

of Achav:

וַיַּעַשׂ אַחֲזִיָּהוּ בֶן אַחָב רָע בְּעֵינֵי ה' (וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ אָבִיו וְאִמּוֹ אַחָב וְעֵזֶבֶל) וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ יֵרָבָם בֶּן נָבָט שֶׁבִּיְרָבָם

*And he (Achazyahu ben Achav) did evil in the eyes of God, and he went **in the way** of his father and mother (Achav and Eezevel) and **in the way** of Yeravam ben Navat who caused Israel to sin.*

Meaning: The word בְּדֶרֶךְ (b'derech) appears in the verse with regard to the person who was just outside the Azara on the 14 of Nissan, and the same word appears again in the context of the evil Yeravom ben Nevat.

What is the Baal Haturim telling us?

I submit:

The Gemara (Sanhedrin 102a) relates that HaShem appeared to Yeravam ben Nevat and said:

שׁוּבוּ בְּתִשְׁבּוּבָה וְנֵלְכֵם בְּגַן עֵדֵן, אֲנִי וְהַבֶּן יִשַׁי (מֶלֶךְ דָּוִד) וְאַתָּה. וְיֵרָבָם שָׁאֵל, "מִי יִהְיֶה רִאשׁוֹן, אֲנִי אוֹ דָּוִד? וְהַשֵּׁם עָנָה, "דָּוִד." וְעַל כֵּן יֵרָבָם עָנָה, "אִם כֵּן אֲנִי לֹא מְעִיָּקָה לְשׁוּבוֹת אוֹ לְלֶכֶת עִמָּךְ בְּגַן עֵדֵן."

"Return in teshuva and we shall walk in Gan Eden, Me and the son of Yishai (King David) and you. Then Yeravam asked, "Who will be first, me or David? And HaShem replied, 'David.' To which Yeravam said, "If so then I am not interested in repenting or walking with You in Gan Eden."

At that moment there was no one spiritually **further away** from Gan Eden than Yeravam, because he was **so close but refused to enter**! He rejected the opportunity afforded him by HaShem to enter the heavenly Gan Eden.

The Baal Haturim is teaching us that the man who on the 14th of Nisan stands before the entrance to the Azara but refuses to pass over the threshold, possesses a brain-dead and arid, parched neshama like that of Yeravam ben Navat.

English: Modern Day Talmudic Aramaic

Before Pesach, I was presented with a copy of a “Torah magazine”(?) called Kuntris, as stated on the front cover.

The issues dealt with are Torah related ones, and are penned by rabbis who are well known in yeshiva circles in the United States.

So far so good!

However, there is one “minor” detail that caught my eye almost immediately, which could not be a remarkable co-incidence, but an intentionally planned out editorial policy.

There is not one word in Ivrit in any of the “Torah” articles.

When a technical halachic term is cited by one of the rabbinic authors it is italicized; when a pasuk is cited it is transliterated. All the “Torah” articles authored by the American rabbis and poskin are Judenrein.

The very unsubtle message that the yeshiva world in the USA is telling us in Eretz Yisrael is: “You have your Yerushalayim in the Judean Hills, and we have our Yerushalayim in Boro Park, Lakewood and, in fact, anyplace where Torah is studied in the USA.

You have your Ivrit, but we have the modern day equivalent of the Talmudic Aramaic, which we call English.

You visit the military cemeteries to grieve at the graves of

your young soldiers, and we visit our summer bungalows in the Catskills and Poconos.

We are 10 hours away by plane from entering “Eretz HaChayim” – The Land of Life – however we prefer to remain outside the “Azara” of Eretz Yisrael.

You live surrounded by Jews and Judaism; we prefer to be neighbors with the other wonderful minorities in the USA.

We are not your brothers, we are brothers to Yeravam ben Navat.

If this sounds overly critical of the good Jews in the USA, it is in fact underrating the damage they are doing to Torah and our advance towards the geula shelaima – the final redemption of our people, as I will explain.

Are We a Nation or a Religion?

A Major demand of Israel in its “negotiations” with the Arabs here is that they recognize, in word and deed, that Medinat Yisrael is the national homeland of the Jewish people. The Arabs reject this condition with the claim that national homelands are a matter for nations, but the Jews are a religion not a nation, so they are not entitled to a “homeland”.

We know what the Arabs are and the degree of their intellectual “honesty” or honesty in general. But here they bring proof to their assertion that we are a religion, not a nation.

A nation implies a demarcated and designated land area. And for the most part a common language and daily mutual experiences and concerns. The Irish living in the USA are not

a nation of Irishmen, but they are a nation when living in the land mass called Ireland.

There are 4-5 million Jews living in the USA (half are not halacha valid Jews), including one million observant Jews. These observant communities maintain yeshivot and are led by rabbis, roshei yeshivot, grand rabbis and whatever, who turn their backs on the Promised Land at a time when the gates of the Holy Land are open to all. This would lead an impartial mediator to conclude that these rabbis believe and are living their belief that the Jews are a religion, not a nation.

One cannot overestimate the religious, national, political social, historic, military, emotional and educational disasters that these religious leaders in the galut are fermenting on the entire Jewish people now and in the future.

Yeravam ben Navat splintered the nation into Yisrael and Yehuda, eventually leading to the disappearance of the ten northern tribes and the weakening and isolation of the southern tribes.

I fear that we are witnessing a replay of the spiritually "distant" Yeravam, as the yeshiva world of the galut grows every more distant from the earthly Gan Eden of Yerushalayim and the Holy Land of Eretz Yisrael.

I fear that the publishers of the Kuntris magazine are voicing the will of the yeshiva world to cross the line of no-return, where opposition turns to hatred and hatred turns to destructive acts.

May Hashem have pity on the innocent people there who are incarcerated in the web of "da'at Torah" spun around them. May He bring them home before the hands of Aisav tear them apart, or his kiss of death drowns them in mass assimilation.

Chag Sameach!

Nachman Kahana

Copyright © 5774/2014 Nachman Kahana