

# Nitzavim-Va'yai'lech 5773

## BS"D Nitzavim-Va'yai'lech – The last Shabbat of 5773

### Part A:

Every Jewish man and woman is alluded to in the intricate texts of the Bible. So too, are the manifold episodes of every generation hidden behind some word or phrase in the Torah.

Where is our generation alluded to in the Torah?

Initially, we have to identify the parameters and circumstances of our generation which make it unique from all others. This is fortunately not an herculean task! For there has never before been an exile of such duration and cruelty as the one we have experienced these 2000 years, and concluded with Hashem's miraculous restoration of the majority of His people to a sizable part of the biblical borders of Eretz Yisrael, which we call today Medinat Yisrael.

One need not seek out our generation in the texts of the Torah with a magnifying glass, because it is explicit in our parasha Nitzavim chapter 30:

וְיָשׁוּבְךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִבְּיַד כָּל־עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ וְרַחֵם עָלֶיךָ וְיִקְרַבְךָ אֶלְךָ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר שָׁחַתְךָ מִבְּרִית הַבְּרִית (א)  
:וְיָשׁוּבְךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִבְּיַד כָּל־עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ

:וְיָשׁוּבְךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִבְּיַד כָּל־עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ וְרַחֵם עָלֶיךָ וְיִקְרַבְךָ אֶלְךָ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר שָׁחַתְךָ מִבְּרִית הַבְּרִית (א)  
וְיָשׁוּבְךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ מִבְּיַד כָּל־עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ וְרַחֵם עָלֶיךָ וְיִקְרַבְךָ אֶלְךָ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר שָׁחַתְךָ מִבְּרִית הַבְּרִית (א)  
:וְיָשׁוּבְךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ

*3 Then the Lord your God will return you from captivity and have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you.*

*4 Even if you have been banished to the most distant land under the heavens, from there the Lord your God will gather you and bring you back.*

5 He will bring you to the land that belonged to your ancestors, and you will take possession of it. He will make you more prosperous and numerous than your ancestors.

Indeed, we were scattered to the four corners of the globe, and HaShem is now in the process of returning all the Jews to His holy land; those who return willingly, as well as those who cling to the unholy galut and will have to be wrenched away from their sweet captivity.

However, it might appear that the opening verses of this chapter (30) are not pointing to our generation, for it says:

וְכָל־בְּרָכָה וְכָל־קְלָפָה אֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְבַרְכֵךְ וְאֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְקַלְפֵךְ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְבַרְכֵךְ וְאֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְקַלְפֵךְ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְבַרְכֵךְ וְאֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְקַלְפֵךְ (ו)  
:וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְבַרְכֵךְ וְאֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְקַלְפֵךְ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְבַרְכֵךְ וְאֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְקַלְפֵךְ

וְכָל־בְּרָכָה וְכָל־קְלָפָה אֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְבַרְכֵךְ וְאֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְקַלְפֵךְ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְבַרְכֵךְ וְאֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְקַלְפֵךְ (ו)  
:וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְבַרְכֵךְ וְאֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְקַלְפֵךְ

וְכָל־בְּרָכָה וְכָל־קְלָפָה אֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְבַרְכֵךְ וְאֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְקַלְפֵךְ וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְבַרְכֵךְ וְאֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְקַלְפֵךְ (ו)  
:וְכָל־אֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְבַרְכֵךְ וְאֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְקַלְפֵךְ

1 When all these blessings and curses I have set before you come on you and you take them to heart wherever the Lord your God disperses you among the nations,

2 and **when you and your children return to the Lord your God** and obey him with all your heart and with all your soul according to everything I command you today,

3 then the Lord your God will restore your fortunes[a] and have compassion on you and gather you again from all the nations where he scattered you.

How can we say that we are living in the time of national restoration which is conditioned upon the Jews doing teshuva, “And **when you and your children return to the Lord your God** and obey him with all your heart and with all your soul according to everything I command you today”? When did this happen?

I submit:

Teshuva is a subjective matter. It finds expression in accordance to the individual and his dark past.

