

# AL HAARETZ — Perspectives on Eretz Yisroel

Living in, Settling, and Building Up the Land  
 Issue 3 • 22 Teves (Va'era—Bo) 5780

## Toras Eretz Yisroel

Excerpts from Contemporary Seforim on Torah & Mitzvos,  
 Halachos & Minhagim of Eretz Yisroel

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### Mourning the Destruction [part 3 of 3] אבילות החורבן

#### Order of Recitation of Verses, Rending, and Prayers

UPON SEEING JERUSALEM IN A STATE OF RUIN

צִיּוֹן מְדַבֵּר הַיְתֵה יְרוּשָׁלַם שְׁמָמָה (ישעיה סד, ט)

*Zion is a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolation*  
 (Yeshayahu 64:9)

כָּלָה ה' חֲמָתוֹ שִׁפָּף חֲרוֹן אָפוֹ וַיִּצַת אֵשׁ בְּצִיּוֹן וַתֹּאכַל  
 יְסוּדֹתֶיהָ (איכה ד, יא)

*Hashem has accomplished His fury, He has poured out His  
 fierce anger and has kindled a fire in Zion and it has  
 devoured its foundations (Eichah 4:11)*

(Continued on page 2)

## Eretz Chemdah: An Inside View

Various Perspectives and Experiences  
 of English Speakers Living in Eretz Yisroel

### THIS WEEK'S STORY:

#### Finding Our Place in Eretz Yisroel

Aryeh and Shoshana Weinberg, Ma'aleh Amos

In 1996, while we were in our late thirties, we moved from Baltimore to Eretz Yisroel with our six children aged sixteen down to one and a half.

Although many *rabbonim* do not recommend moving to Eretz Yisroel with children from ages eight through high school, we came with the blessing of our *rav* in Baltimore, Rav Mendel Feldman, ZT”L.

We spent our first year in an absorption center in Mevaseret Zion (just outside Yerushalayim), with no idea of where we would eventually settle. This temporary setup (which no longer

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## Eretz Rechavah:

### A Tour Guide's Focus In the Expanse

In a village named Shunem is the site of the home of the **Isha HaShunamis** [Shunamite Woman].



From time to time, Elisha Hanavi, who lived on Har HaKarmel, would come to the village. Noticing that he frequented the village, the “Isha Hashunamis,” with her husband’s permission, began inviting the *tzaddik*, eventually building him his own private room. While looking for a nice quiet place to *daven* one Rosh Hashana, Elisha showed up in Shunem at this home. Feeling successful from his *davening*, he went ahead and *benched* the already older and barren lady of the house. The *bracha* came true and, the following year, she had a child. A few years later the young boy died, and Elisha came to the home and did *techiyas hameisim*!

Many *tefillos* have been answered there. Reb Chaim Kanievsky, *shlit”a*, sends childless couples to *daven* there. The Mahara”I says that in a place where a *Navi davens* and is answered, “the gates of *Shomayim* are opened – and never close!”

• by Tour Guide **Shmuel Ribiat**

## Eretz Tovah:

### Quotes from Our Torah Personalities



The **Chazon Ish** asked the [American] tourist the question, “Have you come to settle in the Land?” The tourist gave a negative response. He asked him, “Is it permissible to leave the Land?” The tourist became confused and said, “I heard that if one comes to the Land with prior intent not to settle in it, he is allowed to leave it.”

The Chazon Ish responded in a disappointed tone, “How strange, how strange! You are toiling to find a way how to leave the Land at a time when we are all purposefully exerting ourselves to find ways with which to come to the Land!”

(translated from *Nachlas HaShem* #1)

R’ Avrohom Yeshaya Karelitz—the Chazon Ish (1878-1953) immigrated to Eretz Yisroel in 1933, choosing to settle in Bnei Brak and instill Torah in the New Yishuv.

