

Devarim 5778

BS"D Parashat Devarim 5778

Rabbi Nachman Kahana

What is the lost glory of HaShem?

The Gemara (Chagiga 5b) quotes the pasuk (Yirmiyahu 13,17):

אֲנִי בָכָה בְּמִסְתָּרִים אֲנִי בָכָה בְּמִסְתָּרִים אֲנִי בָכָה בְּמִסְתָּרִים
'וְאֵין מִסְתָּרִים אֲנִי בָכָה בְּמִסְתָּרִים אֲנִי בָכָה בְּמִסְתָּרִים

If you do not listen, I will weep in a secret place because of glory;

My eyes will weep bitterly, overflowing with tears, because the Lord's flock will be taken captive.

Rav Shmuel bar Inia said in the name of Rav, "HaShem has a place On High and it is called Mistarim (literally mysteries, concealment), where HaShem cries each day because of His lost glory". In yeshiva they asked, "What is 'the lost glory' referring to?" Rav Shmuel bar Yitzchak replied, "This is the glory of Israel, which was taken from them and awarded to the nations."

Rav Shmuel bar Nachmani says: “It refers to the lost glory of HaShem”.

Show me Your Glory

It would appear that the last days of Moshe Rabbeinu were the worst period in the already exasperating life of the greatest leader of the Jewish nation. It seems that HaShem was oblivious to the needs and well-deserved desires of His most loyal servant.

When HaShem castigated Aharon and Miriam for criticizing their illustrious brother, did HaShem not say to them (Bamidbar 12):

וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע ה' אֶת הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁמַע אֶת הַקּוֹלֹת אֲשֶׁר אֶתְּחַלֵּץ בְּעַדְּךָ וּבְעַד מִרְיָם אֲחֹתְךָ אֶתְּחַלֵּץ בְּעַדְּכֶם וְהָיָה כִּי אֶתְּחַלֵּץ בְּעַדְּכֶם וְהָיָה כִּי אֶתְּחַלֵּץ בְּעַדְּכֶם ()
:וְהָיָה כִּי אֶתְּחַלֵּץ בְּעַדְּכֶם

:וְהָיָה כִּי אֶתְּחַלֵּץ בְּעַדְּכֶם וְהָיָה כִּי אֶתְּחַלֵּץ בְּעַדְּכֶם ()

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Listen to My words: When there is a prophet among you, I the Lord, reveal Myself to him in visions, I speak to him in dreams.

But this is not true of My servant Moses; the most faithful in all My house.

With him I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles or allegories.

Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant

Moshe?"

Nevertheless, four times Moshe relented under HaShem's rejection of the desires that were closest to Moshe's heart.

1. HaShem did not appoint any of Moshe's children to succeed him in the leadership role of the nation.
2. HaShem ordained that Moshe would not enter the holy land but remain in galut even in death.
3. HaShem ordained that just as in his lifetime, Moshe, in death would remain an outsider to be buried in an unknown place, where no man could visit to pray and say Tehillim.
4. HaShem commanded Moshe to destroy the nation of Midian; the very same people that gave Moshe refuge when he escaped the claws of Paro after killing the Egyptian. Moshe was aristocracy, as the son-in-law of Yitro. He knew all the kings of Midian, the princes and establishment for tens of years; but now he would have to kill each and every one.

This is what appears from the simple reading of the Torah text. However, in reality, these were the greatest days of Moshe's life, when HaShem drew him into the closest relationship a human could attain with the Infinite Creator, as follows:

HaShem appeared to Moshe saying:

"You recall 39 years ago after the episode of the "aigel hazahav" (the Golden Calf), you requested of Me:

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל מֹשֶׁה וְעַתָּה הִנֵּנִי שֵׁלֵךְ אֶת יָדֶיךָ מֵעַל הַסֵּלֶק וְעַתָּה אֶפְרָח אֶת אֶפְרָחִי אֵלֶיךָ וְאֶתְּנֶנּוּ לְךָ וְעַתָּה אֶתְּנֶנּוּ לְךָ

(Exodus 33:18) 'Show me Your glory'

You obviously did not request to “see” My infinite glory through your human eyes of flesh and blood. You wished that I disclose to you the inner essence of My glorious self; My magnificence, splendor, grandeur, majesty and brilliance.

At that time, I denied you entrance to My essence; even by your limited human capacity to grasp anything regarding the Omnipotent Creator.

However now, during the lasts days of your human life, I will go even further than what you wished. I will make you partner in My “glory”, where you will feel the things that I as the Infinite Creator feels; you will experience what no man before you has, as we share in the feelings of My “glory”.

However, Moshe, recall the Gemara in Chagiga 5b (part A:) that describes what happened to My “glory”.

What you, Moshe, presumed to be My glory, magnificence, splendor, grandeur, majesty and brilliance is replaced by the sadness I feel when I see My children of Yisrael not continuing in My ways, by accepting Avoda Zara, which will eventually destroy My first Bet Hamikdash. And this you will feel with Me when you see that your children will not follow in your path.

What you presume to be My glory, magnificence, splendor, grandeur, majesty and brilliance is replaced by My profound sorrow when I will be forced to send My children into exile for their sins; and I will have to be with them in the galut.

So, you too Moshe will share in My “lost glory” as you feel now in the exile from the holy land that you so much wish to be part of.

What you presume to be My glory, magnificence, splendor, grandeur, majesty and brilliance is replaced by a profound feeling of loneliness when My chosen nation neglects My Torah, and you too Moshe will join with Me in this “glory” when you will be buried alone in a hidden place far from the eyes of man.

What you presume to be My glory, magnificence, splendor, grandeur, majesty and brilliance is replaced by immense disappointment when I am forced by the quality of justice to punish people whom I have created to do good, but fell by the wayside of evil. So too, you Moshe will share in My “glory” as Creator and feel with Me the pain of having those who are close to you being punished.

These were Moshe's finest hours, as he was able to share with the Holy One, Blessed be He, the “questionable” glory that should be HaShem's but was relegated to future times because of our sins.

But at the appointed time, in the not too distant future, when Moshe will return after techiyat hamaytim (resurrection) we shall all partake in the restored glory of HaShem here in Eretz Yisrael.

Shabbat Shalom,

Nachman Kahana