The pasukim (Beraisheet 25,8-9) relate that when Avraham passed away, his two sons came to bury their holy father:

:וַיָּמָת אַבְרָהָם בְּעָלְמוֹ וַיְהִי בְּעָלְמוֹ וַיִּבְרָךְ וַיִּשְׁבַּח וַיִּשְׁתַּבַּח וַיִּשְׁתַּבְּחָהּ ( )

וַיָּבֵאוּ אֵת אֲבֹתָיו וַיִּבְרָךְ וַיִּשְׁבַּח וַיִּשְׁתַּבַּח וַיִּשְׁתַּבְּחָהּ ( )

:וַיָּבֵאוּ אֵת אֲבֹתָיו וַיִּבְרָךְ וַיִּשְׁבַּח וַיִּשְׁתַּבַּח וַיִּשְׁתַּבְּחָהּ ( )

*8 Then Abraham died at an advanced age, elderly and full of years; and he was gathered to his people.*

*9 His sons **Isaac and Yishmael** buried him in the cave of Machpelah near Mamre, in the field of Ephron son of Zochar the Chittite*

Chazal say that verse 9 reveals that Yishmael did teshuva, because although Yishmael was older, he agreed that Yitzchak should be the spiritual heir to Avraham, as we learn from the fact that Yitzchak is stated in the pasuk before the name of Yishmael. However, the statement that Yishmael did teshuva is difficult, because Yishmael was an idolator to the end of his life, as attested to by the fact that he took the evil Aisav to be his son-in-law.

As stated previously teshuva is subjective. Yishmael's definitive fault was his stubborn insistence that he was the heir to Avraham's spiritual status. HaShem's grievance to Yishmael was not that he was not a talmid chacham or that he accepted idolatry, but that he did accept the fact that he was not and never was connected spiritually to Avraham. So when Yitzchak precedes Yishmael in the pasuk, it is the Torah's way of saying that Yishmael finally accepted his inferior spiritual status vis-à-vis Yitzchak, and that was his personal teshuva.

The great historic sin of the Jewish people of 2000 years ago was our desire to be accepted and loved by the gentiles. Many Jews were involved with Greek culture, then after with Roman culture. We dressed like them, spoke their language and were a part of their political intrigues, all in the name of being accepted by the goy.

Our experience of living under the goyim reaching the climax with the Shoah, made it clear to most Jews that we must leave the hated galut. That we must return to our own Biblical homeland and distance ourselves from the "favors" of Aisav and Yishmael. And the acknowledgement that we are a unique entity in the world.

This is the teshuva that HaShem was waiting for, and it in itself was sufficient to open the doors of return to Eretz Yisrael and the restoration of our national life.

The next phase in the teshuva process will be our return to actively fulfilling the Torah's mitzvot, towards which we are advancing rapidly every day.

## **Part B:**

The real life game-changing decisions are very private and never revealed in history books. There are things that I know about the Six Day and Yom Kippur Wars which will be forgotten never to appear in the official documents of our nation, but were critical to the events which transpired.

We are now in the throes of events which could have far-reaching consequences for the Middle East and the world. Will the US and Europe attack Syria? Will Syria react by attacking Israel? Will Iran join with Syria? Will Russia and China find reasons to join in the free-for-all?

Our parasha states (Devarim 29,28):

וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע אֲדָמָה אֶת-קוֹל רַב יְהוָה יֹאמַר הָיוּ אֵלֵינוּ אֱלֹהִים וְעַתָּה מַעֲשֵׂה יְהוָה עִמָּנוּ

*The secret things are known to the Lord our God, but the revealed episodes are known to us and to our children forever, that we may follow all the words of this law.*

The real diabolical motives behind the apparent moral positions of the Western powers, are known to HaShem, but not to the general public. The US and Europe are not acting now to retaliate for the crimes perpetrated by the Syrian government, or to prevent further acts of cruelty against humanity.

The reality which might never be told is that the decisions are anchored in deep Christian, anti-Semitic religious motives.

The Christian world will never be reconciled with the existence of the State of Israel. The very existence of Medinat Yisrael is the most brutal, ferocious, merciless, ruthless and unrelenting repudiation and abrogation of all that Christianity stands for.

And all their intellectual gymnastics in explaining why their god permitted the Jews to return to Eretz Yisrael after he 'rejected" the Jewish people does no more than arouse a sarcastic smile on the face of any intelligent person.

The driving motive behind the forth-coming attack on Syria is in order to arouse the Moslem world to retaliate and destroy Medinat Yisrael. The deciders may not even be the heads of state, but a small group of individuals in the Council of Foreign Relations, or the Vatican.