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According to some opinions, one should rend at this point in mourning over Jerusalem

**UPON SEEING THE SITE OF THE TEMPLE**

בית קדשנו ותפארתנו אשר הללוך אבותינו היה לשרפת אש וכל מחמדינו היה לחרבה (ישעיה סד, י)

*Our holy and beautiful House, where our fathers praised You, is burnt with fire, and all our pleasant things laid waste. (Yeshayahu 64:10)*

**One rends one's garment at this point.**

ברוך דין האמת

*Blessed is the true Judge.*

כי כל משפטיו צדק ואמת. הצור תמים פעלו כי כל דרכיו משפט. א-ל אמונה ואין עול צדיק וישר הוא. ואתה צדיק על כל הבא עלינו כי אמת עשית ואנחנו הרשענו.

*For all His judgments are righteous and true. The Rock, perfect is His work for all His paths are justice. A God of faith without iniquity, righteous and fair He is. But You are righteous in all that has come upon us, for You have acted truthfully while we have caused wickedness.*

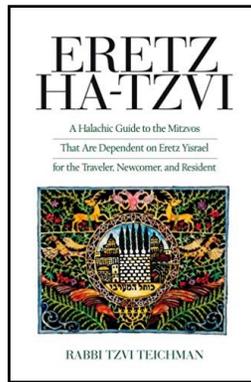
שמחנו כימות עניתנו שנות ראינו רעה. יראה אל עבדיך פעלך והדרך על בניהם (תהלים צ, טו-טז)

*Make us glad according to the day wherein You have afflicted us and the years in which we have seen evil. Let Your work appear to Your servants, and Your glory to their children.*

ויהי רצון מלפניך ברחמי הרבים לראות בנין המקדש וירושלים וערי ישראל ויהודה, כן יהי רצון אמן.

*And may it be Your will that we may merit in your abundant kindness to see the rebuilding of the Holy Temple and Jerusalem and the cities of Israel and Yehudah. So shall it be Your will. Amen.*

מזמור לאסף א-להים באו גוים בנחלתך טמאו את היכל קדשך שמו את ירושלים לעיים. נתנו את נבלת עבדיך מאכל לעוף השמים בשר חסידיך לחיתו ארץ. שפכו דמם כמים סביבות ירושלים ואין קובר. היינו חרפה לשכנינו לעג וקלס לסביבותינו. עד מה ה' תאנף לנצח תבער כמו אש קנאתך. שפך חמתך אל הגוים אשר לא ידעוך ועל ממלכות אשר בשמך לא קראו. כי אכל את יעקב ואת נהוה השמו. אל תזכר לנו עונת ראשנים מהר יקדמונו רחמיך כי דלונו



מאד. עזרנו א-להי ישענו על דבר כבוד שמך והצילנו וכפר על חטאתינו למען שמך. למה יאמרו הגוים איה אלהיהם יודע בגוים לעינינו נקמת דם עבדיך השפוך. תבוא לפניך אנקת אסיר כגדל זרועך הותר בני תמותה. והשב לשכנינו שבעתים אל חיקם חרפתם אשר חרפוך ה'. ואנחנו עמך וצאן מרעיתך בודה לך לעולם לדר ודר נספר תהלתך. (תהלים עט)

*A psalm of Asaf. O God, heathen nations have come into Your inheritance; they have defiled Your holy Temple; they have turned Jerusalem into a heap of stones. They have given Your servants' corpses to be food to the birds of the sky, the flesh of Your pious ones to the beast of the earth. They have shed their blood like water around Jerusalem and there was no one to bury them. We have become a taunt to our neighbors, a scorn and derision to those around us. How long, Lord? Will You be angry forever? Will Your jealousy burn like fire? Pour out Your wrath upon the nations that do not know You, and upon the kingdoms that do not call upon Your name. For they have devoured Yaakov, and laid waste his dwelling place. O remember not against us former iniquities; let Your tender mercies speedily come to meet us, for we are brought very low. Help us, God of our salvation, for the glory of Your name; and deliver us, and forgive our sins, for Your name's sake. Why should the nations say, Where is their God? Let the revenging of the blood of Your servants which is shed be made manifest among the nations, and before your eyes. Let the groaning of the prisoners come before you; according to the greatness of Your power preserve a remnant of those who are appointed to die. And repay our neighbors for their insult wherewith they have insulted You sevenfold into their bosom, O Lord. And we Your people and the sheep of Your pasture will give You thanks forever: we will relate Your praise to all generations (Tehillim 79).*

