

“Let not the Land disgorge you for having contaminated it.” (18:28)

Eretz Yisrael will tolerate us as long as we act appropriately, as befits a land that is pure and holy. The *Maggid m'Dubno* offers a valuable analogy that sheds light on the reason *Klal Yisrael* is compelled to go into exile. A wealthy man exemplified the *middah*, character trait, of *hachnosas orchim*, welcoming wayfarers and providing for their immediate needs. His home was a veritable restaurant that fed anyone in need – from the abject poor to the business traveler who needed a home-cooked meal and a bed. Acutely aware of the varied backgrounds of his guests, he divided his dining room into two rooms that provided for the comfort and individual needs of his guests. The poor subsisted on breads, potatoes, herring and onions. Those who were used to a more refined diet of meats, fish and salads ate in the other dining room.

Once, a well-dressed traveler appeared at the wealthy man's home, and the host promptly seated him in the dining room in which he felt he would be most comfortable. Surprisingly, when the guest looked at the small serving of fancy bread and vegetable salad, he quickly went over to the table set for the poor and began to partake of a hefty portion of bread and potatoes. Apparently, his eating habits did not coincide with his station in life. Noticing this, the host went over and said, “I see that you are taking food from the other table. Why do you not simply go over there, sit down and eat to your heart's content?”

The *Navi* in *Chavakuk* 3:6 says, “He stood and measured out the land; He looked and dispersed nations.” *Chazal* explain that Hashem assessed each nation in order to determine the appropriate place for it to live and thrive. Gilaad was home to people that were bloodthirsty and manifested no respect for human life. Bavel was a country in which people who were always angry – and were constantly involved in disputes – lived. Egypt was the center of witchcraft, and the list goes on. *Eretz Yisrael* is a place where spirituality thrives. Its *kedushah*, holiness, and *taharah*, purity, are suitable for achieving a high degree of spirituality. There is no Torah like the Torah studied in *Eretz Yisrael*. *Nevuah*, prophecy, which is one of the highest levels of Divine Inspiration, only reposes on an individual while he is in *Eretz Yisrael*.

When *Klal Yisrael* sins and behaves in a manner befitting the gentile nations of the world, Hashem says to them, “Why should you live in *Eretz Yisrael* and stretch out your hand to partake of the lifestyle endemic to *chutz la'aretz*, the land outside of *Eretz Yisrael*? Why live in the Holy Land and live like a gentile? If you want to adapt their lifestyle – go to live with them!” This is what the Torah means when it says, “The land will disgorge you.” Economy class meals are not served in the first-class section.