

Ki Taytzai 5776

BS"D Parashat Ki Taytzay 5776

Rabbi Nachman Kahana

Loyalty to One and Only One

The Torah states that if A divorced his wife, and thereafter she married B and he too divorced her or died, she may not go back and remarry A. Devarim chapter 24:

וְכִּי יִשְׁאַר אִישׁ אֶת אִשְׁתּוֹ וְיִפְּרֹדָהּ וְיֵצֵא מִבֵּיתָהּ וְיֵלֶכְתָּהּ אִישׁ אֲחֵר׃
(Devarim 24:1)

וְאִם יִפְּרֹדָהּ אִישׁ אֲחֵר׃
(Devarim 24:2)

וְאִם יִפְּרֹדָהּ אִישׁ אֲחֵר׃
(Devarim 24:3)

וְאִם יִפְּרֹדָהּ אִישׁ אֲחֵר׃
(Devarim 24:4)

1 When a man taketh a wife, and marrieth her, then it cometh to pass, if she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some unseemly thing in her, that he writeth her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house,

2 and she departeth out of his house, and goeth and becometh another man's wife,

3 and the latter husband hateth her, and writeth her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her

out of his house; or if the latter husband die, who took her to be his wife;

4 her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD; and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

Several reasons for the prohibition have been suggested, including the idea that the Torah knew that it could lead to halachically legal but morally repulsive adultery, where B pays A to divorce his wife so that he can live with her for a time and then return her to A. While no halacha has been violated, the Torah calls this conduct “to’ayva” – repugnant and obscene – and hence declares it prohibited.

In any event, the Torah set down the principle that a woman who was divorced by A and then committed her allegiance to B, may never return to former husband A.

2000 years ago, HaShem expelled the Jewish nation from His land, as a husband sends away his disloyal wife.

While in the many lands of our galut – in our prayers and in our ceremonies – we always longed to return home, we never pledged allegiance to the gentile lands in which we were forced to live. We lived there but always on the periphery of society, not only as a result of our being rejected from the mainstream of gentile society, but more so due to our sustained loyalty to HaShem’s Torah and His Holy Land. However, things have changed dramatically. There are today over 65 million refugees in the world, but not one of them is a Jew. Never in the last 2000 years was there a time when some Jewish community was not being expelled or suffering from any of the diabolical tortures that the gentile mind was able to

impose on their hapless Jews. But today, the Jews have entered the mainstream of the societies in which they live – the United States, most of Europe, South Africa and others. The change is very apparent in the attitude of the Jews who, as loyal citizens, pledge allegiance to their respective lands and societies.

The Jews in the West can be compared to the wife who was sent away by her first husband for being disloyal and has now taken her vows of allegiance to another partner. HaShem declares that the Jews who feel like loyal citizens of their adopted second lands will not return again to Eretz Yisrael.

Loyalty

The most telling feature of a citizen's loyalty to his land is military service, which implies willingness to give one's life for that nation.

As I have written and warned many times before, the United States will, at some point in the near future, restore the military draft. Donald Trump has alluded to it more than once when saying that he will increase dramatically the number of servicemen.

The sons and daughters of even religious Jews will be drafted into the US military. And rightfully so, because their parents have emotionally and legally severed ties with Eretz Yisrael by becoming loyal citizens of a "second husband" and creating a reality that they cannot return to their first vows of allegiance.

A short story from my book "With All Your Might"

The phone rang in the nearly desolate, topsy-turvy home of the Levines.

Mrs. Levine nervously let the wrapping cord fall from her hand as she picked up the phone. Too late. The light on the phone's base signaled that there was a recorded message.

She pushed the "listen" button and a familiar voice spoke:

"Hello, this is Miri from Nefesh be'Neshama. I have two messages for you; a happy one and another a bit disappointing. The movers will be coming to your home tomorrow morning, Monday, at exactly 7:00 AM, so please be ready. And the not so happy news. I know how much you wanted the three ABC seats by the window, because of your names Al, Beth and Carol, plus the adjoining D seat of the middle section for David, on this Thursday's flight. But because you are a family of four you were assigned the four DEFG seats in the middle section. In any event, the thrill of going on aliya will certainly overshadow any such minor irritation. Aliya tova!"

Miri was so right, Mrs. Levine thought to herself. The thrill of a dream-come-true leaves no room for such mundane issues as seating on a plane; 'although it would have been nice to see the coastline of Israel drawing closer as the "wings of eagles" brought us home'.

Al and Beth Levine had decided to come on aliya five years ago, when Carol was ten and David celebrated his Bar-Mitzva. However, it took five years for Al to find a suitable replacement in his law firm in addition to the protracted process of selling the house for the right price. But thank God, the local shul bought it to serve as the community home for whomever would be serving as rabbi at the time.

In the interim, the Levines kept their dream alive by keeping up with current events in Israel, as well as developments in the Middle East in general.