**WHEN VIEWING THE WALLS SURROUNDING THE OLD CITY (Especially the Gate of Mercy and the Kosel)**

טבעו בארץ שעריה אבד ושבר בריחיה מלכה ושריה בגוים אין תורה גם נביאיה לא מצאו חזון מה' (איכה ב, ט)

*Her gates sank into the ground, He has destroyed and broken her bars; her king and princes are among the nations; there is no Torah, also her prophets have not found a prophecy from the Lord (Eichah 2:9).*

## Special Prayers

All who pray at this place, Yerushalayim, are regarded as if they pray before God's Throne of Glory, because the gate of Heaven is there. (*Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer*, chap. 35)

Despite two thousand years of exile, Jews throughout the generations continued to long for the opportunity to return to Eretz Yisrael. This hope and yearning found expression in the many elegies and prayers composed by some of our greatest sages. Of the numerous *tefillos* on the subject, I have selected three prayers, any of which are appropriate when viewing the site of the Temple in its state of ruin.

The first is that of the Ramban (Nachmanides), who first settled in Eretz Yisrael at the age of 72. After an arduous journey he arrived in the holy city of Yerushalayim on the ninth of Elul, 5027 (1267) to find it in a total state of ruin. He arrived seven years after the Mongul hordes had wreaked havoc and destruction on the city and its populace. Although many of the conditions described in this very moving prayer have changed, we can still find much relevance in the words of the Ramban.

The second *tefillah* is that composed by Rabbi Avraham Danzig, author of *Chochmas Adam* and *Chayei Adam*. Although he longed for the day that he would merit to ascend to Eretz Yisrael, his dream never came to fruition. However, he succeeded in writing a treatise on the laws of Eretz Yisrael entitled *Sha'arei Tzedek*, and in the Introduction he offers this prayer to be said after rending one's garment in mourning of the destruction.

The last *tefillah* presented here was composed by the famed medieval traveler and Halachic scholar, Rabbi Eshtori Ha-Parchi. His work *Kaftor va-Ferach* examines the boundaries and sanctity of Eretz Yisrael. He recited this *tefillah* opposite *Sha'ar Ha-Rachamim*, the Gate of Mercy, a site he claims is especially suited for the acceptance of our prayers.

[The prayers, as well as the sources for this chapter, can be found in the printed book.]

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**Eretz Ha-Tzvi** - A Halachic Guide to the Mitzvos That Are Dependent on Eretz Yisrael - For the Traveler, Newcomer, and Resident, by Rabbi Zvi Teichman, Feldheim 2007

(Continued from **Eretz Chemdah**, page 1)

exists there) enabled us to: live rent-free for the first half year; attend ulpan, with a free daycare on the premises; and send our children to schools in nearby Telz-Stone and Yerushalayim. Additionally, it gave us the opportunity to see many communities around the country, which was thanks to trips organized by the absorption center and by Tehilla (an organization that conducted pilot trips, organized field trips in search of communities, and provided emotional support to new religious immigrants in the days before Nefesh B'Nefesh). Moreover, we had the opportunity to meet many other new immigrants with whom we could exchange information about job and community searches and give and receive emotional support.

We discovered Ma'aleh Amos by taking rides with other absorption center residents who were looking at various communities. Many aspects of Ma'aleh Amos appealed to us.

The small size classes in the Bais Yaakov and Talmud Torah elementary schools- were five to ten students on average. This was wonderful compared to the class sizes in Yerushalayim of up to forty students. Also, the fact that school was about a two-minute walk from home was appealing.



The relatively inexpensive cost of housing was also appealing. We first rented a four-bedroom home, and then eventually built our current home in the empty lot next-door, as part of a project that included eight homes, for a fraction of rental and sale prices in Yerushalayim.

We also appreciated the small and intimate community with only about fifty families at the time. The *rav*, HaRav Z'ev Wolf Charlop, Shlit"a, who is English-speaking, is an approachable *talmid chochom* who understood the issues faced by American immigrants. (Having an accessible *rav* was always of primary importance to us). Many of the families here were also immigrants from the U.S. or from the former U.S.S.R. Since we were all without family, we became each other's family and support system. Even the Israeli families did not have family nearby, so they became part of this support system as well.