The reader of this might think that this line of thought is hallucinating. I too would think so would it not be for the Midrash Tanchuma which is quoted by Rashi in the Book of Yechezkel 35,10 as follows:

וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶת הַקּוֹל וְיִשְׁמַע אֶת הַבְּרִיחַ וְיִשְׁמַע אֶת הַקּוֹל וְיִשְׁמַע אֶת הַבְּרִיחַ וְיִשְׁמַע אֶת הַקּוֹל וְיִשְׁמַע אֶת הַבְּרִיחַ

וְאִסָּוֹן אֶת-בְּתוּלַת יִשְׁמָעֵל בְּתוּלַת אִשְׁתּוֹ הַיְהוּדָיָה וְיִצְחָק יִשְׁמָעֵל יִשְׁמָעֵל יִשְׁמָעֵל  
 וְיִצְחָק יִשְׁמָעֵל יִשְׁמָעֵל יִשְׁמָעֵל יִשְׁמָעֵל יִשְׁמָעֵל יִשְׁמָעֵל יִשְׁמָעֵל  
 וְיִצְחָק יִשְׁמָעֵל יִשְׁמָעֵל יִשְׁמָעֵל יִשְׁמָעֵל יִשְׁמָעֵל יִשְׁמָעֵל יִשְׁמָעֵל

*Midrash Tanchuma explains the intention of Yechezkel in this verse to mean that **Aisav** married the daughter of **Yishmael** with the intent of influencing him to kill **Yitzchak**, then he (Aisav) will act as the “goel hadam” the justified avenger to kill Yishmael, thereby paving the way for him to be the uncontested spiritual heir to Avraham.*

Replace the name “Aisav” with Europe. Replace “Yishmael” with the Arab countries, and replace “Yitzchak ” with Medinat Yisrael and you have the script of what is transpiring these very days.

Aisav the Christian arouses Syria the Yishmaelite and its Persian masters to attack Yitzchak the Jew.

The time of our so long awaited redemption may be now. Our Father-in Heaven will protect His people Israel.

During times of stress the prophetic words of Yishayahu (40:15,17) must always be in the forefront of our thoughts:

:וְנָחַת כְּנֶפֶס אֶת-כְּנֶפֶס אֶת-כְּנֶפֶס אֶת-כְּנֶפֶס אֶת-כְּנֶפֶס אֶת-כְּנֶפֶס אֶת-כְּנֶפֶס אֶת-כְּנֶפֶס אֶת-כְּנֶפֶס (וְנָחַת)

:וְנָחַת כְּנֶפֶס אֶת-כְּנֶפֶס אֶת-כְּנֶפֶס אֶת-כְּנֶפֶס אֶת-כְּנֶפֶס אֶת-כְּנֶפֶס אֶת-כְּנֶפֶס אֶת-כְּנֶפֶס אֶת-כְּנֶפֶס (וְנָחַת)

*15 Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket;  
 they are regarded as dust on the scales;  
 He weighs the islands as though they were fine dust.*

*17 Before him all the nations are as nothing;  
 they are regarded by him as worthless  
 and less than nothing.*

**Part C:**

We might be entering the period of HaShem's retribution for what the gentiles did to us. When it happens, the Jewish communities in the galut will not be immune. Their fate will not be concerted establishment anti-Semitism but rather ground-roots "street" violence. When the genie of hate is released, the blacks and Moslems will smell blood and react with violence. They will run through the streets smashing, vandalizing and burning Jewish stores, attacking Jews on the streets, destroying their cars and homes.

Let us hope and pray that this will never happen. However, one can never know when HaShem will change the gears of history, and the lives of people will never again be the same.

Question: Why should such an idea even enter one's mind?

Our Minister for Tourism, Dr. Uzi Landau, revealed a sickening statistic. That from 1948 to the present, less than 15% of the Jews of the United States ever visited Medinat Yisrael.

It is estimated that there are 5 million Jews in the US, of which one million are Torah observant.

The 15% of 5 million who visited Eretz Yisrael is 750,000 half of whom are presumably non Torah observant, leaving the number of observant Jew who ever visited Israel at around 375,000.

Numbers don't lie. These numbers reveal that the vast majority – 625,000 out of one million – religious Jews of the US have never stepped foot on the soil of God's holy land.

Among these 625,000 there are principals and teachers in religious day schools, pulpit rabbis, yeshiva and kollel students and more.

It has not yet come through to the Jews in the galut that our Father in Heaven is very serious when it "comes to religion". HaShem was the initiator of Religious Zionism, when He revealed himself to Avraham and promised to him and his

descendants sovereignty over "Eretz Hakodesh".

The religious leaders in the galut would do well to recognize the awesome responsibility they have for the physical and spiritual welfare of their adherents, by not guiding them to return home, and theirs will be the ultimate blame for not doing so.

Their responsibility goes even beyond that of the religious leaders of the 1930s in Europe who saw the black clouds over the horizon, yet did not use their prestige to arouse their adherents to return home.

Let us hope that in the coming year of 5774 the Quality of Chesed (compassion) will overcome the Quality of Severe Justice, and all of Am Yisrael will be united in our holy land of Eretz Yisrael.

Shabbat Shalom

Nachman Kahana

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