

# BS"D Parashat Yitro 5784

## The past and future will meet again

In several previous weekly divrei Torah, I translated the Malbim (Harav Meir Leibish ben Yechiel Michal) in his commentary on the Book of Yechezkel (32,17):

*"It will come to pass in the end of days, after the Jewish people will return to the land of Israel (which is now), that the nations will come together in an attempt to seize Yerushalayim.*

*(The prophet names the nations who will come.)*

*Gog, the king of Meshech and Tuval from the north and west who are uncircumcised and called "Edom", who are the descendants of Yefet living now in Europe. And Paras, Kush, and the House of Turgama who are all circumcised and adhering to the belief of Yishmael, will join with the children of Edom to attempt to capture the Land of Israel from the Jews."*

*(Malbim continues)*

*"But when they arrive (at the gates of Eretz Yisrael), they will create chaos among themselves and make war on each other, that is, Edom will make war on Yishmael because their religious beliefs are irreconcilable.*

*And there, God will judge them in sword and blood as revealed to the prophet Zecharia chap. 14.*

*The first to be utterly destroyed (in the war with Am Yisrael) will be the Egyptians, who are the closest to the Land of Israel and will come forward first and fall. Then the Assyrians and Persians will come to avenge their ally and they all will be destroyed."*

The major points alluded to by the prophet Yechezkel, as explained by the Malbim:

- 1- There will be a war between the European Christian countries against Moslem countries and they will ultimately destroy each other.
- 2- The first country to attack the Jews in Eretz Yisrael will be Egypt and we will destroy them.
- 3- Persia-Iran will follow suit to avenge the defeat of Egypt and they too will be destroyed.

How remarkable that the prophet Yechezkel has all the players in his prophecy who are now making headlines in our days: Europe, Islam, Egypt, and Iran.

## **Philadelphia: Brotherly Love**

Philadelphia in Greek means brotherly love. But as with most things, Arabs have a way of corrupting the good and turning it into bad; so brotherly love becomes brotherly hate.

The capital of Jordan, Amman in Arabic, was called Philadelphia; but just as the water supply in Jordan is scarce, so too is brotherly love a rare commodity.

The most southern town in the Gaza strip is the divided town of Rafah; half in Gaza and half in Egypt, separated by a 17-kilometer road called the Philadelphia Road. The name is a misnomer because it too is not exactly bubbling with brotherly

love. The sinister thing about the Philadelphia Road is the many, many under-ground tunnels connecting Egypt and Gaza.

Tzahal in an unprecedented military achievement starting from northern Gaza has reached the southern Philadelphia Road. Israel must control it overground and under in order to stop the wholesale smuggling of goods and weapons into Gaza, in return for hefty money transfers to the Egyptian army there. These tunnels are the lifeline of Hamas and must be under our control.

Egypt is standing on its hind legs and barking at Israel not to approach the Philadelphia Road, hinting that such a move could bring on war.

Egypt by all indicators is a failed country, on the brink of bankruptcy; except in one area – childbearing. It is the second most populous country in Africa. The situation has become even more dire with the dramatic decrease in shipping through the Suez Canal because of the Yemenite Houthis' attacks on commercial shipping, making their entrance into the Red Sea and from there to the Suez Canal and Europe very dangerous.

Suez Canal toll fees can range from between US \$400,000 to US \$700,000 per vessel. The Suez Canal set a new record with annual revenue of \$9.4 billion in USD for the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2023. Half of the container ship fleet that regularly transits the Red Sea and Suez Canal is avoiding the route now, according to new industry data.

Egypt cannot afford to also lose the income from the smuggling of goods and weapons through the underground tunnels of the Philadelphia Road.

## **Egypt's Fate**

We cannot know if this is the time that the prophet Yechezkel

was referring to that there will be war between Egypt and Israel. But it is interesting to note the similarities between our first step into geula (redemption) when the Egyptian army drowned in the waters of the Red Sea and our final stage of redemption as predicted by Yechezkel and explained by the Malbim.

If Egypt with the largest army in the Middle East decides to declare war on Israel and matters become very serious, Egypt might find itself once again under millions of cubic tons of water. Because more than 95% of Egypt's population lives on a mere 5% of the country's surface, in the Nile Delta, along the riverbanks of the Nile Valley, and in the immediately outlying cities of Alexandria and Port Said.

To the south of the country is the great Aswan Dam holding back the huge Lake Nasser. If the dam were destroyed in a war, for example, Lake Nasser would rush downstream in a tidal wave of such magnitude that Egypt would essentially cease to exist as a country, with untold millions swept into the Mediterranean.

It would be the largest single catastrophe in terms of both humans killed and wounded, and property damage, equal to an Asian tsunami 500 times over. So, it would be recommended that Egypt not provoke Tzahal from completing its goals.

The song that Moshe and the nation sang to praise HaShem after the Egyptians drowned in the Red Sea begins with the Hebrew word "Az" which can be understood to mean "then" in the past or "then" in the future. Many sources explain that just as the Jewish nation in the past praised HaShem for saving them from Egypt, so too will we sing in the future. The past and future will meet again, and the song of praise will again be sung on the background of the punishment of Egypt by water.

Who knows!

Shabbat Shalom

Nachman Kahana

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