

Balak 5772

The 17th of Tammuz, is the day when we solemnize five disastrous events in our history, as we also do for the calamitous 9th of Av, in three weeks hence. Both are fast days, with the 9th of Av following closely behind Yom Kippur in its halachic severity.

However, this year we will not fast, because both days fall out on Shabbat.

Two days ago, on the 17 of Tamuz, while sitting at the Shabbat seuda (feast) as I will do on the 9th of Av, the prophesy of Zecharia (8:19) came to my mind:



Thus said the Lord of Hosts: The fast of the fourth month (17th of Tammuz), and the fast of the fifth (9th of Av) and the fast of the seventh (Fast of Gedalia), and the fast of the tenth (10th of Tevet), shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love truth and peace.

Although, Zecharia is referring to the future when all the Rabbinic fast days will be annulled, this year we have an opportunity to indulge a bit in what that **very near** future will bring. How do I know it will come about in the very near future? Because the entire eighth chapter of Zecharia is referring to our times, as follows:

² *Thus said the Lord of hosts: I am zealous for Zion with great zealousness, and I am zealous for her with great wrath.*

(HaShem drove out the Turks and the British in order for us to establish the Medina, and has granted the Jewish army incredible victories over enemy forces many times larger,

better equipped and with Russian advisors).

³ Thus said the Lord: I will return to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called The city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts. The holy mountain.

(The Jewish nation has returned to Eretz Yisrael and is sovereign over Yerushalayim for the first time in over 2000 years, an event unprecedented in human history).

⁴ Thus said the Lord of hosts: Old men and old women will again dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, every man with his staff in his hand. ⁵ And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets.

(Come to Yerushalayim or to any place in the Holy Land and see the words of the prophet coming to life before your eyes. The longevity of our elders is obvious and the very large families where 10 children are not a rarity).

⁶ Thus said the Lord of hosts: If it be marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, it will be marvelous in my eyes, said the Lord of hosts.

(We who have returned are filled with wonderment at how we have turned this desolate land into a wonderland. And Hashem, too, is amazed at how His children have been able to overcome 2000 years of Galut and return home as fresh and as vital as ever).

⁷ Thus said the Lord of hosts: Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country;

(HaShem has returned His children to the Land, from east and

from west; from over 100 different lands).

⁸ And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.

(There is more Torah study and sincere observance in Yerushalayim than in the rest of the world combined).

⁹ Thus said the Lord of hosts: Let your hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these words from the mouth of the prophets that were in the day that the foundation of the house of the Lord of hosts was laid, even the temple, that it might be built.

(There are ongoing preparations for the third Temple, both on the theoretical and practical levels).

¹² For there shall be the seed of peace; the vine shall give its fruit, and the ground shall give its increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these things.

(The land is rich with agricultural produce, which is a mighty sign that the redemption is close by).

¹³ And it shall come to pass that, as you were a curse among the nations, Oh house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I save you, and you shall be a blessing. Fear not, but let your hands be strong.

(The gentiles have blamed the Jews for all the ills of the world and we have been unable to defend ourselves. Today the Medina is at the cutting edge of science and technology to help cure the ills of humanity. We are a blessing for the

world).

¹⁶ *These are the things that you shall do: speak every man the truth with his neighbor; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates;*

¹⁷ *and let none of you devise evil in your hearts against his neighbor; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, said the Lord.*

¹⁹ *Thus said the Lord of hosts: The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love truth and peace.*

(Nullification of the rabbinic fast days, when we will soon participate in the full redemption of the Jewish people).

²⁰ *Thus said the Lord of hosts: It shall yet come to pass, that there shall come peoples, and the inhabitants of many cities;*

(Gentiles from New York, Moscow, Rome, Mecca and Shanghai).

²¹ *And the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to entreat the favor of the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts: I will go also.*

²² *Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of the Lord.*

(The gentiles will ultimately throw away their false religions and accept the seven Noachide laws)

²³ *Thus said the Lord of hosts: In those days it shall come to*

pass, that ten men out of all the languages of the nations, shall take hold of the garment of a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.

As time progresses, we in Eretz Yisrael will realize the fulfillment of all the prophetic destiny of the Jewish people. Our Father in Heaven and His devoted children in the Holy Land have passed the point of no return in our relationship. He has no choice but to show His mercy to His chosen people, who have demonstrated loyalty far and beyond what could be expected from fragile human beings.

We are eating the fruits of the sacrifices made by the last 80 generations of our fathers and mothers. May we be worthy of their sacrifices.

Nachman Kahana

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