

תורה מציון Torah MiTzion

RELIGIOUS ZIONIST KOLLELS כוללים ציוניים בתפוצות

Shabbat Shalom from Torah MiTzion

Parshat Ki Tavo

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Bringing Comfort

Gideon Weitzman, former Rosh Kollel, Kansas City

This week we read the sixth of the seven special Haftarat that make up the Shiva DeNechemta, the Seven Weeks of Comfort that stretch from the Shabbat after Tisha B'Av until the Shabbat before Rosh Hashannah. During these seven weeks we depart from our regular custom of reading portions of the prophets for Haftarat that are connected to the Parshah of the week. Rather, we read seven special Haftarat of comfort that come to console us after the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash, the Holy Temple.

All of these special Haftarat are taken from the book of Yeshayahu, the prophecies of Isaiah. All of them are taken from the fortieth chapter and onwards as these are the chapters of comfort, of consolation.

The Haftarat open with the ultimate words of comfort "Be comforted, be comforted, My people." And each week we read words that promise us that God is with us, despite the destruction of our Temple and exile from our Land. Even though we are now desolate and depressed with our sorry state, still God comes to comfort us and to promise us that even though the Beit Hamikdash was destroyed, it will be rebuilt, even greater and grander.

Indeed, after reading these words of comfort and believing in the Divine Providence behind them, we take heart and are ready to accept God upon us as King, during Rosh Hashannah. Thus these Haftarat link the 9th of Av with Rosh Hashannah.

This week's Haftarah is also taken from the book of Yeshayahu and comes to comfort us. "Arise and give light as your light has come and God's glory will shine on you." For though I smote you in My anger in My favour I have mercy on you."

The Haftarah closes with the simple words "in its time I will speed it up." These words seem simple enough but when we actually consider them they do not make sense. If it is the time then how can God speed it up and if He speeds it up then it will come before its time?

The Gemara (Sanhedrin 98a) already asked this question and explained that this refers to two different possibilities. "If they merit it then I will speed it up, and if they do not merit it, then in its time."

There is a designated time when the redemption will occur, whatever happens, whether we deserve it or not, God will redeem us in the allotted time. However the prophet speaks of another possible scenario. If we merit it then it will come speedily, i.e. before the allocated time, quickly.

This message changes somewhat the nature of the comfort of these seven Haftarot. Until now we prayed to God to bring us the geulah, the redemption. We heard the promise that in the same way as it was He who ordained the destruction, so, it would be He who would orchestrate the redemption.

However the conclusion of this week's Haftarah tells us differently, we are not only to wait and pray for the redemption, after all "If they merit it then I will speed it up," the redemption may also be dependent on us. We have the power to speed up the geulah if we act in the proper manner to bring this about.

While God wants to redeem us and bring the Mashiach, maybe it is us who are holding it back, maybe it is us who can merit it through our actions. Far from being just passive observers of our own history, we can and therefore must become active partners with God to merit the redemption and thus speed it up.

May we merit this year to be inscribed for a good, happy and healthy year in which we rise to the challenge set for us by Yeshayahu and that we will bring the redemption quickly.

Shabbat Shalom.

Bishul Akum, part 3 **Rav Nehemya Taylor, Torani Advisor to Torah MiTzion**

In the previous article, we discussed who is included in Chazal's ban on food cooked by a non-Jew (*bishul akum*), and we determined that the Mechaber and the Rama disagree in this regard. According to the Mechaber, domestic help is included in the ban, but the Rama feels that one can be lenient. Based on this, we questioned whether or not it is permitted to eat in restaurants or hotels with non-Jewish cooks.

The Mechaber and the Rama differ as to whether or not having a Jew light the oven solves the problem of *bishul akum*. According to the Mechaber (Yoreh Deah 113:7), even though lighting the oven for non-Jewish bread (*pat akum*) is effective, this solution is not relevant for *bishul akum*. However, the Rama disagrees with the Mechaber and states: "There are those that differ who deem that lighting the fire or stirring the coals applies to *bishul akum* and *pat akum* equally, and such is the custom. Even stirring the coals unintentionally is

effective. There are those who opine that it is sufficient for the maid to kindle the fire from the flame of a Jew, even if the Jew neither stirred nor added woodchips (Orach Hachaim *ibid*, based on the Maharam).” Thus, Oriental Jews (*Bnei Edot HaMizrach*) are required to act with stringency and to refrain from eating in restaurants or hotels where no Jew was an active participant in the cooking process, and, in fact, some of the major *poskim* of the *Edot HaMizrach* ruled this way.

Nevertheless, the Gaon Rav Ovadiah Yosef *shlita*, in Yechaveh Daat 5:54, defended those who act with leniency and wrote the following in his conclusion: “Sephardim and *Bnei Edot HaMizrach* also have a basis for lodging and eating in kosher hotels and restaurants, under the supervision of the local rabbinate, even if the chef is a non-Jew, as long as the Jewish kashrut supervisor (*mashgiach*) personally lights the flames of the cooking and baking ovens. (If the fire should go out, a Jew must be the one to rekindle the flames.) And one who is stringent with himself will be blessed.” However, in contrast to this leniency, the Gaon Rav Mordechai Eliyahu *shlita* rules stringently and strictly according to the words of the Mechaber. Of course, for Ashkenazim, who follow the Rama, there is no problem in eating in these establishments.

