

Friday Night, Parshas Vayetzey, 5765

At the first meal, Mohorosh *Shlit"a* spoke inspiring words about drawing the holiness of *Eretz Israel* (the Land of Israel) to the Diaspora based on the words of Rebbe Nachman, in *Lekutei Mohoran*, Part I, Lesson 61.

Rebbe Nachman says, “A place the Jews settled in the past, even in the Diaspora, has the aspect of the sanctity of *Eretz Israel* – the aspect of “a minor sanctuary” (*Ezekiel* 11). Because the Jews live there, the air is sanctified in the aspect of the air of the *Eretz Israel*”. (These are the words of Rebbe Nachman).

Mohorosh explained that Hashem gave power to the Jews that in each and every place which they go in their exile, they are able to sanctify it with the holiness of *Eretz Israel*. By building synagogues and houses of study – which are called “minor sanctuaries” (*Megillah* 29) – and by establishing *yeshivot*, Torah learning, and Jewish schools, the place where the Jews reside literally becomes sanctified with the holiness of *Eretz Israel* and the holy air is drawn down upon that place. This is because the holiness of *Eretz Israel* is through the *Shechina* (Divine Presence) that rests there and through the light of wisdom that exists in the air itself. And when Jews perform Hashem's will in the Diaspora, the holy *Shechina* is drawn down upon the place where they reside, thereby also filling the air with the light of wisdom. This is stated in the *Zohar* (*Tikkunim*, *Tikkun* 5), “אִיר – *Avir* (air) is a combination of the letters אִוּר – *Ohr Y*’ (the light of wisdom).

However, if we live in *Eretz Israel* and do not perform Hashem's will, G-d forbid, then we drive out the holy *Shechina* from there and the Land will evict those who inhabit it as it is written (*Vayikra* 20), “so that the Land will not evict you”. It all depends upon a person's acts; therefore, even when we see the days of exile being prolonged as they are, by strengthening ourselves to do the Hashem's will despite all that comes about, then the place where we dwell becomes sanctified with the holiness of *Eretz Israel*.

This will ultimately bring about the redemption and we will be returned to *Eretz Israel* as the holy *Satmar Rav z"l* once said concerning what is recited in the beginning of the *Haggadah* on the night of *Pesach*, “This year here, next year in *Eretz Israel*”. This year “here” – this year the holiness of *Eretz Israel* will be here – through the *mitzvot* of *Pesach* that we fulfill here in the Diaspora – but our prayers are “next year in “*Eretz Israel*”. That next year we merit being in *Eretz Israel* in actuality with the coming of *Moshiach*. Because the main thing is to find the holy *Shechina* in every place and to attach oneself to Him wherever we are. In this way, we will go out from our personal exile as is written (*Tehillim* 69), “draw near to my soul and redeem it”, and we will live a good sweet life. Happy is the one who attains this and happy is his lot.

Mohorosh connected the above ideas to our *parsha* in an amazing way. It is written, (*Bereishis* 28), “And Yaakov left *Beer-Sheba*, and he went to *Haran*”.

The holy Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev z”l asks in his book “*Kedushas Levi*” why is it written “and he went to *Haran*” and not “and he descended to *Haran*” – as it is written on many instances went someone left *Eretz Israel* to the Diaspora – because *Eretz Israel* is ‘higher than all the other lands’ (*Kidushin* 69)? And he answers, that this is because when a *Tzaddik* departs – as Yaakov Avinu did from *Beer-Sheba* – the beauty and holiness of *Eretz Israel* departs with him and therefore Yaakov did not descend from *Eretz Israel* at all.

According to the above words of Rebbe Nachman these words are illustrated very well. When Jews perform Hashem's will even when they're in the Diaspora, the holiness of *Eretz Israel* is drawn upon that place. Therefore, Yaakov Avinu took with him the holiness of *Eretz Israel* to every place he went and did not descend anywhere at all. This is what Rashi explains on this verse saying, “While the *Tzaddik* is in the city, he is its beauty, he is its splendor, he is its majesty”. The *Tzaddik* bestows beauty, splendor and majesty upon the city he resides in and even when he departs the city, beauty, splendor and majesty depart with him. They go with him and escort him everywhere. Many cities throughout the Diaspora are sanctified by the *Tzaddikim* who lived in them, like *Breslov*, *Medzibuz* and *Berditchev*. By simply remembering the name of a certain city, we remember the *Tzaddik* who lived there. The *Tzaddikim* brought the holiness of *Eretz Israel* to their city and a holy remembrance remains with the Jews in that place for all generations.

Mohorosh also said that his father and teacher, the author of “*Minchas Ze'ev*”, explained on the words of the *Midrash (Bereishis Rabbah, section 68, par. 1)*, “and Yaakov left”; this is alluded to in the verse “Then you will walk securely in your way; if you lie down, you will not fear” (*Mishlei* 3). This refers to Yaakov, of whom it is written ‘and Yaakov departed’; ‘if you lie down, you will not fear’ from Esav and Laban”. This *Midrash* needs to be explained further; what is the connection between these two verses? However another *Midrash (Bereishis Rabbah, section 76, par. 2)* mentions on the verse (*Bereishis* 32) “and Yaakov became very frightened (of Esav)” that he feared he could not stand up against *Eisav*'s merit of living in *Eretz Israel* while he had been absent from there so many years. But as soon as Yaakov realized that he also possessed the holiness of *Eretz Israel* even during his absence – for even Mount *Moriah* uprooted and came to greet him during his travels (see Rashi *Bereishis* 28:11) – he no longer feared Esav and was secure, as referred to in the verse “if you lie down, do not fear”. May Hashem grant us the merit to draw upon ourselves the holiness of *Eretz Israel* in every place that we live and may we merit seeing the coming of our righteous *Moshiach* and rejoice in our Land soon and in our days. *Amen v'amen*.