this is true relating to the Temple, but does this also relate to the Temple Mount?

A: This is also true relating to the Temple Mount. Both of them are a completely different world of ours. We are not suitable. This is not the way. Building now would be a building of children which will bring destruction (Megillah 31b). All of the authorities established that we are not suitable and there is a need to distance ourselves. It is currently not possible to argue on all of the generations which refrained from entering.

Q: The Nation of Israel was then in Exile without the possibility of approaching.

A: The Rabbis of Yerushalayim, Rav Yehoshua Leib Diskin and Rav Shmuel Salant, also refrained.

Q: They were not able to approach because of the non-Jewish authority.

A: But there were Rabbis who ruled that one should not place our fingers into the Kotel. And there were those who stood at a distance of a hundred meters from the Kotel because of the concern of the position of the Radvaz (that the Kotel is the wall of the Temple Courtyard). By way of their distancing, they drew close. Ha-Rav from Brisk who stood at a distance was certainly closer than one who prays in the "Machkameh" (court building which is located on the Temple Mount) and he infused within the Nation more love, recognition and claim to the Temple Mount.

[To be continued next week, B"H]

Rav Aviner on... And in My Dream I am in a Church

[Be-Ahavah U-Be-Emunah - Tetzaveh 5771 – translated by R. Blumberg]

... And in my dream, I am in a Christian church, a majestically adorned church, but I feel like I am suffocating. The smell of blood rises in my nostrils, Jewish blood spilt down through the generations, the blood of murders and torture, forced conversions and expulsions. I smell an awful stench. I want to flee, but I am frozen in place. Suddenly I see representatives of Jewish religious and Charedi organizations coming in, yeshiva directors and prominent rabbis. I rub my eyes. I cannot believe what I am seeing. It's an awful nightmare. I pinch myself to wake up, but I am still here.

All the representatives and all the rabbis sit smiling and self-satisfied. They must certainly have been forced to come here. I remember that during black periods of our history we were forced to sit in churches and to listen to the priests preaching to us. Yet how did we end up

back in a church? Don't we have our own State? Apparently, you don't questions about a nightmare.

And now the choir is starting to sing. I don't understand a word of the Christian verbiage, but it doesn't interest me. It sears through my brain and makes my head spin. Then a Christian minister steps up to the pulpit and starts to speak. He says: "I am the head of this church, Pastor John Hagee. Welcome to the Corner Stone Church following our three days of Christian celebrations. I am pleased about the privilege that has come my way to grant every one of you a religious contribution from the Evangelical Christians, to each of you up to a million dollars."

What!? Shall we accept a contribution from the non-Jews? What?! Are we beggars? Schnorrers? It's forbidden to accept public gifts of money from non-Jews! (Rambam, Matanot Aniyim 8:9. Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 254:8). And here this is happening with a live broadcast!

And if it's exclusively for Jews, that is even worse. (ibid. 254:16). I am ashamed! What a nightmare! And now, a Jewish representative is stepping forward... for all the cameras to see, and he is accepting an enormous check made of poster board, a meter long, and all the cameras are flashing! I don't understand! After all, the Chief Rabbinate prohibited accepting money from Christians... And here is still another representative... How did we dare enter a Christian church? It's forbidden to enter! (Chochmat Adam 84:16. Birkat Yosef on Yoreh Deah 145:15. Shut Yabia Omer vol. 2 Yoreh Deah #11). And still another representative... I can't believe it. Look who else has come in!

Surely Rambam writes that it is forbidden to pass through a city in which there is idolatry, let alone to live there. Yet we have no choice, and we are the living fulfillment of, "There you will serve man-made gods of wood and stone" (Devarim 4:28) (Perush HaMishnayot Avoda Zara 11). And once again... a well-known representative... It cannot be that that prominent Chassidic sect is generating influence and dependency on Christianity. Heaven help us! What a great temptation money creates! Bribes blind the wise men's eyes!

I see the ___ Institution stepping forward, and I am despondent. This strengthens the status of the Christians in Israel. Precisely because of their money, the law we wanted to pass against missionizing has failed several times.

And now the ___ institution! Surely Ha-Gaon Rav Mordechai Eliyahu forbade accepting Christian money, as did Ha-Gaon Rav Avraham Shapira, Ha-Gaon Rav Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, Ha-Gaon Rav Asher Weiss, Ha-Gaon Rav Ovadia Yosef and many more.

And the ___ yeshiva! Oh no! Have you forgotten that the Jerusalem "Badatz" Rabbinical court forbade this, as did the rabbinical court of Chabad? True... true... it's just a dream.

I then remembered Rabbi Yehuda Ha-Chassid, who said, "A priest owed a Jew money, and the priest knew that the Jew would not follow him into the church. So, when the Jew came to demand his money, the priest went into his church, and the Jew did not wish to follow him inside." (Sefer Chasidim 60:435). Yet here the Jews are, coming to the church for money!

And the X organization as well! Maybe they never heard the following story from Rabbi Yehuda Ha-Chassid? "A Jew went into a house of idolatry, and then felt contrite. He asked an elderly sage to instruct him what to do to repent. The sage asked what day he had gone inside, and the Jew told him. The sage responded, 'Fast on that date every year.' And the Jew did so." (Sefer Chasidim). We can hope that those Jews in the dream will pray.

