

# BS"D Parashat Tetzaveh 5783

## It's Time for a Heart-to-Heart Talk

King Shlomo, son of King David, states in Kohelet (chap. 3) that every human act and emotion, as opposite as they might be, has its proper and befitting time.

People rarely have time for a good heart-to-heart talk with themselves, and just live according to the flow of their lives; but now the time has come for each conscious Jew to have a frank talk with him or herself, for two reasons.

1- If you haven't yet noticed, the 8 billion people in today's world, including the Jewish nation, are living on a seam in history; a seam that joins or, if you wish, divides between the tectonic plates of mankind: the past and the future. It is not the result of human malice or stupidity, but the handiwork of HaShem, with the proof being the reality that no intelligent person would gamble on his credibility by predicting where humanity is heading.

Will Europe erupt again into another world war, possibly a nuclear one? Will the nations lose their minds and every country will be at war with its neighbor? Will there be a breakup of the United States as it rips itself apart by shedding every bit of morality still left there? Will the "haves" financially enslave the "have nots"? And will the future of mankind be in the hands of a few powerful bankers?

- In our Jewish universe the dilemmas are:
- Will the United Nations lose its patience with the nuisance country called Israel and vote that we no longer exist?

- Will the number of Jews worldwide dwindle from millions into the thousands as assimilation decays and destroys Jewish communities in the galut?
- Will the Moslems attempt to gain their god's love by killing Jews in the manner suggested by Haman and nearly implemented in our time by the son of Alois Schicklgruber (*Hitler's father*)?

These are but a few of life's probabilities, but the possibilities go beyond human imagination.

2– We are repeating the sins of our fathers in the Persia of Achashverosh where there was widespread assimilation that brought on the nearly fatal heavenly decrees. Even after over 78 years since the end of World War II, our nation has not returned to the 17 to 18 million Jews who lived at the outbreak of the war. Assimilation is the second Shoah to have befallen the Jewish nation within the past 90 years. So, it is time for every thinking Jew to have a frank conversation with himself to clarify 'who am I' by asking the following questions:

**Question number 1: How can I know if HaShem loves me, is indifferent towards me or, God forbid, bears negative feelings towards me?**

This is a complex question when taking into account that if life is very good to you it could be an indication that HaShem is indeed satisfied with you. Or it could be just the opposite; that HaShem rewards a rasha (evil person) in this world for the few mitzvot that he has performed rather than rewarding him in the next world, the treatment that is reserved for tzadikim (the righteous). On the other hand, if life is very demanding, it could be a sign that HaShem is punishing you, or that He really loves you and is punishing you in this world rather than in the next.

But happily, the illustrious Rabbeinu Tam (Rabbi Yaakov ben

Meir, grandson of Rashi and a leader of the Tosafot school of Talmudic commentators) taught that there is a sign that proves HaShem's love for an individual Jew. When he or she is privileged to perform an unusual or uncommon mitzva, like saving a Jewish life, or helping a disabled person, or any one of the uncommon mitzvot in the Torah.

Like the privilege of living in Eretz Yisrael in today's challenging times. This is a sign that HaShem wants you to be by His side.

An example: In the days preceding the Six Day War many people left the country out of fear, including some from the Chassidic community where we were living at the time. A neighbor, Mr. Moshe Parnes z"l, told us of his resolve to remain – no matter what. The war broke out on the 26th of Iyar and on the 28th we became the sovereign possessors of Yerushalayim, for the first time in over 2000 years! The following week Mr. Parnes returned from a visit to Yerushalayim and told us of the greatest joy he had ever experienced. He was walking on Rechov Yafo when a truck filled with young paratroopers stopped nearby. The soldiers exited from the truck and began dancing and singing songs of Yerushalayim. A group of soldiers approached the elderly Mr. Parnes and drew him into their circle where he found new strength to go round and round with paratroopers 60 years younger than him. Hashem had shown his love to this old-young Moshe Parnes.

**Question number 2: If 200 years ago all Jews in the world would have been on your spiritual level would there be any Jews alive today?**

An authentic, serious God-fearing Torah-observing man or woman could proudly answer today in the affirmative, because their spirituality would most likely have been steady enough to sustain the necessary spiritual energy to entrust to future generations.

But, if all the Jews 200 years ago were non-observant, there is little reason to believe that there would be a single Jew alive today. Something to think about!!

**Question number 3:** On the premise that when HaShem created the world, for reasons known only to Himself, and filled it with races and nations, and He chose a particular family that later expanded into a nation that He commanded to abide by His Torah, He did not intend for the Jews to be “one more” Norway or Sudan (*whose greatest achievement is to have their national flag hanging before the UN building in New York*), He wanted a God-orientated nation whose level of righteousness and sanctity begins where the gentile level ends; a nation sanctified by HaShem.

Now, look objectively into yourself. **Is your life one of obedience to the Torah and loyal affiliation with the tens of millions of Jews who for 3500 years have observed the Judaism which we received at Mount Sinai?**

The future of the Jews as a nation will depend on the combined spiritual level of each of its individual parts. Every Jew makes a difference!

Shabbat Shalom

Nachman Kahana

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