



## DON'T ABANDON SHIP

Why was Moses buried in the desert? Why are the Chabad Rebbes buried in the Diaspora?

A fascinating mystical discussion about the responsibilities of Jewish leaders and how they continue to tend to their communities—even after their passing.



# JEWISH INSIGHTS

A TASTE OF THE REBBE'S TEACHINGS



3RD OF TAMMUZ

Marking the 27th anniversary  
of the Rebbe's passing

# Part 1: Graveside Prayers

## Source 1 Bireishit Rabbah 82

**Rachel died, and she was buried on the road to Efrat:** Why did Jacob our forefather see it appropriate to bury Rachel on the road to Efrat? He foresaw that the Jewish exiles would pass there. Therefore, he buried her there so that she would beg for mercy for them. As the verse says, "A voice is heard on high, lamentation, bitter weeping, Rachel weeping for her children."

ותמתה רחל ותקבר בדרכן אפרת, מה ראה אבינו יעקב לקבור את רחל בדרכן אפרת, אלא צפה יעקב אבינו שהגָלִילִית עתידות לעבר שם, לפיכך קבורה שם כדי שתהא מבקשת עליהם רחמים, הדא הוא דכתיב (ירמיה לא, יד): קול ברמה נשמע נהי בכינוראים רחל מבכה על בוניה.

## Source 2 Rashi, Genesis 48:7

**I buried her there:** So that she would be of assistance to her children. When Nebuzaradan exiles them, and they pass by there, Rachel will emerge from her grave and weep and beg mercy for them, as it is said: "A voice is heard on high...Rachel is weeping for her children." And G-d answers her, "There is reward for your work, says the L-rd, and the children shall return to their own border."

אכברה שם. שתהא לזרה לבנייה כשיגלה אתם נבזראאנן, וכי עוברים דרכן שם, ייצאת רחל על קבורה ובוכה ומבקשת עליהם רחמים, שנאמר (ירמיה לא, יד) קול ברמה נשמע וגוי והקב"ה משיבה יש שקר לפعلתך נאם ה' ושבו בנים לגבולם.

## Source 3 Talmud, Sota 34b

**They went up into the south, and he came to Hebron:** It should have said they came!? Rava says: This teaches that Caleb separated himself from the spies' plot and went and prostrated himself on the graves of the forefathers. He said to them: My forefathers, pray for me that I be saved from the plot of the spies.

ויעלו בדרום וניבא עד חברון: ניבאו מבעי ליה (היה אמרו להיות כתוב וניבואו – בלשון רביהם)? אמר רבא: מלמד שפירש כלב מעצת מרגלים, והלך ונשתחה על קברי אבות. אמר להו: אבותי, בקשׁו עלי רחמים שאנצל מעצת מרגלים.

## Source 4 Zohar, Acharei Mot 70b

G-d made three abodes for the righteous, and one is for those righteous who have not left this world [despite their passing] and are present here. When the world needs mercy and the living suffer, the people pray at their gravesites, and they, in turn, inform those who sleep in Hebron [i.e., the Patriarchs]. They awaken and enter the [lower] Gan Eden where the Ruach of the righteous dwell...they take counsel with them, issue decrees [for the benefit of humanity] and G-d grants their desire and has pity on the world.

The level of the soul which remains in this world to protect the living is called Nefesh. It does not depart from this world but abides in the world to watch and know [what takes place] and to protect its generation. It is with regard to Nefesh that we are told that the dead know the sorrows of the world.

...רשותם כתוב: שלושה מודרים עשו הקב"ה לנפשות צדיקים - אחד: לנפשות הצדיקים שלא הסתלקו מהתעוולם הוה ומצויים בעולם הזה. ואחר אריך העולם לנתקמים והאנשים החיים יושבים בצדער, הם מתפללים תפילה על קברותיהם, הצדיקים אלו הוליכים ומודיעים הקבר לישני חברון, ומתעוררים ונכנסים לעזרה הארצי, שם רוחות הצדיקים מתלבשים בעטרות של אור, ומתיעצים איתם וגוזרים גורה, והקב"ה עושה רצונות וחס על העולם.

