

### In the Beginning

#### 1. Numbers 32:1-5

And great cattle belonged to the tribes of Reuben and Gad, a mighty amount, and they saw the land of Yaazer and Gilad, and the place was a place of cattle. And the tribes of Reuben and Gad came and spoke to Moses and to Elazar the High Priest, and to the tribal leaders, saying... If we have found favour in your eyes, let this land be given to your servants as a portion. Do not take us across the Jordan.

#### 2. Numbers 32:6, 32:14

And Moses said to the tribes of Reuben and Gad: Shall your brothers go to war, while you settle here?... And behold, you have risen in the place of your ancestors, a crop of sinners, to add further to Divine rage upon Israel!

### The Roman Period

#### 3. Talmud, Ketuvot 110b

One should always live in the Land of Israel, even in a city which is mostly of idolaters, rather than live outside of the Land of Israel even in a city which is mostly of Jews, for anyone who lives in the Land of Israel is as though he has a relationship with G-d, and anyone who lives outside of the Land of Israel is as though he has no relationship with G-d, as the text says, "To give you the land of Canaan, to be your G-d."

But does anyone who does not live in the Land of Israel have no relationship with G-d? Rather, it means to teach: Anyone who lives outside of the Land of Israel is as though he worships idols...

#### 4. Midrash, Sifri Devarim 43

"And you will quickly be lost... and you shall place these words" – Even though I exile you from the land, be marked by your mitzvot, so that when you return they will not be new for you.

#### 5. Talmud, Yoma 57a

They related the idea to Rabbi Yirmiyah, who declared, "Foolish Babylonians! Because you live in a dark land, you teach muddled ideas!"

#### 6. Talmud, Bava Metzia 85a

When Rabbi Zeira moved to Israel, he fasted 100 fasts to forget Babylonian teachings, lest they distract him.

#### 7. Talmud, Erchin 32b

Leviticus 25:10 says, "And you shall proclaim liberty in the land for all of her inhabitants" – when all of her inhabitants are there, and not when some of them are in exile.

### Backlash from the Diaspora

#### 8. Zechariah 7:3

Shall I cry in the fifth month, abstaining as I have done for these many years?

#### 9. Talmud, Succah 44a

Rabbi Yochanan said: I once thought that wisdom was yours [Israel], but I see it is actually theirs [Babylon].

### Modern challenges

#### 10. Website of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel ([http://www.rabanut.gov.il/show\\_item.asp?levelId=61631](http://www.rabanut.gov.il/show_item.asp?levelId=61631))

The Chief Rabbinate serves the Exile not only as a spiritual authority for legal questions, but also as an information resource for all Jewish communities, and all organizations providing kosher supervision around the world.

11. R' Jeremy Gimpel, *What does it mean to be a Zionist today?* <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9P2v7NJ1qbw>  
When it comes to loving Israel there are two types of people in the world: those that are pro-Israel, and those that are Zionist... Rooting for and defending what you love is wonderful - but a Zionist is something totally different.

12. Michael Eisenberg, *What Happened to Yeshiva University, er... American Jewry?*, Tablet, March 10 '17  
American orthodoxy is suffering from a lack of ideas and ideals that are the direct result of a lack of leadership. The question is: What happened to those leaders? I think the answer is inherent in the appointment [by Yeshiva University] of Rabbi Dr. Berman. Like Rabbi Berman, they, the future leaders, moved to Israel. Moreover, I would argue, the ideas and ideals that animate American Orthodoxy and will, necessarily, impel it forward in the 21st century, have also moved to Israel.

13. Rabbi Reuven Spolter, *In Search of Leaders*, Jewish Action, Spring 2004  
While I congratulated the Bloom family for making *aliyah*, and encouraged my members to seriously consider following their lead, I saw their move as an ominous sign for the American Modern Orthodox community.

14. Ben Swartz, National Chairman, South African Zionist Federation, <http://lookingatzion.com/?p=1117>  
*In your opinion, what is the main thing Israelis fail to understand about the reality of being Jewish outside of Israel?*  
1. Israel is as responsible to the diaspora as the diaspora should be to Israel.  
2. Often the views of Israel are crystallised around 'World Israel' and 'World America' and the relevance of other communities of the world are marginalised. This is a big error.

15. Sallah Shabati, 1964

16. Joel Bainerman, *Looking the Gift Horse in the Mouth*, Washington Post, October 29 '95  
AMERICAN AID to Israel is in dispute now as never before. In part, this has to do with the perception that Israel's security needs have diminished; and in part, from budget pressures in Congress. But there's another dynamic at work. A growing number of Israelis themselves are saying that perpetual U.S. government financial aid to Israel may not be a good thing.  
In January 1994, Labor Party Knesset member Yossi Beilin told the Women's International Zionist Organization that Israel may no longer need diaspora Jewry's contributions: "If our economic situation is better than in many of your countries, how can we go on asking for your charity?"

How might we answer this question, today?

17. Joshua 22:10-12

And they came to *Gelilot* of the Jordan in the land of Canaan, and the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and half of Menasheh, built an altar there by the Jordan, a great altar for show. And the Children of Israel heard, saying, "Behold, the tribes of Reuben and Gad and half of Menasheh have built an altar beside the land of Canaan, on the side of the Jews!" And the Children of Israel heard, and the entire nation of the Children of Israel gathered to Shiloh, to ascend upon them in force.

18. Joshua 22:27

It is a sign between us and you, and between our generations after us, to perform the service of G-d before Him with our burnt offerings, sacrifices and peace offerings, and your children shall not say to our children tomorrow, "You have no portion in G-d."