Regarding *bishul akum* in factories, the Chida in Barchei Yosef (Yoreh Deah) cites a responsum of the Maharit Tzahalon which is based on the Roeh, a major Rishon, and writes: “And in addition, the baker bakes in a house that is specifically designated for [baking] and does not intend to cook either for himself or for any other specific person, rather for his trade alone. Since he was hired to bake **and cook for anyone who comes to the designated house**, where people neither eat nor drink and which is a public domain, open to everyone, it can be said this is not considered to be *bishul akum*, because the fear of social interaction is not relevant here. And even more so, with respect to *pat akum*, concerning which [the *poskim*] were more lenient.” Nonetheless, the Chida did not accept the Maharit Tzahalon’s opinion, and the Baal Shevet HaLevi wrote (in Section II): “There are those that do not regard cooking in factories as *bishul akum*, because there is no concern that it will lead to intermarriage. However, the Gedolim, including the Gaon of Israel, the Chazon Ish *zt”l*, were stringent in this respect.” Similarly, the Minchat Chinuch (3:26) also ruled stringently. However, he added that if the food was smoked, the two leniencies may be added together to permit the food.

Clearly, this discussion is particularly relevant for canned goods, such as tuna and other preserved foods that are “not served on the king’s table” (“*einam olim al shulchan melachim*”), an expression that will be defined later. Is it necessary that these foods be cooked by Jews (*bishul Yisrael*) or is it sufficient that a *mashgiach* be available to ensure that the workers do not introduce non-kosher food and to light the ovens? Most Ashkenazi *poskim* are lenient in this regard and suffice with regular supervision. In addition, there are *poskim* of the *Edot HaMizrach* that are similarly lenient, such as the Baal Ateret Paz, who writes (in Section I, Volume II): “And if so, here too it can be said about our topic, namely non-Jewish factories, that concerns are unwarranted, both for intermarriage with the shopkeeper, as explained by the Maharit Tzahalon, and lest [the non-Jew] feed [the Jew] something non-kosher, because they are supervised by a *mashgiach*.”

However, other *poskim* of the *Edot HaMizrach*, such as the Gaon Rav Mordechai Eliyahu, were very meticulous about *bishul Yisrael*. For that reason, the words “*bishul Yisrael*” are printed on some tunafish cans.

IY”H, in the next article, we will discuss which foods are included in the ban on *bishul akum*.

Family Learning: Parashat Ki Tavo

Bluma Zaltzman

- 1) Who is the "Arami" referred to in the passuk "Arami oved avi.."? (26:5)
- 2) Which Shvatim were to stand on Har Grizim, and which on Har Aival?
- 3) What is the difference between the joy when Bnei Yisrael are joyous and when their enemies are joyous? (28:63)
- 4) Why is the last proclamation made at Har Grizim and Har Aival different from the other ones?
- 5) What is "Vidui Ma'aser"?

Answers follow below

Love of The Land: Elon Moreh

Elon Moreh is first mentioned in the Tanach in Parshat "Lech Lecha" when it is written that Avraham "came as far as Shechem, as far as the Plain of Moreh". Immediately in the passuk afterwards, HaShem promises Avraham that he will give this land to Avraham's descendents, thus strengthening the claim that the area of Shechem belongs to us Jews.

Elon Moreh is mentioned several other times in the Tanach, one of them being this week's parsha, where it says that Bnei Yisrael are to stand at Har Grizim and Har Eival. Those two mountains are in very close proximity to the yishuv of Elon Moreh today.

The story of the settlement of Elon Moreh is one of incredible determination shown by its founders. Until it was established, it was illegal for Jews to spend more than 24 hours in most of Judea and Samaria.

The Elon Moreh Settlement Nucleus (garin) was thought up as a practical solution for the idea of Jewish settlement in the Eretz Yisrael. Its purpose was to resettle the hills of the Shomron, that are close to Shechem, thereby strengthening Israel's hold on the Shomron.

At first, the settlers tried to obtain permission from the government to start a settlement in the area. This effort failed. After the Yom Kippur War, as pressure grew for Israel to withdraw from areas liberated in the Six Day War, the Elon Moreh settlers decided to act.

Between 1973 and 1975, there were eight different attempts to settle near Shechem. Each attempt brought young pioneers, who were equipped with food, water and building equipment to the Shomron. Each attempt lasted only a few days before Tzahal came and evacuated them by government order. Each attempt brought more and more popularity to the prospect of settling the Shomron area.

The eighth and last attempt was a success. Channukah 1975 brought thousands of supporters to the abandoned train station in Sebastia. Finally, under the leadership of then Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, the government gave in and permission was granted for the establishment of a temporary community in the Kadum army camp. Thirty families made their homes in Kadum, under awful conditions, without enough water or electricity, with a communal kitchen and one-room concrete army barracks and tents for housing. The

government thought that this would deter the settlers and they would give up on the idea of Elon Moreh. However, it was just the beginning.

Afterwards the Yishuv moved around a lot. They went from Kedumim to Rugeb to Har Kabir, which is where the Yishuv is found today. Har Kabir is not the real site of Elon Moreh, however the Yishuv has been there for the past 24 years.

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Answers: Family Learning

- 1) Lavan. Yaakov's father-in-law.
- 2) Har Grizim: Shimon, Levi, Yehuda, Yissachar, Yoseph, and Binyamin
Har Eival: Reuven, Gad, Asher, Zevulun, Dan, Naftali
- 3) When Bnei Israel are joyous, HaShem is also joyous, but he is not also joyous when Bnei Yisrael's enemies are joyous.
- 4) The last one is more like a general statement, the other ones are talking about specific mitzvot and averot.
- 5) a proclamation made by each person every three years to the shmitta cycle that he has upheld the laws of shmitta accordingly.