ואיתן נפשות של הצדיקים נמצאות בעולם הזה כדי להגן על המתים, וזה נקרא נפש; וזה לא מסתלק מון העולם הזה, ונמצא בעולם הזה להסתפל ולדעת ולהגן על הדור. וזה שאמרו החכמים, שהמתים יודעים הצדער העולם.

When the world requires mercy, these worthy righteous souls — their Nefesh, which is found in this world to shield the world, rises upward, soars over the world, and informs the Ruach. The Ruach rises upward...and informs the Neshama, which in turn tells G-d. Then G-d has compassion on the world. Then the Neshama goes down and informs the Ruach, and the Ruach informs the Nefesh...

Rabbi Yeissa asked: Why, when rain is needed, do we go to the dead? The Torah forbids us to “inquire of the dead”!? Rabbi Chizkiya replied: ...The ‘dead’ to whom the verse refers are those who may certainly be termed dead, i.e., the sinners of the heathen who are forever dead. But of Israel who are truly righteous, Solomon says: “And I praise the dead, for they are already dead”; i.e., they have died in the past, but now they are living. Furthermore, when other nations visit their dead, they come with magic to arouse evil spirits upon themselves. When, by contrast, the Jews visit their dead, they come in profuse repentance before G-d with a contrite heart and with fasting, with the intent that the holy souls entreat G-d for mercy on their behalf — and then, for their sake, He has compassion on the world.

In regard to this, we have learnt: A righteous man even when he departs from this world, does not truly depart from any world. For he is to be found in all worlds more than in his lifetime. In his lifetime, he is found only in this world, but afterwards, he is found in three worlds, and accessible therein.

ולמדנו - בשעה שצרכיך ה

עולם רחמים איזי הצדיקים הוציאים, ואתה הנפש שגמצאת בועלם ליהו על ה

עולם, קרי היא עולה והולכת ומשוטטה בעולם, ומודעה לרוח, והרוח עולה ומתחטרת ומודעה לנשמה, והנשמה מודעה להקב"ה, ואז חס הקב"ה על ה

עולם. אז יורדת הגשמה מלמעלה למיטה, ומודעה זאת רוחות, והרוח מודעה לנפש...

אמר רבי ייסא: בשעה שצרכיך ה

עולם ?מטר, ומה הולכים אנו אצל המתים, וחורי כתוב: לא ימצא ב... וידענו ודרש אל המתים" (דברים פרק יח), וזה אסור? אמר לו...הփרוש "ודרש אל המתים" - "אל המתים" וכן קרא, שם רשיינו ה

עולם, שם גויים עובדי עבודה זרה, שם נוצאים תמיד מתים, אבל ישראל שם צדיקי אמרת, שלמה קרא עליהם: "ונשבה אני את המתים שכבר מתו", "שכבר מתו" - ועכלשו הם חיים. ועוד, ששאר העמים כשבאים למתיהם, באים בכשפים לעורר עליהם מיעים רעים, וכשישראל באים למתיהם, בתשובה הם באים לפניו הקב"ה, בשברון הלב, בתענית לקראותו, והכל כדי שהנשמות הקדושות יבקשו רחמים לפניו הקב"ה עציהם, והקב"ה חס על ה

עולם בגולם.

וזה מה שלמדנו - צדיק אפיילו באשר נפטר מן ה

עולם היה, אין מסתלק ואין נאבד מכל ה

עולם, ואך נמצא בכל ה

עולם יותר מבחיו; שחרי בחיו הוא נמצא בכל העולם הזה בלבד, ואחר כן נמצא בשלושה ה

עולם ומזמן אצלם...

# Part 2: Burial in the Diaspora

## Source 5 Midrash Tanchuma Chukas 10

G-d said to Moses: How can you demand entry to the Land of Israel?

It is like a shepherd who went to tend to the king's flock, and the flock were stolen. The shepherd wanted to enter the king's palace, but the king said, "Others will say that you caused them to be stolen." So too, G-d said to Moses, "Will your legacy be that you buried six-hundred-thousand in the desert and brought a different generation into the land? Remain at their side and come with them [in the future]." As the verse states, "He came at the head of the people...."

