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From The Rav's Responses In 5769

Where Does Hashem Want Us To Live?

Q

What does Hashem want from us – to be here, or to be in *Eretz Yisrael*?

A

If I answer you, will you do it...? *Eretz Yisrael!* Specifically, in *Yerushalayim, Ir HaKodesh*.

From The Rav's Responses In 5779

Escaping From Anti-Semitism

Q

With the rise of Anti-Semitism throughout the world, and with all the increasing Anti-Semitic attacks on Jews, especially with the Anti-Semitism that's now in the American government, does all of this mean that Hashem wants Jews to move to *Eretz Yisrael*? How can a Jew living outside of *Eretz Yisrael* know if the time has come to move to Israel (*Eretz Yisrael*)? The atmosphere [in America] today is different than it used to be, resembling the way things were like before the Holocaust [in Germany]. How should we view the rise of Anti-Semitism and how can we know if Hashem wants those living outside of *Eretz Yisrael* to move to *Eretz Yisrael*? We have all heard stories of people who were able to leave Europe before the Holocaust and they waited too long....

A

The simple nature of a Jew's soul (besides for the issue if there's a *mitzvah* or not to live in *Eretz Yisrael*, and when this applies) is to yearn to dwell in the palace of the King and to live close to Him. Therefore, simply speaking, at all times the "initial thought" of a person is that he would like to live in *Eretz Yisrael*.

However, "upon second thought", there are additional factors to consider. There were *tzaddikim* who were afraid to live in *Eretz Yisrael*, due to the immense holiness of *Eretz Yisrael*, similar to the fear of getting too close to the *Aron* (Ark) which would burn any unworthy carriers. Another reason was because they couldn't abandon their "flock" – their leadership of communities who needed them, as well as other reasons related to benefitting the masses. As for all others, leaving their country to go live in *Eretz Yisrael* couldn't be done, due to their responsibilities to earn livelihood, and also because they wouldn't be able to find proper places of education for their sons and daughters properly by moving there. Sometimes a person cannot move to *Eretz Yisrael* due to the *mitzvah* of honoring parents, and sometimes a person cannot move there simply because of valid social or community reasons: a person would find it too hard to leave behind his friends or community. There are other reasons as well [not to move].

However, the recent events [of Anti-Semitism] are like a *bas kol*, a "voice from Heaven", to strongly awaken our "initial thought" [to want to live in *Eretz Yisrael*]. But after considering this, a person should also think it over, with a calm state of mind and with a pursuit for the truth. Each individual should do this, and think about what is proper for him to do right now, and why.

Moving To Eretz Yisrael – Pros & Cons

Q

We all know that we are immediately before *Mashiach's* arrival, with all that this means and what is going to happen. I live in *Eretz Yisrael* but I am asking this question on behalf of those who live outside of *Eretz Yisrael*. Do those who live outside of *Eretz Yisrael* need to come live in *Eretz Yisrael*?

A

The Talmud (*Kesubos 110a*) says that everyone should move out of their country to go live in *Eretz Yisrael*, and Tosafos there says, “This is not practiced in our times, because it is dangerous to travel. And Rabbeinu Chaim would say that in our times there is no *mitzvah* to live in *Eretz Yisrael*, because there are many *mitzvos* which apply only in the land of *Eretz Yisrael* and there are many punishments for those who are lax in keeping them, and we are not able to so careful in keeping them.” According to Rabbeinu Chaim in the Tosafos, there is both a physical danger and a spiritual danger to go live in *Eretz Yisrael*, so there is no obligation today to live in *Eretz Yisrael*. [Even according to the opinions that there is a *mitzvah* today to live in *Eretz Yisrael*] there is also a dispute if the *mitzvah* is Biblical or Rabbinical in nature: this is discussed by the Ramban in *Sefer HaMitzvos L'Ramban*, and in *sefer Pe'as HaShulchan*, and others.

Now, there is an obligation upon a person to connect himself to *kedushah* (holiness), in terms of soul, time, and place. Therefore, besides for the matter if there is a *mitzvah* or not to live in *Eretz Yisrael* today, there is still a level of *kedushah* which can only be attained by one who lives in *Eretz Yisrael*. That is clear, and simple. In spite of this, however, the view of Rabbeinu Chaim in the *Tosafos* is that if there is any physical or spiritual danger in moving to *Eretz Yisrael*, there is no *mitzvah* to go live there. The “spiritual danger” he is referring to is the laxity of people in observing

the unique *mitzvos* of *Eretz Yisrael* and the subsequent punishments for those who do not properly adhere to the *kedushah* of *Eretz Yisrael*. However, there were still some *Gedolim* throughout the generations who risked their lives in order to go live in *Eretz Yisrael*.

