

Tetzaveh 5772

BS"D Tetzaveh 5772

Part A:

☒ *And you shall make sacred garments for your brother Aharon to enhance his position with honor and glory (Shemot 28:2)*

In contrast to the 99% of all other societies – non-religious Jews and Gentiles – who strive to achieve financial independence and physical pleasure, our holy Torah impels us to strive for spiritual perfection.

However, when taking stock of our spiritual achievements, one cannot escape the dismal thought that not only are we light-years away from our goal, but the trajectory of our efforts is not even directed towards spiritual greatness – let alone perfection.

Why are we failing? Why do millions of Jews prefer to be entrapped in the never ending spiritual and often physical quicksand of the galut, rather than take part in the “spring-time” of the revival of the Jewish nation in our ancestral homeland?

Why are the government bodies in Israel embarrassed to be patriotic, as they refrain from officially annexing all of Yehuda, Shomron and the Golan to the Medinah at large?

How did we give birth to unabashed traitors, here and abroad, who labor tirelessly in undermining the independence of the Jewish State?

Who is responsible for the J Street crowd, as well as the Jew Street crowd that sends emissaries to Teheran to hug and kiss the modern day Haman?

Why can't our rabbis, of the many persuasions that make up our society, get together in a show of solidarity to exhibit the unity of Am Yisrael?

How is it that so many young people who dedicate their lives to Torah study are oblivious to the grand mitzvah of physically defending the State of Israel; both those who live in Eretz Yisrael, as well as the young Jews in the galut?

Why do we incarcerate Arab terrorists who have murdered or intended to murder Jews, rather than execute them, as the Torah law prescribes?

Why do thousands of Chabad "shulchim" go to the "ends of the earth" to feed some Jewish straggler a kosher meal, while ignoring the historic call of reaching out to all the Jews in Eretz Yisrael who have distanced themselves from Torah?

The list of our failings is as long as the Jewish exile itself!

A social scientist or professor of anthropology would provide answers to all these questions based on a myriad of factors, such as gentile influences, socioeconomic elements and remoteness from Torah centers and Torah study.

They would certainly reject the claim that there is one central, underlying reason for all our ills ; which I believe there is.

One can find it in a Mishna in Bava Metzia 83a:



Rabbi Yochanan ben Matya instructed his son to hire some Jewish day-laborers. In the work agreement with them, his son agreed to provide them with "food". When he reported back to his father that the laborers had arrived and that they would be getting lunch, Rabbi Yochanan instructed his son to

quickly insert in the work contract, before they begin working that the menu is not open ended, but rather will consist of bread and some vegetables.

To his son's bewildered look, Rabbi Yochanan explained that it was necessary to enumerate what they would be receiving because, in an opened ended agreement, the laborers would have the right to demand an elaborate, copious feast in the manner that was served in the palace of King Solomon.

Rabbi Yochanan explained, that despite the fact they were mere field laborers, they were in fact the descendants of Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov; and as such they were nobility and could have demanded to be treated as such.

A remarkable story, indeed!

But even more remarkable is the birkat hamazon (grace after meals prayer) that we recite after eating bread, and even more puzzling is the innocent and oblivious manner in which we recite the following



May HaShem bless us as He blessed our fore-fathers Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov with wealth equal to what You gave to them all.

Are there no limits tochutzpa? Who are we to even contemplate the thought that HaShem should shower each and every one of us with the unending gifts He showered upon our righteous fore-fathers? *"With wealth equal to what You gave to them all"*, indeed!

We, the Jewish nation, and only we, have been designated by the Creator of heaven and earth as His chosen people. Indeed, we and the Torah are the core purpose for the entire creation, as stated by the Ramban (Beraishiet 1:1) and many other

sources.

HaShem is the absolute King and Father. We are His children and servants. Each of us is a prince or princess, and Eretz Yisrael is the palace of the King.

When the Jewish people sinned, HaShem exiled us from His palace and scattered us to the four corners of the world. Exile from home, per se, is a horrible punishment, but the ultimate punishment was what the exile did to us. The brutality, torment, persecution, cruelty, subjection and murder merged together to make us forget that we were like Yosef – princes in exile.

The Gemara (Sota 36b) relates that Paro's advisers rejected the idea that a slave could become the viceroy of Egypt, because in their culture one who was born into slavery forever remained a slave. Paro replied that he discerned in Yosef an aura of majesty and nobility that proved that Yosef was sold into slavery but was not born a slave. The aura of majesty that Paro observed applied to all the brothers, who were the descendants of Avraham, Yitzchak and the children of Ya'akov. As cited above regarding Rabbi Yochanan ben Matia.

