

donkey, and took two young helpers with him, and Yitzchak his son, and cut the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went to the place of where HaShem had told him.

4 On the third day of their travels, Avraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place from afar.

5 And Avraham said to the two young helpers, wait here with the donkey; and I and the young man (Yitzchak) will go over there to worship and we will return to you.

The Midrash (Vayikra Raba chap. 26), informs us that the “two young helpers” were Avraham’s son Yishmael from the Egyptian maid servant Hagar and Avraham’s servant Eliezer.

Avraham told the two helpers to wait at that specific place until his return.

At the time, Avraham and his family were living in Chevron, about 25 kilometers south of Yerushalayim.

On the third day of their journey northward towards Yerushalayim, Avraham and his entourage saw the “place” from afar. The “place” being Mount Moriah – The future Temple Mount.

The very first place from where one can see Mount Moriah when coming from the south is the present day promenade at the end of the ridge in Armon Hanatziv, the very place where we were celebrating the 49th year of Yerushalayim’s liberation.

As the Torah relates, the “young men” were told to wait at the end of the ridge from where they could see the events as they were developing between Avraham and Yitzchak.

They saw Avraham and Yitzchak descend the ridge into the valley and then ascend to the Mount about half a kilometer away. They saw Avraham assemble an altar upon which he placed the wood. They saw Avraham bind Yitzchak and place him on the

wood, and they understood that soon Yitzchak would be no more.

Yishmael and Eliezer were hoping in their hearts that Avraham, with the knife held in his hand, would soon kill Yitzchak. Then they would be the first in line to inherit Avraham's material wealth and spiritual status, as was before the birth of Yitzchak.

They saw the sun's glow reflected from the knife in Avraham's hand and in one more second the interloper would be no more. Suddenly Avraham dropped the knife, released the bonds that held Yitzchak, and in his place Avraham sacrificed a ram.

Their disappointment was boundless. Yitzchak was still alive and the two "helpers" would remain forever rejected from any holy, intimate relationship with the Creator.

History runs full circle

Two hundred meters to the east of where we were celebrating that moment, stands the United Nations headquarters in Eretz Yisrael. History runs a full circle. The UN on the ridge overlooking the Temple Mount is the reincarnate of Yishmael and Eliezer, who 3500 years previously – from that location – saw the Temple Mount as they were hoping beyond hope that Yitzchak would no longer be. Would it be in the power of the UN today to bring about the demise of the Jewish Medina they would not hesitate to do so.

However, just as Yishmael and Eliezer were profoundly frustrated to see Yitzchak very much alive, so too the UN Human Rights Commission and all the other UN affiliates will never understand that the will of HaShem – the "Jewish" God – will always prevail over the evil contrivances of Man.

While looking towards the north, I saw the great divide between the promenade and the Temple Mount; although in

measured distance the two are close. It was a seemingly open valley, but in my mind's eye I envisioned the entire valley filled with the enemies of the Jewish State.

Present were the 22 nations that comprise the European Union, the entire United Nations, The United States' administration, the Arab League, ISIS, Iran, the BDS backers, and just plain old anti-Semites of every color and every language.

The valley echoed with the cacophony of hate-filled voices. "Don't build in Jerusalem. Divide the city. Give the Arabs a state from which they will launch murderous attacks against your people. Don't react when hundreds of missiles rain on your cities. Let the murderers' names be embedded on the streets of Ramalla and Shechem. Relinquish land so that a single mortar shell will be able to paralyze your air and sea ports".

So many enemies. So much hate for the Jewish State and its people!

However, at that moment of contemplation, around me my friends were rejoicing in song and dance in celebration of the great miracle of Yom Yerushalayim, with not a thought of the screaming bulk of anti-Semitic humanity "filling the valley" beneath our feet.

From where do these emotions of simcha and joy arise? Where is the fountainhead from which the people there, including myself, draw our optimism and assurance that Am Yisrael in Eretz Yisrael will live forever?

And I recalled the story of Elisha.

In the deep recesses of our neshamot we saw what Elisha saw at that day in Dotan.

The valley between us and the Temple Mount is satiated with the enemies of Medinat Yisrael; however, the mountains

surrounding the valley are filled with HaShem's angels in battle dress, prepared to avenge every evil calculated against the Jews in Medinat Yisrael.

Shavu'ot

The exodus from Egypt, replete with its amazing accompanying ten plagues, was not the culmination of HaShem's efforts for Am Yisrael, but just their initial phase. And the breathless escape from the Egyptian fangs at the Red Sea was also just a phase in the overall plan. So we must conclude that the revelation of HaShem at Mount Sinai and presenting of the Torah must be considered as the vertex of the time.

But no! Not even receiving the Torah was the final objective of our Father-in-Heaven.

This stage in the Jewish nation's relationship with HaShem was culminated only after forty years of Torah Study under the tutelage of Moshe Rabbeinu. Then Am Yisrael entered the Promised Land to live a complete Torah life on a national level in HaShem's Holy Land, as He had promised our forefathers: Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov.

To remain in Egypt even with the Torah, as 80% of the Jews wished, was rejected by HaShem and they died there. To remain in the desert with Moshe Rabbeinu, as was the wish of the miraglim and that generation, was unacceptable to HaShem and the generation of six hundred thousand men died in the desert.

Today, those who voluntarily remain in the galut, even while observing the Torah rather than coming home to the Promised Land, is likewise unacceptable, and the outcome? Let's leave it to HaShem's mercy.

Shabbat Shalom,

Nachman Kahana

Copyright © 5776/2016 Nachman Kahana