

Simchat Torah 5774

BS"D Simchat Torah 5774

On Simchat Torah we will read of the passing away of Moshe Rabbeinu. His death and subsequent burial by HaShem in a remote place east of the Jordan, an area which although within the designated borders of Eretz Yisrael is in a secondary level of sanctity compared to the western side.

We don't know why HaShem did not permit Moshe to be buried in the preferential part of the holy land, but perhaps we can draw a practical conclusion for our times.

One who was born in chutz l'aretz, lived and functioned there his whole life, should not be buried in the holy soil of Eretz Yisrael.

And this applies even more so to people whose lives are dedicated to teaching Torah, because they provide the comfortable spiritual cushion that encourages others to remain in galut.

The Zohar states (parashat Vayechi):

וַיִּשְׁאַל ר. יְהוּדָה מַה עָשָׂה יַעֲקֹב לְבַרְרָתוֹ שֶׁנֶּחְמָדוֹ לְבָרְרָתוֹ שֶׁנֶּחְמָדוֹ לְבָרְרָתוֹ
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R.Yehuda asked how did Ya'akov request to be buried in Eretz Yisrael, when we know that one who dies in chutz l'aretz and is buried here is in the category stated by the prophet Yirmiyahu, "...you came and defiled my land and made my inheritance detestable"?

And R. Yehuda explains that Ya'akov was different than all

other people, in that the holy Shechina was upon him and this permitted his burial in the holy land.

One of the great travesties of our lives is the obnoxious and pretentious thought that one can live his whole life among goyim, contributing to their culture and societies, and be buried here; and merit a grand entrance into Gan Eden.

Whoever does so, does no more than bring his tuma (impurity) to the holy land.

Were it up to me, for these people who wish a short cut to heaven, I would create a cemetery in the Golan Heights right along the Syrian border. This would satisfy their desire to be put to rest in Eretz Yisrael and perhaps guarantee that the area would forever remain with us.

We do not need dead Jews here! We need live brothers and sisters who value the sanctity of the land and contribute to its physical development and spiritual purity.

Chag Samayach

Nachman Kahana

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