

# Mishpatim 5771

**BS"D Parashat Mishpatim 5771**

**Quote from the UN News Center**

*27 January 2011 – The United Nations today honoured the memory of the estimated six million Jews and countless others who perished in the Nazi death camps of the Second World War with ceremonies around the world and pledges to wipe genocide off the face of the Earth.*

The Mishna (Sanhadrin 54,a) questions the verse in our parasha:

*that exacts the death penalty on a man or woman who had a sexual encounter with an animal and the animal itself: The person is punishable for violating the halacha, but why kill the animal?*

And the Mishna explains:

*Because the sin came upon the person because of that animal.*

On this day, the 27th of January 65 years ago, the Russian army liberated the death camps of Auschwitz-Birkenau. It was here that ten thousand Jews were brought daily by the very efficient and uninterrupted rail system. Efficient, because it was managed by IBM from their offices in Warsaw, and was never interrupted – not even once by any allied air-forces who could have bombed the rail tracks at will.

The liberation of these and other camps brought the immensity

of Man's bestiality to the fore, and with it the immensity of what had been done to the Jewish nation.

Never before had man sunk so deep, that a word had to be invented to describe what had happened to us – Shoah (holocaust).

There were different degrees of evil doers in the Shoah.

- There were those who murdered in lust and joy.
- There were those who were “only” fulfilling orders.
- There were even Jews who for one more day of life served as kapos in the camps.
- And there were “good” Deutsche volk who lived in the area of the camps but looked away with indifference at what was happening, and not even the pungent smell of burning flesh that filled the air day and night aroused their consciousness .

The nightmare ended and the Shoah of the Jewish people was over. Or was it?

The physical Shoah of the Second World War with its killing fields was indeed over, but the Jewish spiritual Shoah continues in full force to this very day.

A Jew who is murdered is a Jew lost to our nation; but so too is a Jew who marries a gentile. A Jew who could not keep the Torah because he was a prisoner in a death camp, is not very different from a Jew who does not keep the Torah because he is a prisoner of the culture of his gentile lands.

At the end of the Second World War, the Jews in the US numbered approximately six million, so we would expect their number today to be between twenty and thirty million. In reality they number around 5 million – with about half of them non-halachic Jews having been converted by the reform and conservative movements, recognized as Jews because of one Jewish parent – father or mother.

So where are the other 20 or 30 million Jews? They are not here because of the ongoing spiritual Shoah taking place in every galut land.

And as in the Shoah of Europe, there are different degrees of evil-doers in today's spiritual Shoah.

- The murderers of our peoples' souls in lust and joy are the gentile missionaries of all types who outwardly seek to convert our people.
- There are the reform and many conservative "rabbis" who just follow the orders of their "rabbinic" seminaries while destroying the foundations of our faith in their temples.
- And there are the Jewish kapos – the "spiritual leaders" who preside with Catholic priests and Protestant ministers at mixed marriages.
- And there are the observant Jews who look on with indifference to the Shoah that is never far from their own doorstep.

However, within this atmosphere of spiritual Sedom and Amora there are Jews who are aware of what is happening and are attempting to save the remnant. These are the dedicated people of the Young Israel, NCSY, Chabad, and possibly others of whom I am not aware. With due respect, I compare their efforts to a doctor who has successfully diagnosed the life threatening disease of his patient and attempts to save him with doses of aspirin, or to a Jew in Germany in 1938 who is so disturbed by what he reads in the papers that he cancels his subscription.

The only real way out of this spiritual Shoah is to read the writing on the wall; cut our losses and have our rabbinic leaders urge mass aliya to Eretz Yisrael.

Indeed, there are different kinds of Shoah. The unspeakable, beastly Shoah which began in Germany and spread to the waiting arms of Jew haters in other countries, and the "elegant"

painless Shoah that is proceeding to this very day – led by the loving kiss of death of the American way of life.

To return to the halacha in this week's parasha where the animal is punished not because of any wrong doing on its part, but because a Jew transgressed because of the passive presence of the animal.

This principle holds true even with regard to societies who are seemingly innocent, but where Jews for many reasons leave the holy Torah to become part of that society.

No human father will remain passive when seeing his children being taken from him. How much so when HaShem sees countless numbers of His children leaving the living Torah to be like the gentiles surrounding them.

Shabbat Shalom,

Nachman Kahana

Copyright © 5771/2011 Nachman Kahana