

# Shabbat Shalom from Torah MiTzion

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By Yedidya Gruber, former Shaliach, Atlanta

## Shabbat Chazon

As we approach Tisha B'Av, we are frequently enjoined to recall the famous Talmudic dictum:

"Every generation which did not witness the rebuilding of the *Beit HaMikdash*, it is considered as if it was destroyed in that generation."

In other words, if a generation was unable to rebuild the *Beit HaMikdash*, the generation is considered to be guilty of the same sin which led to the *Beit HaMikdash*'s destruction: *sinat chinam* (baseless hatred).

Yet, what does this statement really mean? Sadly, the *Beit HaMikdash* is still destroyed, and since the Second *Beit HaMikdash* era, no one has rebuilt it. Are we to understand that all those generations which preceded us were comprised of sinners? Were all those generations – the *Tana'im*, the *Amora'im*, and all the sages and righteous individuals who followed them – still steeped in *sinat chinam*? And what about all the *tzadikim* who died *al kiddush Hashem* throughout the millennia? Was their merit insufficient?

R' Yehudah Aryeh Leib, the Sfat Emet of Gur, explains that "the rebuilding of the *Beit HaMikdash*" is actually an ongoing process, which continues in every generation. Just as we employ the phrase "*Boneh Yerushalayim*" ("the Builder of Yerushalayim") in our prayers – i.e. in the present, rather than in the future – we are constantly rebuilding.

No single generation – not even the generation of the final redemption who will, *b'ezrat Hashem*, be privileged to construct the *Beit HaMikdash* in Yerushalayim in actuality – has enough merit on its own. Rather, the combined

merit and *mitzvot* of all the Jews throughout the generations are necessary for the Third *Beit HaMikdash*.

Similarly, no single individual can perform all the *mitzvot*. After all, no one can be both man and woman or a *Kohein*, *Levi*, and *Yisrael* at the same time. Hence, each Jew must be part of the greater nation which observes the Torah, and in this way, the individual can observe the Torah in its entirety.

So, too, each generation of *Am Yisrael* adds its *mitzvot* and merits to the whole, and the cumulative effect eventually leads to the rebuilding of the *Beit HaMikdash*. Thus, each and every generation can rebuild its own share of the *Beit HaMikdash* – via its good deeds and by atoning and rectifying for past transgressions. Furthermore, as part of this generation, which is part of *Am Yisrael*, we can each rebuild our own special corner and add our own unique bricks.

In order to participate in this wondrous process, we must be part of the nation and the unbroken chain. We must be connected to *Am Yisrael* and everything it experiences. We must constantly ask ourselves: Where is my place? How can I contribute to the nation and to this process – right now, in this generation? Which bricks must I add to enable the rebuilding of the *Beit HaMikdash*?

*B'ezrat Hashem* and in the merit of our collective efforts, may we soon be privileged to see Yerushalayim and the rebuilt *Beit HaMikdash* in all their splendor and glory.

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### Shabbat Times

	Mem	Jerusalem
<b>In</b>	7:51	19:05
<b>Out</b>	8:51	20:23

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## Torah Mitizion— The Land of Israel & Us

New! weekly corner—R. Goldberg

### The Centrality of The Land of Israel—continuation

Last week we started to list some of our connections to the land of Israel, and the centralism of Israel in our faith. This topic fits the days we are in – the three weeks – between the 17<sup>th</sup> of Tamuz and the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av, days that were designated for mourning over the exile and the destruction of the temple. The original case that took place on the day of “*Tisha Be’Av*” (out of 5 mentioned by our Rabbis in the last Mishna of “*Ta’anit*”) was the sin of the spies who rejected entering the land of Israel.

