

# This Land is My Land

## A Breslov Perspective on the Holy Land

### Essay #43—Parshat VaYigash 5762

Wednesday, December 12, 2001. Anthony Zinni, the representative of President Bush, calls for two days of quiet between Arab terrorists and Israeli armed forces.

Early Wednesday evening, December 12, 2001. Emanuel, Israel. Cold blooded Arab murderers and terrorists ambush an Israeli civilian bus entering the town of Emanuel, killing 10 and wounding over 30 others.

So much for the great intelligent American plan of "two days of quiet." This is not really just an American plan, for there exist "great and honorable" Israeli leaders who still advocate working with the barbaric Palestinian murderers towards peace! Thus, so much for intelligence, so much for "honorable leaders," so much for peace and quiet. Is there anything we Jews in the Holy Land, as well as Jews elsewhere in the world, can do about it?

These past weeks and continuing into the next few weeks, we read in the Torah about Yaakov's family. We learn about the exceptionally strong bond that existed between Yaakov and Yosef, and the relationship between Yosef and his brothers; how they were rent apart through jealousies and hatred, and how they were reunited and came to love another. Considering the troubles we face in the Holy Land (and in the Diaspora as well), we would do well to learn more about avoiding strife and developing a loving connection between family and friends, neighbors and people in general, as well as the impact such behavior would have on the Holy Land. The following is from the *Kitzur Likutey Moharan (The Abridged Likutey Moharan)*, Part II, Lesson #71. Rebbe Nachman taught:

"*Chavalim* (My lots) have fallen in pleasant places" (*Psalms* 16:6).

[1] The essence and greater part of consciousness and wisdom are available only in the Land of Israel (see *Bereishis Rabbah* 16:7). Even Jews outside of the Land receive and nurse the entirety of their intellect from the Land of Israel. Every Jew has a share in the Land.

According to what one's share in the Land is, he nurses and receives his wisdom from the Land of Israel. However, when people blemish the honor of God, they fall from the intellect of the Land of Israel and their intellect becomes associated with the Diaspora. This leads to conflict, since the consciousness of the Diaspora is an aspect of conflict.

[2] The entire creation was made solely for God's honor. Therefore everything was created only for mankind, since the enhancement of God's honor depends specifically and exclusively upon human beings. When a person is given honor, he must be extremely careful not to receive it for himself. Instead, he must be certain to return and elevate all the honor to God. In this way he rectifies and sustains the entire world, since the whole world - and everything in it - was created solely for the honor of God.

[3] The consciousness associated with the Land of Israel is identified with the pleasantness of the Torah, an aspect of peace, while that of the Diaspora is identified with assault and conflict. Through charity, in particular charity given to people in the Land of Israel, a vessel is created in which to receive an influx of this pleasantness.

Conception and birth emanate from the supernal pleasantness whereby a person merits having children. Having children enhances God's honor to the greatest extent, since people are the main means by which God's honor is revealed in the world (as above). This precipitates the rectification of the consciousness associated with the Diaspora, since its spoilage is due to the blemish to God's honor.

Thus, through the revelation of God's honor this damaged consciousness can be rectified. However, if, God forbid, the consciousness associated with the Diaspora is in an extremely blemished state due to the fact that God's honor has been greatly blemished, it is not possible to rectify it. To the contrary, the consciousness of the Diaspora actually taints the consciousness of peace of the Land of Israel. Consequently, strife breaks out in the Land of Israel as well. This is the underlying reason for the strife and conflict that presently exists in the Land of Israel.

[4] When a person does not blemish the honor of God whereupon he merits the consciousness of the Land of Israel known as "pleasantness," he merits feeling the pleasantness of the Torah. For indeed there is a pleasantness present in the Torah. This is the main thing - to merit experiencing the pleasantness in the Torah. Fortunate is one who merits it!

We learn from Rebbe Nachman that the Holy Land offers a high level of consciousness when we reveal God's honor. This is accomplished by recognizing and serving God. The reverse is also true. Those who blemish God's honor, lose their honor, their consciousness and their identity. They cease to be counted among those human beings who were created for God's honor. As a result they are treated by others as non-human, and are liable to be slaughtered en masse, like animals. May God protect us from now on. Amen.

Reb Noson elaborates on the above-mentioned lesson while explaining a Mishnah in *Pirkei Avot* (*Ethics of the Fathers* 4:21): "Jealousy, lust and [the seeking of] honor, remove a person from [a normal life in] this world." Reb Noson points out that these three characteristics are contrary to the concepts taught in Lesson #71. The Rebbe spoke about drawing the Divine Pleasantness by giving charity, through which the honor of God is increased and whereby we merit peace. Physical lust is the direct opposite of Divine Pleasantness, for one's pleasant feelings and experiences are enhanced spiritually with the Divine influx. However, one obscures the Divine influx of Pleasantness by seeking to increase his wealth and sensual pleasures, which are limited and materialistic.

Due to one's lust and avarice he automatically minimizes his charity-giving in order to increase his own wealth. Yet it is charity that draws the Divine Pleasantness. Thus by giving less he minimizes his exposure to Divine Pleasantness.

Seeking honor for one's self certainly negates any effect of honor one might offer to God. This, in essence, decreases God's honor and blemishes the purpose of Creation.

The third characteristic, jealousy, is the main cause of strife hatred and conflict. These conflicts conceal God's honor, hide the sanctity of the Land, and becloud one's consciousness. The person then "removes himself from a normal life in this world," for he has destroyed the purpose of his own creation (see *Likutey Halakhot, Minchah* 6:13).

If we but examine our current circumstances, we find ourselves in a situation that probably hasn't existed since Creation. Who would ever have thought that there exists Arab people who willingly blow themselves up with the intent to cause others extreme harm when they stand to profit absolutely nothing by it?! Aside from destroying the lives of their intended victims, they destroy their own families, communities and countries. Yet, despite this barbaric anomaly, there exists a greater anomaly, the existence of a few Jews from a proud nation that "begs equality and acceptance" with these insane marauders! However, as the Rebbe and Reb Noson explain, all this has to do with people who seek their own honor and noble peace prizes, who lust after a temporal pleasantness of a few minutes quiet, rather than seeking a long-term lasting peace.

May God help us! We really are in trouble. But we can change the situation around. All we need is to try our best to do the right thing, to extend our love and heartfelt feelings to others, rather than seeking merely our own benefit. This too is a means of charity and will draw Divine Pleasantness not only for us, but for all of mankind, as well. Amen.

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