

AL HAARETZ — Perspectives on Eretz Yisroel

Living in, Settling, and Building Up the Land
 Issue 6 • 5 Adar (Tetzaveh—Ki Sisa) 5780

Toras Eretz Yisroel

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

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Purim

They therefore decreed that, in honor of Eretz Yisrael, any city that was surrounded by a wall in the days of Yehoshua bin Nun shall read on the 15th (Mishnah Berurah, Orach Chayim 688)

When Purim arrives in Eretz Yisrael, it is a reason for a double dose of *simchah*. According to Halachah, some cities celebrate Purim on the 14th of Adar while others celebrate it on the 15th. Many take advantage of this special opportunity and are stringent in the imbibing of the “spirits” on both days, by participating in the Purim celebrations of both cities. What exactly is one’s obligation regarding the other mitzvos of Purim: reading the Megillah, sending *mishloach manos*, *matanos la-eyyonim*, and holding a festive *se’udah*? Must one repeat these mitzvos in each of the cities he is present in? Is there a difference whether one intends to

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Eretz Chemdah: An Inside View

Various Perspectives and Experiences
 of English Speakers Living in Eretz Yisroel

THIS WEEK’S STORY:

Ratzon HaShem

Yekusiel A., Gush Etzion

I came to learn in Eretz Yisroel after three years in Beis Medrash (post high school). I grew up in Lakewood, New Jersey, and, like most of my friends, when I came to learn in Eretz Yisroel I had no long-term intentions. I came to do the two-year Eretz Yisroel experience. Like most *bochurim*, this obviously included Shabbos *seudos* at the homes of many different types of people.

At one of those Shabbos meals, the question was posed: "How can people live in *chutz la’Aretz* if there is a mitzvah to live in Eretz Yisroel?"

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Eretz Rechavah:

A Tour Guide’s Focus In the Expanse



After the Six-Day War, excavators found numerous artifacts at the foot of Har HaBayis. One of the items found was an enormous cornerstone that was toppled by the Romans at the time of the Churban. Inscribed on this stone in large Hebrew letters was, “*LeBeis Ha’tekiah*,” “the house of [trumpet] blowing.” This stone had been part of the balcony on the southwest corner of Har HaBayis, facing the city of Yerushalayim. A *kohen* would go to this balcony every Erev Shabbos to blow *tekios* to announce the arrival of Shabbos. These *tekios* are mentioned in the Mishna, which is the source of the modern-day custom in many communities to sound a siren right before the arrival of Shabbos. Is it not amazing that we can see this stone—which is tangible evidence of the continued existence of Jewish survival despite our enemies wish to destroy us and stop our service to HaShem—with our own eyes?

• by Tour Guide **Pinchus Abramowitz**

Eretz Tovah:

Quotes from Our Torah Personalities



“Many times have I directed that the religious Jews in the diaspora be instructed that anyone who has the ability to come to Eretz Yisroel and doesn’t, will have to account for his failure in the future world.”

(To Dwell in the Palace, Feldheim, 1991)

Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld (1848—1932): in 1921 he was involved in the establishment of the Eidah HaChareidis and served as its first *Gaava”d*.

Enter our raffle for a 25x35cm canvas print of an Eretz Yisroel theme (valued at 290 NIS) - see back page

This sheet contains Divrei Torah and requires *genizah!*

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spend the entire day or only part of the day there? Another unusual situation arises when Purim, for those who celebrate it on the 15th, falls on Shabbos. The Halacha tells us that when this occurs, the Purim celebration is spread over three days! Knowing which cities celebrate Purim on the 15th and what criteria determine one's obligation are vital to the proper fulfillment of this special Yom Tov.

Purim

Megillas Esther teaches us that Hashem fulfills His will not only through obvious miracles but also through the seemingly coincidental laws of nature and even through the whims of human beings. This message of Omnipotence makes *Megillas Esther* unique, and it is for this reason that the celebration of Purim will never cease, as the Megillah itself testifies:

And that these days should be remembered and kept in every generation, every family, every province, and every city, and that these days of Purim should not disappear from among the Jews, or the memorial of them perish from their seed (*Megillas Esther* 9:28).

