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## Tefillah - 091 War In Israel

### ***Eretz Yisrael - The Tool To Get Close to Hashem***

#### ***“L’artzeinu.”***

We ask of Hashem to return us to the land which was promised to our forefathers Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov.

Moshe Rabbeinu desired very much to enter the land of Israel, but he did not merit it. What, indeed, is so special about Eretz Yisrael, the land of Israel? What is it all about?

“Hashem, the Torah, and the Jewish people are all one.” The spiritual light (*ohr*) of Hashem, the Torah, and the Jewish people need to be contained in something so we can receive its light. The land of Israel is the “*kli*”, the container, the tool, to receive the light of Hashem, the Torah, and the Jewish people.

(To give more background about this, everything in Creation has in it a *kli*, (a container), which contains the *ohr*, (spiritual light), that goes into it. A *kli* is needed to contain the *ohr*. In other words, when Hashem sends us His light, we need a container to be able to hold it.)

*Eretz Yisrael* is a *kli*, a vessel, that can enable us to get closer to Hashem. It is a tool which can reveal the light of the Torah as well, and it can also reveal the light of the souls of the Jewish people. It is the *kli* that contains the *ohr* of Hashem. That is why Moshe Rabbeinu desired so much to enter this land, which he did not merit. Avraham Avinu was promised the land of Israel, because the land of Israel can help the Jewish people become close to Hashem, when they utilize it.

*Eretz Yisrael* is a place where a person can really feel Hashem more in his life, and where he can come to understand His ways better. Chazal say that even the air of Israel makes a person wiser. It is much easier to feel Hashem in *Eretz Yisrael* than when a person doesn’t live in *Eretz Yisrael*. It is a *segulah*. It is clearly a *kli* to reveal the *ohr* of Hashem.

If someone intends to get closer to Hashem through *Eretz Yisrael*, he utilizes the purpose of *Eretz Yisrael* and fulfills the purpose this land is meant for.

#### ***Misusing The Tool***

However, in recent times, people have been using *Eretz Yisrael* for a purpose unto itself, and not to use it as a *kli* to reveal the *ohr* of Hashem; in other words, people are not using *Eretz Yisrael* necessarily as a way to get closer to Hashem. The *kedushas Yisrael* (holiness of the Jewish people)

has most particularly been affected negatively by these people who have come to misuse Eretz Yisrael. Unfortunately, when people come and contaminate the holiness of Eretz Yisrael, the possuk in the *tochachah* says that the land will “spit them out.”

We *daven* in *Shemoneh Esrei* that Hashem should gather us all together and return us to Eretz Yisrael, but this is only as a means for us to get closer to Hashem. That is why we should want to be in Eretz Yisrael. (It is arguable if there is a *mitzvah* to settle the land of Israel nowadays, but even if there is a *mitzvah* to settle the land, this is not the main intention we need to have in wanting this land). If there is any other intention in using this land, the results are not good. *Eretz Yisrael* “spits out” people who are ruining its holiness.

If a person lives an internal kind of life and he is interested in spirituality, he knows what his priorities are.

People have to know what their priorities are – what the main thing is, and what is secondary to it. When you have a *kli* \vessel and *ohr*\spiritual light, what is the main thing – the *ohr*, or the *kli* ? The *ohr* is the main thing, while the *kli* is only secondary. The *kli* is supposed to be used so that you can get the *ohr*; but if one uses the *kli* as a means to itself, then he is abusing the purpose of the *kli* , and instead of being interested in containing the *ohr* of Hashem, he just wants the “*kli* .”

It is well known that the Brisker Rov zt”l said that the goal of the Israeli Government is to uproot the Torah. They are not using *Eretz Yisrael* at all as a *kli* to get close to Hashem, and their intentions are the exact opposite.

If people come and use *Eretz Yisrael* as a way to forget about Hashem and try to uproot His Torah and mitzvos – is this what *Eretz Yisrael* is meant for?! This is a *kli* without *ohr*. It’s a mistaken priority.

### ***The Danger In Israel***

Let us give a typical example of what we mean.

Right now, Israel is in trying times. We are currently going through a dangerous time; there is a war. However, if you think about, there is a much bigger problem in Israel: the spiritual situation here. There is much worse going on spiritually to people in Israel than the threat to our physical lives here. The Israeli government intends to wipe out Torah from this land and get rid of all our *ruchniyus* – a spiritual genocide on all religious men, women and children. Yet, people are only getting afraid when their physical lives are in danger. Why isn’t it bothering us as much that we are in grave spiritual danger here? Why is it that only physical danger shakes us up and gets us to awaken ourselves?

