

# Matot 5776

BS"D Parashat Matot 5776

Rabbi Nachman Kahana

## Unexpected agents of HaShem

Megilat Esther 3,10:

וַיִּסְרֹף הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת-טַבָּחָא דְּמַלְכֵּיהּ וְעָלְמָא דְּמַלְכֵּיהּ  
:וְעָלְמָא דְּמַלְכֵּיהּ

*And the king (Ahashverosh) removed his ring from his finger and presented it to Haman son of Hamdata, descendant of king Agag (the Amaleki) nemeses of the Jews.*

The Gemara (Megila 14a) records a conclusion drawn by Rabbi Abba bar Kahana from this pasuk:

וְהַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת-טַבָּחָא דְּמַלְכֵּיהּ וְעָלְמָא דְּמַלְכֵּיהּ  
וְעָלְמָא דְּמַלְכֵּיהּ ,וְעָלְמָא דְּמַלְכֵּיהּ וְעָלְמָא דְּמַלְכֵּיהּ ,וְעָלְמָא דְּמַלְכֵּיהּ  
.וְעָלְמָא דְּמַלְכֵּיהּ

*The ring's removal was more effective in drawing the Jews to do tshuva than the 48 prophets and 7 prophetesses who prophesied to the Jewish nation; none of the prophets succeeded in influencing them to do tshuva, whereas the ring's removal moved the Jews to do tshuva.*

A phrase that frequently appears in our Torah sources:

*HaShem has many agents (to do his bidding)*

The phrase is usually cited to point out an unexpected, inappropriate, even evil person who unknowingly and by his own free will served as HaShem's agent to influence Jewish history. Beginning with Nimrod who threw Avraham and his belief in HaShem into a furnace, on to Paro of Egypt and to Haman whose authority was vested upon him when receiving the King's ring.

Just as the 55 prophets sent by HaShem did not succeed in restoring the Jews of their times to the Torah way of life, whereas Haman did motivate the Jews to do tshuva, so too in our time we have witnessed unexpected agents of HaShem who have brought us to our senses.

Were it not for Hitler, the German nation and the Shoah, there would not be today a Medinat Yisrael, because the Jewish people were not interested in establishing one; neither the majority of spiritual leaders, nor the rank and file of world Jewry. The Shoah created a situation where close to 2 million Jews in post war Europe and in Arab lands had nowhere to go. The Shoah proved to many Jews that there is no future for us in the galut, and for one instant at Lake Success on the 29th of November, 1947, two thirds of the member states of the UN were gripped with compassion for the down-trodden Jewish nation.

The millions of Moslems in Europe today are playing the role of HaShem's unwitting agents in bringing European Jewry home. Many will come home, but most will settle in the UK, Canada or any of the other great Jewish havens in the galut.

What about the Jews in the United States, who will show them the way home?

Mr. Donald Trump has a message which could make him, his daughter and son-in-law benevolent agents for aliya of American Jewry. Their message should resonate with the Jews there.

Mr. Trump believes and says: "Globalization – No! America – Yes!" The American people have to strive for what is good for America and not carry the entire free world on their backs. Make America great again – rebuild the diminished army, strengthen homeland security, reconstruction of the outdated infrastructure and distancing of internal potential enemies.

Those in the American rabbinate who have not yet sold their souls to the seduction and temptation of American comforts and who really believe in the Torah can use Mr. Trump's message to save whatever can yet be saved of the vanishing Jews of the US.

The message is **"Galutization – No! Eretz Yisrael – Yes!"**

Whosoever has a spark of Yiddishkeit left in him, come forward to make Eretz Yisrael great again as it was in the time of King David, Solomon and the Maccabim. Strengthen the Jewish army, enhance home security, infrastructure building, distancing of our internal enemies and universal compulsory Torah study.

Mr. Trump's message could be HaShem's last wake-up call to American Jewry to come home before they will no longer be able to do so. "Make Israel Great" means to live in the Land. To feel its hallowed soil under your feet. To smell the beautiful aroma of Yerushalayim. To become part of the eternal bond that unites your brother and sister Jews from 100 different lands, despite our differences which are hugely out-weighted by what we have in common.

As far as the US election is concerned: no one knows what the outcome will be, but I pray "may the best man win".

# Whoever is Closer to the Land

In Devarim chapter 8 Moshe describes the richness and blessing of the Holy Land. Verse 8 states:

:אֶרֶץ חִטָּה וְאֶרֶץ שְׂבֹלֵת וְאֶרֶץ זֵיתִים וְאֶרֶץ תְּאֵנִים וְאֶרֶץ זֵיתֵי שֶׁמֶן וְאֶרֶץ דְּבַשׁ וְאֶרֶץ עֵץ

*Land of (1) wheat and (2) barley and (3) grapevines and (4) fig trees (5) and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and date honey.*

The Gemara (Brachot 41,a) establishes two halachic principles regarding the preferential order of reciting a brachot (blessings):

אֶרֶץ חִטָּה וְאֶרֶץ שְׂבֹלֵת :אֶרֶץ חִטָּה ,אֶרֶץ שְׂבֹלֵת אֶרֶץ זֵיתִים אֶרֶץ תְּאֵנִים אֶרֶץ זֵיתֵי שֶׁמֶן וְאֶרֶץ דְּבַשׁ וְאֶרֶץ עֵץ .אֶרֶץ חִטָּה אֶרֶץ שְׂבֹלֵת אֶרֶץ זֵיתִים אֶרֶץ תְּאֵנִים אֶרֶץ זֵיתֵי שֶׁמֶן וְאֶרֶץ דְּבַשׁ וְאֶרֶץ עֵץ

1- the product (fruit) which is mentioned earlier in the verse has precedent in the bracha over a product which is mentioned after it, i.e. the bracha over wheat precedes the bracha over barley.

2- The critical factors in the verse are the two words "Land", meaning: despite the fact that date honey appears last in the verse its blessing precedes that over grapes, because grapes appear third after the word "land" whereas date honey appears second after the second word "land".

There is a profound principle underlying this halacha that reflects far and beyond the matter of blessings. Simply stated: whoever is closer to the "Land" is closer to God and closer to HaShem's blessings.

No more need be said.

Shabbat Shalom,

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