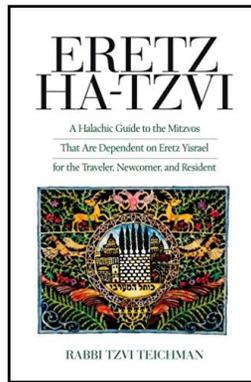
Shushan Purim

Megillas Esther describes how in the days of Mordechai and Esther the Jews fought against the gentiles who sought to exterminate them in accordance with Haman's evil decree. Some communities fought through the 13th of Adar and rested on the 14th. In Shushan, the walled capital city of Achashverosh's dominion, the Jews continued to fight through the 14th and rested on the 15th.

To commemorate this separate victory in the walled city of Shushan, the Rabbis declared that all walled cities throughout the world should celebrate Purim on the 15th of Adar, as in Shushan. All unwalled cities would celebrate on the 14th. Logically, it should have followed that cities that were walled at the time of the Purim miracle should have been instructed to observe the 15th. However, doing so would emphasize the desolation of our holy land, since its previously fortified walled cities were in a state of ruin at that time. Thus, since the cities of Eretz Yisrael would be left to celebrate Purim on the 14th, it would result in a disgrace of our beloved homeland, G-d forbid. To uphold the honor of Eretz Yisrael, the Rabbis stipulated that only a city that was surrounded by a wall in the days of Yehoshua bin Nun would observe Purim on the 15th. With this enactment, both the primacy of Eretz Yisrael and the special victory in the walled city of Shushan would be remembered.

Mukaf and Paruz (Walled and Unwalled Cities)

Those cities that had walls surrounding them in the days of Yehoshua, both in Eretz Yisrael and the Diaspora, are



defined in Halacha as *mukaf*, surrounded, while the unwalled cities are described as *paruz*, open.

Nowadays, the only city that can be definitely classified as *mukaf* is Jerusalem.

Although only a minor part of present-day Jerusalem was encircled by a wall, nevertheless, virtually all of greater Jerusalem observes the 15th.

The Talmud explains that any city that is close and within view of Jerusalem has the status of *mukaf* and observes the 15th.

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The precise definition of "close and within view" is a matter of debate, and one should generally follow the accepted practice within each community.

With the constant expansion of Jerusalem, which creates contiguity between neighborhoods many neighboring communities that formerly observed the 14th have now achieved the status of *mukaf* and keep the 15th.

Some of the communities that were a matter of debate are Bayit Vegan, Har Nof, Hadassah Hospital in Ein Kerem, and Neve Yaakov, among others. Ramot continues to be a matter of dispute, with many residents observing both days out of doubt. Its status is expected to change with the addition of the Ramat Shelomo (Shuafat) neighborhood, making it contiguous with the rest of Jerusalem. [AH ed: This was written in 1996, before construction of Ramat Shelomo.]

Throughout Eretz Yisrael, many ancient cities are suspected of having been surrounded by a wall in the days of Yehoshua. Those cities are: Yaffo, Tzefat, Teveryah, Beit Shean, Shechem, Lod, Akko, Be'er Sheva, Azzah, Chevron, and Ramlah. The questions concerning them are twofold: first, did they possess a wall, and secondly, even if we have sources proving that these ancient cities were indeed walled, are the present-day cities located on the site of the original cities? Due to these questions, it is therefore the custom of many of these cities' residents to read the Megillah on both days, reciting the blessings on the 14th and omitting them on the 15th. The mitzvos of *mishlo'ach manos*, *matanos la-eyyonim*, and *seudas Purim* should be observed on the 14th.

Damascus and Baghdad are among the cities throughout the world suspected of having been walled at the time of Yehoshua.

