

# Chayai Sarah 5773

Last Shabbat we read in parashat Vayaira, how Hagar was sent away from Avraham's home together with her son Yishmael. They wandered in the desert until the waterskin was empty, and then sat under the blazing sun waiting to die.

The pasuk relates (Beraishiet 21:15-16):

*When the waterskin was empty, she put the boy under one of the bushes. Then she went off and sat down about a bowshot away, for she said, "Let me not see the boy die."*

A very disturbing scene indeed – a mother watching her young son slowly slip away from life.

However, one would think that the pasuk should have read, "Then she sat down and embraced the boy and said, "My young son is dying." Instead, she *went off and sat down about a bowshot away* and said to herself, "Let me not see the boy die," where the subject of the pasuk's tragedy is her own personal suffering at the pending death of her son.

It appears that Hagar was more concerned with her own feelings than with her dying son, when at the moment the boy needed his mother's closeness and embrace in the waning moments of his life, she was not there.

This detached, self-centered, egotistical attitude plays out in the national character of the Arabs in our neighborhood of the Middle East. A close relative who commanded a very violent sector in the Second Lebanese war, told how the terrorists of Hizbollah abandoned their wounded and dead, something that Tzahal never does.

It is patently obvious that we Jews, the descendants of Yitzchak, cannot be compared in any way to the descendants of Yishmael. And most certainly not when it comes to altruistic

acts of benevolence, charity and loving kindness. We hear it repeatedly reported in the manner that Jews and Jewish organizations are acting during the present crisis throughout the northeastern coast. What is transpiring now is of dramatic proportions, with a large snowstorm reportedly on its way to the area.

Now since FEMA and the insurance companies will take out one's neshama before they deliver a dime to any individual, I believe that Medinat Yisrael cannot sit idly by while our brothers and sisters are suffering.

The US would never agree to accept material aid from us like tents and medical personnel which Israel sent over the last several years to Haiti, Turkey and other disaster-stricken areas around the world. So, I suggest a two stage program for Medinat Yisrael to do:

1- Bring children and teenagers here and provide them with schooling, also easing the burden on their parents. There are stricken areas where yeshivot and other schools will not return to normal function for many weeks, and it would be a great chesed for all the youngsters to escape the devastation and frustration now prevailing in many areas.

2- Encourage and facilitate, through all means, the aliya of families who have lost their homes and possessions to continue their lives in Eretz Yisrael.

Jewish self-help is legendary. It is a trait mandated by the Torah and honed to fine precision over thousands of years of anti-Semitism.

Medinat Yisrael is in the forefront of almost every international rescue effort, certainly we must come to the aid of our own brothers and sisters in the galut.

**Part B:**

Hurricane Sandy brought disproportionate devastation to areas where religious Jews live. Why?

Now is not the time for musar, but rather for providing aid to our fellows Jews who are hurting. The lessons to be learned from these events can wait, and certainly in light of the fact that the lessons will fall on deaf ears, anyway!

### **Part C:**

The situation for the Jews of the United States is “unsettling” to say the least.

Barak Obama was voted into office twice by virtue of the changed demographic make-up of American society, and the ever so gullible nature of the Jews. America is not the land I remember – a land of the white and the affluent. It is ever more a land of the colored and the needy, where the colored will become increasingly intolerant of the white, and the needy will become increasingly jealous of the affluent. In both cases Jews will feel increasingly uncomfortable.

In addition, as events unfold, beginning with the Twin Towers disaster, the economic disaster of 2008, natural disasters and political developments, the Jewish situation has taken a downturn. Jewish wealth has diminished considerably, as seen by the dramatic decrease in Jewish philanthropy over the last decade.

President Obama is now sharpening his knife to carve out how, in his view, the Holy Land should be divided. The borders of 1967? doubtful! Most likely he means the borders of 1947.

This will come about in the near future and the Jews of America will be divided among themselves.

Most will bow their heads as good US citizens and accept Obama’s rhetoric. They will turn their backs on their brothers in Eretz Yisrael and many will be in the forefront of those

pressuring the Jewish State to return to the "Auschwitz borders," as coined by our former Foreign Minister Abba Evan.

The minority of Jews will suffer conscious pangs of dual loyalty between allegiance to the land of their birth – the US, vs. the Land of their God. They will choose the land of their birth.

Certain individuals will rise to the occasion and return home.

As I wrote previously, the Jews in the United States are a failed community as far as their commitment to Torah and to Jewish history is concerned. This situation will continue just as long as their religious leaders are more concerned with their life contracts than with their contacts with the lives of their adherents.

May HaShem have pity on them all.

Shabbat Shalom

Nachman Kahana

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