Last week we focused on the time period of the creation of the world, and on our forefathers. This week we will continue our journey to the land of Israel, continuing along with the Torah. The exodus from Egypt is described more than once as a fulfillment of the promise to the forefathers regarding the land of Israel. Already in the first reveal of G-d to Moshe, at the burning bush, we find the following:

“וַיֹּאמֶר לְהֵצִילוֹ מִיַּד מִצְרַיִם וְלִהְיוֹתוֹ מִן הָעָרֶץ הַזֶּה וְהָיָה אֵל אֶרֶץ טוֹבָה וְרַחֲבָה אֶל אֶרֶץ זֵבֶת חֶלֶב וְדָבָשׁ אֶל מְקוֹם הַכְּנָעֲנִי וְהַחִתִּי וְהָעַמֹּרִי וְהַכְּנִזִּי וְהַיְבוֹסִי”  
(exodus 3, 8)

The full proclamation of the redemption includes bringing the Jewish people to the land of Israel. We find the same later on (exodus 6 2-8; 12, 25; 13. 5; 13, 11).

In Several cases we see that the children of Israel seem to know about their final destination. We find in the song that was sung on the sea of reeds – “*Shirat Ha’Yam*” – a song we say each morning in “*Pesukei De’Zimra*”, that the nations that are mentioned as frightened as a result of the crossing of the red sea are those who reside in the land of Israel, teaching us that even the rest of the

world knew about belonging of the land of Israel to the Jewish nation.

The plan as it was supposed to take place – was to enter the land of Israel a short time after the exodus from Egypt – as we read in this weeks’ *Parsha* –

ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ דָּבָר אֵלֵינוּ בְּחֶרֶב לֵאמֹר רַב לָכֶם שָׁבֶת בְּהַר הַזֶּה:  
פָּנוּ וּסְעוּ לָכֶם וּבֹאוּ הָרָה הָאֶמְרִי וְאֵל כָּל שְׂכֵנֵי בְּעֶרְבָה בְּהָר וּבְשָׁפְלָה וּבְגִבָּה  
וּבְחוּף הַיָּם אֶרֶץ הַכְּנָעֲנִי וְהַלְבִּנוֹן עַד הַנָּהָר הַגָּדֹל נְהַר פָּרָת:  
רְאֵה נָתַתִּי לְפָנֶיכֶם אֶת הָאֶרֶץ בָּאוּ וַיִּשְׁאוּ אֶת הָאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע ה' לְאַבְרָהָם  
לֵאמֹר לִי צִחֶק וְלִיעָקֹב לָתֵת לָהֶם וּלְזָרָעָם אַחֲרֵיהֶם:  
(Deuteronomy 1, 6-8)

We also find *Datan & Aviram* complaining in their wicked manner about not yet reaching the promised land of milk and honey (Numbers 16, 12-14).

Last week we read about the way the land of Israel should be divided between the tribes, and the laws of inheritance of land in Israel.

Finally we see that the Torah ends with the death of our great leader Moshe as a punishment on the sin of *Kadesh*. Moshe's punishment was not to lead the people into their home-land – the land of Israel.

Next week we will take a general cursory glance on the rest of the Bible.

May we all observe with our own eyes a full redemption and return to the land of Israel.



## Din Torah: Double Travel Expenses

Courtesy of: Mishpetey Eretz Institute, Ofra. [www.dintora.org](http://www.dintora.org)

### Question

I have been working at one place of work which gave me a monthly bus pass (*Chofshi Chodshi*) in lieu of my travel expenses. I have now received an additional offer of employment where there too I am due to receive travel expense pay, although I don't know at present whether this will be based on my own breakdown of the expenses or whether they intend to pay me a lump sum equal to the cost of a *Chofshi Chodshi*. When I travel to the second place of work, it is almost certain that I will use the bus pass that belongs to the first workplace.

My question is whether, in this case, I am allowed to submit (to the second place of work) my travel expenses, and if so on what basis: according to the number of journeys that I make

pass?

(two urban buses in each direction) or the price of a *Chofshi Chodshi* - a monthly pass?

