

Rosh HaShana 5778

BS"D Rosh Hashana 5778

Rabbi Nachman Kahana

5777 Wrap-up

The following is a synopsis of many of this year's (5777) weekly messages.

The messages were variations on one sole theme – the centrality of Eretz Yisrael to everything Jewish, and its corollary that the galut is dying and every Jew must return home.

Eretz Yisrael is not one more item in the 'tool shed' of a Torah true Jew; it is the shed itself. The Holy Land determines the quantity and quality of our mitzvot. There are quantitatively more mitzvot to be fulfilled here than in the galut, and the quality of a mitzva observed in the galut compared to its observance in Eretz Yisrael is like a weed to a rose.

Our land is the border crossing between this world and the next. And when we sinned, HaShem exiled us to the brutal galut where our books and bodies were burned and our thoughts perverted.

Eretz Yisrael is the focal point of Judaism; the holy precinct which is directly under the kisei hakavod – the holy throne.

35 Points for Contemplation

1) Chareidi ideology professes to represent authentic halachic Judaism, when in reality its position regarding military service exposes a profound theological flaw.

In theory, the Chareidi way of life is dedicated to upholding Halacha to its minutia. However, the most basic factor is blatantly omitted in their lives – HaShem!

In the Chareidi way of life HaShem exists in the siddur, in the Biblical and Talmudic texts, and in the material objects necessary for performing mitzvot. But where HaShem is not to be seen or felt in the miraculous historical movements and changes that surround our people in Eretz Yisrael. For them HaShem is missing from the reality of life. Yom Ha'atz'maut is a day of semi-mourning in many of their circles. They cannot see that the miraculous military victories of Tzahal are on a par and even more impressive than many of the great miraculous victories recorded in the TaNach.

2) There is an immutable connection between every Jew to the collective Am YIsrael, even one who is far from Torah observance. A Jew can never cease being a Jew no matter what he does, because one cannot erase his essence.

3) We are members of the small, elite group of people whom the Creator selected to be His "Chosen Nation". We are the descendants of Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov, the nation that crossed the Red Sea and stood at the foot of Mount Sinai to receive the Torah from the Creator Himself. Children of a nation 3500 years old whose blessings to humanity have no equal. It is the pride of being a Jew that echoes in one's soul proclaiming, "I am a prince, a son of HaShem, and as such how can I betray the 150 generations of my family, beginning with the revelation at Mount Sinai, who sacrificed so much that I could be born a Jew today?

4) The Mashiach will be a military person or a rabbi who is knowledgeable in military strategy and tactics. He will lead the nation to victory in the wars of Gog King of Magog. He will be a charismatic individual who will return the Jews to the Torah, and rebuild the Bet HaMikdash.

5) The Zohar, at the end of parashat Beshalach states that the descendants of Yishmael are destined to cause three major world wars; one on the sea, another on land, and the last close to Yerushalayim.

6) Were it not for Ya'akov and his children, the concept of God would have long been forgotten. Christianity would have diluted into atheism and Islam into avoda zara (idolatry).

7) Our father Ya'akov experienced two dreams. In the first, which occurred on the Temple Mount, Ya'akov saw HaShem's angels ascending to heaven and descending to this world. In the second dream, he sees how he can increase the number of animals in his herd. The first one with angels occurred when Ya'akov was in Eretz Yisrael; while in chutz la'aretz, even the great Ya'akov dreamt of animals and wealth.

8) The holy people of this land – dati and not – are living the words of our prophets that HaShem would restore us to this land. They are more “Jewish” than the most observant person in Lakewood, New Jersey, USA. We are the followers of Yehoshua Bin Nun who liberated the Holy land, but those in the galut are followers of the other 10 spies.

9) The Jews in galut are oblivious to the dangers they will be facing very soon. My heart goes out to them, but there is nothing we can do to move them as long as they follow the false messages of their leaders.

10) The Medina is the natural platform for HaShem to exhibit His love for the chosen people via the ingathering of Jews from 100 lands, the unprecedented military victories, the ongoing return to the Torah in all segments of our people, and

the unprecedented economic growth. Do not take lightly the fact that we are the only country in the Middle East that has a water surplus. Medinat Yisrael, through our holy army of Tzahal, is the 'extended arm' of HaShem aiming to implement the annihilation of evil in the world.

11) A Jew who remains in galut when the gates of the Holy Land are open, is testifying that he does not trust that HaShem will provide for his sustenance. It is a tacit admission that he doubts if HaShem will protect His people in the face of so many enemies. It is an acknowledgment of doubt in the legitimacy of the word of our prophets that HaShem will return us to the Holy Land. Where is the one eminent rabbi in the galut who will call out to his people to TRUST HaShem and leave the galut and return home?

