

Ki Tisa 5771

BS"D Parashat Ki Tisa 5771

Part A:

To my brothers and sisters in Eretz Yisrael

Shemot 32:19



And when he approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, Moshe's anger was great and he threw down the tablets and shattered them near the mount.

The Gemara (Yevamot 62a) relates that Moshe Rabbeinu acted upon his own volition in three essential matters, and in each case HaShem commended him for what he did:

1. Moshe left his wife and children and the comforts of life in order to live alone;
2. He smashed the Tablets and
3. When HaShem commanded that the nation set aside two days of preparation before receiving the Torah, Moshe added one more day of preparation thereby delaying the time of revelation by one day.

Moshe, son of Amram and Yocheved of the tribe of Levi, is known as Moshe Rabbeinu – Moshe our rabbi. Because Moshe was not only the human conduit through whom HaShem gave us the Torah, Moshe also taught future generations what it means to be a rav.

In the three matters where Moshe initiated his actions we see the three sides of what a rav should be.

By leaving the comforts of his own personal life, we learn that an authentic Jewish leader and his family must be

prepared to sacrifice the pleasantness that life can award to people. Not the big house nor the cushiony life-contract contribute to the making of a rabbinic leader, but rather the involvement in the problems of his congregants in the long hours of the night, just to mention one aspect.

After assessing the spiritual level of his congregation, the rav is expected to initiate actions and limitations aimed at advancing the individual and community sanctity; just as Moshe did when adding one more day of preparation before receiving the Torah.

By shattering the Tablets, Moshe demonstrated for future generations of rabbanim that when congregants act inappropriately, the rabbi must not feel intimidated; but must exercise his duty to rebuke them for what they did and try to restore their Jewish conscience of right and wrong.

However, there was a fourth dimension to Moshe Rabbeinu, which he exercised repeatedly throughout the forty years of wandering in the desert. Moshe was called upon, again and again, to encourage the nation in times of depression, despair, and hopelessness which led many of the nation to want to return to Egypt.

Moshe inspired them with confidence in the knowledge that they were HaShem's chosen people and that they were involved in the highest mitzva – Jewish nation building – which would affect all future generations, Jews and gentiles alike till the end of time.

As I write these words, the world is undergoing a metamorphosis that will change the constellation of nations and peoples as we have known them till now.

The geopolitical configuration of the Middle East has already changed, with the future power in the area, that of extreme Islam, taking control of the energy sources that power a great part of the machinery of the world.

And as Yismael sharpens his sword in preparation for world conquest, he eyes the Jews in Eretz Yisrael as the last major obstacle standing before the implementation of his plan for the world caliphate.

We in Eretz Yisrael will feel threatened as never before, as the prophecies of Yechezkel and Ovadia and others begin to unfurl before our eyes. Many people will leave the country, such as the 350,000 non-Halachic Jews who came here from the Soviet Union. Many secular Israelis will join them, as will many religious Jews who maintain foreign citizenships and who are here for a year of study and fun.

Many other religious people will leave upon urging of their rabbinical leaders in chutz la'aretz.

How do I know this? Because I lived through it in the period just prior to the Six Day War. The most adamant and loyal people at that time who did not entertain for even a moment the idea to leave were from three communities:

1. The old entrenched religious families of Yerushalayim, Tzfat, Teveria and Hevron, who came to Eretz Yisrael 200 and 300 years ago
2. The religious Zionists
3. Many secular Israelis whose love for the land overrode their personal fears.

In the near future, we will be subject to local and international threats.

From where will the encouragement come to believe that Hashem will save us again, but this time on a scale unprecedented in world history?

From where will the fighting spirit of our soldiers come?

It will be from the religious Zionist rabbanim who follow the path of our past rabbanim: Moshe, Yehoshua, the Judges, King

David, the Prophets, Ezra the Scribe, the Macabeem and Rabbi Akiva.

Many of our religious Zionist rabbanim and teachers have, and are now, serving in Tzahal as fighters and officers. These rabbanim and roshei yeshiva are the spiritual backbone of this nation.

They represent the finest leaders that 3500 years of Judaism has produced. Torah knowledge, combined with gevura (heroism) and love of Eretz Yisrael all in one personality.

With leaders as these to bring encouragement to our people we will overcome all our enemies and adversaries, as predicted by our prophets regarding the future redemption of Am Yisrael.

The spirit of Moshe Rabbeinu lives on in the rabbanim of Eretz Yisrael, like Harav Dov Lior of Hevron and Harav Shmuel Eliyahu of Tzvat and many others who strive to emulate the teachings of the ultimate rav, Moshe Rabbeinu; the convergence of Torah scholarship, dedication to their communities and the knowledge that the Torah was given by HaShem to be kept in Eretz Yisrael. And above all, the unflinching, uncompromising belief of Moshe Rabbeinu that HaShem will never forsake His chosen people in Eretz Yisrael.

Part B

Shemot 32:19



When Moses approached the camp and saw the calf and the dancing, his anger burned and he threw the tablets out of his hands, and shattered them to pieces at the foot of the mountain.

Everything in the Torah is a lesson, even the straightforward statement “and shattered them to pieces at the foot of the

mountain". The Tablets did not bounce back – they were not made of rubber. They did not bend – they were not made of plastic. They were of inflexible and rigid stone and they shattered when mishandled.

Our holy Torah has a built-in degree of limited flexibility, that takes into account circumstances which make the fulfillment of a mitzva very difficult, if not impossible. But when one trespasses the limits of the Torah's pliability the Torah is shattered "to pieces at the foot of the mountain".

I am dismayed and appalled by the writings of some renowned spiritual leaders in the galut who over-stretch the pliability of the Torah as they square a halachic circle to justify their being in the exile.

One such halachic gymnastic idea set forward is that living in Eretz Yisrael is indeed a mitzva, but *not living in Eretz Yisrael is not an avayra (sin)*.

Another concept put forward and adhered to by many people in the galut is: *to be in the galut while hoping and waiting for the Mashiach to bring one to Eretz Yisrael is tantamount to living in Eretz Yisrael*.

The list goes on and on as far as the Jewish imagination can stretch, and that is very far.

And how about the rabbi who said that *Jews must be in the galut in order to fulfill the prophecy that the Mashiach will bring the Jews to Eretz Yisrael*.

There are limits to HaShem's patience when His holy Torah is bent, twisted and convoluted; at which point the Torah ceases to be the Torah, and it becomes "shattered at the foot of the mountain".

Shabbat Shalom,

Nachman Kahana

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