

BS"D Parashat Re'eh & Rosh CHodesh Elul 5782

As the month of Elul approaches, and we prepare for the Days of Awe – Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur – introspection is foremost on the agenda. To evaluate ourselves. Who we really are, and have we observed the Torah in the best way that we can? And have our relationships with our fellow man lived up to what is expected of a ben Torah?

This process of personal introspection cannot be achieved without going beyond the everyday mundane flow of life. It requires one to consider and ponder on the Creator; what is He? And what is his relationship with humanity, more specifically with His chosen people – Am Yisrael and most specifically with the individual Jew.

Firstly, we have to clarify that we believe that there is a God – the first cause of all things; and that the Creator has chosen us, the Jewish nation, as his unique and only “adopted children” in this world and in the next.

Is there a rational, empirical proof aside from tradition passed down from generation to generation?

There are many proofs, but I will report on a particular one that caught my attention.

It was, I believe, Louis the 16th, last King of France before the fall of the monarchy during the French Revolution who asked a philosopher friend for proof that there is a god. To which the scholar answered with two words “les Juifs” – the Jews. That if the Jews still exist after all that was perpetrated upon them then there is a God and He is Jewish.

Now let's try to ascertain, in some very modest manner, the infinite greatness of the Creator.

The new NASA James Webb telescope has the capacity to look more than 13 billion light years in the past (a light-year is the distance light travels in one year). Light zips through interstellar space at 186,000 miles [300,000 kilometers] per second and 5.88 trillion miles [9.46 trillion kilometers] per year), the farthest we've ever seen into space. The image of this galactic cluster is known as SMACS 0723 and contains thousands of galaxies, some of which are as far away as 13.1 billion light years. The observable Universe has an estimated radius of 46.5 billion light-years (46.5 billion times 6 trillion miles) and seems to contain at least two trillion galaxies. The estimated number of stars (our sun is a medium size star) in these galaxies are **200 billion trillion stars or 200 sextillions, that is 1 followed by 22 zeros.**

The people at NASA are overwhelmed with the results which enlargers exponentially the estimates of what the universe contains. However, as brilliant as they are, the astronomers of NASA do not get it. Not only are there 200 billion trillion stars in the universe, but more astonishing is the fact that HaShem knows each one and designates to each one a name, as the pasuk says (Tehillim 147,1-7):

וְיִשְׁמְרוּ אֶתְּךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְיִשְׁמְרוּ אֶתְּךָ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ (□
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Praise the Lord!

¹ *How good it is to sing praises to our God, for he is gracious, and a song of praise is fitting.*

² *The Lord builds up Jerusalem; he gathers the exiled of Israel.*

³ *He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds.*

⁴ ***He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names.***

⁵ *Great is our Lord and abundant in power; his understanding is beyond measure.*

⁶ *The Lord lifts up the downtrodden; he casts the wicked to the ground.*

⁷ *Sing to the Lord with thanksgiving.*

Preparing Ourselves

Tradition teaches that Eliyahu HaNavi (Elijah the Prophet) will appear to the Jews before the arrival of the Mashiach in order to prepare our hearts, minds, and our military for the challenges that will accompany this revolutionary period in world history.

The rabbis of the Mishnah concluded that if Eliyahu has to prepare us for this transition then we have to have to be prepared for the appearance of Eliyahu himself. Hence, the last Mishna in tractate Sota reveals what the world will be like prior to Eliyahu, as follows (Mishna, Sota 9:15):

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Translation in bold letters, followed by explanation:

In the times of the approach of the Messiah,

As we live today on this planet.

Impudence will increase.

Chutzpa expressed by the disrespect of young people to the elderly, unlearned to the scholarly, people to people and nation to nation.

And high costs will pile up.

There will be world-wide inflation where prices skyrocket as money loses its value.

Although the vine shall bring forth its fruit, wine will nevertheless be expensive.

This situation is a negation of the iron clad law of economics where the price of an item is based on supply and demand, that when supply is plentiful, and demand is moderate, prices drop. Today, the supermarkets, car dealerships, vacation spots etc., have readily available inventory, yet prices are continually rising.

And the monarchy shall turn to heresy.

World governments will deny the existence of a Deity.

And there will be no one to give reproof about this.

Corruption will be widespread and taken for granted, to the extent that even a righteous person who would stand up to criticize the situation would be suspected of being corrupt.

The meeting place of the Sages will become a place of promiscuity.

The parliaments and supreme courts will sell their favors for the highest bidder as a harlot.

And the Galilee shall be destroyed, and the Golan will be desolate.

In our own land the upper and lower Galilees will be in a state of destruction because the majority of residents there are now goyim – Moslems, Druze and Christians, and the Golan will be scarcely settled.

And the men of the border shall go round from city to city to seek charity, but they will find no mercy.

There will be millions of refugees in the world who will find no solace.

And the wisdom of scribes will putrefy.

The advice of the great Torah minds will not be heeded

And people who fear sin will be held in disgust.

God fearing observant Jews will be belittled and even hated.

And the truth will be absent.

Life threatening issues will be dealt with the false principles of secular values.

The youth will shame the face of elders, elders will stand before minors.

The progressive ideas of denying all time-honored values will destroy the order of society. Parental respect will be a thing of the past as will respect for one who has merited to reach old age and all time-tested values of what makes up a decent human being.

Normal family relations will be ruined: A son will disgrace a father; a daughter will rise up against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. A man's enemies will be the members of his household.

Destruction of the nuclear family by the abominations, and abhorrence of newly defined gender species causing rife, discontent and doubt on our holy value system.

The face of the generation will be like the face of a dog.

Political leaders will be devoid of compassion just as a dog

shows no sympathy or empathy even to those who raised him up.

A son will no longer be ashamed before his father.

The morals of our societies have developed over thousands of years and passed on through the generations, the most sacred of which is the solidarity and respect in family life, and traditions will be denigrated.

And upon what is there for us to rely? Only upon our Father in heaven.

There will be despair, hopelessness, in our ability to remedy the ills of our society and we can look only to HaShem to send His Mashiach to instill normalcy and Godly values in the lives of human beings before we self-destruct.

Sound Familiar?!

The Mashiach will propel the Jewish nation to the forefront in the battle to eliminate those ideas which will be perverting the world and dragging humanity down in the gutter.

Shabbat Shalom

Nachman Kahana

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