

Mishpatim 5781

BS"D Parashat Mishpatim 5781

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Five National Challenges

Midrash Esther (10,4) relates an incident in which R. Chiya Raba and R. Shimon ben Chalafta were walking in the valley of Arbel near the Kinneret in the dead of night. They suddenly saw the first rays of light coming from the sun as it slowly ascended from under the horizon. R. Chiya tells R. Shimon that this is the way of Jewish redemption – darkest night followed at first by a dim light that continues to gain more and more momentum.

Menacing Perils and Risks

The ideas put forward here might appear to be pessimistic at best. However, in reality, they stem from the profound traditions and beliefs we have received from our rabbis. These traditions and beliefs are steeped in optimism because they are the holy vows of the God of Yisrael.

We of Am Yisrael, who have merited to return home, are experiencing five national challenges that are fraught with menacing perils and risks:

1. Our most dire problem is the presence of many **people who wish the Medina only bad**, while the democratic and western-valued Medina is unable to expel them. There are the millions of Arabs who reside between the Sea and the river. Then there are the nearly 400 thousand non-Jews who have emigrated from the former Soviet Union, many of whom have no interest in converting to Judaism and many

are outwardly anti-Semitic. Let's add the leftists and anarchists, who team together with the secular courts to eradicate every vestige of Judaism in the land, and sects like Neturei Karta and some Lithuanian groups, who would not shed a tear if they had to relocate to Switzerland or to London. But for the faithful and dedicated people of the land, the prophet Yeshayahu has a message of hope and encouragement (49:17):

הָרְחוּקִים ,הָשׁוּבִים מִן־הַגָּלוּת הָרְחוּקִים ;הָשׁוּבִים מִן־הַגָּלוּת ,הָשׁוּבִים מִן־הַגָּלוּת .הָשׁוּבִים מִן־הַגָּלוּת

Hurry, return my children; for those who would devastate and destroy you will be expelled from your midst.

2. Then there are the **modern-day Hamans of Iran**, whose centrifuges grind on continuously turning uranium 238 into more fissionable uranium 235 to make bigger and more destructive nuclear weapons. To the pitiful Iranians, I have only to quote from Yeshayahu, beginning of chap. 54 verse 17:

אֵין מִלֵּחָמָה מִלֵּחָמָה מִלֵּחָמָה ...אֵין מִלֵּחָמָה מִלֵּחָמָה ,אֵין מִלֵּחָמָה מִלֵּחָמָה-אֵין מִלֵּחָמָה : 'אֵין מִלֵּחָמָה-אֵין מִלֵּחָמָה ,אֵין מִלֵּחָמָה מִלֵּחָמָה

No weapon forged against you (*by Iran*) will prevail... this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and this is their vindication from Me, declares the Lord.

3. Another disturbing headache appears in this week's parshat Mishpatim (legalities), in which the Torah sets down HaShem's holy laws for Am Yisrael. This week, **the ICC** (*International Court of Criminals*) in the Hague unilaterally declared to extend its jurisdiction to cover the State of Israel and the areas we acquired during the Six Day War. Its intention is to distort and manipulate international law in order to give vent to their anti-Semitic feelings against Israel and our

soldiers. I wish to remind the ICC about the continuation of the prophetic verse above:

;וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל ,וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּפְּחוּ-וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּפְּחוּ ...
: 'וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל ,וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּפְּחוּ וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּפְּחוּ

...and you (*Am Yisrael*) will refute every tongue that accuses you (*ICC*). This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and this is their vindication from Me, declares the Lord.

4. **Covid-19** continues to wreak havoc among our people. The antidote for this epidemic as it affects us in Eretz Yisrael is to recognize HaShem's signal to draw closer to Him in thought and deed.

Shemot 22:30

וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל ,וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּפְּחוּ

And you shall be **holy** men unto Me

Shemot 23:25

,וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל-וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּפְּחוּ ,וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּפְּחוּ ,וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּפְּחוּ
.וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל ,וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּפְּחוּ ;וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל-וְאַתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל

And you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread, and your water; and **I will take sickness away from your midst.**

He wants us to shed ourselves of the corrupting gentile values that have seeped into our national consciousness, to renew our dedication to extend our sovereignty over every piece of land under our control – first and foremost over the Temple Mount – and to modify the national educational curriculum to include an intense and wide-reaching program of Torah studies.

We must strengthen our ahavat Am Yisrael (*love for one's*

fellow Jews) through social-aid programs and share national responsibility in a more equitable manner, including military service. We must strengthen the core family by outlawing sexual deviations and perversions.

There is much to do before we can say that we have lived up to the historic responsibility that HaShem has placed on the shoulders of this generation. This invisible virus has taught us that the dominant factors in our lives – be they holy or profane – are precisely the entities beyond our human senses.

5. The Biden Administration has feverishly appointed many people who are anti-Israel and anti-Semitic – both gentiles and Jews – to key government positions. I perceive that the domestic problems will so overwhelm the administration that they will forget where Israel is on the map. History has proven that HaShem deals more benevolently with the declared enemies of the Jews than He does with the fair-weather friends and allies who betray us.

However, it is possible that the simultaneous occurrence of the four challenges: Iran, Biden, Covid-19 and the ICC were wrought by HaShem to create an atmosphere whereby the negative populations will conclude that it is more conducive to live elsewhere. They will emigrate from the land, leaving here the sincere, authentic Jews who recognize the hand of HaShem in our lives. The four will expel the fifth. It just might happen, *b'ezrat HaShem (with G-d's help)*.

B careful B healthy B here

JLMM Jewish Lives Matter More

Shabbat Shalom,

Nachman Kahana

