

Chayai Sarah 5777

BS"D Parashat Chayai Sarah 5777

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The Strong Force

Protons and neutrons are held together in a nucleus of an atom by the "*strong force*", that gets its name by being the strongest attractive force – 137 times more powerful than an electromagnetic field and 6,000 billion billion billion billion (6 followed by 39 zeroes) times more powerful than gravity. The *strong force* only operates at extremely small distances that are on the order of a 1000th millionth millionth of a meter (10 to the power of -15). If you think about a micrometer (100th the size of a human hair), it is a billion times smaller than that. When taken alone, protons and neutrons form rays which can be lethal.

The Force that Binds

Two distinct elements bond together to effectuate Am Yisrael; but when taken independently, each can produce negative and even dire results. The first is the "spiritual element" when HaShem and a Jew interact through the mitzvot of the Torah. The second is the "nationalist element" when Jews interact with other. The force that binds both these elements together to produce Am Yisrael is the force and energy present in Eretz Yisrael.

When taken alone, the "spiritual element" frequently opposed the "national element" of Judaism. Commentators explain that the spiritual side of Judaism was responsible for the

miraglim's (scouts) refusal to enter the holy land, which would require the nation to leave the bet midrash in order to attend to earthly matters.

When taken alone, religious fervor is divisive and introversive, as people vie for G-d's truth which they believe to be only their truth. An example is the Hassidic movement which has fragmented into hundreds of groups generally known by the town their leader was from: Belz, Biala, Bluzev, Bobov, Ger, Karlin-Stolin, Klausenberg, Munkacz, Sanz, Satmar, Skver, Slonim, Spinka, Toldos Aharon, Vizhnitz, Zvhil, etc.

Many of these groups will not even intermarry with another group, nor will they eat from the kashrut of another group. These divisions appear in the non-Hassidic and Sephardic segments where every yeshiva has its personal brand of Yiddishkeit.

There is much religiosity in the galut; but they have no need for the nation of Israel, as they prefer to live in communities and turn their disinterested backs to the Medina.

On the other side of the coin, the "nationalistic element" of Am Yisrael can exist without the spiritual element, as we have seen with the early leaders of the Zionist movement.

The only force which can bind these two elements into one Am Yisrael is total life in Eretz Yisrael, where the active ingredient is pride in being a Jew.

I will explain.

The Unifying Force

While watching president elect Donald Trump during his acceptance speech on election night, I was wondering what he was thinking and feeling. As I studied his face, it was clear

that his heart was filled with justifiable pride that over 60 million Americans had chosen him to be their next president. Despite the fact that he lost the popular vote and that many came out on the streets to declare that they would not accept him as their president, Mr. Trump will be the United States' 45th president.

This honor will last four or possibly eight years. However, when he has to retire to private life, the very fact that so many people chose him to fill the nation's highest office – albeit temporarily – will have been sufficient to elevate his emotional state to the height of justifiable personal pride. Going into election day, Mr. Trump's chances to win were far less than the chances of an ice cube to survive in Gehennom, with the odds at 100 to 1 against him. Yet he won, because it was the will of HaShem after more than seven years of Obama famine.

The only one who can appraise the greatness of the Creator is the Creator Himself. We humble human beings are programmed to think only in terms of words and numbers and do not possess the terminology to express the infinite. Infinity is a concept which defies human understanding. Just as one will become blind by staring at the sun for even a short time, the short cut to insanity is to reflect on the concept that infinity has no beginning nor does it have an end.

We, as Jews, each and every one of us, should be the proudest individuals in the world. It was not 60 million human beings who chose us, but the Creator Himself who declared to Moshe that the Jewish nation would be His "kingdom of Kohanim and a holy nation" for all eternity.

The feeling of pride which will reunite the two elements of Jewish "spirituality" and "nationalism" is now in progress. As the Jews in Eretz Yisrael become ever more proud of what is happening here, they will seek to become more Jewish. And more Jewish means closer to the Torah and traditional Judaism,

including the liberation of all of Eretz Yisrael, the Bet HaMikdash and our return to Jewish life before we were sent into exile.

Several years ago, I had the opportunity to spend a day at a F-16 air base. I was in a hanger as the technicians were preparing the plane for take-off. On the side of the fuselage was a big Magen David. I was so moved that I drew close and kissed the symbol.

At that moment, I thought about how HaShem guards my home through the mezuzah on the entrance, which I kiss when entering and leaving the house, and how HaShem protects the Jews in Eretz Yisrael through the brave F-16 pilots. It is this feeling of pride of being an Israeli that will draw the people here to return to who we really are.

In conclusion:

In our parasha, when Eliezer suggests that he might find a suitable wife for Yitzchak but that she would or could not come to Eretz Yisrael, Avraham warns him (24,6):

:אברהם אברהם אברהם אברהם אברהם אברהם אברהם

Be careful not to take my son there (and Yitzchak never left the holy land).

Several months ago, four men from the city of Atlit entered my bet kneset and began talking about the sanctity of Medinat Yisrael and Yerushalayim. They dressed and spoke like the average Israeli. They were enthusiastic about their visit to the Old City and the fact that they were part of the kedusha (holiness) of the Holy City, sitting no more than 100 meters from the place where the Bet HaMikdash once stood and will again stand.

For some unexplainable reason, I told them the following:

Eretz Yisrael has four recorded names in our sources:

1- Eretz Yisrael ארץ ישראל

2- Eretz Tzvi (beautiful) ארץ צבי

3- Eretz Chemda (desired) ארץ חמדה

4- Eretz HaKodesh ארץ הקודש

The first letter of the four Hebrew names ,א, ,י, ,ה, ,ק
are the same.

...spell out the word Yitzchak יצחק

And Yitzchak never left Eretz Yisrael.

They got up, said goodbye and left the bet knesset. A moment later, one of the men returned and said: "I am discussing marriage with a Jewish woman who lives in New York, but her condition is that we live in the United States. Because of what you told us today, I have decided to leave her but never to leave Eretz Yisrael – and my name is Yitzchak!"

Shabbat Shalom,

Nachman Kahana

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