

This Land is My Land

A Breslov Perspective on the Holy Land

Essay #4—Parshat 5761

Last week we wrote about the media's deep "interest and concern" about goings-on in the Holy Land. Since the concept of the Holy Land, Malkhut, is power and majesty (for it reflects God's Majesty), why is it that the news from the Holy Land always seems difficult and degrading towards anything good, let alone to God's honor? For the answer, we need to turn the page to *Likutey Moharan* I, Lesson #7, where Rebbe Nachman speaks about the Holy Land, faith, prayer and miracles.

Briefly, the Rebbe teaches that "having faith is synonymous with prayer." If one has faith that God exists, he would lean towards praying to Him. If he truly believes, then he would certainly pray to God, for he knows that God will listen to his prayers and eventually answer him. In fact, the greater one's belief, the more intense his prayers are.

Rebbe Nachman teaches further that "the place of prayer is the Holy Land," as is written, "This is the gate of Heaven (*Genesis* 28:17) (a reference to the site of the Temple in Jerusalem). Additionally, we find that when Abraham blemished his faith (which is synonymous with prayer) by questioning God, he was told that his descendents would have to suffer in exile, outside the Holy Land (*ibid.*, 15:13). Thus, the Rebbe teaches, "the real place of prayer is in the Holy Land." And, Rebbe Nachman adds, "one who prays can effect miracles." After all, the essence of prayer is asking God to provide for the person that which he lacks or seems beyond him. Isn't this asking for a miracle? For what the person has is within the confines of a natural order—this is what he has, this is what he lacks. But with prayer, one can ask for—and sometimes even get—the world!

One who has faith will pray. One who prays to God will find his faith increasing. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Holy Land where prayers are required every day, just to survive. And not only is the Holy Land the place of prayer, it also is the place which makes you pray! And you'd better pray, and strengthen your faith, and pray harder, because the situation, unfortunately, warrants it. But when you look deeply into the situation, you actually can see a miraculous situation, you can see the guiding Hand of Divine Providence!

For no one can truly give an acceptable explanation to the survival of the Nation today in the Holy Land. Dozens of people are shot at on a daily basis. Stones are thrown by the hundreds and for the most part do not reach their intended targets. This is not due to the lack of effort on behalf of the perpetrators of death. One need only to see the blood thirsty looks of hate and destruction they reveal to the media when interviewed. No. The only answer, if we look behind the scenes, is the guiding Hand of God, Who receives those mortars, bullets and stones, as He did at the time of the Splitting of the Red Sea (see Rashi on *Exodus* 14:19) and as He did during the Persian Gulf War, when Scud missiles were sent our way but "somehow" failed to cause the death and destruction intended by the Iraqi gladiators.

(There have been victims and even one is way too many and unacceptable. But considering the literally thousands of attempts at murder [which are not reported by the media] the casualties have been

somewhat contained. Our hearts go out to the victims who have been murdered by those cowardly killers, as well as our deepest sympathies to the victims' families.)

Thus the guiding Hand of God is quite openly present in the Holy Land, even though it is concealed. What holds people back, the media in particular, from acknowledging this phenomenon? The lack of faith that the Land is God's to do with as He pleases. Automatically connected to this is the lack of belief and lack of acknowledgement that God gave the Land to the Jews. So, instead of any recognition of miracles being manifested, a steady barrage of venom is released against the Holy Land and its rightful inhabitants. Were those reporting the news interested in seeing God's Divine Hand, they easily could. And they would also be able to report it honestly. Their interest is piqued by the "power struggles" on earth, because it is a representation of the Power from on High. If they—**and we**—accept that it is the "behind the scenes power struggle" which attracts attention to the Holy Land, then we can accept upon ourselves to strengthen our faith, our prayers and our attachment to the Holy Land.

And what do you know? Rebbe Nachman teaches that faith and truth go hand in hand. If faith was prominent, then the truth would actually be reported! Amen.

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