אמר הקב"ה למשה: משה,  
באיזה פנים אתה מבקש לבוא  
לארץ,

مثال למה הזכיר דומה, לרועה  
אחד שישציא לרעות צאנו של מלך  
ונשכית הצאן, ביקש הרועה  
ליכנס לפולטוריון של מלך, אמר  
לו מלך יאמרו שאתת השכית  
הצאן, אף כן אמר לו הקב"ה  
למשה, שבחן הוא שהזאת  
ששים ריבוא וקברותם במדבר  
ואתת מכניס דור אחר, עכשו  
יאמרו כו', אלא תהא בצדנו  
ותבוא עמם, שנאמר (דברים  
ל"ג, כ"א) **וניתא בראשי עם צדקה**  
**ה' עשה וגורה.**.

## >> The Rebbe

### Moses Remained Behind with His People

The resting places of the Chabad Rebbes are not in the Land of Israel; they were purposely interred in various locations in the Diaspora. This is also true of the first leader of the Jewish people, Moses: Instead of being interred in the Land of Israel, he remains in the desert until this very day, three thousand years later.

Why?

Midrash Tanchuma explains that G-d told him that he could come into the land if he so desires, but what would be with the "desert" generation? Moses would be asked: You personally entered the Land of Israel, but what did you do with the six hundred thousand members of your nation that remained in the desert?

For this reason, Moses remains in the desert!

Therefore, the Torah says of him that “he carried out G-d’s righteousness and His judgments in Israel”: He remained with his flock in the forsaken desert so that he would be able to ultimately take them along when he entered the Land of Israel for the future redemption.

## **Jewish Leaders of All Generations Remain with Their Flock**

The same is true of every Jewish leader in his generation:

A Jewish leader disregards his own spiritual desires for the sake of his people. When his people remain in exile, he remains in exile with them, to continue being a source of blessing and connection through which his flock could connect with G-d.

For this reason, the Chabad Rebbes were laid to rest in the Diaspora: They wanted to remain with their flock, to be a source of assistance to them. They possess ‘general souls’ which are the source of all the ‘individual souls’ of their generation, so they have the power to help individuals (being that every person is a ‘part’ of them) far more than ordinary people.

# Part 3: Holy Land Connection

## Source 6 Talmud, Tractate Berachot 30a

One who stands in prayer in the Diaspora should face the Land of Israel, as it is stated: "They shall pray to You in the direction of their land..."

One who stands in the Land of Israel should face Jerusalem, as it is stated: "They shall pray to G-d by way of the city that You have chosen."

One who stands in Jerusalem should face the Temple, as it is stated: "And they shall pray toward this house."

One who stands in the Temple should face the Holy of Holies, as it is stated: "And they shall pray toward this place."

One who stands in the Holy of Holies should face the ark...

Consequently, a person in the East faces west, a person in the West faces east, a person in the South faces north, and a person in the North faces south, and all the people of Israel face the same place.

As Rabbi Avin, and some say Rabbi Avina, said:

What verse alludes to this? "Your neck is like the Tower of David, built with turrets [talpiyyot]..." He interprets the word *talpiyyot* as the hill [tel] toward which all mouths [piyyot] turn, i.e., the Temple Mount.

היה עומד בחוץ לארץ - יכינוי את לבו כנגד ארץ ישראל, שנאמר: (מלכים א' ח', מ"ח) "וְהַתִּפְלֹל אֵלֶיךָ דָּרְךָ אֶرְצֶם".

היה עומד בארץ ישראל - יכינוי את לבו כנגד ירושלים, שנאמר: (מלכים א' ח', מ"ד) "וְהַתִּפְלֹל אֵל הַדָּרֶן הַעִיר אֲשֶׁר בְּמִרְתָּה".

היה עומד בירושלים - יכינוי את לבו כנגד בית המקדש, שנאמר: (דברי הימים ב' ו', ל"ב) "וְהַתִּפְלֹל אֵל הַבַּיִת הַזֶּה".

