



Table Talk: Parshat Pinchas

In this week's parsha we are inspired by the daughters of Tzafchad. These 5 young women desired the land of Israel so strongly that they asked for inheritance in the land when their father died, when it seemed that because there were no sons, their family just wouldn't receive a portion. Until now, it was assumed only the men would be receiving an inheritance, but these women felt it was unfair that their father's name "be lost and forgotten" just because there were no sons to take care of the land. They really wanted to have that connection, both to their father and to the land of Israel. And so it was: they received land and from then on, G-d told Moshe, inheritance will be passed to the daughter if there is no son.

The 5 daughters are introduced in the text with an extensive family tree. Chapter 27, verse 1 states: "the daughters of Tzafchad, the son of Chaifer, the son of Gilaad, the son of Machir, the son of Menashe... the son of Yosef came forward." The Torah is tracing these young women all the way back to their great-great-great-great grandfather Yosef. That seems unnecessary! Why give us that detail?

It must be important, say our Rabbis in the *midrash*. And they assume we can connect these women to Yosef in a way that's more than just as a blood-relative. The sages direct us to Genesis 50:24 where, upon Yosef's realization that he is going to die, he calls his brothers and asks them to bury him outside Egypt, back in the land of Canaan. He tells the brothers that G-d will be taking the nation out of Egypt to "bring you up from this and to the land that he promised on oath to Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov." And when G-d does, don't forget to take his coffin with them!

We see Yosef's love for the Land of Israel and his desire to be there, even if it's just to be buried there. Such "chibbat Ha'aretz" (love for the Land) was clearly a trait passed down through the generations! Here are his great-great-great-great granddaughters exhibiting that same tenacity in their desire to bond with the Land.

What values are passed down in your family from generation to generation? Do you know anything about the values, interests and causes in the lives of your grandparents or great grandparents? Who are you named for? What values from that namesake did your parents wish for you to internalize?

How is "chibbat ha'aretz" demonstrated in/by your family?

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