### Answer

The *Mishna* in *Masechet Ketubot* (12:1) states: “If one marries a woman and she stipulates with him that he will feed her daughter from a previous marriage for a period of 5 years – he is obligated to feed her [the stepdaughter] for 5 years. If he divorces the woman, and she marries another man, and she stipulates with the new husband that he too will feed her daughter for 5 years – the first husband remains obligated to feed his stepdaughter



Continued on page 4

## Religious Zionist Paragons of Virtue: Batya (Bessie) Gotsfeld

Written by Yehudit Zimrat, AMIT

Batya Goldstein was born on Hoshanah Rabah 1888, to a Chassidic family in the city of Przemysl, Poland, which was then part of Austria. The Zionist movement was in its nascent stages, and many intellectuals would gather at the Goldstein home to discuss the Jewish future in *Eretz Yisrael*.

Young Bessie was mesmerized by these passionate debates, which shaped her Zionist dreams and determined her life's chosen path. Even in those days, she was noted for her friendliness and her ability to listen to all sorts of people. She listened to their problems and assisted them with her sage advice.

In 1905, the family moved to New York. Bessie's father had gone ahead, and the rest of the family subsequently followed. The first few months were very difficult, but then an attractive Australian-Jewish young man named Mendel Gotsfeld was hired as Bessie's private English tutor. Mendel and Bessie became very close, and in 1909, they were married. Two years later, the young couple moved to Seattle, Washington, where Bessie began her public activities.

The rise of communism meant that thousands of Russian-Jewish refugees landed on Seattle's shores, and the local Jewish community opened their homes to the newcomers. In particular, Mendel and Bessie Gotsfeld were renowned for their warmth and generosity, and many young people got their start on life in the United States in the Gotsfeld home. Indeed, it was around Bessie's round table that the Mizrachi movement was first introduced to Seattle.

Several years later, the couple returned to New York, where Bessie continued her communal activities. *Keren HaYesod* (literally, "the Foundation Fund" – a forerunner of the United Jewish Appeal) was established to purchase lands in *Eretz Yisrael*, but religious Jews also needed an organization which would concern itself with spiritual survival in addition to physical survival. Bessie found the answer in the Mizrachi movement, which founded and supported shuls and Torah learning in *Eretz Yisrael*.

The women of the Mizrachi movement were traditionally responsible for fundraising and transferring the donations to *Eretz Yisrael*. However, Bessie was determined to establish an independent women's association. Although many were skeptical, Bessie felt that women were capable of heading a national organization. In addition, she realized that she would have to assume a leadership role. After all, "if I am not for myself – who will be for me?" Thus, she approached a number of younger women, who had a more modern outlook than the then typical, elderly Mizrachi women, and invited them to join her new organization.

The Mizrachi Women's Organization of America (later known as American Mizrachi Women and AMIT) was founded in 1924.

Bessie's lifelong motto was, "If I am not for myself – who will be for me? And when I am for myself, what am I?" In other words, what does it mean to be a religious Jewish woman? She believed that the answer was to educate and prepare religious Jewish girls for a productive and meaningful life in *Eretz Yisrael*.



In 1933, a year after Bessie and Mendel made *aliyah*, Bessie's dream was realized. The Beit Tze'iroi Mizrachi, the country's first vocational school for religious girls, was founded in Yerushalayim.

Bessie never shied from identifying needs and meeting them. For instance, towards the end of World War II, when the survivors began arriving in *Eretz Yisrael*, Bessie decided to assist the orphans. She did not wait for governmental or other assistance. Instead, she fed, clothed, housed, and educated the children on her own. Thus, she helped found institutions such as Techiya, Tel Raanan, and the Motza Children's Farm, which absorbed the "Teheran Children".

In the summer of 5707, the Motza Children's Farm was disbanded, due to its proximity to hostile Arab villages. The farm's fifty-four trainees were sent to Kfar Batya, where they were joined by a group of young Hungarian Holocaust survivors.

David Eliach, the village's first school principal recounts:

"The village absorbed orphans from different countries and different cultures during a difficult time for *Am Yisrael*. The village united and integrated them and taught them to live Jewish lives.

It transformed them into decent citizens, who were faithful to *Am Yisrael*... Kfar Batya was a model for educating youth *olim*. It set the standard for how to create a disciplined and educational homelike environment and prepare for the realities of life. The village had comfortable homes, parks, study halls, a library, and a school and was named after Mrs. Batya Gotsfeld. Her dream and vision was to transform the youngsters into pillars of society and to enable each and every student to achieve the pinnacle of their abilities."

