

A Taste of Torah Coming Home

By Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher

One of the hallmarks of the Jewish people in the Diaspora has been the millennia-long yearning for the Land of Israel. This fire, however, was lit long before the Jewish people were exiled.

We find numerous places in the Torah where our ancestors expressed their longing for Eretz Yisroel. The nature of this longing, as described by the Sages, is telling.

In this week's Parsha, we are told of Moshe's prayers to Hashem to allow him to enter the Promised Land. Rashi tells us that he prayed 515 times (the numerical equivalent of the word "Vaeschanan," "And I implored," the term Moshe used in regard to his prayers) to merit entrance into Eretz Yisroel. Ultimately, Hashem denied Moshe's request.

The Gemara asks, why did Moshe desire to enter the Land? (Sota 14a). Did he want to eat its fruit? To be sated by its goodness? These were not Moshe's motives. Rather, Moshe wanted to have the ability to fulfill the many mitzvos that can only be performed in the Land of Israel.

Klal Yisroel's right to the land is not

based upon nationalistic ambitions. It is not predicated upon nostalgic longings. Klal Yisroel's right to the land is due to their observance of Torah and mitzvos. The peak level of Divine service can only be attained in Eretz Yisroel. Our connection to Hashem and His Torah can be maximized in Eretz Yisroel. And our desire to live in Eretz Yisroel is to be rooted not merely in its soil, but in the sanctity contained therein.

Moshe Rabbeinu set the tone for all generations to come; when we pray for our return to the land of our fathers, it is so that our relationship with Hashem and His Torah can be restored to its former glory.

As we complete the period of mourning for the two Temples and the exile of our nation, and we begin a period of consolation, a period in which we look forward to a brighter tomorrow, let us focus on the true love of the Land: A Land where our relationship with Hashem will burn brightly, where the service in the Temple will again be performed, and where the inherent sanctity of its stones and soil can once again grow and flourish.

Ask the Rabbi Taking Stock

From: Marvin Peyser

Dear Rabbi,

I own stocks in some companies that are not doing too well these days. (What stock is?) Some of these companies just

announced massive layoffs, in the tens of thousands. This will result in lower costs, therefore greater profits, and I'm liable to make some money on it when the stock subsequently rises. I would like to feel joyful that my stock

Stories For The Soul

Get Moving

Moshe began building three of the Cities of Refuge in accordance with Hashem's command. The other three cities had to be located in the land of Israel, and since Moshe was not allowed to enter Eretz Yisrael, Moshe was not able to complete the mitzvah, but he started with what he was able to do. We see here the importance of a mitzvah.

Rav Shlomo Kluger ztz"l accepted a new position as Rav. Shortly thereafter, he was invited to a bris. When he got there, he saw that the bris was not proceeding. He inquired about the delay and was told that the father of the baby was in the next room dying and they were waiting for the father to pass on so the baby could carry his name.

Rabbi Kluger was aghast. He ordered the bris to take place immediately for two reasons:

First there is the concept of zerizim makdimim l'mitzvos - one should always do a mitzvah as soon as possible. Naming a baby after a father does not justify a delay in performing a mitzvah.

Secondly, the merit of the mitzvah will serve as a zechus to heal the father. When a bris is performed the angel Raphael comes down to heal the baby. Once Raphael is healing the baby he can also heal the father.

At the Rabbi's urging the bris was performed immediately and that minhag was officially abandoned. Shortly thereafter the father made a miraculous recovery.

Adapted with permission from ShulWeek by Rabbi Boruch Lederman.

Kollel Happenings

LEGAL HOLIDAY LEARNING MON., SEPT. 5

The next legal holiday learning program will take place on Labor Day, Mon., Sept. 5 at Zera Avraham. Shacharis will be at 8 followed by breakfast and a class from 9:10-10:10. \$125 sponsorship is still available. For information, call 303-820-2855 or email rye@denverkollel.org.



'GOOD GOSSIP?' AT SEPT. 7 TORAH FOR TYCOONS

Join Dean Phil Weiser, Dean and Thompson Professor of Law, University of Colorado Law School. Former Senior Advisor for Technology and Innovation in the White House's National Economic Council and Kollel Dean Rabbi Shachne Sommers Schwab for "Good Gossip? The Ethics of Speech Where Knowledge is Power" at the next Torah for Tycoons, Wed., Sept. 7. The program will be held at noon at the East Side Kosher Deli. Cost: \$20. To RSVP, call 303-820-2855 or email info@denverkollel.org



CHERRY CREEK MUNCH AND LEARN, MON., SEPT. 12

The next Cherry Creek Munch and Learn for men, led by Rabbi Yehuda Amsel, will be held on Mon., Sept. 12, at 12:30 p.m. at the East Side Kosher Deli, 499 S. Elm St. . The class focuses on Pirkei Avos. For information, contact Rabbi Amsel at 303-820-2855 or at rya@denverkollel.org

Interpersonal Issues Avoiding Bal Tolin

One should make sure to have cash available before hiring a worker. If it's possible that the employer will be unavailable to pay the worker when the job is completed, arrangements should be made to

have someone available to pay him.

Adapted with permission from "The Halachos of Other People's Money" by Rabbi Pinchas Bodner (Feldheim Publishers)

Ask the Rabbi

Continued from front.

will rise, but then I am reminded that tens of thousands of families will have lost their income. This is a dilemma. Is there any Torah insight on this?

Dear Marvin Peyser,

First, I'd like to say that your question shows a great deal of sensitivity, compassion, and market savvy.

How should you feel when others lose their jobs while your stock rises? Bad and good. Feel bad that others have lost their jobs, and glad that your stocks went up.

The Talmud actually deals with this idea of relating to contradictory emotional stimuli. The Talmud's example regards how to relate to a parent's death when at the same time that death brings financial relief to the child.

If someone hears that his father has died, leaving him and his brothers an inheritance, what blessing does he say? Should he say, "Blessed is G-d, the True Judge," which is the blessing accepting G-d's will upon hearing sad news? Or, should he say, "Blessed is He who is Good and Who bestows good," which is the blessing for good news which benefits him and others, such as here where he and his brothers have become wealthy?

The Talmud states that he should say both blessings. First the blessing for the bad news, and afterwards the blessing

for the good news.

This can be understood as recognition that people can feel contradictory emotions; an event which has positive and negative aspects can be experienced as such. I think an important part of this lesson is that a person shouldn't feel guilty for experiencing the happy aspects of a bad situation. It doesn't necessarily mean that he is insensitive.

With that, I would like to tell you a true story. A rabbi I know once called the police to report his teenage son, last seen riding his bicycle, missing. Later that day the police phoned asking the rabbi to come and view the body of a boy, matching his son's description, who had been hit by a car while riding his bike.

The rabbi later told that while he and his wife were in the car on their way to identify the body, he had hoped for a fleeting moment that the sight which would greet his eyes would not be that of his son. "But if it's not my son," he realized, "then it will be someone else's son, and my joy will be someone else's tragedy. If it is my son, others will be spared." That thought gave him courage and helped him accept the sight that did greet his eyes, the sight of his beloved son.

Sources: Tractate Brachos 59b.

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