

## Parshat Re'eh Dwelling of G-d: Shilo vs. Jerusalem

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rabbi Hershel Reichman

In Parshat Re'eh, we read about the various resting places of the Holy Ark. The Torah refers to the final resting place of the Ark as "Menucha V'Nachala". Chazal say, "Menucha"-tranquility, refers to Shilo and "Nachala"-a resting place, signifies Yerushalayim, the final destination of the Aron Hashem.

The Shem MiShmuel asks why the Mishkan needed to sojourn first in Shilo before coming to Yerushalayim. He writes that Hashem created the world with various energies. These are manifested in our world in triple form - time, place, and the human soul. The soul is a combination of Moach-intellect and Lev-emotions. Torah study engages the Moach and performing mitzvot develops the Lev-an awareness and closeness to Hashem.

Moach and Lev are each emphasized in time. Shabbat is Moach and Yom Tov is Lev. On Shabbat, the seventh day of the week, there are seven aliyot. Seven symbolizes completion. The Gemara writes that Shabbat is a day dedicated to the study of Torah. In addition, there is a mitzvah of oneg- pleasure. This is characterized by a feeling that one has achieved completion. Whereas Shabbat involves Moach-intellectual pursuit and satisfaction, Yom Tov exudes simcha-happiness. It is Lev-an emotional experience expressing the joy of existence, not just of man but of the miracle of nature. Each festival celebrates a different aspect of nature. Pesach is the time of new beginnings, Shavuot is the holiday of the first fruits-bikurim, and Sukkot celebrates the completion of the harvest.

There is exhilarating energy in the air as we rejoice with the changing seasons of nature.

Shilo is the place of Moach-intellect and was Hashem's first resting place. Yerushalayim, the Lev-the emotional center of the Jewish people, was the final destination. Shilo is in the portion of Ephraim, the son of Yosef. Yosef symbolizes the power of the mind. According to Kabbalah, Yosef's encounter with the wife of Potiphar was a trial of the Moach. Yosef knew intellectually that the act was wrong. Passion, anger, and fear were all at work to make him sin. Yet his exceptional power of Moach helped him overcome this incredibly difficult test. The first level of holiness is when the mind defeats the sinful passionate heart. According to Jewish law, one who brought up a sacrifice in Shilo was permitted to eat it at a distance as long as one could still see the Mishkan. There were no walls which constricted the person. This signified that there was a certain confidence that holiness could spread. In contrast, one who brought a sacrifice to Yerushalayim needed to eat it within its walls. The holiness of Yerushalayim was limited as opposed to the kedusha of Shilo which was boundless. This is the power of the mind. Torah learning helps one achieve the level of Yosef which can defeat all evil. This is the power of Shilo and that is why it was the first resting place of the Mishkan.

The Beit Hamikdash, the final stop for the Aron Habrit, was the emotional center of the Jewish nation and was in the portion of Binyamin and Yehuda. Binyamin represents the power of the Moach. Yehuda is royalty,

the heart of the nation. This was the second stage. It is much more difficult to channel one's emotional passions towards the service of Hashem than to convince the mind of the logic of Torah. The power of

Yerushalayim is the invisible energy, the yearning hovering in the air, which draws us close to Hashem. We need to physically be there to sense it. It is the power of the Lev-the heart of Israel, which is a lot greater and more difficult to achieve than Moach. Yerushalayim is also called Zion, the identical numerical value of Yosef. Yerushalayim is the power of mind and heart working in perfect synch. When the Mishkan moved from Shilo, we did not lose Moach. On the contrary, in addition to gaining heart, the power of the mind increased in Yerushalayim. The Shem MiShmuel explains that Shilo is Menucha and Yerushalayim is Nachalah. Menucha is temporary. The mind is a fickle thing and flits from one thing to the next. In contrast, the heart, the desire to be close to Hashem, remains eternal. Throughout our long years of exile, the Jewish nation's strong bond with the Creator was never severed. The physical trappings of Yerushalayim were destroyed but its spiritual holiness lives on forever. Similarly, Shabbat is associated with Menucha-a transient dream. In contrast, Yom Tov, the joyous emotional experience of Lev, remains with us throughout the year.

Let us use the power of our own minds and hearts to build a personal Mishkan, a Mishkan of Lev and Moach dedicated solely to the service of Hashem and His Torah.

## Mind and Heart Connection

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Mrs. Shira Smiles

The Arizal taught that exile is a departure from *daat* (knowledge) while redemption is its return. *Galut* and *geulah* are a spiritual concept. While *galut* is Hashem's hiddenness in exile, *geulah* is the revelation of His glory which comes from knowing Him. *Daat* (knowledge) is awareness of Hashem's reality and oneness. *Galut* is when that knowledge is

concealed. When the *geulah* will come, awareness of Hashem will spread as it says in Yeshaya, "*Ki malah haretz deah et Hashem.*" The earth will be filled with the knowledge of Hashem. In Tehilim it says, "*Vayeidu ki ata shimcha Hashem.*" They will know that it is you alone whose name is Hashem. But until then in exile, His name is concealed. On Rosh

Hashana we pray, "You Hashem will rule over the world ... and every being will know You and every creature will understand You created him and every soul will say, 'You Hashem are the king and will rule over all.'" We see that at the time of the redemption every being, even animals, will understand and know Hashem.

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The main dwelling place of Hashem is within our hearts. The more a person is aware of the oneness of Hashem, that He is the omnipotent Ruler and that He gives life to all, the more redemption there will be in the world. The more Hashem is hidden, the more the state of exile will increase. The Michtav M'Eliyahu writes that *timtum halev* (blockages of the heart) and exile are one and the same. Physical exile stems from a spiritual unawareness of Hashem. Prayer brings the redemption closer. We see that in Egypt when *Klal Yisrael* called out to Hashem, their cry went up to the heavens and brought on the *geulah*. Prayer is *avodah shebalev* (work of the heart). It penetrates the blockages of our inner self and brings redemption.

