

### 1 – Topic – A thought on the middle of the Parsha.

As I speak to you from Artzeinu Hakedosha, from the only place to be Yerushalayim Ir Hakodesh. I just came back from the Kevura and the Nichum Aveilim for Rebbetzin Scheiner, the wife of Rav Reuvein Scheiner. As a matter of fact, I ran from the Nichum Aveilim to be able to give this Shiur. But I want to tell you she had a tremendous Ahavas Eretz Yisrael. Her husband couldn't afford to take them to Eretz Yisrael all the time, therefore, he started a camp here in Eretz Yisrael. Those of you who remember, they used to come every summer. After a while you get too old for a camp so that is why HKB"H gave his son a few dollars that he should be able to have them come here whenever they want. So that is the key to Hatzlacha. Ahavas Eretz Yisrael. Ahavas Hatorah has to go with it. A tremendous Ahava for Eretz Yisrael. People who have the right Ahava when they come here, it says that the land is Pose'ach Es Otz'roseha, it opens its Otzer.

The Pnei Yehoshua on Daf Kuf Yud Aleph in the Sugya in Kesubos about Eretz Yisrael says that Eretz Yisrael doesn't help everybody. It depends why you are coming. If you are coming for Kedushas Eretz Yisrael, then that is why you have to come.

Let's talk a little about Parshas Eikev. Between Shlishi and Revii we have the 40 days that Moshe Rabbeinu was Mispaleil after the Eigel. We are taught that for 40 days Moshe went up to Har Sinai and received the first Luchos, came down and broke them. For 40 days he went back up and Davened to HKB"H for Kapparah. Then the third 40 days (which is 120 days altogether), he went back up and was Mekabeil the Luchos Shenios. This is the general understanding of what took place. There is a problem with the numbers, calculating all of the numbers of the days. It doesn't really work out precisely. Moshe Rabbeinu had to be down for at least one day to break the Luchos. It is a problem with the calculation, but anyway this is the way Rashi and the Ramban learn. Moshe Rabbeinu is at Har Sinai for three cycles of 40 days.

The Vilna Gaon disagrees. The GR"A doesn't just argue with Rishonim he bases it on a Pirkei D'rabbi Eliezer and the Pirkei D'rabbi Eliezer says no, the middle 40 days Moshe Rabbeinu went up to Har Sinai? Moshe Rabbeinu was down among Klal Yisrael and he was getting Klal Yisrael to do a proper Teshuva. He went to different Shevatim and he went to get them to do the proper Teshuva for what they had done. If you want to see the Shittas HaGR"A learn the Hameik Davar, the Netziv goes with the GR"A's Shittah and explains the Machlokes in this week's Parsha, and more elaborately back in Parshas Ki Sisa.

So that we have two opinions about the middle 40 days. Rashi and the Ramban says that the middle 40 days were up on Har Sinai and the Gaon says that the Pirkei D'rabbi Eliezer is Masham not that way, he says that Farkert that Moshe Rabbeinu was among the people. The Pesukim fit better that way, the calculation fits better that way and that is why the GR"A embraces this Shittah. The question is of course that it says that Moshe Rabbeinu Davened for the middle 40 days as it says in 9:25 (אֶת אַרְבָּעִים הַיּוֹם) אֶת אַרְבָּעִים הַיּוֹם--אֲשֶׁר הִתְנַפְּלִיתִי. The middle days that I Davened.

Let me tell you the Netziv's Teretz. It is a big Yesod. The Netziv asks another Kasha. We learned in this week's Parsha that before you Daven you are supposed to praise HKB"H. Before a Bakasha you are supposed to start with Shvach and Hoda'a. That is what we do in Shemoneh Esrei. The first three Berachos are Shvach and Hoda'a. Freigt the Netziv, what about in Shemos 32:11 (וַיַּחַל מֹשֶׁה) where Moshe Rabbeinu Davened after the Eigel and it doesn't say that he said praise or in this week's Parsha we have between Shlishi and Revii where Moshe Rabbeinu had Tefillah and he didn't start with praise. What is going on? We learn out from one time that he did and he Davened with praise and he said (הַקֵּל הַגְּדוֹל הַגְּבוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא) and we do that, but other times he didn't? Enfert the Netziv what he himself calls a big Yesod in Tanach. That the Tefillos are said in the Shemoneh Esrei. The ideal way for a Tefilla to work is in middle of a Shemoneh Esrei. When you Daven Shemoneh Esrei and in the Shemoneh Esrei you add (וַיַּחַל מֹשֶׁה). What is (וַיַּחַל מֹשֶׁה)? You Daven a Shemoneh Esrei and stick in a Bakasha for Kapparrah. That is the ideal Tefilla.