היה עומד בבית המקדש - יכינוי את לבו כנגד בית קדשי הקודשים, שנאמר: (מלכים א' ח', ל"ה) "וְהַתִּפְלֹל אֵל הַמֳּקוֹם הַזֶּה".

היה עומד בבית קדשי הקודשים - יכינוי את לבו כנגד בית הכפרות... נמצא עומד במוֹרָח מִתְזִיר פָּנָיו לְמוֹרָח. בְּדָרוֹם - מִתְזִיר פָּנָיו לְצָפוֹן. בְּצָפֹן - מִתְזִיר פָּנָיו לְדָרוֹם. נמצא כל ישראל מכונינו את לבם למקומות אחד.

אמר רבי אבין, ואיתימא רבי אבנן: מי קראה (שיר השירים ד', ד') - "כִּמְגַדֵּל דָוִיד צֹאנוּךְ בְּנוּי לְתִלְפִיּוֹת" - תֵל שֶׁכֶל פִּוּת פֻּנִים בו.

## >> The Rebbe

### Praying at a Tzaddik's Grave is Like Praying in the Land of Israel

Another point regarding the leader's dedication to his people: by being laid to rest in the Diaspora, near his flock, he connects them to the Land of Israel.

To preface:

When we pray and ask G-d to provide us with our needs, our prayer is supposed to be connected to the place of which G-d says, "My eyes and heart will always be there." Therefore, Jewish law states that "Diaspora Jews should face Israel during prayers, as the verse states, 'They shall pray to You in the direction of their land'; we also face Jerusalem, the Temple, and the Holy of Holies."

The reason is as follows: G-d's energy is channeled to the Diaspora through "seventy ministers." However, his energy to the Land of Israel is channeled directly from Him, as the verse states, "the land which G-d's eyes are upon from the beginning of the year until the end." Therefore, we seek to connect our prayer specifically to the Land of Israel.

And this unique advantage of the Land of Israel exists in the Diaspora (in addition to merely facing the Land of Israel) at the resting place of the *tzaddik* of the generation.

### The Ohel is Compared to the Land of Israel

The explanation:

In the end of Tractate Ketubot, the Talmud discusses the concept of the resurrection of the dead. The big question is, how exactly will it occur. The Talmud asks, "According to Rabbi Elazar, how will the righteous of the Diaspora be resurrected?" The Talmud answers: "Tunnels will be created for them underground" (in which the righteous will go through until they reach the Land of Israel and emerge). The grave of a righteous person, even in the Diaspora

and even overseas, will have tunnels through which they will make their way to the Land of Israel and then emerge from the tunnel's entrance.

Since the tunnel's entrance is in the Land of Israel, the tunnels themselves also have the status of the Land of Israel.

This teaches us that the graves of the righteous in the Diaspora—which are connected to tunnels which lead to the Land of Israel—have the spiritual status of the Land of Israel as well.

Therefore, praying in the Diaspora at the resting place of a righteous person and leader of the Jewish people has the same advantage as prayer in the Land of Israel.

# Part 4: More Than Israel

## >> The Rebbe

### Connecting with the Highest Levels

This is the power and advantage of praying at the resting place of a righteous person:

In our day, with the spiritual degeneration of the Land of Israel since the destruction of the Temple, if a Jew desires to pray to G-d in a manner equivalent to the prayer in the Land of Israel during the Temple era (in a place where the “seventy ministers” wield no power), connecting his soul with G-d, “closeting” himself with G-d, so to speak—where can that be accomplished? At the gravesite of a righteous person, a leader of the generation. That is a place which has the status of the Land of Israel just as it was during the Temple Era.

Obviously, prayer in such a location has an additional advantage: the requests made in prayer will be fulfilled,

Including that the spirit of G-d envelope you in your daily life, in your thought, speech and action, helping you fulfill your life-mission as it was entrusted to you by the Rebbe himself,

And this is all given to you without concealment, granting you great success in all your physical and spiritual endeavors.

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מיזם של "משרד השלווחים"

נוסד ביום השבעה לזכרון ולע"נ הרוב גבריאל נח וזוגתו רבקה הי"ד  
שלוחי הרוב במומבאי, הודו