It was the middle of August 2006. Tensions were high as Iran, patron of the murderous Hizballah and Hamas gangs, continued to develop a nuclear capacity. The United Nations Security Council passed a limited economic boycott resolution against Iran. In an angry knee-jerk response, the Iranians decreased their sale of oil and the world price jumped to \$100 a barrel! As if this were not bad enough, Venezuela's leftist president signed a ten-year agreement to sell its oil exclusively to China, which brought the price of gas at the filling stations to \$5 a gallon, with no end in sight that this would be the determining price at the pump.

But none of this could detract from their decision to come on aliya. David was to begin Bar Ilan University right after the holidays and Carol had registered in the Ulpan in Kiryat Arba. Since youngsters of David's age in Israel are drafted into the IDF, it could have deterred the family's decision to make aliya, but David was promised that he would be permitted to finish his BA uninterrupted by army service.

With this issue behind them, there was really nothing to prevent the Levines from taking the step of a lifetime.

The family was disturbed by the attitude of some relatives and friends who, perhaps for reasons of jealousy or personal weakness, were very critical of their aliya plans. "What's the rush? Wait until the children finish school. You're now at your peak earning power. Is this the time to leave?"

On the other hand, their rabbi was wonderful. On Shabbat he spoke from the pulpit about the mitzvah of living in Eretz Yisrael. He praised the Levines, saying how they would be missed in the many areas of their community involvement – Al

for giving up his Sundays in order to coach the shul's little league team, Beth for being the Shabbat kiddush coordinator, Carol for helping her mother with the kiddushes and David for managing the various teen activities of the shul.

Of course, the rabbi was careful to point out that the mitzvah of living in Eretz Yisrael was in the category of a four-corner garment – not mandatory to wear; but if one should do so, he would be required to attach to it tzitzit and merit a mitzvah. So too, one is not required to “go up to the land” until the Mashiach comes; but if one should do so, he merits a great mitzvah.

To their skeptical friends and relatives, Al responded that there had been too many warnings of late and that the time had come to go home. So if not now, then when?

The war in Iraq was not going well, and the new Iraqi government was requesting additional American troops in light of the British decision to “bring the boys home”. American soldiers had been sent to the Philippines to help in their war against Al Qaeda, and Colombia was requesting a US military presence in their on-going war against the insurgence. To complicate matters, Mexico had just elected a leftist president who spoke of an anti-United States axis composed of Mexico, Cuba, Venezuela and Bolivia.

It was Monday and, true to Miri's message, the movers arrived at 7:00 AM sharp to take all the Levine's worldly possessions to the packing company, and from there to Israel. Packing was an unforgettable experience.

Mrs. Levine wondered how they “succeeded” to accumulate so much “stuff” during 20 years of marriage. They started in the attic, which served as a nostalgic trip into the past and evoked many memories as they rummaged through their possessions – the less-than-modest wedding gown which Mrs. Levine did not want her Carol to see, a 78 RPM record player,

Al's catcher's mitt which he could not part with, old photographs from the Pineview and Pioneer Hotels and summer camps. How these experiences had sweetened with the passage of time. But life must go on, as the family used mental scissors to begin severing these ties in anticipation of their new life in the promised land.

Eventually, much was given away, more was thrown out, and the necessary articles were now packed in cartons to be shipped off. In the packing process, the Levines concluded that Moshe Rabbeinu was right in ordering the Jews to leave with only a few matzot; because if they would have been permitted to bring their possessions, we would still be in Mitzrayim.

Ten in the morning and the movers had finished only about half the work. At that moment, a Western Union messenger arrived with a telegram for Mr. David Levine. Al signed for it, opened the envelope and read aloud.

"Greetings.

You are hereby informed that The President of the United States of America and Commander in Chief of the armed forces, and Congress in emergency session, have passed the Selective Service Act of 2006, to be enforced immediately.

You are hereby ordered to report within one week to the Induction Center at 1948 Independence Ave. for induction into the armed services for a period of not less than three years. You will be sent to Paris Island, Georgia to commence basic training as a proud United States Marine.

Your passport will be on hold until the completion of your military service.

Good luck and Godspeed to you in the service of your country."

Just as Al was handing the telegram to Beth, the phone rang.

He got there too late to answer, but the light on the phone's base signaled that there was a recorded message. Al pushed the "listen" button and a familiar voice sounded.

"Hello, this is Miri again from Nefesh be'Neshama. Good news. Due to last-minute cancellations, we have been able to get for you the three ABC seats near the window and the D in the middle."

9/11

This week on 9/11 is the 15th anniversary of the attack on the New York twin towers commercial centers. 9/11 is the eleventh day of the ninth month – September.

The gentile world has copied most of what is good and just in their cultures from the Jewish people, but here is a fascinating coincidence – in HaShem's world where there are no coincidences.

We count our years beginning with the month of Tishrei, when in the view of R. Eliezer (Tractate Rosh Hashana 8a) the world was created. According to this the 11th month is Menachem Av and the time of our great national disasters occurred on tisha be'av – the 9th of Av which is the Jewish 9/11.

Is there a message here? Is this the beginning of Hashem's punishment of the Christian world for what they perpetrated to HaShem's chosen people for 2000 years? Time will tell.

Shabbat Shalom,

Nachman Kahana

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