

Shlach 5780

BS"D Parashat Shlach 5780

Rabbi Nachman Kahana

Gifts That Only HaShem Can Give

The book of Ezra chapter 4 relates a very crucial principle concerning our relations with the gentile world with regard to spiritual matters. Koresh, the first monarch of the Persian empire, granted permission for the Jews to return to Eretz Yisrael and rebuild the Bet Hamikdash.

The leader who acted upon this edict was Zerubavel, grandson (or great grandson) of King Yehoyachin of Yehuda. Zerubavel returned to Yerushalayim with the “impressive?” number of 42360 Jews.

When the gentiles who were in Eretz Yisrael at the time volunteered their aid in rebuilding the Temple, Zerubavel and the other leaders rejected their offer:

וְהַגִּידְתִּי אֲלֵהֶם אֶת דְּבַר יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֲלַי לֵאמֹר
וְהָאֵלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדָם הָאֵרֶץ וְהַיָּם
'וְהָאֵלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדָם הָאֵרֶץ וְהַיָּם
:וְהָאֵלֹהִים אֲשֶׁר בְּיָדָם הָאֵרֶץ וְהַיָּם

It is not for you together with us to build a Temple for our God, we (the Jews) will build (it) for the God of Israel...

Zerubavel evoked the eternal principle that in spiritual matters "three is a crowd." In matters between the Creator of heaven and earth and his chosen nation, Am Yisrael, no gentile hand is to be tolerated.

The facts speak for themselves:

Every entry of Am Yisrael into the land was accompanied by bitter fighting with our neighbors. HaShem could have made our entries a bit more elegant than the heartache of war and bloodshed, but the goal was to distance all unwanted intruders when Am Yisrael returns home.

When Yehoshua bin Nun entered the holy land, the Girgashi nation ran for their lives (some historians claim that they ended up in today's Morocco) while the other resident nations chose to fight.

Zerubavel and his generation did not succeed in completing the Temple's construction, which was subsequently accomplished by Ezra the Scribe and his generation. However, their efforts were fraught with danger and duress from the gentiles, so much so that the book of Ezra relates that the workers would alternate days, when one group worked the other would stand guard, armed with weapons.

In 1920 the San Remo international conference recognized the Jewish people's right to a national homeland in Eretz Yisrael, which was verified by the League of Nations in 1922 and again recognized as the rights of the Jewish nation on November 29th 1947 by the United Nations. Despite all these international agreements that the Jewish people have the right of nationhood in the holy land, on the 6th of Iyar 5708, the day following the declaration of statehood of Medinat Yisrael, we were invaded by 5 standing armies of Arab nations, while we with our ragtag militias of Hagana , Palmach, Etzel and Lechi stood between the life and death of the yishuv here.

We became sovereign over the holy city on the 28th of Iyar

during the Six Day War against Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq and other bedfellows of evil. No foreign hand was involved, it was mehadrin glatt kosher fighters of Am Yisrael, their blood, their sacrifices.

The principle evoked by Zerabavel has proven to be true over the ages: that in matters of Eretz Yisrael it is only HaShem who is involved.

HaShem is biased, discriminating, one-sided, partial and the P word – prejudiced toward his chosen people. HaShem presents and we receive. Much like a chatan who gives his betrothed a ring under the chuppah, there is no place for a third party.

Annexation

The issue competing with the Covid 19 crisis here in Israel is the US plan to bring everlasting peace and prosperity to the people of the holy land. The problem is that the plan has more holes than a piece of swiss cheese. Indeed, there are pros and cons, doubts and maybes, but it's a dangerous game of rush-in roulette.

The plan's details are disastrous for Medinat Yisrael, as they say, the devil is in the details.

I want to focus on the seemingly positive side. the United States, with all its prestige and influence in the world, will stand by us and support our annexation of 30% of what we justifiably liberated in the Six Day War.

That's a good thing. However even if the plan would give us 100% sovereignty over 100% of the area, I would demonstrate against it for the reason I stated above – Only HaShem gives us Eretz Yisrael and there shall be no gentile hand involved

in the gift. That which HaShem gives is permanent. What the hand of man gives is temporal and very untenable.

However, on the pro side, there is a strong argument for annexation even under the bad proposed plan. The gentile world was always sensitive and knowledgeable as to what is important to the Jewish people and they would historically pinpoint the issue and attempt to undermine our rights. So, the very fact that so many gentile countries are opposed to our annexation is an indication that we should annex now!

So between the principle that we should limit the gifts of Torah and Eretz Yisrael from HaShem exclusively, and therefore reject the American plan and their help, as opposed to the principle that if the gentiles are upset with our annexation it is a sign that we should annex – and now; what should we do?

The answer is crystal clear. Reject the American plan so as to remove them from the process, and then declare annexation as Jewish – Israeli right by virtue of our historic and Biblical rights to the land from our sole benefactor, the God of Israel.

Shabbat Shalom,

Nachman Kahana

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