In our times, though, besides for the above danger, there is also an additional danger, which we will clarify here, with *siyata d'shmaya*. Our Sages taught that in the final days, before the coming of *Mashiach*, when we are not yet meritorious of *Mashiach's* arrival, the jurisdiction over the land of *Eretz Yisrael* is given over to the "Other Side." In the active sense, this means that the wicked souls of the "*Erev Rav*" are in charge of controlling *Eretz Yisrael*. These are the very reincarnations of the souls whom Moshe Rabbeinu allowed to convert and be brought up from Egypt. These are the very same souls who later instigated the sin with the golden calf, by convincing the people that Moshe *Rabbeinu* was no longer with them. They represent an alternative leadership to Moshe *Rabbeinu*. These are the people who rule *Eretz Yisrael* in the final days: the heads of the *Erev Rav*. They are called *Erev Rav* from the word *taaruvos* (mixture) which connotes an *iruv rav* (great mixture), a huge and disturbing mixture of all elements within one place.

Therefore, one who lives in *Eretz Yisrael* is in spiritual danger of becoming mixed with the *Erev Rav*, in terms of seeking prestige, money, power, etc. from them. As time goes on, they increase the influences of their great mixture, to the point that every single boundary which our Sages and *Gedolim* have built is being trampled upon and uprooted. Their mixture of influences affects all people who live in *Eretz Yisrael*.

Making matter worse, a recent organization called "*HaShamayim HaPetuchim*" (trans. "Open Heavens") has allowed millions of non-Jews to come live in *Eretz Yisrael*. Jews leave *Eretz Yisrael* and mix with the gentiles and become influenced by them, and then return to *Eretz Yisrael* with all of these influences that they have brought back. This is all due to the *Erev Rav's* agenda, which seeks a totally mixed society with every possible influence. They want to incorporate every existing influence into [Israeli] society - and they don't want to leave anything out. In that way, the *tumah*

(spiritual defilement) of countries outside of *Eretz Yisrael* differs from the *tumah* today in *Eretz Yisrael*. Outside countries contains the *tumah* of the gentile nations, whereas *Eretz Yisrael* today contains the *tumah* of the *Erev Rav*.

We would need several thick volumes in order to cover all of the details of the disturbing mixture of the many different secular elements that the *Erev Rav* has so far succeeded in bringing to *Eretz Yisrael*, But there isn't enough time to publish all of the details, so we would only be destroying our precious time, instead of the *Erev Rav*. We are currently found deep in the "50th Gate of Defilement", where evil is covering us on all angles, in front and behind us, and from every possible direction. Basically everything is found in the "exile of the *Erev Rav*" today.

Therefore, it is proper for every Jew to live in *Eretz Yisrael*, but only if one has a total separation from the "*Erev Rav*" here. On a personal level, **every individual needs to clarify his personal situation [to see if he should live in *Eretz Yisrael* or not]**. For example, if one is needed by many others, or if one is of spiritual influence to others [in such cases, he should not move to *Eretz Yisrael*, because others need him]. Also, if raising one's children in *Eretz Yisrael* will not be conducive to them, or if moving to *Eretz Yisrael* will be too hard of a change for them [because they will be switching schools], this is also a factor not to move to *Eretz Yisrael*, and it needs to be carefully thought out. Also, if one cannot make ample livelihood in *Eretz Yisrael*, one will need to examine how much *bitachon* (reliance on Hashem) he really has [and then he can decide].

We are hoping and awaiting the Redemption that it should come speedily. **There is a great spiritual gain to be in *Eretz Yisrael* at a time like this...**

From The Rav's Responses of 5780

*What If The Internet Is The
Only Connection I Have To Learning Torah?*

Q

I understand that a person living in a holy place [such as *Eretz Yisrael*] is able to give up his internet connection and be fine without it, but what about a person who lives in a country amongst *goyim* and he is already so influenced by them? For such a person, even a remote connection to Torah [such as through viewing Torah sites on the internet] can be very helpful to him. Can the Rav please tell me clearly what I should do, since I live in *chutz l'aretz*?

A

It would be proper for you to move to *Eretz Yisrael*, even if you would be giving up a lot to come here - although this will seem at first to be almost impossible for you, due to factors of your *parnassah* (livelihood), *shalom bayis* (marital peace), your family, etc.

If you are so connected, in how you lead your life and in how you feel, to the ways of the *goyim* who are immersed in the depravity of the “50th level of *tumah*”, then for you, the internet is something which purifies you [through viewing Torah websites] but at the same time it also contaminates you with its *tumah*. Therefore, [in your specific case] you may remain with the Torah websites. This is an exceptional ruling being given to you under your current circumstances, until you are able to separate from the internet totally.

Questions About Redemption

Q

1) I have some questions about *Mashiach*. First of all, am I allowed to ask questions at all about *Mashiach* and the *Geulah* (the final Redemption), since we are not able to know what's going to happen anyway? 2) Will *Mashiach* come to *Eretz Yisrael* or will he come to the rest of the world as well? Though he will “gather all the dispersed” together, will he do this by actually coming to each country of the world where there are Jews, or will everyone gather together to come see *Mashiach* in *Eretz Yisrael*? There's a very big difference, because if *Mashiach* is only coming to *Eretz Yisrael*, then people from *chutz l'aretz* would have to be in *Eretz Yisrael* by the *Geulah* in order to greet *Mashiach*, but if he's coming to *chutz l'aretz* then he will gather us from where we live and we don't need to go anywhere now. 3) The Rav said in a *derasha* in America that the situation here is so spiritually dead that *Mashiach* cannot come here the way it is now. Elsewhere, I have seen that the Rav explains that it does not make sense at all how *Mashiach* will come, because it is not a logical matter that we can understand, and he will come even if it seems totally illogical for him to come. How is this not a contradiction?