We are now in a time in which our spiritual situation is very low, and this was not what our forefathers had in mind when they wanted Eretz Yisrael. (It resembles the prayer of Channah, who said that she wanted only a son like Shmuel, not just any son – “*For this child I prayed.*”)

Even if the physical danger ends, the danger isn’t over yet. Anyone who thinks otherwise is living in a dream. The government intends to uproot Torah and mitzvos from the country, which is basically a time of *shmad* (evil decree) on our *ruchniyus*. During a time of *shmad*, the *halachah* is that a Jew has to give up his life rather than give in to any sin they try to make you do.

We might have to give up our lives *al kiddush Hashem* if we have to, and to do so happily...is anyone prepared to die for the sake of Hashem?! It’s scary, very scary – yet no one is thinking of the possibility!

“The strength and might of my hands”

Even if we would somehow be guaranteed to live safely here, there still exists an entirely danger to us altogether – the danger to our spiritual situation. When we daven that the army should succeed, we might become very connected in our souls to their successes and feel that their successes are our own; like the possuk, “kochi v’oitzem yadi”, (“The strength and might of my hands”) which is when people become arrogant and attribute success to themselves, not Hashem. If that happens to us and that is what we will feel when it ends, we are in terrible danger, because then we will be connected to the secular values of this State, which is to deny Hashem and be steeped in the worst levels of impurity. By attributing success to the army of Israel, we will become connected to what they feel, which is to disregard Hashem.

### ***Strengthening Emunah, And Awareness To The Spiritual Danger***

When a person lives to achieve holiness and purity, and this is his goal in life, then *Eretz Yisrael* helps him greatly achieve it.

Yet, the power of holiness has a force equal in strength to counter it, (because there is an equal amount of good and evil in the world), and for this reason, there is tremendous impurity here in *Eretz Yisrael*, the worst of the worst. We are referring to the great denial of Hashem amongst people here.

What we need to do is to strengthen our *Emunah*, deeply, and always remind ourselves of Hashem’s kindnesses at all times. But we also have to be aware of the dangers that still exist.

You will not receive the proper outlook from what you hear from the media, and even the so-called “Chareidi” newspapers will not give you the proper way to view the situation now in Israel. The problem that is resulting from this entire situation (even if the physical danger ceases) is that the Israelis will grow in their arrogance and attribute their success to their own strength, increasing their denial of Hashem amongst people; and people who are hoping for the army to succeed are in danger of forgetting about Hashem, thinking that it is Israel and its army are in control. It will cause people to become haughty and forget that it is only Hashem who can save us.

What a person needs to do, then, is to deeply strengthen his *Emunah*.

### ***How We Spend Our Summers***

What does Hashem want from us from all this?

It is already the second time that there is a war in Israel in the summertime, when people are on vacation. This is all a message from Hashem that we need to spend our vacations differently.

At first, people began to spend their summer vacations by visiting the graves of *tzaddikim*. This was, for the most part, a holy way to spend the summer, but even then, there were already some people who used these tours as an excuse to do improper things along the way.

After some time, this led to going to hotels during the summer, and this led to taking trips outside the country, and this led to *frum* people taking tours in Europe. Recently, a new trend started called “women’s retreats”. It seems *kosher* in the way it is advertised, such as “For Women Only” in order to avoid problems of mixed crowds, and even more recently, the advertisements said “For Beis Yaakov girls only.” But this still doesn’t make it *kosher*.

Our hearts should be bleeding inside over all this. Our *Yiddishkeit* is at stake from all this, at what goes on by all these trips! It’s also questionable according to *Halachah* (Jewish law) if such trips and getaways are even permissible, from all the issues to our *Yiddishkeit* it causes.

The country that I see today in *Eretz Yisrael* is not the same place that it was twenty years ago. It's totally changed over (for the worse). There is a lack of a deep connection to Hashem and Torah. Even the *Bnei Torah* look different today. Girls are dressing differently today and there are breaches in modesty that never were. The generation today in Israel is like the "new Pharoah, who did not know Yosef." The new generation does not recognize holiness, and it's all because of the sophisticated gadgets going on today. The whole way of life that people are living today is totally far from a life of closeness to Hashem. The real, inner way of life is concealed from this generation.

Just because something has a "*hechsher*" on it doesn't necessarily make it *kosher* for us to do, to any *bar daas* (someone capable of a mind) who thinks it through.

We must know what Hashem wants from each person. We need to return to the way we were when we stood at Har Sinai. We need to return to the true kind of life, which is "*What does Hashem ask of you, except to fear Him?*"

We must truly return to the Torah of Hashem, as well as to separate from the new secular lifestyles that are affecting us. We are living in a time of a *shmad* to our *ruchniyus*. It's a spiritual holocaust going on here, and this should be very clear to everyone.

May our thoughts become immersed in Torah, and in how to help others and uplift other Jews spiritually - from a true and earnest desire to increase brotherliness and friendship among us.

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