Ma'aleh Amos is an easy commute to Yerushalayim. It is about a half-hour drive to Gilo at the southern end of Yerushalayim, or about a one-hour bus ride to the city's main entrance. When we moved here, my husband worked in a high-tech park in Yerushalayim, which made for a very reasonable commute for him.

(Continued on page 4)

Ma'aleh Amos is in a quiet area where the Judean Hills and the Judean Desert meet. It has a remarkable view of the Yam Hamelach and the mountains of Jordan. We see a lot of sky here. The amazing view, the quiet, and the feeling of being in nature and not in a congested city was very appealing to us. During a simple walk in the *yishuv* (small settlement), we can see sheep on the nearby hills, sometimes a family of camels, and many other interesting animals and plants. The quiet, calm, and small-town atmosphere is very conducive to *ruchniyus* growth through participation in *yishuv* life and having time to learn, whether in *shiurim*, with a *chavrusa*, or on your own. We don't have all the conveniences of the city, but on the other hand, we do not have to deal with a hectic and urban pace of life. As I tell other people, the only time people rush here is to

catch the bus—because the next one won't be leaving for several hours.

### **Finding Work**

*Just as HaShem supplied Bnei Yisroel with all their needs in the desert, He has taken care of our parnassah needs here—in the middle of nowhere!*

*Several people from our area work in schools and day-care centers either in the local mosdos, in nearby yishuvim, or in Gush Etzion, Beitar, or Yerushalayim. They are teachers, rebbeim or assistants in the Bais Yaakovs, Talmud Torahs or preschools.*

*A few are employed by the yishuv in various positions, mostly part-time, in the capacity of handyman/gardener, secretary, klita (absorption) coordinator, youth directors, librarian, post office administrator, community coordinator, cultural and activity coordinators, security director, and cleaning the schools, offices and mikvaos.*

*Some work from home as architects and interior designers, by running businesses from their home, or in other types of work for companies with American hours.*

*Two residents are bus drivers. One resident owns and operates the makolet (grocery store) with the help of some part-time cashiers who fill in when he is not available.*

*Several new residents work in Yerushalayim, Beitar or in various Gush Etzion communities as medical or other secretaries, in stores, government offices, or in security positions.*

*Some women operate their own day care or preschool programs in their homes or in public buildings here, or work in day-care centers here or in nearby yishuvim. Several sofrim work locally, and one resident has a batim business for tefillin.*

*Some are independently employed, including a construction contractor and a painter.*

*Two male residents are nurses in Yerushalayim. Some people work part-time as chugim leaders for exercise or crafts classes, here or in other communities. There's really something for everyone.*

We also liked the fact that there were enough English-speaking families for us to feel comfortable. At the same time, we did not want to live in an American "bubble," but rather in a *yishuv* that operates in Hebrew, so that we and our children would pick up Hebrew quickly and befriend people of various nationalities.

Boruch HaShem, we felt comfortable here from the very first day—our children were already playing with neighbors their age while the movers were still unloading the moving truck!

Just a brief postscript on our employment: Aryeh is a CPA who currently works for Roth & Co., a *frum* New York-based accounting firm that recently opened up an auditing office in Yerushalayim. (They're looking for more accountants.) I am a free-lance translator, working from home.

### **Eternal Covenant: History Tidbits**

- 5597 (1837) – Thousands were killed in an earthquake in Tzefas and Teveriah. Many survivors reestablished themselves in Yerushalayim. In a *hesped*, the Chasam Sofer said that the earthquake also occurred because people neglected Yerushalayim and chose to settle in other places of Eretz Yisroel at a time when it was already possible to settle Yerushalayim.
- 5654 (1894) – Beit Knesset Moussaieff was the first building built in the Bukharan Quarter in Yerushalayim. It continues to serve as the central Sephardi shtieblach.

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All issues, a list of organizations and other resources for *frum* English speakers living in (or interested in coming to live in) Eretz Yisroel, at **AviraDEretzYisroel.org**

In memory of Sarah bat Yitzchak ob"m,

In memory of Kitty Elizabeth bat Rachel ob"m

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