

Shabbat Yom Kippur 5771

BS"D Yom Kippur 5771

The year 5771 has begun, but it's yet too early to judge if it entered as a lamb or a lion – time will tell.

The alphabetical symbols for the numerals 5771 are:

✘

which, in my mind, serves as a double acrostic. The first is:

✘

May this year be one of mass aliya to our land

The second acrostic will come later.

But for now, the first will serve perfectly to express my blessings to all my brothers and sisters that HaShem should bless them with desire and ability to close the historical circle on their families' personal 2000 year exile and come home.

Dear friends: The following story is probably familiar to you from previous writings, but I repeat it here because its lesson should not be forgotten.

There was once a man who sought absolute truth, and it was his habit in every place to ask if anyone there knew the truth of life?

One townsman replied that when he was a young child, his father told him that on the mountain lived a woman who knew the truth. The man ascended the mountain where he saw a woman standing before a cave. She was the ugliest person he had ever seen. Her age could have easily been 100 or 120. Any beauty

which might have been hers was long ago lost, for she was a pitiful sight.

He asked her, "Are you the woman who knows the truth? She replied that she was the personification of truth in the world. The young man was so enraptured by the woman's wisdom and revelations on every subject. After several months, he informed her that he must return to civilization.

She agreed, and when he was about to leave, she said to the young man, "Remember to tell everyone that I am young and beautiful."

This story comes to teach us that often it is difficult (if not almost impossible) to face the blatant truth, but in our attempts to soften the sting, we often pervert the absolute truth.

Yom Kippur is "pay-up" time. During the year, HaShem "slackens the leash" to permit us a degree of freedom to choose our way in life. But then, comes Yom Kippur and we are required to confess our mistakes and request forgiveness.

A common illustration of this is your local supermarket. You enter, pushing a cart into which you are free to place any ridiculous assortment of items – and neither the manager nor any one of the staff will criticize or limit your choices. But at some point, you will stand before the cashier and remove each item – one by one – and pay!

When I will stand before HaShem on this Yom Kippur, as I have done in previous ones, I will employ the three sided triangle of teshuva: vidui (confession), charata (regret) and kabala le'atid (resolutions not to repeat these sins). But within the unfortunate totality of my shortcomings, I can truthfully state before the Almighty that I never denied the truth of the Torah, nor have I ever acted in any way that could be construed as negating one iota of the written or oral Torah.

Unfortunately, this claim cannot be made by people in the galut. Indeed, the more observant and the more erudite the individual the greater is the degree of denial of the basic concepts of the Torah. And when taken to its logical extreme, their conduct has life threatening implications for the Jews in Eretz Yisrael.

I will explain.

The fanatical, homicidal adherents of the Moslem religion, together with many other peoples and nations, demand that we withdraw from the Temple Mount. They point to the two imposing Moslem buildings on the Mount – the Golden Dome and the Al Aksa Mosque – each over 1000 years old; and conclude that we have no legitimate claim over the Mount. Their claim is corroborated by the historical fact that for 2000 years the Jewish presence in the Holy City was either sparse or non-existent.

The reply of observant Jews is that HaShem, Creator of heaven and earth, presented the Mount solely to the Jewish nation to be the eternal site of His holy temples – those of the past and the one in the future.

The same fanatical, homicidal adherents of the Moslem religion, together with many other peoples and nations, demand that we withdraw from the major areas of Biblical Eretz Yisrael, such as Yerushalayim, Shechem, Chevron, Bet-Lechem and Yericho in favor of a ragtag, unaffiliated, disengaged rabble who came to Eretz Yisrael 100 years ago to find work, and were artificially welded together under the name “Palestinians” by the leftist Israeli press with the compliance and endorsement of foreign gentile factors. They point to areas which were Arab villages in the past and are today kibbutzim or moshavot.

The reply of observant Jews is that HaShem, Creator of heaven and earth, presented the land solely to the Jewish nation to

be our eternal, sanctified homeland.

The fanatical, homicidal adherents of the Moslem religion, together with many other peoples and nations, claim that we Israelis are the last vestiges of imperialism in the world, demanding that each one of us return to his country of origin, and restore the land to its rightful owners – the Bedouin, the murderous Chamas and Chizballa, and Persia-Iran.

The reply of observant Jews is that HaShem, Creator of heaven and earth, presented this land solely to the Jewish nation to be our eternal sanctified homeland.

The claims of the gentile and our God-centered retort are stated in Rashi's first commentary to the Chumash (Book of Beraishiet). There are no surprises here. The Torah opens with the episode of creation in order to announce to the world – in every generation – that HaShem created all, so it is His right to do with the entire creation whatever He wishes. And it is His expressed wish that the entire Holy Land be the sole possession of the Jewish nation.

This is our tradition, our heritage, our belief and our hope. HaShem has presented this great gift to the Jewish people, and we are commanded to establish here a God-centered society based on Halacha, as expressed in the written Torah and expounded by the oral Torah.

Now, if your father presented you with a gift of a huge, fully-furnished mansion, with the latest model, silver-plated limousine in the driveway, with an olympic-sized swimming pool and two tennis courts in the back – would you not say “thank you” and move in?

If you would not move in, nor drive the car nor take advantage of any of the great luxuries, what would your father or the neighbors conclude?

The obvious ones are that either you don't particularly value

the gifts, or you harbor great animosity towards the giver. The third possibility of insanity is never far behind.

Je accuse! The message that resounds today to the gentile ear from any and every observant Jew in the galut, who casually or not casually dismisses the historic opportunity to rebuild our national-religious life in Eretz Yisrael is that the Jew does not value the gift (the Land) or he does not value the giver (Hashem). There is no escaping this conclusion.

The enemies of Israel have picked it up very quickly and it has emboldened them to attack, murder, destroy and plan for the liquidation of the Jewish presence in the Holy Land.

If learned rabbis, with hundreds of students, and Grand Rabbis with thousands of disciples stay away from Eretz Yisrael, then the land is obviously not an essential part of Jewish tradition. Hence the Jews who are here have no disclaimers to counter the historical facts of the Moslem and we are usurpers of land that does not belong to us, because the only real legitimate claim we have is based on the Almighty's gift to us of this land.

Had religious Jews come here en masse then world history would be today radically different. We would have today a religious government, and many of our internal problems and strife would be eliminated.

But because of some scratch in the brain, religious Jews in the galut have adopted the irrational, even Christian oriented (but comfortable), belief that HaShem opened wide the gates of the Holy Land to invite the Arabs, Druze, Beduins, Christians etc., while His chosen people will have to wait for the Mashiach.

I am so embarrassed whenever I hear a ben Torah from the galut expressing this idea. But I am mortified and humiliated to learn that he is quoting in the name of his spiritual mentor.

To return to the opening part of this message that deals with the second acrostic of



I suggest the following:



Meaning: May this year be one of serving the Almighty

The two acrostics complement each other. The first designates this year as one of great aliya to Eretz Yisrael, and the second designates the year to one of serving Hashem.

The Gemara (Ketuvot 110b) states that a Jew who lives outside of Eretz Yisrael is considered as if he worships idolatry.

May this coming year bring about a great wave of teshuva, when millions of Jews cease to worship idolatry as they return home to Eretz Yisrael.

Gemar Chatima Tova
Nachman Kahana