

# Re'ah 5775

BS"D Parashat Re'ah 5775

Rabbi Nachman Kahana

## A Blessing Disguised as a Curse

Devarim 11,26-28:

:וְהָיָה כִּי יִשְׁמַע ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶת כָּל אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוֶּה אֵלֶיךָ

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אֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוֶּה אֵלֶיךָ וְעָשִׂיתָ אֵת כָּל אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוֶּה אֵלֶיךָ  
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*26) Perceive (comprehend)! I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse*

*27) The blessing if you obey the commands of the Lord your God that I command you today;*

*28) And the curse if you do not obey the commands of the Lord your God and turn from the way that I command you today by following other beliefs, which are foreign to you.*

It is apparent from these verses that there are three possible situations in the Creator-Yisrael relationship:

Verse 27) "...if you obey..." – life will be a blessing

Verse 28) "...if you do not obey..." – then life will be a curse

Verse 26) "Perceive! I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse", when life is a blessing and also a curse. Here the catchword "re'ah" (perceive, comprehend) directs us to discern that what is transpiring in front of our eyes is a blessing disguised as a curse.

For example:

The Israeli public and, certainly, our political leaders who are more privy to what is happening, are angry and frustrated at the double standard being applied by the "enlightened" peoples of the world against the Jewish State.

Many Western European institutions and personalities are leading the movement to isolate Israel by boycotts, divestments and sanctions. The problem is that they assert their moral indignation only against the Jewish State.

Where are the demonstrations on behalf of the Tibetans, Syrians, Kurds, Armenians, and Ukrainians? Where are the boycotts against the Chinese, the Russians, the Cubans or the Turks?

At "Black September" Jordan murdered more "Palestinians" than those who have died in Israel in 120 years; with no threats of BDS.

However if one has "Jewish eyes" (as apart from Irish eyes) he will discern that the double standard is a blessing in disguise!

What does that mean?

There is a powerful, subconscious compulsion standing behind the double standard which the Christian and Moslem countries are imposing against the Jewish State. It is their painful, destabilizing gut feeling based on the Jewish nation's quantitative and qualitative survival record that we are

indeed God's chosen people. Therefore, they must make every effort to prove that the Jews and the Jewish State are immoral and non-spiritual, and that not only are we not God's chosen but we are unworthy to be included in the family of nations.

The hatred shown to us by these anti-Semites is a glaring expression of their own awareness that we are indeed God's chosen people. For the more they attempt to negate the historical fact laid down at Mount Sinai and isolate us, the greater is their frustration as the Jewish State goes from success to super success, from victory to greater victory.

Here is HaShem's blessing – the visible truth – arising out of man's attempt to curse, as the prophet Yishayahu (54,17) said 2500 years ago:

אין ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה  
אין ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה ארבעה

*No weapon forged against you will prevail,*

*and every accusing tongue will be silenced*

*This is the heritage of the servants of God,*

*and this is their vindication from me,*

*declares the Lord.*

One more example of man's curse from which arises HaShem's blessing...

The State of Israel is weary and fearful with every military acquisition made by an Arab country. Since we cannot acquire the quantity of arms which fill the facilities of our neighbors' armies, we strive to maintain a qualitative edge. However, it is predicated in military circles that quantity becomes quality when the figures reach over three to one. A great pilot can expect to be victorious when combatting 2-3

enemy planes; beyond that number he is in serious trouble.

The total quantity of weapons given to our neighbors by the United States, Russia, England, France etc., is beyond 4 to one and in some case 10 to one compared to Israel.

Here is the curse! Where is the blessing that arises from the curse?

These great quantities of weapons are used daily to fan the fires of hatred between the Arabs and themselves. In Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Sinai desert, Yemen, Somalia, Mali, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, every day our Arab enemies murder their own Moslem Sunni and Shiite co-religionists and become less focused on Israel.

Even in times when large segments of the Jewish nation do not observe the Torah mitzvot and the quality of harsh justice (midat hadin) demands its full expression, our Father in heaven reluctantly decrees a curse upon His children, and very carefully and with great dignity imbeds a cloaked blessing in the decree.

What is happening today is a replay of sorts of what transpired in ancient Egypt, where the Torah (Shemot 1,12) states:

וַיִּכְרֹתוּ אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּחַרְבֹתָם; וַיַּמְרֹתוּ אֶת-בָּתְּלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּחַרְבֹתָם; וַיִּכְרֹתוּ אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּחַרְבֹתָם; וַיַּמְרֹתוּ אֶת-בָּתְּלֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּחַרְבֹתָם:

***But the more they (the Jewish people) were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread***

This will be the pattern of our history for the foreseeable future. We will face one danger after another, and in every case HaShem will extricate His children Yisrael. Until the time when the cumulative miracles being performed for the Jewish nation in Medinat Yisrael will leave no room for doubt

that we are and always were the exclusive nation of the Creator.

## **A Curse Disguised as a Blessing**

There is, however, a reverse situation arising from the verse 26) "Perceive! I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse", when life is a blessing and also a curse. Again the catchword "re'ah" (perceive, comprehend) directs us to discern that what is transpiring in front of our eyes can also be a curse disguised as a blessing.

For example:

A beautiful, spacious home in a nice Jewish neighborhood in London, Buenos Aires, Lawrence. Two cars in the driveway and an income of over a quarter million dollars a year. Children in day-schools, in universities. Daf Yomi with the chevra, with a great talmid chacham teaching. Pesach in any one of the high-end hotels which is not embarrassed to take from you 25-30 thousand dollars for the eight days.

Or, an adequate home or nice apartment in any one of the yeshiva communities, where your soul feels uplifted daily, especially under the tutelage of an outstanding rosh-yeshiva who gives credence to the belief that soon the Mashiach will come and bring an end to the Jewish suffering.

Here are two instances of blessings which conceal an extreme curse. Because the individuals involved have been sentenced to life imprisonment in the penitentiary of galut, with no chance of parole.

# The Land Chosen and Sanctified by the Creator

Parashat Re'eh is from beginning to end Eretz Yisrael.

Chapter 12,1 states:

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל מֹשֶׁה אֲמַר אֶל הָעָם כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ יְהוָה אֵל אֱבֹתֵינוּ  
:אֵל אֱבֹתֵינוּ אֵל אֱבֹתֵינוּ אֵל אֱבֹתֵינוּ אֵל אֱבֹתֵינוּ אֵל אֱבֹתֵינוּ

*Moshe Rabbeinu is telling the nation that this is the way of HaShem to be followed in Eretz Yisrael, the land that HaShem, the God of our fathers, has given us for an inheritance.*

Chapter 14,2:

וְעַתָּה אֵל אֱבֹתֵינוּ אֵל אֱבֹתֵינוּ אֵל אֱבֹתֵינוּ אֵל אֱבֹתֵינוּ אֵל אֱבֹתֵינוּ  
וְעַתָּה אֵל אֱבֹתֵינוּ אֵל אֱבֹתֵינוּ אֵל אֱבֹתֵינוּ אֵל אֱבֹתֵינוּ אֵל אֱבֹתֵינוּ

*For we are a hallowed people, chosen by HaShem to be His chosen nation because of our inherent spiritual nature.*

The Land was chosen and sanctified by the Creator. He chose the descendants of Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov to live in the Land and to serve as the torch-bearers of His presence in this world.

Happy and blessed are the descendants who have kept the faith by returning to the Land and fulfilling the call from Sinai with no lame excuses.

Shabbat Shalom,

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