We say in Kabbalat Shabbat, "*Hisnari me'afar kumi...*" Shake off the dust, arise, don your splendid clothes my people. "*Karva el nafshi gealah.*" Draw near to my soul and redeem it. Physical redemption will come about through the spiritual redemption of our souls. The Baal Shem Tov writes that this verse is a prayer for individual redemption from the exile of the *yetzer hara*. When every Jew will be redeemed from his evil inclination, the greater redemption will come.

It is possible for a person to be in external exile while living in a state of spiritual redemption. He can do this by attaining a feeling of closeness and trust in Hashem. It

says in Tehilim, "*Ki eshev b'choshech Hashem or li.*" When I sit in the dark Hashem is a light onto me. The Malbim explains, that even if a person experiences the darkness of physical exile, he can still connect to the light of Hashem by his faith and belief in Hashem's salvation. David Hamelech says in Tehilim, "*Hotziah mimasger nafshi l'hodot et shimecha.*" Bring my soul out of prison to thank Your name. The Malbim explains that David Hamelech asks, heal my soul which is imprisoned and doesn't feel closeness to Hashem. Open my heart so that I may thank your name. David mentions thanking Hashem because that is a key way in which a person can cleave to Hashem. When he recognizes all the goodness and kindness Hashem does for him, it will bring him to thank Him. The prophet Yeshaya says, "*Am zu yazarta li tehilasi yidabeiru.*" The people which I created, they will tell my praise. In *zemirot* Shabbat we say, "*Barach hu Elokeinu shebranu l'kavodo.*" Blessed is Hashem for creating us for his glory. We see that the central purpose of man's creation is to praise Hashem.

In Tehilim it says, "*Dom l'Hashem v'hischolel lo,*" Be silent towards Hashem and await Him patiently. There's another verse in Eicha, "*Tov v'yachol v'domem teshuat Hashem,*" It's good for a person to wait silently for Hashem. There may be times when a person may find himself overwhelmed by various troubles. In such a situation, the power of emunah can redeem

him. David Hamelech says, don't add on more prayers than necessary. Rather wait patiently and strengthen your trust in Hashem. There comes a time to leave it to Hashem, to accept and to be happy with whatever it is you have been given. Don't press or ask Hashem too hard, because you may get it and it may not be good for you. "*Lishu'ascha kivisi Hashem.*"

One must hope for the good and trust Hashem. The Sefas Emes in Shemot writes that if a person feels the external difficulty of exile, it's a sign that he's missing inner spiritual redemption and awareness of Hashem. There's *hashgachat Hashem*. Hashem is looking out for us at every turn. But in exile the truth is hard to recognize. We can break through the darkness by trusting in Hashem.

The Nesivos Sholom writes that *daat* connotes *deveikut* (closeness). In Bereishit it says, "*V'Adam yada et Chava ishto.*" *Daat* doesn't mean knowledge but rather closeness. Although the source of *daat* is in the brain, the main knowledge is in the heart. It says in Devarim, "You should know Hashem and take him down to your heart." Even if a person knows Hashem in his mind, if he feels distant or separate from Him in his heart, he is missing complete knowledge of Him and that lengthens the *galut*. When a person draws the *midah* of *daat*, the knowledge that he has, down to his heart so that he feels one with Hashem he brings the redemption closer.

## Believing Lashon Hara: Rumors and Newspapers Part II

Based on a Naaleh.com shiur by Rabbi Beinish Ginsburg

In *Seif Vav*, the Chofetz Chaim writes that if Reuven tells Shimon about something negative he and a friend did, Shimon may believe Reuven about himself, but he may not believe what he said about his friend. It is interesting to note that the Chofetz Chaim doesn't mention in his writings that it is prohibited to speak negatively about oneself. Rav Rosner explains that it seems that it may be permitted. He brings a proof from the Gemara Eruvin which discusses *apei telusa*, the leniency to speak *loshon hara* in front of three people. Rashi says that if a person spoke *loshon hara* about himself in front of three people, the three listeners may spread it further. This is because the speaker has revealed his own thoughts and isn't upset that other people will know.

There's a famous story told about the Chofetz Chaim who was once traveling on a train. He met a man who did not recognize him. The man began praising the Chofetz Chaim to which the Chofetz Chaim responded humbly, "He's not so great." The man reacted angrily defending the honor of the *tzadik*. When he found out who he had really spoken to, he was mortified and went to apologize. The Chofetz Chaim responded, "I have to thank you. Because of what happened, I learned that one shouldn't speak *loshon hara* about oneself." Rav Rosner posits, when you're speaking about yourself and the person doesn't know you, maybe then you may not speak *loshon hara* about yourself because the person may think you are speaking *loshon hara* about

someone else. Perhaps that is what the Chofetz Chaim meant.

Rav Shechter brings an insight from Rav Soloveitchik. We don't own our reputation. It follows that of course one should not speak *loshon hara* about oneself. Mishnayot Sheviit discusses the idea of *marit ayin*. One reason for *marit ayin* is that if I do something people think is prohibited then they might come to do it themselves. Another reason is that if I do this negative action people will suspect me as a sinner. Therefore I cannot do it. We all have a spark of the divine image inside us. Therefore we have an obligation to keep our reputation clean and free of suspicion. So of course we should do all we can to avoid speaking *loshon hara* about ourselves.

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