

This Land is My Land

A Breslov Perspective on the Holy Land

Essay #24—Parshat Nitzavim (3) 5761

Hello again and welcome to *This Land is My Land*. As we're about to leave the Holy Land for Uman, in the Ukraine, where we spend Rosh Hashanah with Rebbe Nachman. We're always asked the question, "How can you leave the Holy Land for the Ukraine?" Good question. Actually, there are some Breslover Chassidim, who won't leave Israel for Ukraine (and they don't leave it at all, ever). So maybe it would be nice to explain it once and for all, in terms that Rebbe Nachman himself used. The following is from *Kitzur Likutey Moharan (The Abridged Likutey Moharan) II*, Lesson #40 (translated by Yaakov Gable).

1) Anyone who knows the Land of Israel, that is, who has truly experienced the taste of the Land of Israel, is able to discern in another person if he was with a tzaddik on Rosh Hashanah or not. This is because if a person was with a genuine tzaddik on Rosh Hashanah, then the air of any place this person looks is transformed into "the air of the Land of Israel." Consequently, a person who knows the taste of the Land of Israel, each person according to his own level, must necessarily sense the taste of the Land of Israel when he meets the person who was with a genuine tzaddik on Rosh Hashanah, because this person transforms the air around him into "the air of the Land of Israel."

2) The great holiness of the Land of Israel derives only from God's direct Providence there; since God looks constantly upon the Land of Israel, as is written (*Deuteronomy 11:12*), "The eyes of God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year until the year's end." The eyes are associated with wisdom (see Rashi on *Genesis 3:7*) and therefore the air of the Land of Israel is holy and it makes one wise (*Bava Batra 158b*).

3) The genuine tzaddik who works to draw people closer to God is the main source and essence of the delight that God has in the Jewish People, since all closeness to God and all of God's delight come through the agency of the tzaddik. This delight is the concept of "God's tefillin" [for the verses speak of the greatness of the Jewish Nation; see *Berakhot 6a*]. Consequently, when a person looks at this genuine tzaddik, it is as if he is looking at and seeing the light of "God's tefillin" [for he is able, through the tzaddik, to see the exaltedness of the Jews]. This happens especially when people have come and gather to the tzaddik to hear the word of God. This is particularly true of Rosh Hashanah which is the time of the largest gathering. At that time, God's delight is at its height because many have gathered together who desire to draw close to Him. Thus the splendor and beauty of the tzaddik is also magnified and increased, since he himself is the essence of God's delight, as stated above. Thus, when a person looks at this genuine tzaddik, he then receives from this delight and he too imbibes the light of God's tefillin. Then his eyes too take on the quality of "the eyes of God" and everywhere this person looks the holiness of the Land of Israel is evoked, as in "the air of the Land of Israel makes one wise."

We see that "God's tefillin" — His great pride, joy and delight in the Jews, is actually developed by the tzaddik, when the people come to him and gather around him to hear the word of God. Thus, in a sense, it is the gathering by the tzaddik which allows for the "eyes of God" to direct their Providence upon the Land. Kabbalistically, this works out too. We have seen in an earlier essay ([#19](#)) that the tzaddik represents Yesod which transfers its bounty to Malkhut, the Holy Land. This is why we travel each year to the tzaddik.

May God bless you all with a year of good health and prosperity. May you all be inscribed in the Book of Life, in the book of the Righteous. Since Rosh Hashanah represents a New Year, a New Creation, may we merit to see a year in which the power, beauty and sanctity of the Holy Land emerge from their concealment. And, may we all merit to a year of peace, true peace, and to see the Coming of Mashiach, the Ingathering of the Exiles, and the Building of the Holy Temple, speedily, in our days, Amen.

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