

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT NITZAVIM

23-24 SEPTEMBER | 28 ELUL

Moana, Tafari and the Land of Israel



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It is always exciting for me when my love of movies and my passion for Torah learning merge. Watching Moana was, therefore, a spiritual experience, as the Disney movie has everything to do with this week's parasha.

Parashat Nitzavim speaks of two promises made by God to the Jewish people. The first is the curse of the Jewish people's exile from Israel as a consequence of rebellion. The curse would affect not only the people, but also the Land, which would become desolate.

The Jewish people were indeed exiled from their homeland; not just

once, but twice. And what about the Land being desolate? American author Mark Twain perfectly describes that in 1867, during his trip to the Land of Israel; he was shocked by how the entire Land was empty of any greenery, and he could not understand how anyone could live there. His words reflect the promise in the Torah that when there's no significant Jewish presence in the Land, there's no liveable Land. Let's jump to Moana. The heart from the beautiful island of Tafari was removed, and what happened? Tafari becomes Te-Ka, an uninhabitable rock of an island. So far, we see a parallel in the storylines.

The second promise that God tells the people is that at some point, the people will return to the Land of Israel, and the Land will once again flourish. David Ben Gurion, the first

Prime Minister of Israel, famously dreamed of "making the desert [in Israel] bloom". Anyone who goes to Israel can see that this dream has become a reality. Why? Because the Jewish people have returned to the Land. In Moana, when the heart was finally returned to Te-Ka, it bloomed back into Tafari, an island that is the source of life. The return of the heart of Tafari was considered a heroic act and was celebrated by all who were affected by the life source of the island. This euphoria was felt through the screen and it reminded me of how incredible the miracle of the fulfilment of the second promise really is.

May we continue to see the positive promises of the Torah fulfilled speedily in our days.

Wordsearch



- CHOICE
- EXILE
- FORGIVENESS
- FREEWILL
- ISRAEL
- MITZVOT
- MOSHE
- PROMISES
- STANDING
- UNITY