If you go to Kever Rochel and you want to Daven, it is a fine thing to go to Kever Rochel and say Tehillim. No question. However, if you want to do a Tefilla that has the best opportunity to be Miskabeil, go to Kever Rochel and Daven Mincha there or Daven Shacharis or Maariv there. There are Mincha Minyanim there by Mincha Gedola and you Daven Shemoneh Esrei, in your Shemoneh Esrei you add your Bakashas. That is the best way for a Tefillah to be. This is the Netziv's Yesod and I would add that the Yesod doesn't depend, Rashi and the Ramban do not argue on the Yesod. But this Netziv comes out of the Shittas HaGR"A. it is an interesting to follow in this week's Parsha where the Netziv himself refers you back to Parshas Ki Sisa and it is fascinating. The two Shittos about Moshe Rabbeinu where he was those 40 days.

## **2 – Topic – A Thought on (אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲבִנֶיהָ בְּרִזָּל)**

Earlier in the Parsha it describes Eretz Yisrael as is found in 8:9 (אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲבִנֶיהָ בְּרִזָּל). A land whose stones are iron. Chazal in Masseches Taanis 4a (7 lines from the top) Darshun (כל ת"ח שאינו קשה כברזל) (אינו ת"ח). Especially in Eretz Yisrael. In Eretz Yisrael (אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲבִנֶיהָ בְּרִזָּל). Meaning the Talmidei Chachamim are (בְּרִזָּל), they are tough. In Eretz Yisrael they are tough. In America we are weak. People ask a Shaila and we tell them most Poskim Assur, but is there someone to rely on? Maybe, could be.

I remember that someone once came to me on Shabbos, and asked me a Shaila. I pulled out a Mishna Brura and looked and it said Yeish L'hakeil Bish'as Had'chak. He said Boruch Hashem. What do you mean Boruch Hashem? Yeish L'hakeil Bish'as Had'chak? In Eretz Yisrael when it says Yeish L'hakeil Bish'as Had'chak they are not Maikil. (אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲבִנֶיהָ בְּרִזָּל). They are tough.

In the Taima Dik'ra (page 210 on 8:9) Rav Chaim Kanievsky brings a question that he asked that his father answered. He asked a question. It says that in Eretz Yisrael that the Talmidei Chachamim are (אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲבִנֶיהָ בְּרִזָּל), there are other Gemaras that indicate that Talmidei Chachamim in Eretz Yisrael are gentle. Like in Masseches Sanhedrin 24a (25 lines from the top) (אלו ת"ח שבא"י שנוחין זה לזה בהלכה). They are more gentle in Eretz Yisrael. Or in Nedarim 22a (bottom line) (ונתן ק' לך שם לב רגז). Hashem will give you a heart that is quick to anger (בבבל כתיב). That is not Eretz Yisrael?

So he asked his father which way is it? His father answered that Talmidei Chachamim of Eretz Yisrael are tough, they are strong, they are powerful in their keeping of Torah, but anger that is a different story. You

ever saw how an Israeli puts his thumb and his first two fingers together and shakes it at you. So in America that is very offensive. In Eretz Yisrael it is tough but not offensive, he doesn't mean anything personally. He is not angry at you. He is asking you to wait a minute but in a tough way. That is a Mashul. It is a Mashul of how it is here in Eretz Yisrael.

In Maseches Chagigah the Masechta begins (הכלחייבין בראייה). Everyone is Chayuv to go up to the Beis Hamikdash for the Sholosh Regalim. There are two Peshatim, Rashi says (הכל חייבין בראייה) means everyone is required to be seen. The first Tosafos in Chagigah argues and he says you need to bring a Korban, you don't come to the Beis Hamikdash empty handed. There are two ways to come to be Oleh Regel, to be seen and to come with a Korban.

The same thing in the Mishna in the beginning of Peah (הפאה והבכורים) שאלו דברים שאין להם שעור. הפאה והבכורים) (והראיון). What is (והראיון)? That is Ri'ya, to be seen in the Beis Hamikdash. What does it mean? On Daf Zayin in Chagigah there is a Machlokes, does it mean Ri'yas Panim, you should be seen. (שאלו דברים שאין להם שעור) you can come once or you can come many times. Or does it mean the Korban, there is no Shiur to the price of the Korban Min Hatorah. So what we learn here is that there are two ways to be seen in the Beis Hamikdash. Ri'yas Panim and Ri'ya with a Korban.

This comes to mind because there are two types of Ri'yas Panim here in Eretz Yisrael as well. There are people who come here and they bring a Korban, they are being Makriv. Either they sacrifice to come or today when people don't sacrifice to come, but they come with an offering to the Ribbono Shel Olam. They are going to work on something, they are going to try to be Mitzuyanim while they are in Eretz Yisrael they are going to try to not miss Kavana in Shemoneh Esrei. While they are here they are going to try to be Mehadeir in the Mitzvos that they do. They come with a Korban.

Other people are Ri'yas Panim they come and they are seen. I don't mean in centuries when it was difficult to travel to Eretz Yisrael. People traveled on rickety boats and people traveled across desert land. Believe me they thought about that it is a Korban, it is a Hak'rava, it is a sacrifice. They weren't going to Eretz Yisrael just to relax, they were going to Eretz Yisrael to have Aliyah, to be raised. Today Boruch Hashem we go easily, but we need to come the right way. To come and offer up a sacrifice. To offer up something to the Ribbono Shel Olam. Some Hanhaga in learning, some Hanhaga in Davening.

