

Emor, Yom HaZikaron & Yom Ha'atzmaut 5776

BS"D Parashat Emor, Memorial Day and Yom Ha'atz'maut 5776

Rabbi Nachman Kahana

Medinat Yisrael – HaShem's outstretched hand to His nation Yisrael

Medinat Yisrael is 68 years young. In terms of nation building we are still in our infancy, and like an infant that cries and grows, we cry at the cost of the 23447 lives of our defense forces from the turn of the 20th century and the more than 2500 citizens who lost their lives through Arab terror from the beginning of the Medina, as we continue to grow in every field of endeavor.

If anyone doubts the miraculous existence of the Medina just consider the following statistics:

- We are 6,377,000 Jews spread across 1255 cities, towns and villages.
- In 2015, 195,000 Jewish children were born here.
- 2 million olim have arrived here in the last 68 years, including 30,000 last year.
- There are over 10 thousand batei kneset in Israel with a million and a half regular daveners, not to mention the thousands of mikvaot.
- We have over 130,000 young men studying in the various yeshiva systems.
- Over 10,000 men and woman come from the galut to learn in our yeshivot and seminaries yearly.

- 2,187,296 children went to schools in the various educational systems last year.
- Annually, we produce thousands of new volumes in the many areas of Torah, an unprecedented production of Torah material.

And all this within the shadow of war, which drains human and material resources which could be put to productive use.

But that is the way HaShem has deemed to be the path to redemption. Redemption only for the spiritually strong who defy attempts of the enemies of HaShem who would strike out at the Almighty by hurting his children Yisrael.

Am Yisrael chai! As we are now in the final chapter of our pain, when a majority of halachically recognized Jews are now in the Holy Land.

The Medina and Me

Medinat Yisrael is larger than life; the greatest gift HaShem has presented to the Jewish nation since revelation at Mount Sinai. Mount Sinai became part of our national-religious experience after HaShem saw our 210-year loyalty to the traditions we received from Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov. How much more so when HaShem saw our loyalty to Him over the 2000 years of suffering and hardship in this last galut. HaShem's appreciation for this loyalty is our unprecedented return to our homeland, through the miraculous creation of Medinat Yisrael.

There are observant Jews in Israel (our brothers and sisters in the galut are a non-factor in the future history of the Jewish nation) who refuse to acknowledge and appreciate the miraculous nature of the Medina because it is not a Torah led State. How could it be when the major rabbis in the late 19th

and early 20th centuries opposed Zionism, so that only a minority of the religious came here. But I will deal with that issue BE"H next week.

I received several comments on last week's message. All were favorable, save for one woman's message which was derogatory and insulting. My initial reaction to her comments was that if this is the level of my detractors, then I don't have too much to worry about.

Nevertheless, I would like to answer her because in its essence she represents a large number of observant Jews in the galut who feel as she does albeit in varying decibels.

She writes, including the spelling and linguistic mistakes:

... "(You) talk so negative on our holy brothers and sisters (in America) that loves God and the Torah more then most Israelis. You talk so much against them ,just for living in chul so they can be mekayem Torah and mitzvos on a higher level then in Israel where we have □□ □□□□ which are bothering us from being a kosher Jew 24/7 nonstop.

I will delete the personal insults of her message, and quote the end:

"you are making the bad Israelis anti God , hollier than the big tzadikim of Boro park and lakewood etc.

My reply:

1- The spiritual leaders of Boro Park and Lakewood etc., have notable and noble spiritual goals, as I have witnessed in the 10 years of my adult yeshivah education, including 5 years in Boro Park.

By their worthy personal conduct, they spare no effort in bringing their communities and yeshivot to higher levels of

spirituality.

They encourage Torah study and character development based on the model of perfect Art Scroll righteousness. They expound on modesty in dress and attitude; frugality and moderation when purchasing clothing, homes, cars, home furnishings and hotels. They extol ethical business practices by refusing to accept money when there exists even a doubt if it was gainfully earned. They uphold ethical and social behavior; principled, pure, decent, honorable, righteous, virtuous and incorruptible standards as befit a Torah observant Jew in matters of kashrut or other services rendered by the rabbinat. They guide their loyal followers in honoring the Torah and its Halachic-legal system, as exemplified in the many cases involving rabbis and Torah institutions where litigation is brought before rabbinic courts, not before the secular court system; God forbid! These are just a few of the many admirable goals of many of the religious leaders in the galut.

In addition, most rabbinic authorities there agree that for the foreseeable future there are several "Promised Lands" to choose from, such as the United States, United Kingdom, etc., to the exclusion of that far away mythical "Alice in Wonderland" place called Medinat Yisrael, which will become real only when the Mashiach will appear to whisk all the yiddin by a magic carpet to their palatial homes in Jerusalem Heights.

I, on the other hand, cannot compete with the righteous of Boro Park etc., and their many virtuous ideals, because I have only one single, exclusive goal – saving Jewish lives, irrespective if they are observant or not.

The Jews in the galut are sitting on an ice cube, resting on a furnace ready to be lit. It's just a question of time! Every Jewish family I help bring to Eretz Yisrael can be multiplied by many future generations which would otherwise be lost to Am Yisrael in the galut.

I am certain regarding the spiritual leaders in the galut and their great grandchildren. I am certain that the spiritual leaders will complete their years as observant Torah Jews. I am equally certain that their great grandchildren will be married to gentiles. I am not certain if the communicable disease of assimilation will impact on their children and grandchildren.

In contrast, I am also certain that those “ ׀׀ ׀׀׀׀ which are bothering us from being a kosher Jew 24/7 nonstop” as stated in the woman’s comments, will do tshuva and if not then their offspring will certainly be learning Torah in the yeshivot of Eretz Yisrael.

As for “mekayem Torah and mitzvos on a higher level than in Israel,” let me say that there is more Torah in the city of Yerushalayim than in the rest of the world combined. Enter Bnei Brak and the thousands of yeshivot and batei midrash spread out over the land which can quantitatively and quantitatively put the Torah of the galut in their “little pocket”.

In a sense, my goal and that of the Medina are similar, that’s why I wrote ‘The Medina and Me’.

I, in my small, modest way and the Medina as the Jewish national homeland seek the same goal – to save Jewish lives from extinction, which has been the sad saga of our people in the galut.

Granted, official Israel is based on Ottoman and British Common law, with a smattering of Halachic principles. However, the purpose set about by HaShem for the Medina was not to be a Moshe Rabbeinu, but more like a puzzle. The initial activity in building a puzzle of 1000 pieces is to create the frame, without which it would be almost impossible to complete the puzzle,

The Medina was established to create the infrastructure for Am

Yisrael's return home. The Mashiach who we all await to come, would not be happy to arrive in a desert as the land was for 2000 years while we were away sunning ourselves in the ghettos of Europe and the mellas of North Africa.

The Medina has performed better than expected. But now that the framework has been completed we must prepare to change "gears" and fill in the frame with "pieces" of kedusha in all walks of life. Then the puzzle will no longer be as such, because all the questions and doubts will fall into place and our history will be complete with the Bet Hamikdash and all that that implies.

Yom Ha'atz'maut Samayach Shabbat Shalom,

Nachman Kahana

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