

The Book Column

'We Love Israel'

by Tsipi Wexler, chairman

Several years ago while visiting relatives outside the country, someone asked me why I live in Israel. I blanked out. How do I explain Zionism and Moledet to someone who was not Jewish, had never been to Israel, lived near my parents, and possibly thinks Zionism is evil? How do I explain the concept of Moledet? Israel is home to my forefathers and mothers. It is my homeland even though I grew up elsewhere; Israel is the home to Jews from across the globe. I will leave the explaining to those more eloquent than myself.

The Henry Koor Judaica Library has a number of books about people who explain why they love Israel and make Israel their home:

Belonging: Conversations with Men and Women who have made Israel their home by James McNeish

The title expresses the idea - this book collects stories from an assortment of people, places and backgrounds.

Courage and Hope: Inspirational Writings by Youth in Gush Etzion published by the Gush Etzion Foundation

Israeli teenagers living in Gush Etzion write about the specialness of living in the Gush and in Israel. This booklet was written in 2003, in reaction to the intifada. Although life was dangerous and difficult, the youth show much optimism and inspiration.

To Dwell in the Palace: Perspectives on Eretz Yisroel edited by Tzvia Ehrlich-Klein

This collection of essays and anecdotes is about making Aliya and living in Israel, all from a religious perspective. Many essays underline the uniqueness and quirkiness of living here.

101+ Reasons Why We Love Eretz Yisroel

This booklet bases its reasons for loving Israel on our classic texts and encourages us to delve deeper into them.

The library has many individuals' Aliya stories. A couple of them are mentioned here:

From Bogota to Madrid to Jerusalem: A Family's Fascinating Journey by Chaya Diane Hager

The author and her family made Aliya from Madrid to Bayit Ve'gan. Although their absorption was difficult, they knew that they reached the right place.

Coming Home by Rahel Yanait Ben-Zvi

The author, a young high-school teacher, made Aliya as part of the Poalei Zion movement. Her dream was to work as a pioneer to develop this desolate land, which she did in Nahalal. Later, she became the wife of Yitzhak Ben-Zvi.

Our library has a growing number of books on Israel as a start-up nation. I won't enumerate here. The last book on my list hasn't yet been written (as far as I know). It would parallel Israel's amazing innovations and inventions in the physical realm. It would describe our awesome progress in the spiritual realm – learning Torah, doing good deeds, giving charity,

and praising G-d and his land.
Anyone have a pen in hand?!

New Synagogue Magazine - Pesach 2020