





HaShem's promise of the return of her children as reward for her actions and tears.

We find here the same emotional reaction and wording "refusal to be comforted" in Ya'akov's mourning over the death of Yosef and Rachel's reaction to the extended period of exile (galut) of Am Yisrael.

But here is the problem. Ya'akov's inability to be comforted over the loss of Yosef is understandable, because of the finality of death. But the Jews' exile has an end when we will all return, as promised by HaShem. Is there no room here for some emotional comfort?

For Rachel the answer is NO! There is no comfort for her. Because, like Ya'akov, she too is facing the finality of death which the galut would inflict on her children. While her husband was facing the death of one son, she saw what galut would do to Am Yisrael. She saw millions of Jews over two millennia being torn away from Judaism by homicidal Christians and Moslems and even more through forced and voluntary assimilation.

How can she find comfort when the promise of redemption is far into the future?

## **World Jewish Population**

At the outbreak of World War Two, on September 1, 1939, there were between 17 and 18 million Jews worldwide. Six years later one third of our nation was murdered; bringing our nation down to approximately 12 million people.

Today, 80 years later, we are still very far away from replacing the number of Jews of 1939. The high estimate is 14-15 million, but realistically the number is much less when taking into account that half of those in the United States claiming to be Jews are halachically gentiles.

Although the Jewish population in Eretz Yisrael is growing through birth and aliya, the number of Jews in galut is steadily declining.

The current wave of international anti-Semitism might drive some Jews to strengthen their Jewish roots; however, historic precedent teaches that the big numbers take the escape route away from Judaism.

Mama Rochl (in Yiddish) still has much to cry for.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, an interesting observation.

Verses 16-17 in Yirmiyahu's above prophesy are repetitious: that in its time all the galut Jews will return home:

<sup>16</sup> This is what HaShem says: Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for your efforts will be rewarded, declares HaShem, **They will return from the land of the enemy.**

<sup>17</sup> So there is hope for your future descendants, declares HaShem, **your children will return to their own land.**

Verse 16 that speaks of the Jews' escaping to Eretz Yisrael from enemy lands lacks two words that appear in verse 17 that deals with Jews who consciously return home. The words are "your children". Those who longingly return to the holy land are considered as the children of Rachel; whereas those who come in order to escape the "whip lash" of Judenhass are welcome, but the verse omits the words "your children (of Rachel)".

Shabbat Shalom,

Nachman Kahana

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