

This Land is My Land

A Breslov Perspective on the Holy Land

Essay #20—Parshat Ki Tavo (4) 5761

In order to get a glimpse of God's system of justice, we present here the first parts of the text of *Likutey Moharan* I, Lesson 55:1-4 with some of the commentary. (The entire Lesson is available in *Likutey Moharan*, Volume 6, with Hebrew text, facing English translation and running commentary; Breslov Research Institute). For our essay, in the interest of space, we have deleted source references and quoted only that which was felt necessary. The following essays will quote some of the commentary and explanation of the lesson.

Rebbe Nachman taught:

1. Know! the only way to see the downfall of the wicked is through the aspect of the Land of Israel, corresponding to, "Sit at My right hand, while I make your enemies your footstool." YaMiN ("right hand") is the aspect of the Land of Israel, the aspect of Binyamin: Ben YaMiN, who was born in the Land of Israel.

But drawing the aspect of the holiness of the Land of Israel now, in exile, while she is under the control of the Other Side, so that her holiness is incapable of being revealed—it is nonetheless possible to reveal and draw her holiness even in this bitter exile, in the aspect of, "Thus even this too in their enemies' land." That is, even in the bitter exile it is possible to reveal the aspect of "this too" [i.e., the sanctity of the Land].

2. By what means is it possible to draw the holiness of the Land of Israel?—by means of the illumination of patriarchal merit. As in the teaching of the Zohar: Wherever the patriarchs are present, the Divine Presence is present, in the aspect of, "I will remember My covenant with Yaakov...with Yitzchak...with Avraham...and I will remember the Land." When the light of patriarchal merit shines, the holiness of the Land of Israel is revealed. Then not only is a person saved from someone wicked, but he also sees happen to the wicked person what the wicked person wanted to have happen to him.

3. The wicked draw the aspect of an evil eye upon their enemies, corresponding to, "Not only this, but he sees happen to his enemies." Yet a person is spared from this evil eye by finding merit in the wicked person, because the Holy One, too, finds merit in the wicked person in order to save the tzaddik from the wicked man's evil eye. This is as our Sages said: "Not only this"—but he is exonerated, as it is said, "Your judgments are far removed from him."

And by virtue of his exoneration—that they find in him merit—the tzaddik is spared from the evil eye of the wicked person. This is because in order to remove sternness and judgment, the hand must be revealed, in the aspect of "grasp judgment in My Hand," so that judgment does not overwhelm the wicked. When the Hand of God is revealed, the shade is

created in which the tzaddik is concealed from the poison of the evil eye, in the aspect of, "I have sheltered you with the shade of My Hand."

In this bitter exile the eyes of the wicked person are polished like a cast mirror and his poisonous eyes see into the distance, in the aspect of "they look on and deride me," but because of the shade, the light of his eyes is dimmed, preventing their poison from doing harm.

As for the tzaddikim, however, the light of their eyes is presently minimal, in the aspect of, "Who is blind like My perfect one?" But by means of the shade, the light of their eyes is strengthened. This is like those whose vision is weak; they are unable to see well when the light is bright and strong, but require shade in order to see.

This is the meaning of: "The wicked man watches for the tzaddik and seeks to have him put to death. God will not abandon him into his hand, nor let him be found guilty should he be tried."

The wicked man watches for the tzaddik and seeks to have him put to death—that is, with the evil eye, as explained above. God will not abandon him into his hand—Specifically "into his hand," i.e., with the revelation of the Hand of God, as explained above. By what means is the Hand of God revealed? By means of: "nor let him be found guilty should he be tried"—through the aspect of "grasp judgment in My Hand," the aspect of "Your judgments are far removed," as explained above.

As a result, the light of the wicked person's eyes is dimmed, in the aspect of "They are muddled in vision, they stumble in verdict." Because "they stumble in verdict"—this being the aspect of judgment, exoneration—"they are muddled in vision"—the light of his eyes is dimmed, as explained above.

But by means of the shade, the light of the tzaddik's eyes is strengthened, as explained above. He is then able to see into the distance, in the aspect of "I lift my eyes up to the mountains." He sees and perceives God's justice, and he can know and understand that God is in the right—even if the wicked person is exonerated, although this does not seem right. And he sees that God's acquitting the wicked man in judgment is the Holy One's justice: "I will not let a wicked person escape judgment." And this is the meaning of, "I lift my eyes up to the mountains." It is the aspect of the Holy One's justice, corresponding to "Your justice is like the highest mountains" even though "Your judgment is" suppressed in "a great deep."

4. As a result of the tzaddik's vision being strengthened through his seeing God's justice, his faith is strengthened and he is able to pray. This is because his heart is divested of the crookedness that it had before he saw God's justice. For by means of the Divine justice that he sees, the heart is divested of its crookedness and becomes upright, in the aspect of "Your justice to the upright of heart." At first the crookedness of his heart prevented him from believing completely in God, because it seemed to him that the Holy One had perverted the verdict, God forbid. But now that he sees God's justice, his heart is upright with perfect faith.

Then he strengthens himself and prays for his needs. For the foundation of prayer is faith—he believes that everything is in God's jurisdiction, even to change nature. And the

Holy One does not deny any creature its due reward, because God is just. This is the aspect of "I will give thanks to You with an upright heart"—by means of an upright heart, which corresponds to faith, the aspect of prayer is made.

The Rebbe continues the Lesson explaining how prayer is conceptually the mitzvah of the Red Cow, which can purify even from the worst impurities (see *Numbers* 19). When a person attains the level of pure prayer, he invokes the merits of the Patriarchs which reveal the sanctity of the Holy Land. When this sanctity is revealed, one's enemies will fall (see above, [section 1](#)).

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As with all of the Rebbe's lessons, this one is as intricate as they come. There are nearly 40 footnotes on the short piece of text cited. Bearing in mind that the purpose of Creation is to reveal Godliness, what the Rebbe is teaching is that a person's enemies can only be defeated when the sanctity of the Holy Land is revealed. At present, because of the concealment of God, there is death and destruction, pain and suffering, illness and harm. However, when Mashiach comes and reveals Godliness, then all suffering and pain will be removed from the world. Harmony and peace will prevail. Therefore, our goal should be to reveal Godliness, for this brings man closer to his purpose, to recognize and serve God. Thus the importance of revealing the sanctity of the Holy Land, for then one's enemies — harm, illness, suffering — will be defeated.

However, we are in a world where the concealment of Godliness produces wicked people. By their own choice of course. There are times when the wicked seem to have all the prosperity while the righteous suffer. Since God created free will, and He also created reward and punishment to reward the righteous and punish the wicked, the concealment of God becomes even deeper; it doesn't make sense for a righteous person to suffer, and for a wicked person to prosper! This is the Talmudic question, Why is there a tzaddik who has it good and a tzaddik who suffers? Why is there a wicked person who prospers and there are wicked who suffer? This is self-contradictory. Not only that, but in our lesson it seems that God even protects the wicked! But this is part of God's system of justice and is explained in the next essay.

(To be continued)

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