

DEAR TORAH TIDBITS FAMILY



RABBI AVI BERMAN

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Once every few years, for a few weeks at a time, different portions of the *Torah* are read in *Eretz Yisrael* and in *chutz la'aretz*. We are currently experiencing one of these years and this *Shabbat*, we realign *Torah* readings, as *Parshat Mattot-Masei* is read in the Diaspora while *Parshat Masei* is read in *Eretz Yisrael*. It begs the question, what can we learn about *Parshat Masei*, a *Torah* portion that unifies Jews in and outside of *Eretz Yisrael*?

In *Parshat Masei*, all the journeys of *Am Yisrael* in the desert are carefully detailed, the boundaries of their future lands are given, and the *arei miklat* (cities of refuge) are designated. This *parsha* offers an important lesson for what it means to be a member of *Klal Yisrael*. *Am Yisrael* has a unifying journey - to serve the *Borei Olam* and bring an awareness of the Almighty to the world. But we cannot reach our goals without each individual member of *Klal Yisrael* actively upholding the values of *Torah*, thus inspiring one another to reach for greater heights.

When we do a *mitzvah* we not only impact ourselves but we impact those around us, and more broadly, we actively contribute to the collective holiness of *Klal Yisrael*. As we each embark on fulfilling our personal mission on this earth there is so much we can learn from one another. In my own life, I have found that seeing the ways in which

my parents, *rabbanim*, mentors, family and community members serve *HaShem*, I can envision my own potential and be inspired to hold myself to higher standards...

Seeing the love my parents had for *Eretz Yisrael* and their dedication to the dream of building a life here despite challenges they faced ignited a fire in their children, all of whom live here today.

Both my grandfathers exemplified what it means to serve as reliable members of the *Klal*. Despite how challenging it was for my *Zaidy* to walk from his home to Rabbi Shalom Gold's shul in *Har Nof*, he was always among the first group of people to arrive. My Grandpa *a"h* was the first one to open the shul where he *davened* every morning in Brooklyn. They inspire me to get out of bed regardless of how tired I might feel and play an active role in making a *minyán* for the community.

Seeing the respect that my parents had for Rav Moshe Feinstein and the stories they would tell me about his *gadlus* (*greatness*) helped me appreciate the *gedolim* (revered rabbis) of our generation and I share the same stories with my own children.

The time my father would spend bringing me to see Rav Moshe Feinstein at Yeshivat Tiferet Yerushalayim impressed upon me the value of building relationships with *gedolim* and seeing them as role models. These experiences helped me set the foundation for fostering my own relationships with *rabbanim* such as *Rav Mordechai*

Eliyahu. Following in my father's ways, I make sure my children are given opportunities to visit *Torah* giants and learn from them.

This past week, *Am Yisrael* lost a holy soul with the passing of Mr. Kurt Rothschild, a person who taught the world what it means to be involved in *tzarchei tzibur* (the needs of the community) and how important it is to serve as an active member of *Klal Yisrael*.

Born in Germany in 1920, Kurt was sent by his parents to England and just three years later, migrated to Canada where he built a career of scrupulous honesty and a life dedicated to *Am Yisrael*, *Eretz Yisrael* and *Torat Yisrael*. In 2012, after Kurt and his wife Edith made *aliyah*, he found new opportunities to lend a hand and devoted himself to *Am Yisrael* in *Eretz Yisrael*. One of the many projects he took on was establishing communities in the *Negev* for Israelis displaced from *Gush Katif* looking to rebuild their lives.

Mr. Rothschild modeled respect toward every Jew and deeply believed in the unity of *Klal Yisrael*. As a testament to the way in which he conducted his life, Jews came to pay their respects and accompany his *neschama* to the *Olam HaEmet*. Some wore *kippot* of all shapes, sizes and materials, some wore baseball caps, some wore traditional *yeshivish* garb, while others wore T-shirts and sandals.

I had the *zechus* to meet with Kurt on a number of occasions and always felt motivated by the excitement he had when tackling the latest need he identified in *Klal Yisrael*. On one such occasion, Zvi Sand, OU Israel President, and I went together to meet with Kurt (see photo). We were



incredibly impressed with his endless work in the Jewish world. Seeing the love, dedication, time, effort and funds that he personally invested into the Jewish people left me with no choice other than to join in his latest efforts to help our brethren. The lessons I learned from Mr. Rothschild I hope to implement in my own life and pass down to my children.

May we follow in the path that Mr. Rothschild set for us and find opportunities to reinforce *Am Yisrael*. With so many holy members of *Klal Yisrael* to learn from, may we see the beauty in one another, inspire each other through our own personal growth and may we unite in our mission as children of *HaShem* and bring His light to this world.

Wishing you all an uplifting and inspiring Shabbat,

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Condolences to Lynne Steinberg and family
on the passing of her mother

Ruth Weinberg a"h

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים