

Vayaitzai 5773

BS"D Parashat Vayaitzai 5773

Part A:

As this is being written, the army of Israel is poised to perform a Torah mitzva of "mechi'at Amalek" – by destroying a great number of arch evil people of Amalek. However, after pounding the Arabs of Gaza for 8 days, our government caved in to Obama pressure to save his Moslem brethren, as was dictated to us in no uncertain terms by his Secretary of State. She place the revolver on the table and said "stop". So the mitzva will be postponed for a more auspicious opportunity.

The feeling among the majority in the country is to destroy Hamas and its patron Iran, who are the Jewish people's most vicious enemies since Hitler.

The international community barely raises an eyebrow when thousands of missiles and shells fall on the cities and villages of Israel, or even when thirty thousand people are slaughtered in Syria; but when the Jewish people just begin giving a potch (Yiddish for a slap) to a goy they stand on their hind legs and bark in the name of peace.

In the middle of all this, I received a letter from a gentleman in the NY area who is obviously annoyed at the messages I write and the views I espouse. Were I in his place, I too would be very unhappy to be told by a rabbi in Eretz Yisrael, backed up with halachic sources, that I must leave my homeland, my birthplace, my father's home and place of employment. Although in light of the examples I saw in my parents' home, I would have certainly been more fastidious in my choice of words. On the other hand, I respect his emotional outbreak which proves that, at least, he cares.

As we all know, Hashem's timing is impeccable. And indeed this

letter presents the perfect opportunity to explain to the gentleman and to many others who share his feelings, about the great abyss that exists between the Jews in Eretz Yisrael and those yet in the galut.

He writes:

“How he (meaning me) is allowed to publish his diatribe against his fellow Jews, wish them harm just because they have not made Aliya is an embarrassment.

The assertion that God blew a hurricane into NY as a direct result of the fact that we don't live in Israel is so ridiculous that words cannot express (deleted)... The same argument that he made for Jews in America being punished by God by hurricanes could be made for Israelis that are subject to rocket attacks. Maybe God is using Hamas rockets as his way of saying Jews should not live in Israel.

Since I'm sure Rabbi Kahana speaks to God “face to face” on a regular basis, he can explain that to us”.

Three parts to the letter:

1. I wish harm upon the Jews who do not come to Eretz Yisrael.
2. Just as one can conclude that the calamities that befall the Jews in the galut are HaShem's warning to them to leave the galut, one can conclude that the calamities that befall the Jews in Eretz Yisrael are HaShem's warning to us to leave Eretz Yisrael.
3. That I speak to HaShem “face to face” on a regular basis.

1- His first assertion, that I would wish harm to any Jew, is hysterical and unworthy of a reply.

2- The calamities that befall the Jews in the galut are indeed HaShem's punishments and warnings to them, just as they are to us in Eretz Yisrael. But here the comparison abruptly ends, in

light of the vastly different goals these difficulties are intended to achieve.

HaShem's call to the Jews in the galut is to rise up and move. The galut is coming to an end and Hashem, our Father, is showing the way towards physical and spiritual salvation.

HaShem's call to the Jews in Eretz Yisrael is similar – to rise up and move. To rise from the particular stage in the geula process where we are now, towards a higher stage of redemption.

In Iyar 5708, the UN partitioned Eretz Yisrael, with the Jews receiving a thin sliver of land, incompatible with establishing a modern country, and certainly too small to contain all the Jews in the world. HaShem then brought upon the young and weak Medina what appeared to be an overwhelming "calamity" when seven Arab armies invaded the tiny land. At the end of the war, Israel had leveraged the "calamity" into doubling our area to what it was to be until June 6, 1967.

During the 19 years leading up to 1967, the Medina absorbed about 2 million Jews and established the governmental ministries and groundwork for a modern state.

In 1967, we reached a plateau in our development and the time came to change gears and expand to a higher quantum level. In order to arouse us to move, HaShem brought upon us another seeming "calamity", when Egypt, Syria and Jordan united to throw us into the sea. At the End of the Six Day War the Medina leveraged the "calamity" to include the Shomron, Yehuda, the Golan Heights and the entire Sinai Peninsula.

The holy soldiers of Tzahal were urged on by HaShem's angels, however our political leaders did not follow through on the great miracle. The time was perfect to annex the newly liberated areas into Medinat Yisrael, from the northern tip of the Golan to Sharm el Sheikh at the south of the Sinai Peninsula, and everything in between. They disappointed HaShem

and generations of Jewish history by shying away from their historical obligations by not annexing these areas of Biblical Eretz Yisrael.

So, we have now been on this plateau for the last 45 years, and HaShem is signalling us to rise again and enter into a yet higher quantum level of geula.

To summarize: The calamities in the galut are intended to move the Jews horizontally, from the lands of their exile to Eretz Yisrael, whereas the calamities in Eretz Yisrael are intended to move HaShem's chosen people physically and spiritually vertically up the ladder that Ya'akov saw in his dream in our parasha, to a more advanced stage in the geula process.

3- I indeed speak to HaShem "face to face" on a regular basis, but not any more than the writer of the letter – we, and all observant Jews, speak to HaShem "face to face" three times a day – Arvit, Shacharit and Mincha.

But we in Eretz Yisrael, despite what appears to many of us here as being too slow or paranoically cautious, understand what HaShem is saying, whereas our brothers and sisters in the galut do not, because HaShem speaks to his children in Ivrit not in English or Yiddish!

Part B:

There are two lessons that seemingly "leap" at one when learning this parasha:

1) We will be reading in the parasha of Ya'akov's dream on the Temple Mount, when HaShem promised him overwhelming material and spiritual abundance:

Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I

will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."

But Ya'akov's reaction is amazingly out of place, for he says to HaShem:

Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will watch over me on this journey I am taking, and will give me food to eat and clothes to wear so that I return safely to my father's house..."

Why did Ya'akov ask for bread and clothing, when he was promised great wealth? Additionally it would seem that he is making his devotion to HaShem conditional:

Then the Lord will be my God

But, in fact, Ya'akov's reaction was visionary. He is saying to HaShem, "If You will give all these things to us, I cannot be certain that my future generations will know how to deal with them and deal with You. Therefore, I ask for only bread to eat and clothing to wear, not wealth. By so doing, I will be sure that Hashem will always be in the hearts of my children".

The lesson here is that the amenities of life offered in many lands of our exile, conflict with the ideological responsibilities placed by HaShem on the shoulders of His Chosen People.

Every Jew is born at the starting line of a fast track that finishes at infinity; and we are expected to break the ribbon there in the 70, 80 or 120 years which are allotted to us.

Courage and determination in keeping HaShem's commands are the qualities which have brought the Jewish people to where we are today, after 3500 very trying years. These are the qualities

HaShem bestows on those who choose to carry the torch that was first ignited by the fire that Avraham held on his way to the akaida (Beraishiet 22:6), and which was added to by the fires on Har Sinai and by the candles of the Maccabeim.

It is by the light of that torch that we have returned here to rebuild and defend our land and restore our Torah way of life, so brutally interrupted two thousand years ago.

2) In the parasha, Ya'akov has two dreams: while yet in Eretz Yisrael, he dreamt of angels ascending and descending to and from the heavens, but in Lavan's home in chutz la'aretz Ya'akov dreamt of how to increase his wealth through sheep and goats.

In Eretz Yisrael we dream of angels, in the galut we dream of wealth and animals.

And as we well know, the essence of a person is expressed in his dreams.

Shabbat Shalom

Nachman Kahana

Copyright © 5773/2012 Nachman Kahana