As young boys in New York, my brother and I were members of the Betar youth movement that stressed the concept of Hadar; conducting oneself as nobility with honor and pride because we were Jews. The Betar anthem contained the following verse:



Hadar

Jew, even in destitution you are a prince.

Even as a slave or vassal you were born a prince, adorned with the crown of David.

In light and in darkness wear the crown of glory with pride.

We forgot that we are HaShem's children, and that is the root cause for all the curses that befall us to this very day.

The Gemara (Chagiga 5b) teaches that there is an inner room (as it would be) in the heavens, where HaShem enters every day and cries over the glory and honor which were taken from us and transferred to the nations.

It is estimated that every year 150,000 Jews leave the fold to marry out. 3500 years of Judaism cannot combat a ham sandwich or a McDonald cheeseburger. Why?

Because our religious leaders have lost their pride in being Jewish. And when the leader is devoid of Jewish pride how can we make claims against the common man?

When the gates of the Holy Land are open wide to gather in her children, but so many religious leaders close their ears to the call of our mother Rachel (Yirmiyahu: chapter 33) and turn their backs on the call of history, why shouldn't Marvin marry Christine?

When the rabbi in the shtiebel on Avenue L (for example) in Brooklyn, never mentioned the mitzva of living in HaShem's holy land, how can we hold a grudge against the Goldbergs, who spend Saturday skiing in Colorado?

When one is satisfied with a crumb, why should HaShem bother to give him a steak?

When HaShem commanded Moshe in our parsha

 *And you shall make sacred garments for your brother Aharon to enhance his position with honor and glory (Shemot 28:2)*

He intended that all Jews, for all time, would stand erect in "honor and glory" as the chosen of HaShem, just as the Kohen Gadol (High Priest) is the chosen of HaShem. But that has not and is not now happening!

Rabbeinu Ba'cha'ya writes on Devarim chapter 32



And this is the virtue of Eretz Yisrael for it is the palace of the King. It is called "the land of HaShem" and "the domain of HaShem", while every place out of the land is called "tent of Evil", and in the words of our rabbis (tractate Gitin 8b) "Land of the other nations" which are tamei (impure) as are their soil and air.

I am fully aware that the Jewish genius in the galut will find answers to challenge my premise that on the 5th of Iyar 5708, the day the State of Israel was proclaimed, a decree was issued from the shamayim (heavens) that the galut was drawing to a close, and all Jews must return home.

But at the end of the day, when all is said and done, the final word will be that of King Shlomo, the wisest of men, who at the end of Kohelet (12:13), after all of Shlomo's wisdom was set forth, said:

 *In conclusion: After all has been heard – fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.*

It is the challenge of every Jew to achieve spiritual heights. The level of one's kiddusha (sanctity) will be decided, as in the words of King Shlomo, by the degree that he or she "fears God".

Excuses are good for comforting one's conscience, but they are valueless on the Day of Judgment, as King Shlomo states in the final verse of Kohelet:

For HaShem will bring every action into judgment, with every hidden thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

Part B:

I am writing this on the 7th of Adar, the date when Moshe Rabbeinu was born and 120 years later, passed on to the next world.

We know that Moshe's holy neshama left this world when he was on Har (Mount) Nevo, in the tribal area of Reuven, and HaShem interned Moshe's body in the tribal area of Gad, but no person ever knew the exact place.

It is for this reason that the Medina has set aside this day to be the national day of remembrance for the approximate 500 fallen Israeli soldiers whose places of burial are not known.

For all of Moshe Rabbeinu's frustration and mental anguish, caused by the truculent and abstinent Jewish nation, he desired only one thing from Hashem – to enter Eretz Yisrael. However, the gates of Eretz Yisrael and the opportunity to fulfill its respective mitzvot were hermetically closed before Moshe.

Our rabbis have taught that Moshe appealed to HaShem 515 times to enter the land

– the gematria [numerical equivalent] of the word  and was rejected by HaShem 515 times.

I very often wonder what Moshe Rabbeinu's reaction would be at the chaos and confusion that exist today in the minds of religious leaders and their followers in the galut.

On the day following a Yom Tov, there are many diverse minyanim (groups of worshipers) occurring simultaneously at the Kotel.

There are Chassidic groups from Yerushalayim, Bnei Brak, etc., groups of Orthodox tourists celebrating the additional day of Yom Tov as practiced in the galut, with its particular liturgy and Torah reading, groups of young men from various yeshivot,

and a minyan composed of soldiers carrying their weapons under their talitot.

If Moshe Rabbeinu would be there, which minyan would he choose to join?

There is not a shadow of a doubt in my mind, that when I would be reciting the Kohanic blessing, standing before me would be the young men in uniform and Moshe Rabbeinu.

Shabbat Shalom,

Nachman Kahana

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