

מעולם לא לן אדם בירושלים ובקדו עון. כיצד. תמיד של שחר מקפר
 על עונות שעשו בקילת. תמיד של בין הערפים מקפר על עונות
 שעשו ביום. מכל מקום לא לן אדם בירושלים ובקדו עון. שנאמר, צדק
 יליו בה (ישע א כא).

(אמר ר' יוחנן, כ' פתחא את' י')

גשחט (ב) מעלמכס: כ' מליון הלח
 חורה. לפי שהיה רוחה קדושה גדולה
 וכהגיס עוסקים בעבודה היה מכון
 לבו יוצר ליראה שמים וללמוד חורה
 כדרש' בספרי למען חלמה ליראה
 וגו' גדול מעשר שני שמכיח לידי
 הלמוד לפי שהיה עומד בירושלים
 עד שיאכל מעשר שני שלו והיה
 רואה שכולם עוסקים במלאכה שמים
 ובעבודה היה גם הוא מכון ליראה
 שמים ועסק בחורה:

(ה' וס' פ' י' מ' כ"א)

זכות האחרונים מצאתי מסופר על ר' יוחנן כשישב בביתו בארץ
 רא' לפני כנאליים שנת וזוהו לביתו על גנת החפלות את בני ביתו לארץ
 יב שלטו. חזקו נחש גיפו יבש בשנת כספתיים סמוך לעירו חזיר שגופו
 היה על פי החליט להקטנם באהה האספנייה את מעונו

This review of the history of *K'lal Yisroel* heightens the farmer's appreciation of the privilege of living in this Holy Land, and is a major component of the mitzvah of *Bikkurim*.

Why must this declaration be repeated every year, even by a farmer whose family has lived in *Eretz Yisroel* for centuries? The answer is that human nature is such that a person tends to get used to the "good life" and begins to take Hashem's infinite kindnesses for granted. The initial joy experienced when arriving in *Eretz Yisroel* might dissipate over time. Thus, the Torah wants the farmer to constantly reawaken the happiness and newness that he felt when he arrived. This is accomplished by reciting the annual declaration of gratitude which is an integral part of the mitzvah (see *Sefer HaChinuch* 606). This is especially important for someone who has always lived in *Eretz Yisroel* and whose ancestors have resided there for generations. The danger exists that the experience of living there will become "stale" (see *Devarim* 4:25).

In the absence of the *Beis Hamikdash*, the mitzvah of *Bikkurim* can no longer be fulfilled. Yet it teaches an eternal lesson. It is common for people to get used to the "good life," and begin taking things for granted. They fail to appreciate the blessings that they have received from Hashem and the obligation to express heartfelt thanks for His kindness.

Who can forget the pictures in the 1970's, of Russian Jews, with tears running down their cheeks, kissing the very earth of *Eretz Yisroel*, as they prostrated themselves for the first time on its holy soil. During those years, a Russian Jew who applied for a visa to emigrate from the Soviet Union could expect years of agony, hardships and abuse until his request was granted. As soon as he applied to leave Russia, he was fired from his job, his children were expelled from school and he had to endure the taunts of neighbors and former friends who berated him for seeking to leave the Communist utopia. He would now be under the constant scrutiny of the K.G.B. which branded him a Zionist traitor.

After enduring years of poverty and deprivation for wishing to go to a land he had never seen, the day finally came when he boarded the plane to Israel. Imagine his joy at finally arriving in the Land of his forefathers, a land for which he had made such tremendous sacrifices. His dream of so many years to come to *Eretz Yisroel* was finally realized. His feeling of joy and gratitude is indescribable.

Yet, even this picture does not begin to compare with what a Jew living before the advent of air travel, often had to endure in order to reach the Holy Land. He had to give up his home and business and risk his life as he travelled by foot over deserts and mountains and through dark forests, on his way to *Eretz Yisroel*. Along the way, he would pass through hostile, alien lands where the inhabitants could kill a Jew with impunity. If he travelled to the Land by boat, he had to face many dangers crossing seas and oceans, where his life could be snuffed out by storms or marauding pirates. Imagine his joy at finally arriving safely in the land of Avrohom, Yitzchok and Yaakov!

It is this feeling of joy that the Torah wants every Jew to feel when he arrives in Jerusalem with his baskets of *Bikkurim*. Even if he is a long-time resident of the Holy Land, his appreciation of this desirable, good and spacious land must be reawakened in him.

Land has been lost.
of joy that Jews used to feel upon setting foot on the soil of the
and then return. The down side of this is that much of the feelings
for people to fly from America to Eretz Yisroel for a day or two,
less than 12 hours, be in the Holy Land. It is commonplace today
ticket, board a non-stop flight departing from New York and, in
it is relatively easy to travel to Eretz Yisroel. A Jew can buy a
speech? There is a penetrating, practical insight here. In our time,
the general summary of Jewish history that is the theme of this
What is the purpose of these words? How do they fit into

us.
come to the land that Hashem swore to our forefathers to give to
throughout history. In this speech, the farmer says that I have
Hashem for all that He has done for him and for the Jewish people
ceremony during which the farmer declares his gratitude to
Beis Hamikdash. There the fruits are presented to the Kohen in a
Torah praises Eretz Yisroel and bring them to Jerusalem to the
to take his first ripened fruits (of the seven species for which the
First Fruits. The Jewish farmer living in Eretz Yisroel is required
Parshas Ki Savo begins with the miltzah of Bikurim, the

And you shall come to whomever will be the Kohen in those
days and you shall say to him, "I declare today to Hashem, your
G-d that I have come to the Land that Hashem swore to our
forefathers to give to us." (26:3)

לקח את הארץ אשר נשבע ה' לאבותינו לתת לנו (במלכות) ואתנו
כדברת אל הארץ אשר נשבע ה' לאבותינו לתת לנו (במלכות) ואתנו

Handwritten notes in Hebrew and English:
Handwritten: "אמר" (said)
Handwritten: "אמר" (said)
Handwritten: "אמר" (said)

מציאות מסתם עי' יעקב משיש-טובוק, שעלה לרקר באר
כחוש, על כן החליט להעניק בואות האמנות עד שישוב לארצו. שאלו שגנו
ביתר אינו רחוק מכאן, וראוי להעניק באמנות זו כדי לשוב לארצו. שאלו שגנו
עלה לו לר' יעקב בארץ וגו' כחוש ופני נפוליות, מהו הדין בהקשר? ויש לומר
הואוץ. אבל עכשיו שאנו חוזר לביתנו בראי, ופני צוללות, יהיו חלל אומרים;
ראו כמה טובה ארץ ישראל, שבאות מבראים שם.

This can be achieved by requiring the farmer to say, "I
declare to Hashem... that I have just arrived in the land that
Hashem swore to give to my ancestors." With these words, the
farmer acknowledges the privilege of being in this wonderful land.
He recalls the misery and suffering of his ancestors who had to risk
everything for the z'chus of coming there. He mentions the trials
and tribulations that Yaakov suffered when dealing with Lavan and
how he came down to Egypt. He describes how Yaakov's
descendants multiplied miraculously into a great nation, despite the
afflictions of the Egyptians, and how they were finally freed from
Egypt and brought back to Eretz Yisroel.

Handwritten notes in Hebrew:
אמר את הארץ אשר נשבע ה' לאבותינו לתת לנו (במלכות) ואתנו
כדברת אל הארץ אשר נשבע ה' לאבותינו לתת לנו (במלכות) ואתנו
לקח את הארץ אשר נשבע ה' לאבותינו לתת לנו (במלכות) ואתנו
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