



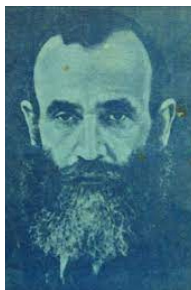
**RABBI AARON**

**GOLDSCHIEDER**

Editor, Torah Tidbits

*Rav Yeshayahu Shapira (1895-1945), belovedly known as the Admor HaChalutz, compiled a selection of teachings of Rav Avraham Yitzchak Hakohen Kook zt”l in a small sefer he called, Eretz Chefetz. Rabbi Shapira was a Chassidic Zionist pioneer, the brother of the famed Rabbi Kalonimus Kalman Shapira hy”d, often known by his sefer, the Aish Kodesh. Rabbi Yeshayahu Shapira settled in Eretz Yisrael in 1920, leaving behind the glory of leading a great Chassidic court in order to physically help build up the Land.*

*In the coming months, be”H, this weekly column will focus on these teachings. Each week we will delve into the meaning of Rav Kook’s words and attempt to reveal the inspiration that Rav Shapira hoped to instill in his remarkable compilation.*



Rav Shapira



Rav Kook

## The Land of Israel’s Bond to the Nation

“אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵינָהּ דָּבָר חִיצוֹנִי, קִנְיָן חִיצוֹנִי לְאַמָּה, כִּי בְּתוֹר אֶמְצָעִי לְמִטְכָּה שֶׁל הַהִתְאָגְדוֹת הַכְּלָלִית וְהַחֲזָקָה קִיּוּמָהּ הַחֲמָרִי אוֹ אֶפְלו הָרוּחָנִי. אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל הִיא חֲטִיבָה עֲצָמוּתִית קְשׁוּרָה בְּקֶשֶׁר חַיִּים עִם הָאָמָה, חֲבוּקָה בְּסִגְלוֹת פְּנִימִיּוֹת עִם מְצִיאוּתָהּ.” (ארץ חפץ 1:1)

“Eretz Yisrael is not an external entity, [it is not] an external acquisition for the nation, [it is not] a means to achieving a collective whole, [it is not intended to] strengthen the nation’s physical existence, or even its spirituality. [Rather,] Eretz Yisrael is an essential unit which is eternally bound to the life of the nation; united by inner characteristics to its existence. (*Eretz Chefetz* 1:1).”

In the above passage Rav Avraham

Yitzchak Hakohen Kook passionately proclaims that the Land of Israel carries singular importance. The Land is embedded within the very fabric of the nation.

Rav Kook continually declared the centrality of the Land of Israel in the life of a Jew. Undoubtedly, the importance of Eretz Yisrael has its roots in the Jew’s first encounter with the Land. When our forefather Avraham was introduced to the Land of Israel for the very first time, the Zohar teaches, God informed Avraham that there are inner dimensions of the Land that even you cannot comprehend. “The power of the Land is deep and concealed” (*Zohar*, 1:78a).

This refers to the Land's innate and hidden holiness.

Perhaps, the following statement made by the Gerrer Rebbe in his *Sfat Emes*, succinctly captured the above idea: *B'nei Yisrael tzrichin le'Eretz Yisrael, ve'Eretz Yisrael tzricha le'benei Yisrael*, "The people of Israel need the Land of Israel and the Land of Israel needs the people of Israel." (*Sfat Emet*, *Parshat Maasei*, תרמ"ז).

When we speak of the intrinsic bond that exists between the people of Israel and the Land of Israel, Rashi's first comment on the Torah is all-important. Rashi cites Rav Yitzchak who says that since the Torah is primarily a book of laws, it should have commenced with the commandment of the new moon (Shemot 12:2), the first law that was addressed to all of Jewry as a nation. He explains that the reason for the Torah's narrative of Creation is to establish that God is the Sovereign of the universe: *He declared to His people the power of His works in order to give them the heritage of the nations (Psalms 111:6)*. If the nations accuse Israel of banditry for seizing the lands of the seven nations of Canaan, Israel can respond, "The entire universe belongs to God. He created it and He granted it to whomever He deemed fit. This was His desire to give it to them and then it was His desire to take it from them and give it to us." (*Rashi, Bereshit 1:1*)

