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Parashat Bechukotai 5771 - #187

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### Dedication Opportunities

Ha-Rav Aviner is set to publish a variety of new books in Hebrew.

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The upcoming books are:

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2. Commentary on all of "Orot" of Maran Ha-Rav Kook – 10 volumes in honor of Gimmel Elul (Rav Kook's Yahrtzeit)
3. Classes of Rabbenu Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah on Orot Ha-Torah – recordings and transcription
4. "Ha-Mored Ha-Gadol" (The Great Rebel) – children's story

### On Lag Ba-Omer...

#### Lag Ba-Omer which Falls on Motza'ei Shabbat

When Lag Ba-Omer Falls on Motza'ei Shabbat, some authorities rule that the bonfires should be started later in the night to avoid the desecration of Shabbat by myriads of Jews (including the police), especially at the grave of the Rashbi on Meiron. The custom of the Admor of Boyan, who lights the main bonfire at Meiron, is to light after midnight.

In Shut Sha'arei Tzion (#14), Ha-Rav Shmuel Rabinowitz - Rav of the Kotel and Holy Places in Israel - discusses the question of celebrating at Kever Rashbi on Meiron. He brings a letter from Ha-Rav Zalman Nechmiah Goldberg (Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach's son-in-law) which says that the bonfires should be lit on Sunday during the day.

The Chief Rabbis of Israel, Ha-Rav Shlomo Amar and Ha-Rav Yonah Metzger, have suggested postponing the bonfires until Motza'ei Lag Ba-Omer. This is also the ruling of Ha-Rav Ovadiah Yosef. And this is indeed proper, since lighting a bonfire is not a Torah Mitzvah and not a Rabbinic Mitzvah and not even a Minhag which must be observed. It is a

non-obligatory custom, and many Torah scholars do not even light a bonfire at all (see the words of Ha-Rav Joseph Soloveitchik in "Mi-Pineni Ha-Rav," pp. 218-220). After all, blowing the Shofar and taking the Lulav, which are Torah Mitzvot, are not performed when their respective holidays fall on Shabbat, on account of a concern that some individuals will violate Shabbat. And the State of Israel postpones Yom Ha-Zikaron and Yom Ha-Atzmaut to prevent Shabbat desecration. It is all the more so appropriate that the bonfires be postponed until Motza'ei Lag Ba-Omer when it is known that many people will desecrate Shabbat if it is not postponed.

Perhaps you will say that if we postpone Lag Ba-Omer then it will not be Lag Ba-Omer but LAD Ba-Omer (the 34<sup>th</sup> of the Omer and not the 33<sup>rd</sup>)? This is not a problem: the fact is that when Tishba Be-Av (the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av) falls on Shabbat, it is postponed until the 10<sup>th</sup> of Av.

Our Rabbi – Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Kook - emphasized that a year in which Yom Ha-Atzmaut is moved to avoid Shabbat violation is a great sanctification of Hashem's Name, since this is proof that the Jewish State is preventing the desecration of Shabbat. The same applies to Lag Ba-Omer.

And to be sure, the Rashbi himself is greatly distressed by this Shabbat desecration, which is supposedly performed in his honor.

## Rav Aviner on... The Internet -- This Is War!

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

The Internet -- this is war! A serious war. The war against the evil impulse! A war against the serpent!

There is a story of some soldiers who came back from the war, having had their fill of battles and victories. An old man said to them, "You've come home from the small war, but the big war still awaits you." They asked him, "What war is that?" and he answered, "the war against the evil impulse" (Orchot Tzaddikim).

It certainly is a big war. If a boy spends six hours every day on the Internet, partly on appropriate material, partly on foolishness and shallow nonsense, and partly on the most impure content imaginable, he contaminates his body and he contaminates his psyche, he contaminates his intellect, he contaminates his soul, he contaminates his spirit. This is therefore war! Everybody must go off to war, because everybody is in danger, both young and old, both girls (albeit to a lesser extent) and boys, both secular and G-d-fearing. This is war. The evil impulse spares no one. It works over time.

Each generation has its own merits and each generation its own trials and temptations. The temptation of our generation is the electronic enemy, the Internet Serpent. And as in every generation, we are embattled on all sides (Mesilat Yesharim, chapter 1).

The best approach is to wipe out the enemy entirely, to smash it to bits, leaving no trace of it, in other words, one should not have Internet at all. It's true, there are good things there, but you lose more than you gain. Such is always the way of the evil impulse, glossing over the bad with the good, and thereby taking souls hostage.

Our Sages did not say in Pirkei Avot, "you will not sin," but "you will not come to the hands of sin" (chapter 3). If you are already in the hands of sin, if the serpent is enveloping you, then you are already in bad shape. Or, as the saying goes, "A clever man is one who succeeds in extricating himself from a situation that a wise man wouldn't have entered in the first place." So be wise.