I am now in the new Ohr Sameach Beis Medrash. The Beis Medrash was dug down into the stone of Yerushalayim. A beautiful Beis Medrash. There is no cell phone reception down there. Wonderful! What a Korban to bring. The whole day no reason to keep it on, it is just searching for service and losing its power. Wonderful! When you come to Eretz Yisrael you have to come and be willing to offer some type of sacrifice.

When you go to Eretz Yisrael they inspect your pockets, they inspect your hand luggage. When Moshiach will come they will inspect your hand luggage. What are you carrying? You are going to get on the plane with a hand luggage with some type of a kindle or a cartoon to watch, or a secular book to read? They are going to send you home. If you get on with Seforim in your hand or in your hand luggage or with things that are meaningful in your hand luggage, maybe with a recording of a beautiful Navi Shiur that

talks about Eretz Yisrael and an earphone to listen to it. They will let you on. You think that they will let you on if you have the wrong things in your handbag? Of course not!

Soon it is going to be Sukkos and there is a Ribbono Shel Olam that is printed in the Machzorim. When you go into the Sukkah it says Biz'chus Tzaisi Mi'baisi Achutza, in the Zechus that I went out of my house and I came into the Sukkah I should be Zoche to whatever it says there.

It is important to understand that it doesn't just say because I went into the Sukkah, it says Biz'chus Tzaisi Mi'baisi Achutza. In the Zechus that I leave my house behind. I left certain things behind and I am going into the Sukkah, that is a Zechus. You take all of your Narishkeitin from your house and you move that into the Sukkah, all of the silliness that you take, all of the Kepaidos that you have, you take that with you, that is not the Zechus.

The same thing, when you come to Eretz Yisrael, the Zechus is Biz'chus Tzaisi Mi'baisi Achutza, it is the Zechus that you leave the garbage behind. Leave it behind, you can do without it for a couple of days, a couple of weeks. You will see that you will have Aliya. It has to be (אָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֶבְנֶיהָ בְּרִזָּל). It doesn't mean that you are a Kai'sin, it means that you are tough, you want to do things the right way, that is what you want. Offer up when you come to Eretz Yisrael, that is what you are Makriv to the Ribbono Shel Olam. All of the Tzaisi Mi'baisi Achutza, you get rid of it Azoi Vi Darf Zein.

### **3 – Topic – A Shaila that comes up for a Levi in Eretz Yisrael regarding Birchas Kohanim**

Before I sign off I want to tell you a struggle, I might have mentioned it last summer or a previous summer. Here we Duchan, it is beautiful, it is wonderful. We have Birchas Kohanim here every day by Shacharis. It always strikes me, I am in Eretz Yisrael and I need Birchas Kohanim every day. You are in Chutz L'aretz, you need Birchas Kohanim every day. But anyway, Boruch Hashem part of the Beracha is that there is Birchas Kohanim.

I am a Levi which I may have mentioned once in a while. In order to wash the hands of the Kohanim I have to leave the Beis Medrash and go to the sinks. When I do it on Yom Tov, I do it. Here if I go out to wash the Kohanim's hands I miss a few of the Amens of Chazaras Hashatz. Is it really worth it for me to go out and wash the Kohanim's hands and miss the Amens?

In Chutz L'aretz it is Yom Tov and there is a long middle Beracha so you don't miss any Amens. Here I am really not sure what to do? If there are other Leviim, so they need one more Levi to wash the Kohanim's hands? I am not sure so I will leave that as a question. Maybe it is an appropriate question for this week's Parsha where we learn in 8:1 (אִם הִתְחַלַּת בְּמִצְוֵה גְמוּרָה, אֲשֶׁר אֶנְכִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם) and Rashi says (אִם הִתְחַלַּת בְּמִצְוֵה גְמוּרָה). If you are in middle of one Mitzvah don't leave it and go do another one.

At any rate, I am blessed to be here in the holy land Boruch Hashem. For better or worse, next Thursday evening which is Thursday afternoon in NY, I will be going to the airport and going back to Chutz L'aretz and hoping to take a little bit or as much as I can of Eretz Yisrael with me. But I will not be able to make this call at this time. If you want, take this time and go to Ohr Sameach's website as on Wednesday night I do plan B'ezras Hashem to speak to the Bochorim here in Ohr Sameach. There should be a Shiur posted,

a Shiur 24 hours before I am leaving Eretz Yisrael. It is very hard. At any rate, wishing everybody a wonderful Shabbos. If you hurry up you can still make it to Eretz Yisrael for this Shabbos. If you do, hurry to the airport and find an empty seat, come to Vasikin Shabbos morning and you can join me and some of the Talmidim here from Ohr Sameach and so many young men who grew up in our Shul and are Davening Vasikin at the Kosel and having the Seudas Shabbos at 8 AM. Would love to see you there. But you got to go right away to the airport because you have to get on a flight early enough to make it here before Shabbos. A Gutten Shabbos to one and all!