Traveling between Mukaf and Paruz cities

The place where one spends the 14th and 15th of Adar

determines on which day one performs the mitzvos of Purim, regardless of where he normally resides. This concept is known as *mukaf* or *paruz ben yomo* - becoming a resident of a city that is *mukaf* or *paruz for the day*.

Some *poskim* maintain that where one is physically present at dawn on the day in question defines one as a member of that city for the day and its obligations. Others contend that a person's intention at the beginning (i.e., nightfall) of the days in question determine his association with the city he intends to be in, even in the event that his plans subsequently change. The relevant question is, where did one intend to be at dawn of a particular day?

There are many situations in which these two opinions would differ on the level of practical Halachah. The following is an example illustrating one such difference. A person left for an unwalled city on the night of the 14th, intending to remain there until dawn. Subsequently, he decided to return to his normal residence in a walled city, before dawn. According to the first opinion, he is not obligated to observe Purim on the 14th, since he returned home before dawn. According to the second opinion, his mere intention to remain in the unwalled city until dawn already obligated him to observe the 14th, even after his return home.

Another question raised among the early commentaries was, what determines a person's status as a *mukaf ben yomo*, a resident of a walled city for the day: his spending the 14th in a walled city, or the 15th? Furthermore, based on the difference of opinion cited previously, do his intentions on the night of the 14th to be in a walled city by dawn, or his actual presence there when dawn arrives, already obligate him to observe the 15th, or is his status contingent upon his presence or intentions on the 15th itself?

Several significant works have been published that deal with the myriad of possibilities that arise as a result of this dilemma and how to deal with them. Ha-Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank, *zt"l*, who served as the Chief Ashkenazic Rabbi of Jerusalem, wrote a pamphlet entitled "*Yemei Ha-Purim*" in which he deals with all aspects of the question. The Chazon Ish, *zt"l*, in his work by the same name in the volume on *Orach Chayim* (152:6), summarizes the many possibilities and his decisions regarding them. These two giants of Halachah differed over the issue of whether physical presence or intention is the determinant in conferring the status of a *paruz* or *mukaf ben yomo*. A concise and clear analysis of these opinions as well as others can be found in the work *Igeres Ha-Purim* by Ha-Rav Chanoch Z. Grossberg, *zt"l*.

[on Purim Meshulash and sources for this chapter, see the printed book.]
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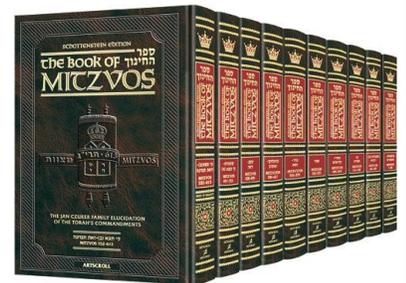
(Continued from **Eretz Chemdah**, page 1)

I was put on the spot, because honestly, I had never thought of it. I was indeed aware there is a mitzvah according to the majority of opinions, but somehow that all was theoretical knowledge. I totally ignored the step of applying my knowledge to my actions—I just honestly never thought about it.

After that Shabbos *seudah*, I decided to research the topic a little bit, until I discovered that Reb Moshe Feinstein *ztz"l* wrote a *teshuvah* that there is no obligation to live in Eretz Yisroel, rather it is a *mitzvah kiyumis*—a mitzvah that one gets *sechar* for doing—but is not an absolute *chiyuv* to do.

I was happy. As far as I was concerned the "issue" was resolved. There is a legitimate opinion that there is no *chiyuv* to live in Eretz Yisroel, therefore I could live happily ever after in Lakewood. Case closed.

Sometime after that I had a conversation about this with a *talmid chacham* I knew. He told me something that changed my life. He asked me if, as a *Yid*, I saw mitzvos as a burden, or am I happy to be part of the *Am Hanivchar* (Chosen Nation) excited to do *ratzon HaShem* even if it isn't the easiest thing. Without too much thought, I knew that the answer was the latter—a *Yid* has to be happy with his *mitzvos* and not look at it as if it is a burden.