Eventually, groups of *olim* arrived from Romania, Yemen, North Africa, India, and Ethiopia, and Kfar Batya served as a warm home for all of them.

Batya (Bessie) Gotsfeld died on 27 Tamuz 5722 at age 74 and was buried in Tel Aviv.





## Looking Back: Netanya Forest

Yaniv Akiva, former Shaliach, Montreal

A visitor to Netanya's new neighborhoods will be surprised to discover a British Mandate-era nature preserve - Netanya Forest, which is also known as *Churshat HaSargentim* ("Sergeants' Grove").

The pristine setting belies the fact that a pivotal historic event took place here.

Beginning in 1946, the British started to apply the death penalty in their dealings with members of the Etzel and the Lechi. In order to change this "gallows policy," the Etzel resolved to retaliate by kidnapping and hanging British soldiers and governmental officials.

In the wake of the Acco prison break of April 14, 1947, three members of the Jewish underground - Avshalom Haviv, Yaakov Weiss, and Meir Nakar - were captured by the British and sentenced to death. Determined to save their comrades' lives, the Etzel decided to snatch British military men. Although the initial attempt was successful, the Haganah, who were working with the British, managed to free the two British soldiers.

The Etzel realized that time was not on their side. Aware of the Etzel's plans, the British shut themselves up in their bases and traveled in large groups. However, two British Intelligence Corps NCOs, Sergeant Clifford Martin and Sergeant Mervyn Paice, ignored the regulations and frequently visited Netanya together with a Jewish friend. Thus, on July 11, the three men were kidnapped by the Etzel. The Jewish friend was released, and the two British sergeants were held near Netanya.

When Netanya's mayor was alerted, he asked the public to help find the hostages. In addition, the Haganah scoured the area to no avail.

On July 14, Netanya and its environs were placed under a three day curfew. During that time, the British continued their search but still came up empty. At one point, the Haganah gave the British information about the sergeants' whereabouts, but the information proved to

be worthless.

On July 29, Haviv, Weiss, and Nakar were executed in the Acco prison, while singing "*HaTikvah*". As a result, the Etzel leadership decided that the time had come to hang the sergeants. In order to avoid detection by the British and the Haganah, the two were hung in their hiding place.

At 9:00 AM the next morning, the bodies were brought to the woods near Netanya, where they were hung on trees. Notes pinned to the bodies listed the charges against the sergeants, and a mine was hidden beneath them.



The bodies were discovered some twenty-four hours later. When a British officer tried to cut down the bodies, the mine exploded, and he was wounded.

The sergeants were buried in the Ramle Military Cemetery, and the spot where their bodies were found was later declared a nature reserve by British authorities.

In response, British troops rioted in Tel Aviv. They murdered five Jews, smashed shop windows, and caused considerable damage.

The incident marked the first time in the annals of the British Empire that British soldiers were on the receiving end of this type of justice, and the British public was outraged. In fact, the so-called "Sergeants affair" was subsequently cited as one of the primary causes for the British departure.

For instance, in 1949, senior British official Colonel Archer Cust observed:

"The hanging of the sergeants did more than anything else to get us out of [*Eretz Yisrael*]."



for 5 years... and likewise the two husbands may not say: 'We will divide the cost of her food between us.' Rather one provides her with food and the other gives her the worth of the food in money" [i.e. each of them must supply the girl with *full* food support].

It is clear from this *Mishna* that a person who undertook to feed his wife's daughter for a certain period of time, is obligated to continue to do so, even if the stepdaughter later receives maintenance from a different person.

HaRav Zalman Nechemia Goldberg deduces from this *Mishna* (*Techumin* 19, p. 271) that it is possible to receive a double undertaking for payment of travel expenses, and even if the two undertakings are not actually realized, the party which has

It is worth reviewing Rav Goldberg's article, because he cites a number of cases in which it is not possible to convert an undertaking into money.

Regarding the value of the payment, it seems that everything depends on the agreement between you and your workplace and it is likely that the employer will choose the cheaper option.

