



Parashat Bechukotai 5772 - #233

Ask Rav Aviner: mororly@bezeqint.net

Prepared by Rabbi Mordechai Tzion

Visit our blog: www.ravaviner.com

On the Haftarah... Trust in Hashem

[Ashkenazim/Sefardim: Yirmiyahu 16:19-17:14
Yemenite Jews: Yechezkel 34:1-27]

Trust in Hashem is not a synonym for inaction and passivity. It is what pushes a person to action without expecting immediate results.

In our Haftarah, we find a section of verses which remind us of the style of King David's Psalms: "This is what Hashem says: Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength, and whose heart turns away from Hashem. He will be like a bush in the wastelands, and he will not see goodness when it comes. He will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives. Blessed is the man who trusts in Hashem, whose confidence is in Him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes. Its leaves are always fresh. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit" (Yirmiyahu 17:5-8).

At first glance, it is difficult to see the connection between these exalted verses - which call a person to trust in Hashem - and the rest of Yirmiyahu's words here, which announce the destruction of the Kingdom of Israel as a result of our transgressions. But the connection is in fact quite simple: the call to repent, together with the ethical ideal, can cure the Nation. The political difficulties we encounter will not be solved by diplomatic channels, but rather by the Nation of Israel being the guardian of universal ethics. If we fail in our task, we lose our place as a Nation among humanity, and experience the trials and tribulations of the Exile. Instead of placing our trust in backstabbing nations and wallowing in a miserable state, the prophet calls us to trust in Hashem. Complete trust in Hashem means acting with integrity. It means being ready to receive all results which stem from these actions,

even if they turn out to our detriment, and recognizing that we are constantly surrounded by Divine Providence.

Do not think that crime pays. It is possible that in the short term righteous and upright people are poverty-stricken and distressed while crooked people are happy and prosperous. But in the long term, the opposite will occur. One whose heart is distant from Hashem, who has chosen to rely on man, and is mired in all sorts of different affairs, will not merit seeing days of kindness. But one who behaved with integrity without compromise will merit days of joy. The reward for acting in this way does not appear immediately. If this were the case, most people would be full of integrity, if only for the sake of their own best interests.

Our world is a world of trials (Mesilat Yesharim, chap. 1), and it is therefore incumbent upon us to overcome many difficulties. Through these, one's true personality will be revealed. One should not despair because of Divine judgment. Its reason will be revealed sooner or later. It is only a matter of time. Such trust in Hashem is not, as mentioned, the same as laziness, inactivity, or reliance on miracles. It is full confidence that the Master of the Universe controls events and does not abandon His creatures to happenstance. At the same time, a person is discerning, rational, and takes responsibility for his actions, whatever the results may be. He knows well that the world belongs to the Master of the Universe, and he will eventually have to give a Divine accounting for all that he did.

And above all else, he knows in the depth of his heart that all of historical occurrences, whether personal or communal, are arranged according to Divine wisdom and justice. This is trust in Hashem.

Rav Aviner on... The Torah Scholar's Ambition

[Be-Ahavah U-Be-Emunah – Behar 5772 – translated by R. Blumberg]

Question: What ambition should a yeshiva student have? To be a great Torah luminary?

Answer: That can be worded better. His ambition has to be to grow in Torah, to increase his Torah. We must avoid haughtiness and expressions such as "great Torah luminary". A person requires a bit of sense and a bit of humility. Not everyone can become a great Torah luminary. It depends on one's talents and prospects. But he must grow in Torah, each person in accordance with his ability. Or, it can be worded differently: the goal is to become a Torah scholar. This is something to which every Jew should aspire. "And all your children shall be disciples of Hashem" (Yeshayahu 54:13).

There are different types of Torah scholars. There are professional Torah scholars, for whom Torah is their trade, like Shul rabbis or yeshiva rebbes, and they earn a living from this. There are non-professional Torah scholars, like carpenters, engineers or soldiers, who are full of Torah. Being a Torah scholar is the ideal, normal state of every Jew. He should be full of Torah, full of spiritual, moral and halachic thoughts.

Therefore, in Yeshivat Mercaz Ha-Rav, Rabbenu Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Kook never led training programs for rabbis, teachers or rabbinical judges. Every student was supposed to learn all of these things himself. The main thing, rather, was to raise up Torah scholars. That is the ideal image of the Jew: a Torah scholar!

In various cultures the ideal was to be a knight, a monk or a gentleman. For us, the longed-for goal is the Torah scholar. As noted above, not every Torah scholar has Torah as his profession, but being a Torah scholar is what constitutes his personality.

As much as a person can, he should grow in Torah. For this there are Yeshivot. The first was the yeshiva of Moshe. It is true that Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov also learned in the yeshiva of Shem and Ever, Noach's son and great grandson. Yet we do not know exactly how they learned there.

The yeshivot have carried on until our own day, and they have the glorious goal of raising up Torah scholars. To become a Torah scholar one must learn with diligence, work on perfecting one's character and increasing one's fear of G-d. One must also show enormous self-sacrifice. According to the effort, so the reward.

It's not just a matter of the quantity of knowledge, but of devotion to study. The main thing is not to know but to study, and that study will leave its mark on the person's whole personality, and the person will bring a blessing to his Nation.

Stories of Rabbenu –

Our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook

We Have Returned Home

Right after the liberation of Jerusalem, our Rabbi informed the entire world on the radio: "All Israel, the entire world and all of the nations of the world must know that we have returned home. And since we have returned home, know that no power in the world will move us from here. Every house has an entrance way and a main room. We first entered the entrance way and now we have reached the main room." (Iturei Yerushalayim #6)

Special thank you to Orly Tzion for editing the Ateret Yerushalayim Parashah 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

