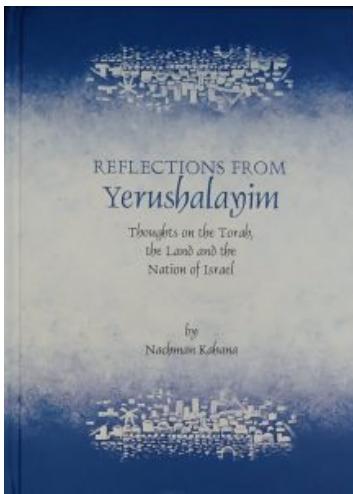


Reflections from Yerushalayim

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Thoughts on the Torah, the Land and the Nation of Israel

by Nachman Kahana



“Reflections from Yerushalayim” is a compilation of original philosophic and hashkafic perspectives, ideas and opinions that came to my mind over the years, or were culled from experiences with my family, rabbis, teachers and friends. Writing this book has helped me fulfill the verse in *Tehillim*:

אני מקבל ומקדים את כל דברי רבותי. עדויותי הן דברי פה. (תהילים 119:99)

I have gained insight from all my teachers. Your testimonies are my speech. (Tehillim 119:99)

I respect and admire all who sincerely live an authentic Jewish life, engaging in Torah learning and fulfilling of its mitzvot, even when their opinions and outlooks conflict with mine. Throughout my life, I have attempted to blend and integrate the various approaches within the Torah world, without identifying exclusively with any particular group or camp. I have tried to follow the path of Torah and *derech eretz* in my service of HaShem, using the Tanach, Talmud and *Shulchan Aruch* as lamps for my footsteps. However, the

decisive factor in fashioning my world view is what I have experienced and understood from events in the Holy Land that attest to the imminent Final Redemption of the Jewish nation.

I was born one year before the outbreak of the Holocaust. When I was six, our nation had already lost a third of its sons and daughters. When I was ten, the State of Israel was established by fewer people than the number who entered the Land of Israel with Yehoshua bin Nun. Yet, at the time of this writing, we are approaching an unprecedented population of seven million Jews, who have arrived here from a hundred different lands.

Having been a witness to this astonishing and ongoing miracle, I've made the central theme of this book the change that our generation is experiencing, as we observe the curtain of history falling on the exile and witness the "fallen daughter of Israel" (Amos 5:2) transforming once more into greatness.

After pondering the lofty events that have transpired so far in the State of Israel – all of them beyond my understanding – I find that the words of Shlomo HaMelech, the wisest of men, override all interpretations and theories:

-אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵינוּ-אֱלֹהִים :אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהִים ,אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהִים
.אֱלֹהֵינוּ-אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהֵינוּ ,אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ
אֱלֹהִים ,אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֱלֹהֵינוּ ,אֱלֹהֵינוּ-אֱלֹהִים-אֱלֹהִים ,אֱלֹהִים
.אֱלֹהֵינוּ-אֱלֹהִים ,אֱלֹהֵינוּ-אֱלֹהִים :אֱלֹהֵינוּ-אֱלֹהִים

Conclusion: After all is said and done, revere God and observe His commandments, for that is man's whole purpose. God will call every creature to account, be it good or bad."
(Kohelet 12:13-14)

The greater part of this volume contains my translation of essays I originally wrote in Hebrew and published under the

title *Hagut*. The thoughts and reflections presented here are organized into seven broad categories:

Part I:	HaShem and the Nation of Israel
Part II:	Life Lessons from Our Holy Ancestors
Part III:	Insights from Our Holy Days
Part IV:	Prayers, Blessings and Sacrificial Offerings
Part V:	The Land of Israel and the State of Israel
Part VI:	What Distinguishes the Jewish People from Other Nations
Part VII:	The Way a Jew Must Live

When taken together, these essays emphasize the infinite magnitude and scope of HaShem's involvement in our national and personal lives. I invite the reader to peruse the ideas presented and accept or reject them, for I recognize that no man has a monopoly on truth.

Although this book was edited, my use of language has not been compromised. These are my thoughts and my language and, therefore at the end of the day, my sole responsibility.

In closing, I offer my heartfelt gratitude to those who helped to bring this volume to fruition:

First and foremost, to my *ezer kenegdo* of sixty years, Feiga (Tzipora), for her insights and comments. Secondly, to Dr. Binyamin Tzvi (Robert) Friedman, to Mrs. R.O. (who requested anonymity), and Mrs. Rachel Lobel for their enduring patience with my run-on sentences and often unconventional ideas; and to Mrs. Uriela Sagiv who edited the work with diligence and expertise. And, finally, to Dr. Avraham and Vita Friedman of Efrata for their involvement in making this volume a reality.

It is my fervent hope that the readers will integrate the ideas presented here with their own understanding, for while

we live in a material world of action, it is the thoughts of man that initiate and direct those actions.

Nachman Kahana

Yerushalayim, Israel

Excerpt from the Foreword:

“Rabbi Nachman Kahana has produced a work that will engage the reader in an uplifting adventure of spirit. This sefer bears a message that is absolutely vital for the Jewish people now. There are no secrets here, there is no hidden agenda that lurks beneath the surface, and no subtle nuances that have to be discovered. Rabbi Kahana has a very clearly defined purpose that is the theme of this sefer and is evident from the very beginning. He pulls no punches, gives no quarter, brooks no excuses, and leaves no holds barred.”

Rabbi Dr. Sholom Gold

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Dean of Avrom Silver Jerusalem College for Adults

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