

BS"D Parashat Ki Taitzai 5782

Jew vs. Jewish

A while back, while walking in the Old City, I came across a group of American tourists. I greeted them with "shalom" and they replied, they were gentiles. We began talking.

They said that they are from Texas. "Then we have something in common, we both have a single star on our flags," I replied. They were highly impressed that an Israeli knew that Texas was the Lone Star State. Then a woman asked, are you Jewish?

I was flustered for a moment; what gave her the idea that I was Jewish?

I replied with something that just fell into my head: "No, I am not Jewish. Let me explain. A piece of cloth which is not really red but tends to be so, is called "reddish"; if it tends to be blue it's called "bluish".

You see, I'm not Jew**ish** (I emphasized the last syllable "ish"), I am a JEW!

I got the impression that the group did not "get it", but some smiled politely, and we parted as good friends.

Then I began thinking about what I had said, and even agreed with myself. Indeed, I am not Jew**ish**. I am a total Jew in all my physical, mental and spiritual attributes; and a proud kohen!

But 60 years ago, when I was still in galut before Aliya – I was only Jew**ish**. I spoke the language of the goy. I laughed at his jokes and played his sports and games. Sunday was a day of fun and romping. I was a Yankee fan, a Knicks and Rangers fan. Above all I felt protected, because to the east was the

Atlantic Ocean and to the west the Pacific. I was on an island of sanity and safety in this crazy world where the last foreign war on US soil was in 1836 against Mexico.

But after coming on Aliya, it didn't take long for me to understand that to be a total Jew in thought, speech and actions, one must be in Eretz Yisrael. One is a Jew only when living in the land in fulfillment of HaShem's command that His nation be here and develop our unique God-centered society according to the laws of the Torah.

The difference between us here in HaShem's land and the tuma of foreign lands can be compared to a college test I once took. The professor said that one can choose an open book test but then the highest mark he can achieve will be 70; a closed book test can potentially get you a hundred. In the galut, let it be Boro Park, Lakewood, Baltimore or any of the other illustrious kiddush Hashem centers of Torah, the highest you can reach whether a rosh yeshiva, rabbi or grand rabbi is 70; the potential for 100 can be achieved only in the holy land.

This is based on the words of the illustrious RamBaN that the Torah was given to be kept in Eretz Yisrael. The non-agricultural mitzvot are in effect also in the galut but of a different paradigm. In Eretz Yisrael it is the real thing, in chuz laaretz it is, in the words of RamBaN preparation for returning to the land, compared to a dress rehearsal before the premiere debut.

Emergency Aliyah Campaign

On Sunday of this week there was a conference of groups, organizations and individuals who are dedicated to encouraging Aliya among the observant. It was arranged by the "Bring Them Home" organization headed by Josh Wander. The following is a short rendition of what I said there.

I opened with the above incident of the Texans where I stated the difference between being Jewish and being a Jew. However, but this thought falls short of inspiring, energizing, provoking and stimulating a family to come on Aliyah.

The way to Aliya in peacetime, when the Jew does not have to search for a place to rest his head after fleeing from the goy, is through education and enlightenment of the younger generation which is not yet paralyzed by the sting of the galut scorpion.

The central point of this education is the very discomfoting, and at times even embarrassing for some people, truth of the 3300-year-old Godly pronouncement that the descendants of Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov are His Am Hanivchar – chosen people to be a light unto the nations!

If one cannot state proudly that he is one of HaShem's chosen nation, he can be Jew**ish** but far from being a Jew. If one can internalize this simple but very complex fact of history, then Aliya becomes the obvious way to go. Jewish Pride is the key to unlocking the powerful forces inherent in the soul of a Jew, and pride in what the Jews have achieved in the 74 years since the establishment of the State. Our achievements here are the strongest proof that we are indeed HaShem's chosen people, and that is enough for any intelligent observant man and woman to want to be part of this redemption process.

But there are powerful forces which seek to demonize this paradigm and those who wish to disseminate it. They include most rabbis who agree in private but fear it will release the genie of antisemitism from its fragile paper lamp.

In any event, the way to Eretz Yisrael is paved with HaShem's promise, as we will read in this week's haftara, Yishayahu 54,10:

וְיִשְׁעוּן בְּעֵינֵי הָאֱלֹהִים וְיִשְׁעוּן בְּעֵינֵי הָאֱלֹהִים
וְיִשְׁעוּן בְּעֵינֵי הָאֱלֹהִים וְיִשְׁעוּן בְּעֵינֵי הָאֱלֹהִים

“For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed”, says Hashem, Who has compassion on you.

The Mitzvah to Destroy Amalek

This week’s parashat ends with the mitzvah to destroy the society of evil people known as Amalek. The progenitor of this evil group of humanity was a man called Amalek, the son of Eliphaz who was the son of Aisav, brother of our father Yaakov.

Aisav’s hate for his brother was passed on to his following generations, to Elifaz then to Amalek the man and to Amalek the society.

Midrash Halacha (Sifrei Bamidbar piska 69):

״אֵיִסָּו הָאֵלֶּיךָ אֶת־כָּל־הָעָם״

Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai (Rashbi) states: It is a fact of life that Aisav hates Ya’akov

An ingrained hatred, stemming from Aisav’s soul whose essence is contrary to the sanctity of HaShem.

The Gemara (Pesachim 118b) discloses that when the Mashiach will appear, nations will come forward to present him with gifts. HaShem will prohibit the Mashiach from receiving the gifts of Aisav, comparing Aisav to a wild boar (pig) in the

jungle.

Why just a wild boar? A pig represents hypocrisy. It has one of the two signs of a kosher animal – split hooves but does not chew its cud. And when it lies down it exhibits its kosher sign, as if to say, “look I am kosher”. Hypocrisy!

Who are the descendants of Aisav in our time?

They are the peoples of Europe and the western world who perpetrated the Shoah, actively or passively, and are active in weakening the Jewish people’s sovereignty over the holy land today. Were it not for the hypocritical western countries we would have had now two million Jews in Judea and Samaria, with all its far reaching political, economic, social and religious implications.

Interestingly, Aisav is associated with the color red, and almost all the nations of Europe have the color red in their flags.

These Christian children of Aisav have one common goal from which they will never desist – the destruction, dismantling, dissolution, and liquidation of the Jewish State of Israel. True to their dishonest hypocritical nature they have come together to lull us asleep with their diplomatic code words as they advance the Islamic State of Iran to its goal of achieving nuclear weapons.

Were our leaders here Jews not just Jew**ish**, we would have turned our backs on all of our cultivated, cultured western “friends” and destroyed all of Iran’s nuclear facilities ten years ago. But it’s never too late to wake up and see the deadly spider web our “friends” are spinning around us.

In any case, the historic scenario will repeat itself whereby HaShem enters the picture one second before twelve o’clock to destroy our enemies and present us with one more happy holiday.

Shabbat Shalom

Nachman Kahana

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