He told me, even if we accept Reb Moshe's view (which I understood not to be the *pashtus*), why does that give you the security to live in *chutz la'Aretz*? You have a mitzvah that is definitely *ratzon HaShem* to live in Eretz Yisroel, so even if it is not a *chiyuv*, shouldn't you want to try to do it? He added, you don't think it is easy? Many mitzvos aren't easy and that just increases the *sechar*, as the *Mishna* in *Avos* says, "*l'fum tza'ara agra.*"

This *talmid chacham* continued to note that the many *maalos* of living in Eretz Yisroel mentioned throughout the Torah and *chaza"l* such as, "*Eretz asher Einei HaShem...*" meaning HaShem's special *Hashgacha Pratis* in this Land or the famous *gemara* (*Kesuvos* 110b) stating the difference between one

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who is living in Eretz Yisroel and one who is living in *chutz la'Aretz*, concerning their relationship with HaShem. I once again was aware of these *maalos*, but somehow, I never thought about trying to apply them to my life. He asked me to forget about if it is a *chiyuv* or not, am I not interested in all these *maalos*?

I thought about this for a while and took it to heart. The reason a *Yid* is in this world is to do *ratzon HaShem*, not to look for loopholes in it. The *ratzon HaShem* in this case is very clear—HaShem wants *Yidden* to live in Eretz Yisroel.

I was just a *bochur* at the time, but when I started *shidduchim* my condition was clear. I went back to the States for *shidduchim* like the norm, but I knew that for the long term, I needed to live in Eretz Yisroel. My parents thought I wasn't being rational, but they agreed I can "try" my condition for a year, and to rethink it if I still don't find my *bashert* by then. A year passed and I started getting nervous, but then HaShem sent me my *bashert*, and B"H she agreed with my condition eagerly.

We got married B"H and started off in Yerushalayim, which was the normal place *chutznikim* my age lived. I continued learning in the same yeshiva I did as a *bochur*. My wife B"H found work for an American company through the computer. Neither my parents or my in-laws were financially supporting our stay in Eretz Yisroel, but we had *Siyata Dishmaya* and my wife had decent work. After a little less than a year, however, we realized that we barely could afford our budget, and this was without the added expenses that come with children. It was a hard but obvious decision: We knew we had to move out of the mainstream Yerushalayim to somewhere where the expenses were much cheaper.

After looking at the various options and spending a Shabbos here and there, we moved to the community we thought made the most sense.

B"H we are very happy, and I thank HaShem daily for letting

me live my dream in Eretz Yisroel, as the *gemara* says, "*duchta deMoshe v'Aharon lo zachu lah...*" a place where even Moshe and Aharon did not merit....

Adjusting

For me, adjusting to our new community outside Yerushalayim wasn't such a big deal. I continued learning in the same yeshiva in Yerushalayim, taking a bus every day.

For my wife it was more challenging. We moved from a mostly English-speaking community, to a building where almost nobody knew English. It took time, but eventually she got connected to the English-speaking community there and also learned to make friends with our Israeli neighbors.

The chutznik community gave us a lot of chizuk. It wasn't a group of people of which most were moving back after 2-3 years. It was an oylam of people doing the same thing we were doing.

Eternal Covenant: History Tidbits

- **5461 (1700)** – Rav Yehuda HaChassid (the second) arrived in Yerushalayim leading an entourage of well over five hundred followers. He had made his way from Poland, with many joining him on the way. He himself died a few short days after his arrival, but he had already managed to buy a parcel of land near the Ramban *shul* for the purpose of building a *shul* for the Ashkenazi community.
- **5501 (1741)** – The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh, Rav Chaim ben Attar, arrived in Eretz Yisroel with a group of his *talmidim* and their families. They started out in Acco and eventually made their way to Yerushalayim, in which he established his *yeshiva*.

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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**

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by sending an email to **info@aviraderetzisroel.org** (or leave a message at **072-2986213**) with your response to the following:

What has helped you,
or can help you,
live or settle in Eretz Yisroel?