



RABBI SHALOM

ROSNER

Rav Kehilla, Nofei HaShemesh
Maggid Shiur, Daf Yomi, OU.org
Senior Ra"m, Kerem B'Yavneh

A Monumental Lesson

ולא תקים לך מצבה אשר שנה ה' אלקיך (דברים טז:כב)

And you shall not set up for yourself a monument, which Hashem, your God hates. (*Devarim* 16:22)

The Torah forbids the construction of a *matzeva* (a monolith; a monument made of one stone), saying that Hashem hates them. Rashi notes that surprisingly, the patriarchs all erected *matzevos*, some as monuments and others as alters upon which to offer sacrifices to Hashem. Rav Moshe Feinstein in *Darash Moshe* is puzzled that nowadays it is common to erect a *matzeva* as a tombstone over a grave. Why is this practice not in violation of the prohibition against erecting *matzevos*?

Rav Moshe suggests two possibilities to

Dedicated L'iluy Nishmat
מרים בת ר' מרדכי ברוך
בענדיט ע"ה

Miriam Rich a"h
whose 12th Yahrtzeit is on אלוול

help us better understand the concept of *matzeva*. First, he examines the root of the word *matzeva*: “*hutzav*”, which means “stationed”, “positioned”, or “standing”.

Prior to the giving of the Torah, the *mitzvos* were all voluntary. Then, a person could turn to God and say, “look what I’ve done; I deserve a reward for my deed.” They could be proud of a past voluntary act, with no obligation for tomorrow. The *matzeva* was a symbol of a past achievement, a monument to memorialize a past event. However, after the Torah was given, *mitzvos* became a matter of daily obligation. There was no demanding a reward or commemoration for a past action, as no job was ever truly completed.

That is why *matzevos* are prohibited. While we are alive, we cannot stand still, as the root of *matzeva* suggests. Only once we are dead is it possible to reflect on our legacy and accomplishments. Therefore, we can build a *matzeva* upon a grave.

A second, albeit connected idea, says Rav Moshe is based on a well-known thought of the *Ba’alei Mussar*¹ that angels are referred

1 *Kli Yakar Vayikra* 18:4; *Prinime HaGra Bereishis* 1:26.

to as “*omdim*” – those who stand.² Human beings are called “*mehalkim*” – those who walk and move. Rather than be complacent with our past accomplishments, we must constantly be seeking to forge ahead and attempt the next challenge. As we have mentioned on several occasions, life is like going up a downward escalator. If we are just standing still, we will descend. We must constantly be growing. One can be proud of accomplishments – keeping in mind, it is but one stop on the journey.

In the words of Rav Moshe, צריך אדם לילך - מעלה מעלה בתורה ובמצות באיכות ובכמות - one must never cease to ascend in our study of Torah and fulfillment of the mitzvot both in terms of quality and quantity. Prior to Matan Torah, when all religious observance was voluntary, any achievement was laudatory and commendable. There was no pressure to keep growing in spirituality. Thus, a stationary stone, commemorating a past achievement was appropriate. However, post- Matan Torah, when life is all about growth, *matzevos* become obsolete. Let us always strive to reach for the spiritual stars. ■

2 Zeharia 3:7.

For Sale in Jerusalem

In a luxurious building on Rav Kook 7 patios, sprinklers, gym, Shabbat elevator, 4 rooms, 123sqm + 10sqm Sukka porch, 7th floor, beautiful apartment, full of light and airy
5,280,000nis (flexible)
for more information call

Yecheil: 052-4876901

Eiferman Properties Ltd.

SALES:

- **YAVNIEL** - Villa + Rental Units! NIS 2,490,000 !
- **HOLYLAND / RAMAT SHARET / BAYIT V'GAN**
Cottage 235 sqm, 9 rooms, large succah, view, parking !
- **OLD KATAMON** * New on Market! Spacious 3 en suite bdrm. apt. Beautifully renovated! Succah balcony !
- **RECHAVIA** - Ben Maimon St. Beautiful new 240 sqm garden apt. private entrance, storage, parking.
- **CITY CENTER** - 4 Bdrms, renovated, elevator, balconies.
- **ROMEMA** - New 137 sqm, 5 bdrms. (2 with en suite bathrooms) parking, storage, succah, view
- **HAR NOF** * Shlav B, 3 bdrms, Succah, storage, view !
* Renovated 4 bdrms, bright and airy, 3 exposures, MB en suite, large succah, no steps to the building !
* Unique Villas for sale, 250- 330 sqm + rental units, outdoor space, parking, view! Many options!

RENTALS:

- **OLD KATAMON** * 6 rms., garden apt. furnished !
* Lovely 2 bdrms, furnished, 3 exposures, two balconies !
- **HAR NOF** Villa, beautiful 6 bedrooms, view!

02-651-4030 www.eifermanrealty.com

CORONA INSURANCE CHECKLIST

- Can Mom and Dad take out local health insurance now that they're stuck here? *Call E/C*
- What are the options for life/health insurance? *Call E/C*
- Can we get a better deal on our car/home insurance? *Call E/C*

Egert and Cohen
We're here when you need us (especially now!)

INSURING YOUR:

Home | Health | Life |
Auto | Business | Travel

**EGERT
COHEN**
אגרט את כהן ביטוחים
Egert & Cohen Insurance

02-623 2546 • www.egertcohen.co.il