12) The term Avoda Zara does not refer exclusively to nature or idol worship. It is a generic term for all beliefs that run counter to the will of HaShem. One can be an observant halachic Jew, yet be guilty of the most severe Avoda Zara, if he or she functions or adopts ideals and ideologies that clash with the will of HaShem.

13) A wise and sensitive rabbinic leader should be able to feel the direction of the winds of history, and coordinate his leadership according to its flow. To fight HaShem's dictates in a changing world is tantamount to Avoda Zara. To use the Torah as a tool to refute HaShem's initiatives is the Jewish version of an autoimmune disease.

14) There are spiritual leaders who act as an autoimmune disease within the nation by using the Torah to destroy the Torah and the fabric of Jewish unity and our return to Eretz Yisrael. Their false interpretation of Torah verses and Talmudic ideas, and the use of their material wealth to control the consciences of otherwise God-fearing people, are indeed a disease that must be eradicated or sidelined for the sake of our nation's future.

15) The yeshiva world in Israel must stop criticizing and belittling the Medina. Their rabbis and students must acknowledge that their entire existence and growth is dependent on the Medina.

16) Am Yisrael is not first among equals of the nations. We are the only nation with whom HaShem has an intimate relationship, and it is only through us, and because of us, that the Creator deals with what is known as "humanity".

17) In 1936, the Rabbi of Munkatz, Hungary published a book called Tikun Olam, in which he called for the Jews to refrain from going to Eretz Yisrael. The book opens with the names and letters of 150 leading Chassidic rabbis who endorsed the book's imperative that Jews were prohibited from returning to Eretz Yisrael until the arrival of the Mashiach. He and those who endorsed his position, opposed the creation of new settlements, even religious ones, and even attempted to convince Jews who were in the Land to return to Europe.

The murder of 6 million plus Jews in Europe, and the miraculous establishment of the Medina are it seems, insufficient to disprove the Munkatcher rabbi and his colleagues. For today, we hear in many Chassidic and yeshiva circles in the galut the very same voices repeating the same blind dangerous ideologies of yesteryear.

18) The organized mistreatment of Jews on the U.S. campuses will spread to your workplaces, to your streets, to your shuls, to your supermarkets and to your summer homes, until you will have no choice but to come home. So why wait when you can come here now with pride, rather than as refugees? It sounds audacious, insolent and quite impossible that this could happen in these "good old United States". But what is – happening now around the U.S. sounded audacious, insolent and quite impossible just two years ago.

19) The Reform and Conservative movements, after having

“successfully” completed their “scorched earth” crusade of destroying holy Jewish souls in the United States through the Shoah of intermarriage, are now attempting to repeat their “successes” in the Holy Land. These two breakaway destructive movements are attempting to infiltrate into the religious life here in a manner similar to an HIV virus that infiltrates into the nucleus of a healthy cell and then takes control of the cell from within.

20) I am opposed to recruiting anyone into the military who is not motivated, whether it be a Chareidi yeshiva or kollel student, a secular person, a pacifist or just an ordinary batlan (idler). To serve in the army of Israel is an immense privilege and a mainline mitzva. To protect, defend and preserve our ancient-new homeland after 2000 years of being trampled upon, crushed, oppressed and subjugated at the whim of any goy in the galut is a miracle of biblical proportions. We have a small but technologically advanced army able to defeat any and all enemies, with the help of HaShem, of course. From my own experience, I can say that whoever does not experience serving in Tzahal will have lost the opportunity to acquire or develop those attributes that contribute so much to the making of a ben-Torah: determination, endurance, firmness, resoluteness, and tenacity.

21) The war erupted in the early hours of Monday morning, the 25th of Iyar (June 5th) when Israel made a preemptive attack, destroying the air forces of Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan and Saudia. The ground war commenced. In 6 days we liberated Yehuda, Shomron, the Sinai Peninsula, the Golan Heights and Azza. On Wednesday, the holy soldiers of Tzahal liberated the Old City and for the first time in 2,000 years the Temple Mount was in our possession. Tzahal, with the aid of HaShem, did more in six days than what Yehoshua Bin Nun had accomplished in seven years!

22) The State of Israel is the first sign of the redemption of

our people. Only a fool can imagine that HaShem will send the Mashiach to a desert land empty of Jews. The Medina is performing what it was set about to do – to bring willing sons and daughters back to Eretz Yisrael.

23) There will be no overt Divine intervention at the early stages of the Mashiach's appearance. It will be up to the Jews in Eretz Yisrael to initiate actions against our enemies. The Jewish-Arab conflict will be resolved when the anger and rage of the Jews in Eretz Yisrael will reach a boiling point, as the Arabs grow in numbers and – audacity, impertinence and hatred, which will peak because of the rabid, fanatical religious incitement they are fed in their mass media, mosques and schools.

