

Bo 5772

BS"D Parashat Bo 5772

At Moshe's threat that the next plague would be a devastating attack of locusts Paro's advisors appealed to him saying (10:7)



"How long will this man be a snare to us? Let the people go, so that they may worship the LORD their God. Do you not yet realize that Egypt is lost?"

This one phrase, 'Do you not yet realize that Egypt is lost?' brought Paro to his knees, for it contains a dynamic socio-economic truth that transcends generations and societies, that people can be classified into two groups: Those who are dangerous and those who are grievously dangerous. The mundane dangerous ones are the "have nots" of the world whose ambition is to "have" something, but the more dangerous ones are those who "have" but are in "clear and present danger" of losing it all.

A demagogic leader can restrain a hungry man or a restless society by diverting their attention to a real or imaginary danger, or through the amusements of sports and the theater. But these superficial diversions are ineffectual in an affluent society where pending disaster threatens to engulf citizen and leader alike.

The Jewish slaves in Egypt would have been content had Paro restored to them the basic building material of straw to produce bricks, as the leaders said to Moshe after his failed first encounter with Paro. But for the royal entourage who were satiated with wealth, the very thought that the plagues might destroy their homes and fields, their livestock and the

luxuries they were so used to, caused them to push the panic button and scream out to Paro, *"Do you not yet realize that Egypt is lost!"*

Civil war broke out between those Egyptians in whose interest it was for the Jews to remain slaves, versus the Egyptian first born who took Moshe's warning of the pending tenth plague very seriously, as is stated in Tehilim 136:10.

Fast forward 3500 years. Today's dire economic situation affects almost everyone on the planet. The "have nots" will continue not to have, and they will demonstrate "to occupy", scream, beg and then go to sleep on an empty stomach, as usual, but they will not be the ones to plunge the world into a third world war.

The grievously dangerous ones are those nations whose citizens go to bed with filled stomachs and fully packed refrigerators, but cannot sleep for fear that their jobs and health insurance are at jeopardy; their mortgage payments (and for religious Jews the day school expenses) are strangling; and their unpaid bills just keep piling up. The house, the car, the TV and all else were purchased with 10% down and the rest in 36 easy monthly payments. To lose these things is not an option, so desperate situations require desperate solutions.

Great episodes of history repeat themselves, just the names and places change.

Our rabbis informed us that during the plague of darkness, on the eve of the exodus, a deep ideological chasm divided the Jewish people. Eighty percent of the nation refused to leave, preferring to remain in Egypt in order to replace the indigenous Egyptian nation with a Jewish State on both sides of the Nile River. Twenty percent of the Jews prepared to leave the hated land of their subjugation with the aim of establishing a Jewish State on both sides of the Jordan River.

Today's economic and political leaders in the lands of the

Jewish galut know very well the true situation of their countries, and the pessimistic outlook for the coming decade or decades. When will they reach the point of *“Do you not yet realize that... is lost”*? No one can know, but it is not far off.

The same chasm that existed in Egypt between those who would not budge from their delusional safe financial and economic perches and those who wished to escape the evils of Egypt, exists today in the lands of the Jewish galut.

The recession “soon to be depression” plagued economies of Europe, and the 14+ trillion dollar national debt of the United States will be blamed not on the selfish materialistic nature of the people of those nations, but rather on the convenient and “time tested” scapegoat; the money grubbing, aggressive Jews in their midsts.

The galut’s bleak future will begin with limited civil unrest leading to riots and mass arrests. This will be followed by a phase of accusations about who is to blame for the economic woes and the disparity in the sharing of the nation’s wealth.

At some point, the Jews will face up to the reality that saving their lives is a bit more important than the long mahogany dining room table and overhanging chandeliers, and will call their travel agents for tickets to Eretz Yisrael, only to be told that there is a 10-month waiting list!

Then they will open to our parasha of Bo and read that when the time came for the Jewish people to leave Egypt, Hashem brought it about in circumstances of great haste. And when the time of our generation’s “great haste” will arrive, I fear that very few of the Jews in the galut will merit a place on the “magic carpet,” and they, like their forefathers, will leave with no more than a few dry matzot

The “Elders of the Negev” said (Tractate Tamid 32a):



Who is the wise man? He who can foresee the future.

How can one foresee the future? A prophet is informed of it by HaShem, but a wise man uses a formula to determine the future: the past + the present = the future. By comparing the factors of the present to those of the past, the wise man intuitively feels where the future lies.

I am often asked why I raise the scepter of fear in the galut rather than stressing the positive aspects of Eretz Yisrael? I answer that I do not want to be like the fool who wrote an approbation to the Book of Mishle (Proverbs) saying: "I too agree that King Solomon was a wise man".

Who am I to extol the sanctity of Eretz Yisrael? It is open for all to see, in the Torah, in the writings of the prophets, in the Mishna, Gemara and in the writings of our rabbis of all generations.

If in our time, the Satan let loose his pit bull called "yetzer hara" to obfuscate the thinking of certain religious leaders, and to induce their followers in the way of the 80% who did not want to follow Moshe Rabbeinu – that is their unfortunate choices in life.

We can only hope that HaShem will remove the blinders from the eyes of those religious leaders and from the eyes of their naive followers, before the curtain of history comes down on the galut in a brutal and final ending,

May HaShem have pity on His children and bring back our brothers and sisters home to Eretz Yisrael very very soon.

Shabbat Shalom

Nachman Kahana

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