Yeshivat X is stepping forward! What about our souls? Yes, of course, another quotation from Rabbi Yehuda Ha-Chassid: "A Jew walked in the courtyard of a house of idolatry. When he left, he heard a Divine voice say, 'You have cast Me behind your back' (Melachim 1 14:9), and he fasted all his life" (Sefer Chasidim, ibid.).

The Jewish-Christian Center in ___. That's no surprise... but why should there be such a center in the Holy City?...

The Reform Movement's ___ School. All right, they're "Reformed", but they're still Jews. They're our brethren, and not Christians. Heaven help us! Don't they understand that the very fact of accepting Christian money increases their stature in our country?

There are even rabbis who are hugging that pastor, and all this for a million dollars. How great the power of money!

Now they're starting to sing: "How good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell together." No! You are not my brothers! First ask forgiveness for murdering my ancestors, body and soul. I don't know how you will be able to atone for that. Come to me in my Land, discreetly, and ask forgiveness, and then we'll talk.

Oy! How great the power of money! Don't all these wretched souls understand that accepting money from Christians undermines the opposition of weak-souled Jews to accepting Jesus the Christian? Where is our self-respect?

Quick! Let's escape from this nightmare! An idol has been brought into the sanctuary!

It's the Money Crusade!

But it's no dream! It's the reality! (The entire episode can be seen on the Internet at <http://www.kr8.co.il/BRPortal/br/P102.jsp?arc=109447>). Obviously, I am not there, G-d forbid. Run away fast! I am getting out of this nightmare and going back to my own dream, our own dream: "When the G-d restores the fortunes of Zion, we shall be as dreamers" (Tehilim 126:1)... "Our feet stood inside your gates, Jerusalem" (ibid. 122:2).

I am sitting in our yeshiva, "Ateret Yerushalayim", and I remember a gentleman who came to visit us thirty years ago, and here is approximately what he asked me: "I represent many Evangelists, and we would like to advance the construction of the Temple. I am therefore coming to you because your yeshiva is the closest to the site of the Temple. Are you preparing the construction of the Temple? You're not... Well... you say that through Torah study and observance of the commandments, good character and the fear of G-d, one can bring the Temple's construction nearer?... Fine... So we would like to help you. In America we've got fifty million Evangelists. I will collect just one dollar a year from each of them, so that you'll receive fifty million dollars a year until the Temple's construction is completed. That is my offer. Do you agree?"

Do you know what I answered him? Just one word. "No!"

Kitzur Tefilat Amecha - #34-35

[adapted for middle-schoolers by Rabbi Shmuel Jablon from Rav Aviner's three-volume commentary on the siddur "Tefilat Amecha"]

#34

In Barchu the Chazan says "Bless Hashem, the blessed One" and we respond "Blessed is Hashem, the blessed One, for all eternity". The Gemara says that the one who answers is greater than the one that makes the blessing. What's going on here? When we pray as an individual, it is just ourselves. But when we are joined with others, we clearly become part of Klal Yisrael. So our prayers have more importance and strength. So in Barchu the Chazan gathers together a bunch of individuals and we become a strong community. And notice when we respond, we say Hashem should be blessed forever. This connects us with every Jew forever and ever. So once again our Tefillot go beyond ourselves and join with the rest of Klal Yisrael.

#35

The first blessing before Kriyat Shema blesses Hashem who created everything in nature. We also say that He creates both the light and the dark. We know that Hashem loves us and takes care of us, which means everything is for the good, even if we don't always see or understand why something is good. So the darkness, both at night time and the darkness that can sometimes happen in our lives, is eventually for the good as it's all from Hashem. We are not like some of the ancient people who believed in a good god and a bad god. Hashem is One and everything He does is for the good, even if it takes us a very long time to see it.

Shut She'eilat Shlomo - Questions of Jewish Law

Exceptions for Mitzvat Yishuv Eretz Yisrael

Q: Concerning the obligation to live in Israel, are there exceptions for Rabbis serving Diaspora communities?

A: Yes, temporarily.

Q: Chazanim serving Diaspora communities?

A: ibid.

Q: People who help Diaspora Jews make Aliya (e.g. Jewish Agency personnel)?

A: ibid.

Q: People who do important work for the State of Israel (e.g. diplomats)?

A: ibid.

Q: If someone is exempted, are his wife and younger children also exempted so that they can live with him?

A: Yes. This is all called to the sake of a Mitzvah for which it is permitted temporarily. Tosafot on Avodah Zarah 13a.

Family Matters - Ha-Rav writes weekly for

the parashah sheet "Rosh Yehudi" on family relationships

Traps

Do not set a trap for your child. What does this mean? Do not forbid him to do something which you know from the outset he cannot withstand, and then punish him for it. And even if you do not punish him, it will create within him a guilty conscience and unpleasant feelings that he was not able to meet the expectations. Even our Sages did not enact decrees which the community could not properly observe. And even Hashem did not command us in His Torah to do anything beyond our capacity. And He does not send anyone a trial if he does not have the capacity to withstand it. Everything is thus dependent on a person's free choice. But a young child possesses a limited amount of free choice. He should therefore not be tested. It is true that a test builds a person's character but a person experiences enough natural tests from the world around him, and he doesn't always withstand those. A parent's role is then to comfort him and help him digest his failure in order to transmit to him: My dear child, failures occur in life, but regardless, I love you.

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