But if you are not wise, and you've got Internet at home, because you need it for work or school, or because the situation is not under your control, or because your parents do not agree to unplug it, despite all your entreaties and despite all your wars against them, or

because your spouse does not agree, or because your evil impulse does not agree, then declare war, a defensive war. Do not say, "It won't happen to me." That's the serpent talking!

This war is composed of two parts: a land attack and an air attack.

The land attack includes employing ruses. One should definitely employ trickery in this war. One should install a filter, the highest level possible, such as the "Etrog" option within the Israeli "Rimon" filter.

It is well known that many people unfortunately manage to circumvent the filter, so there are two options. The first is to use an entry password that you don't know by heart. A reliable friend should hold on to it for you, ready to open it up when you need it, or, TWO people should each have half of the password, and two are better than one. And obviously, three are even better than two.

The second possibility is to install "Webchaver", a software program that can be found on the Internet, which reports to your friend every time you enter a non-clean site.

There is also an air battle: repeat to yourself over and over how contaminating it is, how disgusting it is. To study Mesilat Yesarim day and night, especially chapters two, three, four and five on the trait of caution. And prepare yourself a slip of paper with a list of utterances of faith and ethics and law that influence your heart, and read them morning, noon and night, especially when you're going to encounter the enemy. Use it like an army manual.

Prepare a holy slip of paper that says, "Don't destroy yourself! Don't contaminate yourself! Be aware that impurity will follow you around all day, all your life. The more you sin, the weaker your resistance will be. If a person commits a sin and repeats it, he will come to view it as permissible, and will no longer feel the pangs of conscience. You will feel disgusted with yourself. It will corrupt you. But if you overcome it, how fortunate you will be. But don't fall asleep on watch. You are liable to fall again. And if you fall, then a defensive war will no longer suffice. You'll need a war of liberation. Don't despair. Even from the deepest pit you can climb out. Because you've got the strength. And every day starts a war again. Don't put your gun down. To be vanquished in battle is bad, but to be vanquished without a fight is a tragedy.

You fell down? Get up! The righteous man falls seven times but gets up, until he falls no more. True, this demands an effort, but it's worth it. It's also interesting. Run to the battle!

It seems hard but it's possible.

Buy yourself a notebook and each day mark down how many times you've won and how many times you've lost. That way you will daily decrease your failures and increase your victories, because we ascend in holiness. We do not descend.

Set out on the way, and G-d will help you. Be strong and courageous! After you overcome four or five times it'll be a lot easier for you (the above number appears in Kitzur Shulchan Aruch 1:4), after you pay your fourfold or fivefold fine.

Be aware that G-d does not send a man a trial unless He gives him the strength to withstand it. Believe in yourself! You've got a pure soul and you will win. Even if you fall far down, you will still win.

So be pure and feel pure. Keep it up!

### *Kitzur Tefilat Amecha - #56-57*

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

#56

The most important parts of the Kedusha are when we say the words that the angels say: "Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh" and "Baruch Kavod." We actually say these verses three times in davening. Earlier we said them in the first blessing of Shema. Later we will say them in "U-

va Le-Tzion". And in the middle we say them in Kedusha. It is important to note that unlike the other times, when we say these verses in the Kedusha we must be standing and in a Minyan. We know we stand to imitate the angels. But why do we need a Minyan? This is because the greatest value of Kedusha comes from being in a community, not from remaining an individual. Often others think that true holiness comes from being alone. But for Jews, this is not the case. Holiness comes from doing Hashem's will among Klal Yisrael, and doing it to glorify His Name and to be His partner as much as possible. We need to be part of the community as Klal Yisrael is the Nation whose very purpose is to make Hashem's Name Holy. So when we do a Mitzvah we do it not just as an individual, but as a member of Klal Yisrael. And it is as Klal Yisrael that we give honor to Hashem in this world.

#57

In the Kedusha that last verse "Hashem will rule forever, Your G-d- Tzion, praise G-d." Rabbi David Avudraham asks why this verse from Tehilim was picked, instead of a verse from the Torah which says Hashem will rule forever. He answers that this verse was picked intentionally as it mentions Tzion, Eretz Yisrael. What is so special about mentioning Tzion in the Kedusha? This is because the great Kiddush Hashem that is discussed in the Kedusha comes by way of Tzion, by way of Eretz Yisrael. In theory Jews could live anywhere. But it is by being together in the Holy Land that we can make a true Kiddush Hashem in this world. Notice that unlike "Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh" and "Baruch Kavod", this verse isn't said by the angels. It is said only by us. We must work to actively build up Eretz Yisrael, to build a true House for Hashem in Tzion. This is how we can make a Kiddush Hashem.