A

1) You can ask questions about *Mashiach* and Redemption, but not every answer will be a clear answer. 2) If *Mashiach* comes due to “an awakening from below” [i.e. due to our *teshuvah*], he will come to all the different countries of the world, resembling a person who travels to find his mate. If *Mashiach* will come due to “an awakening from above” [if his arrival is due entirely to Heavenly compassion and we did nothing to deserve his arrival], then he will come only to *Eretz Yisrael*. **It has already become very, very, very important to be in *Eretz Yisrael* for some time now.** 3) My intention in saying that “*Mashiach* cannot come here” is because the Gemara says that *Mashiach* will either come in a generation entirely deserving or entirely undeserving, and right now *Mashiach*

cannot come in the sense of a “generation entirely deserving” because the generation today doesn’t deserve him. **And when the generation is undeserving, we have no idea of what exactly will happen. We have already begun to see, more and more, that the generation has become “entirely undeserving” of Redemption, due to the generation’s heavy use of the accursed media.**

Making Aliyah From America to Eretz Yisrael

Q

I am aware that the Rav has hinted in several responses to people that now is a very appropriate time to leave America and come live in *Eretz Yisrael*. Due to the rise of anti-semitism in America, which is like a *bas kol* (Heavenly message) it’s time to leave America and live in *Eretz Yisrael*. It’s important for one’s Yiddishkeit to leave America and live in *Eretz Yisrael* because of the *tumah* that is very pervasive in America, namely, the lenient attitude towards media and internet use. And the Rav also said that a person should just come to *Eretz Yisrael* now even if he’s not sure about how this will affect his *parnassah* or *shalom bayis!*

I, for my own part, am definitely ready to take the plunge and move to *Eretz Yisrael*. But my wife doesn’t know a soul there, and I don’t want her to fall apart. Plus, she has a very good job here in America, working for a Torah institution which she likes. There is a very good atmosphere at work, and if we would move to *Eretz Yisrael*, we have no idea how she will find a job and if the atmosphere there will be better than the job she has now in America. Plus, I’m learning very well here and I have *chavrusos* and a *Kolel* I am happy in, and I’ve heard that if a person is learning good in America, then there is no need to come to *Eretz Yisrael* to learn. Also, I suspect that I mainly want to come to *Eretz Yisrael* so I can have more connection with the Rav, and my wife will suspect that I’m mainly going to *Eretz Yisrael* so that I can be near the Rav, and that I’m more concerned

about my own *ruchniyus* rather than caring about her emotional needs. I should also point out that if I move to *Eretz Yisrael*, my parents will probably be upset and I would have an issue of *kibbud av v'aim*.

1) Would picking up and moving to *Eretz Yisrael* be a reckless, impulsive decision that would shake up the soul and be too jolting for a person? The Rav has said that a person shouldn't make big changes too fast which jolt the soul, so why is moving to *Eretz Yisrael* different?

2) Should I move to *Eretz Yisrael* even I'm nervous about this decision and I don't have that much *bitachon* that everything will work out?

3) Is America a physically dangerous place to be right now because *Mashiach* is coming soon? Also, if the danger here is mainly spiritual and not physical, because of the dominance of internet and media, why would it be better in *Eretz Yisrael*? Aren't Internet and smartphones everywhere you go? From a spiritual standpoint, is living in *Eretz Yisrael* really a better environment today than living in America, when there's so much tumah all over the world these days?

4) Should I stop making all these calculations and just move my family to *Eretz Yisrael*, in spite of all these factors, and just rely on Hashem, since we are now in a time where we should heed the *bas kol* from Heaven that we are in *ikvesa d'meshicha* (the period preceding *Mashiach*)?

A

1) **Make the decision amidst a composed, settled state of mind** (*yishuv hadaas*), so that you don't shake yourself up and jolt yourself in the process.

2) **Either you can do it through *mesirus nefesh* (being willing to sacrifice), or you should wait until you are at the appropriate level of *bitachon* to go.**

3) **The main danger in America is a spiritual danger, but this also extends into the physical world, making it physically dangerous there as well...From an external viewpoint, certainly**

there is *tumah* everywhere we go today, *Rachmana Litlzan* (may Heaven save us from it), but **from an inner viewpoint, the holiness of *Eretz Yisrael* always makes *Eretz Yisrael* the best environment for a Jew to live in.** This is because of *Eretz Yisrael* it is said, "*A land which the eyes of Hashem are upon.*"

4) Cry about this to Hashem, from the depth of your heart.