

Lech Lecha 5777

BS"D Parashat Lech Lecha and Vayaira 5777

Rabbi Nachman Kahana

Assassination of Leaders and Nations

Part One

A: Two Jewish leaders were assassinated within a period of five years. My brother Harav Meir Kahana on the 18th of Cheshvan 5751 (Nov. 5, 1990) and Prime Minister Yitzchak Rabin on the 12th of Cheshvan 5756 (November 4, 1995).

B: In parashat Lech Lecha, HaShem informs Avraham that Sarah will give birth to a son, Avraham is traumatized and replies: "lu Yishmael yich'ye le'fanecha" – "May Yishmael (who was already born) live before you". Avraham comes to the defense of Yishmael and requests future equal rights for his son born of Hagar, the Egyptian woman.

In next week's parasha Vayera, Yitzchak is born and Sarah perceives the unbridgeable spiritual divide between the two half-brothers. Sarah demands that Avraham send Yishmael away (Beraisheet , 21:10): "Chase away this maidservant and her son, for this son of the maidservant will not inherit together with my son Yitzchak"

Sarah instinctively sees the evil and wildness in the soul of Yishmael, and knows that neither Yitzchak and Yishmael nor their offspring will ever be able to live together.

HaShem tells Avraham to abide by Sarah's request, for she is correct in declaring that Yishmael's progeny will maintain

everlasting enmity towards the future descendants of Yitzchak.

C: True to parashat Lech Lecha, up until he was murdered, Rabin adopted Avraham's mistaken belief that Yishmael has spiritual qualities which could permit him to live harmoniously with Avraham's future Jewish descendants. Toward this end, Rabin permitted the return to the Medina of the PLO murderers living in Tunisia and gave them forty thousand weapons.

Yitzchak Rabin was murdered on Motzei Shabbat of parashat LECH LECHA.

Harav Meir, adopted Sara's divinely affirmed position that the souls of the two are hewn from vastly different worlds – Yitzchak is the ben-Torah and worthy to be a korban (sacrifice) for God on Mount Moriah, while Yishmael is a "pereh adam" (barbarian) who prefers death over life.

Harav Meir preached and pleaded that the people of Israel should see the future and take steps to prevent the tragedies we are witnessing to this very day. Rabin wanted to give them half of Eretz Yisrael, despite the words of our mother Sarah in parashat Vayaira that "the son of this maidservant will not inherit with my son Yitzchak". History has played out in accordance with God's command to Avraham to abide by Sarah's wishes.

Rav Meir was murdered in the week of parashat VAYEIRA, the week of "Chase away this maidservant and her son, for this son of the maidservant will not inherit together with my son Yitzchak".

Part Two

Rambam (Maimonides) in his 'Laws of Tshuva' (repentance) based on Tractate Yoma, enumerates the various ways one can

achieve atonement such as confession, Yom Kippur, Temple sacrifices and difficulties in life, dependent on the severity of the sin. However, if a sin creates a chillul HaShem – a desecration of God' holy name, then atonement can be obtained only after the above-mentioned stages plus the day one passes away.

There are many ways one can create a chillul HaShem, such as a religious person who is found to be corrupt or even impolite behavior by a person who is noticeably Jewish.

The Book of Samuel 1 chapter 17 records that the Jewish and Philistine armies were facing each other in the Valley of Elah, south of the present city of Bet Shemesh.

For a period of 40 days and 40 nights, whenever the Jews would recite Kri'at Shema, Goliath would advance to "no man's land" and curse the Jewish God and His nation Yisrael.

Goliath obviously had defiled the name of HaShem. However, his was not the ultimate chillul HaShem at the time, there was a more severe desecration of the Holy Name. It was the fact that until David appeared on the scene no Jew dared to silence the defiler of HaShem's holy name.

We too are witnessing an ongoing chillul HaShem that makes the absurd declarations of UNESCO pale before it.

In Parashat Lech Lecha, HaShem promises Avraham that his Jewish descendants would be the sole possessors of Eretz Yisrael. The promise was fulfilled when Yehoshua entered the land 3500 years ago.

The powers behind UNESCO's declaration that the Jewish people have no connection with the Temple Mount or the Kotel gains legitimacy from the thousands of rabbis and spiritual leaders of all sorts who prefer to live in the exile rather than in the holy land.

What would our father Avraham and mother Sarah say if they saw the religious communities in the States? They would experience profound feelings of failure. Avraham would probably not enter into their succot, nor would the other 6 ushpizin, they would be too busy visiting the succot of the non-observant kibbutz succot here in Eretz Yisrael who struggle and sacrifice to maintain our presence in the Land HaShem promised to Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov.

Rav Meir Kahana and PM Yitzchak Rabin gave their "all" for the continued success of the Medina in the land which was promised to our forefathers; may the souls of both these men be united with the living souls in Olam Haba.

Shabbat Shalom,

Nachman Kahana

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