24) To illustrate the perversity of the situation in the galut, I put forward a simple question: Torah-observing people condemn a Jew (man or woman) who commits his/her future to a gentile rather than to a Jewish spouse. Why is this different from the more than one million observant Jews who refuse to cast their lot with their brothers and sisters in Eretz Yisrael; preferring to commit their future with the 330 million gentiles in the galut of the United States?

25) We are 6,377,000 Jews spread across 1255 cities, towns and villages.

In 2015, 195,000 Jewish children were born here. 3.2 million olim have arrived here in the last 68 years, including 30,000 last year. There are over 10 thousand batei kneset in Yisrael with a million and a half regular daveners, not to mention the thousands of mikvaot.

We have over 130,000 young men studying in the various yeshiva systems. Yearly, over 10,000 men and women come from the galut to learn in our yeshivot and seminaries.

2,187,296 children went to schools in the various educational systems here last year.

Annually, we produce thousands of new volumes in the many areas of Torah, an unprecedented production of Torah material.

And all this within the shadow of war, which drains human and material resources that could be put to productive use.

26) There are observant Jews in Israel (our brothers and sisters in the galut are a non-factor in the future history of the Jewish nation) who refuse to acknowledge and appreciate the miraculous nature of the Medina because it is not a Torah led State. How could it be when the major rabbis in the late 19th and early 20th centuries opposed Zionism, so that only a minority of the religious came here.

27) I am certain regarding the spiritual leaders in the galut and their great grandchildren. I am certain that the spiritual leaders will complete their years as observant Torah Jews, and I am equally certain that their great grandchildren will be married to gentiles. I am not certain if the communicable disease of assimilation will impact on their children and grandchildren.

28) My premise is that the rabbinic leaders of 120 years ago opposed the creation of a Jewish State in Eretz Yisrael because of the halachic challenges inherent in a religious State. Had they been here to see our lives today in the Medina, they would have surely joined hands with the secular Zionist organization. With the help of HaShem, the great poskim of today's Medina are proving that the halachic challenges have advanced and developed the Halacha in a way that has prepared the Medina for the advent of the Mashiach.

29) The "unique singularity" of a Jew cannot express itself in the galut. We in Eretz Yisrael are not family to the Jews in the galut. A family unit has shared experiences and emotions of gladness and sorrow, celebrations and disappointments. When a mortar shell falls in the western Negev, all Israel recoils; but it is not felt by a Jew in Kansas or in Johannesburg. A

nation is defined by shared borders and common language. The western border of Israel lies somewhere in the eastern Mediterranean. It does not extend to Providence, Rhode Island or to the Jericho Turnpike.

The basic bond that joins a nation together is its language. The mother tongues of the galut Jews are the languages of their birthplace; our children speak Ivrit.

We don't even share the same religion. The mitzvot which are in effect here are not to be found in the galut. Not only are the agricultural laws of Shemita, Teruma and Maaser not in effect in the galut, but even the determination of the fundamental laws of Shabbat and kashrut are different. The illustrious Ramban stated that HaShem gave the Torah to be fulfilled in Eretz Yisrael with the mitzvot in the galut – in effect in a preparatory capacity – so that one should not forget how the mitzvot are kept upon returning to the Holy Land.

30) In the book of Midrashim [expository explanations] called Yalkut Re'uvaini, it is brought that in the future, HaShem will gather in the Jews from the various exiles and provide them with fabulous wealth. And for those Jews who will have resided in Eretz Yisrael, in addition to great wealth, HaShem will open before them the gates of the earthly Gan Eden (Garden of Eden) and reveal the esoteric secrets of the Torah.

31) Our beautiful and holy children who serve here in defense of this holy land and its holy people, do not think of careers, shiny cars, or skiing weekends at Aspen; they are too busy cleaning their rifles and tank cannons in preparation for the next challenge.

32) RaMBaM (hilchot Melachim) states that the Mashiach will lead us in our final wars. That is to say the Mashiach will have a military background, which puts an entirely new perspective on who to expect will be HaShem's messenger to

redeem His people.

33) Discernment, insight and conscious awareness are the adhesives that bind the building blocks of Judaism.

34) Coincidence is HaShem's way of controlling the world while remaining anonymous.

35) Two questions every Jew should ask himself: Is there a grading system to know what HaShem thinks of us? If one hundred years ago, all Jews in the world were on my present level of observance, would there be any Jews in the world today?

Blessings to all Am Yisrael that just as we have seen the beginning of our final redemption, may we merit to see in this coming year the total fulfillment of the prophets' words.

Shana Tova

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