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

### **The Obligation to Make Aliyah at this Time**

Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook  
[Sichot Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah – Bereshit p. 276]

The Pitchei Teshuvah (Even Ha-Ezer 75:10) wrote: "The obligation to fulfill this mitzvah applies at all times, and this is explained by all of the halachic authorities, the Rishonim and Acharonim, based on the ruling of the Ramban (Bemidbar 35:53 and additions to the Sefer Ha-Mitzvot of the Rambam, Positive Mitzvah #4).

There are those who have claimed that there is no mitzvah at this time because of the danger in traveling to Eretz Yisrael, as mentioned in the Tosafot (Ketubot 110b and see Mordechai ibid. and Shulchan Aruch Even Ha-Ezer 75:5). Ha-Gaon Ha-Rav Eliyahu Klatzkin wrote a small book of Halachah called "Dvar Halachah" in which he dealt with this strange and even somewhat funny claim, since people make more dangerous trips for business (#38 p. 27a). And there are those who claim that there is no mitzvah at this time based on what is mentioned in the Poskim that there is no mitzvah to make aliyah when one cannot find a livelihood in Eretz Yisrael (Pitchei Teshuvah ibid. in the name of Terumat Ha-Deshen and Tashbetz). Ha-Rav Klatzkin wrote regarding this idea that in practical terms it is not accurate to say that there is a livelihood outside of Israel but none in Eretz Yisrael. On the contrary, there is a "kosher" livelihood of working the Land in Eretz Yisrael, while the livelihood outside of Israel is through profiteering and the persecution of Israel.

And there are those who claim that there is no mitzvah to make Aliyah since there is a concern that one will become corrupt by being distanced from the Torah. But on the contrary, the Gemara and Poskim explain that one should live in Eretz Yisrael even in a city where the majority of residents are idol worshipers (Ketubot 110b. Shulchan Aruch Even Ha-Ezer 75:3),

despite the potential negative influence. Although some authorities write that heretics are worse than non-Jews in this regard, and there is a greater chance of negative influence, Ha-Rav Klatzkin explained that the same law applies in a city in Eretz Yisrael where the majority of residents are heretics. His proof is from the Gemara in Eruvin (61b-62a. Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim #385) where the law appears that it is impossible to make an "Eruv Chatzerot" (lit. mixed [ownership of] courtyards, which allows one to carry within the courtyard on Shabbat) with a Tzeduki (Saducee, i.e. a heretic), and various options are given if one lives in the same house as a Tzeduki. But there is no mention of a prohibition of living in such a place, or that one is obligated to live in a place solely populated by observant Jews. He adds that one's failure to observe the mitzvot of Hashem based on a concern that spiritual damage will result is discussed by the Gemara in Berachot (10a) regarding King Chizkiyahu, who did not engage in the mitzvah of procreation since he saw through Divine intuition that unvirtuous children would issue from him. The prophet Yeshayahu said to him: "What you are commanded to do, you must do!" And Ha-Rav Klatzkin added (ibid.): As if there is permission to act wiser than Hashem's mitzvot!

There is a story that after the establishment of the State of Israel, Jews from North Africa and Yemen made aliyah and were abandoning traditional observance. The person who headed the Department of Aliyah at the Jewish Agency was a Torah scholar named Ha-Rav Shlomo Zalman Shragai, and he was being eaten up inside by this fact. He did not know whether it was proper to continue to bring Jews to Israel under such circumstances. He went to the Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem, Ha-Rav Ha-Gaon Tzvi Pesach Frank, and asked him what to do. Rav Frank said to him: Can you do me a favor and hand me the Yalkut Shimoni? He opened it and showed him the words of the Yalkut Shimoni on Megillat Eichah (#1038): "Hashem says: If only my children, my Nation, would be in the Land of Israel, even though they make it impure." And he continued: What do you want from me - to transgress the words of our Sages?! You are not guilty for what is occurring. You must bring Jews to Israel and make every effort to connect them to Torah. Rav Shragai continued to bring Jews to Israel and he mentioned this story various times.

When the Belzer Rebbe (Ha-Rav Aharon Rokeach) made Aliyah, he came to Reb Noson (Ha-Rav Shalom Natan Ra'anani Kook, Maran Ha-Rav Kook's son-in-law) and said: You and I had differences regarding the way to bring Jews on Aliyah. We (much of the Haredi world) said that they should first be strengthened in Judaism outside of the Land and only then could they make Aliyah in order to build in holiness; you said that every one of them should quickly come on Aliyah without calculation. After the Holocaust, it has become clear to us that we erred, and we are greatly distressed over this fact.

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