

BS"D Parashat Miketz – Chanuka 5783

Mondial, Chanuka & Us

CHANUKA

On Chanuka, we commemorate the Jews who were loyal to the Torah and Jewish history and “took to the hills” in a seemingly suicidal war against the Seleucid Greek empire. The revolt sought to achieve two goals: the restoration of our national independence and the renewal of the sacrificial service in the Temple which had been suspended by the Greeks for three and a half years.

The land and the Temple are the main components of the Chanuka story, as is the story of Am Yisrael in our time with one essential difference: at the time of the Maccabees, the Temple’s rededication was one major reason to go to war. Many Jews lost their lives in the 25-year bloody battles; whereas today, we have become resigned to the reality that there is no Bet Hamikdash, and it is only the Mashiach who can change this reality.

Bitter proof of this terrible situation is the fact that so many illustrious rabbinical leaders here in Israel prohibit their followers from going up to the Temple Mount. The ramifications of this prohibition bear bad tidings for us and for all of humanity, as follows.

THE CONDITIONAL CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE

A day does not go by without some natural calamity occurring somewhere on the planet. “Experts” associate these events with global warming or other anticipated “natural” causes.

It is incumbent upon HaShem’s Chosen People – some of whom have knowledge of the secrets of the universe – to explain the source of each of these awesome calamities that can affect millions of people who will lose their lives or become hopeless refugees.

The Torah says, “The world was void and without form [tohu vavohu], and there was darkness on the face of the depths” (Bereishiet 1:2).

Some explain “tohu vavohu” to mean “empty, void, the absence of order, chaos”.

The Zohar (Ra’aya Hemnuna 279:1) explains “vohu” as large boulders in the depths of the sea from which spew forth water.

The Talmud (Shabbat 88a) asks: Why, in counting the days of Creation, does the Torah use the definite article only regarding Friday, calling it “the sixth day” rather than “a sixth day”? Resh Lakish (Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish, a Talmudic sage from the Land of Israel and a disciple/colleague of Rabbi Yochanan) explains that HaShem laid down a condition with the Universe that the world will survive only if Israel accepts the Torah, whose five books are alluded to by the definite article, the letter hei (whose numerical value is five). On the sixth day of Sivan (She’vuot), the world will survive. However, if the Jews reject HaShem’s Torah, all creation will regress into chaos.

Here we learn that when HaShem created the world, He did not nullify the essence of “vohu”, which seeks destruction and

chaos. He subjugated the natural world to be in tandem with the Jewish people's adherence to HaShem's commands. Thus, the natural calamities – floods, storms, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions – are the inevitable consequences of the Jewish people's descent into a low and weak spiritual level.

The Jerusalem Talmud (Berachot, chap. 9:2) states: The Prophet Eliyahu asked Rav Nehorai, "Why do earthquakes occur?" Rav Nehorai responded, "They are the result of Am Yisrael's failure to bring agricultural tithes to the Kohanim and Levi'im". Eliyahu then said, "Indeed this is a grievous sin, but there is a more serious reason. It is when HaShem gazes upon the beautifully built theaters and arenas, and then sees His Temple in Yerushalayim in total ruin; in contrast to what was to be the normal state of the world. The Creator reacts in anger (as it were) and brings countless unnatural suffering to its inhabitants.

Rav Acha cited another reason, "It is due to the sin of homosexuality. HaShem says, 'You conduct yourselves in an abnormal manner. I will command the earth to respond accordingly'."

Summary: The reasons for unnatural meteorological and geological occurrences: 1- failure to bring agricultural tithes to the Kohanim and Levi'im, 2- homosexuality, and 3- the destroyed and neglected Bet Hamikdash at a time when there is an abundance of theaters and arenas (e.g., Qatar spent 250 billion dollars on hosting the Mondial).

Despite the fact that the mitzva of giving agricultural tithes is not in effect today as Torah law, and that this reason does not apply to present-day catastrophes, the other two reasons of homosexuality and neglect of the Temple Mount are very much in effect.

Today, the Temple Mount harbors the Moslem abominations of the gold dome and the Al Aksa Mosque. This unnatural condition

has not aroused the Jewish people enough to remove the abominations from our holiest site.

MONDIAL

The 2022 FIFA World Cup Final was played at Lusail Stadium in Qatar on December 18th. The competing teams were Argentina and France, as they battled it out on the playing field in front of close to 90,000 spectators and were seen by tens, if not hundreds, of millions of viewers via the worldwide media. Argentina won in an overtime penalty shootout (a way of deciding the result of a game that has ended in a draw). It was described as one of the best soccer matches of all time

I didn't see any of the matches, but I did listen to the radio broadcast of the last phase of the game – the penalty shootout. Perhaps up to two billion of HaShem's creations were ecstatic when Messi put the ball in the net and won the game and title of world champions for his team. The radio announcers were hoarse from screaming about the final result.

What was I thinking of at that moment? I was pondering the earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, landslides, tsunamis, and other preternatural calamities that would surely be occurring in the near future in every country that has stadiums and arenas while our holy Temple remains destroyed.

In the U'ne'tana Tokef liturgy of Yom Kippur, we are faced with the frightening question about who will die and who will live, who by fire and who by water. I wonder who will suffer the agony of earthquakes, the displacement of millions of people from their homes and the unleashed energies inherent in our planet?

As the crowd roars in ecstasy at MESSI, the world's greatest soccer player, they do not know what a MESS these games will

bring about in our lives.

Jews wake up! Get serious! Make your lives meaningful!

Shabbat Shalom and a happy and meaningful Chanuka,

Nachman Kahana

Copyright © 5783/2022 Nachman Kahana