

Uman in the Diaspora

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The discussions at this time of year invariably involve this point of debate. Should one leave the Holy Land to travel to Uman, particularly for Rosh Hashana? This (non) question has been answered by many great Tzadikim in the past, and it is not my place to attempt to add to those responses. Nevertheless we can look at a small piece of Likutei Halachos, where Reb Noson, who knew Rebbe Nachman more than anyone else, discusses this point.

He talks about the greatness of being at Kivrei Tzaddikim. The goal of the Tzaddik is to bring as many people close to Hashem as possible – even those very far from Hashem. We know that Tzaddikim are considered far greater after death than before. Therefore, post physical death, the Tzaddik continues to pray and work on our behalf, and accomplishes more and more as time goes by (using a special powerful prayer – see LM II 8). By going to the grave of the Tzaddik, we connect ourselves to the Tzaddik, who in turn takes us under his wing.

By being buried in chutz laaretz (outside of Israel), the Tzaddik goes right into the home turf of the evil side to commence battle. This is done with tremendous self sacrifice on the part of the Tzaddik. By being buried there, he is able to cause the evil side to spit out and give up the souls he has trapped in his snare. Reb Noson says the one who is worthy of being at this Tzaddik's grave is included in this tikkun.

What we see is that praying at Kivrei Tzaddikim in chutz laaretz is in fact an incredible privilege, to be included in the prayers of such a Tzaddik, who gives so much on our behalf – even to be buried outside of Eretz Yisroel. We must pray to even be worthy of such an honour.

Less than 2 weeks remaining – be there or be square!

Written by Yosef Bell

Based on Likutei Halachos, Chol Hamoed, 3:14