Rav Kook's beloved disciple, Rabbi Yaakov Moshe Charlop, expounded on this verse from Tehillim quoted above by Rashi: "He declared to His people...". The verse does not say that God announced this axiom to the world. Rather, it is only necessary for the Jew to know that the Land



**SHERLOCK'S**  
is looking for a  
part-time  
sales person.

*Happy  
faces only.*

Send Resume to:  
[sherlockselementary@gmail.com](mailto:sherlockselementary@gmail.com)

#### FOR RENT:

- \* Har Nof - luxurious duplex available now. underfloor heating, double junkers, Pesach kitchen, separate unit
- \* Arnona - 4 room apartment, excellent condition, 3rd floor, Shabbat elevator, private parking. Available now
- \* Arnona - Korei Hadorot, 3.5 rooms, 6200nis/month

**CALL- 0546680836**

**HaGefen Realty**

[www.hagefen.com](http://www.hagefen.com)

**Gavriel & Tova 0546393924/5**

#### **Exclusive Sale in the Sheinfeld Neighborhood in Beit Shemesh**

- \* 8 Room House, 245 sq.m. built on 500 sq.m. lot with excellent view and location with options of expansion
- \* Price: 6.2 million NIS. Price and entry date negotiable for serious buyers
- \* <https://hagefen.com/property/attractive-family-home-for-sale-on-reuven-st/>



of Israel is our chosen Land and then the world will follow suit. Regrettably, we as Jews often forget the Land's centrality and its spiritually-filled nature. (*Mei Marom, Nemukei Mikraot, Parshat Bereshit*)

Toward the end of the Torah, Rashi makes another remarkable comment concerning the Land of Israel. It is the paragraph recited daily as part of *Kriat Shema* (Devarim 11:18). Rashi cites the *Sifre* that the juxtaposition of these commandments with the threat of exile (v.17) teaches that Jews should observe the commandments even when in exile, so that when the redemption occurs, they will not have forgotten how to perform them. This comment plainly implies that the commandments do not have their complete significance when they are observed outside of the Land.

Relatedly, Rav Kook offered an exquisite interpretation of the following Talmudic episode: The great Talmudic sage Rabbi Abba, who was born and schooled in Babylonia, kissed the rocks of Acre upon arriving in the Land of Israel (Ketubot 112a). Rav Kook found meaning in the fact that Rabbi Abba pressed his lips specifically to the stones. Had he kissed the earth, we might have thought that he was enamored by those mitzvot that are outgrowths of the soil, such as bringing the first fruits to the Temple or separating tithes from fruits and vegetables. To put it in the terms above, one might have said that he expressed his recognition of the Land's manifest holiness. But a gesture of love to rocks cannot possibly carry this meaning. Rabbi Abba's love for the Land of Israel was unconditional and based on

its essential holiness (Raz, *Angel Among Men*, p. 272)

A similar episode is reported on the final page in Tractate *Ketubot* (112b): Rabbi Chiya bar Gamda would roll in the dust of the Land as it is stated, "For Your students take pleasure in her stones, and love her dust" (Psalms 102:15). Rashi, who typically offers his elucidation in order to clarify the text, in this case simply repeats the verse verbatim from Psalms without any further explanation. This is quite rare and somewhat strange.

Rav Zvi Yehuda Kook says that Rashi duplicates the verse without adding any information, to emphasize the importance of 'her stones' and the intrinsic Kedusha of the Land, in and of itself. (*Torat Eretz Yisrael*, Samson, p. 229)

Another memorable explanation is that Rashi actually leaves out one word, *sh'ne'emar* ('as it says in the verse') which was stated in the text of the Gemara. Rashi meant to teach that Rabbi Chiya bar Gamda did not engage in the practice because of the command in the verse. He was not compelled. Rather, he was naturally drawn to the Land. He felt a deep love and attachment which fused him with the Land itself. (YUTorah, "Love of the Land" YINN Melave Malka, Rabbi Azarya Berzon. Also quoted in the name of the *Imrei Emes*, the fourth Gerrer Rebbe, see 'The Talmudic Sages Love for Eretz Yisrael,' Eretz Yisrael Yomi, Arutz Sheva). ■

Over 1600 audio and video shiurim  
for listening and downloading  
plus written articles  
[www.rabbisholomgold.com](http://www.rabbisholomgold.com)