

Vayigash 5778

BS"D Parashat Vayigash 5778

Rabbi Nachman Kahana

Paro welcomed the Hebrews to Egypt

The most surprising and even amazing reaction exhibited by any of the personalities in our parasha is that of Paro (45,16) when he was informed that Yosef's brothers had arrived in Egypt (45,16):

16 When the news reached Paro's palace that Yosef's brothers had come, Paro and all his officials were pleased.

17 Paro said to Yosef, "Tell your brothers, 'Do this: Load your animals and return to the land of Canaan,

18 and bring your father and your families back to me. I will give you the best of the land of Egypt and you can enjoy the fat of the land'."

This was surprising and amazing in light of the repugnance that Egyptians felt towards Hebrews, as stated when the brothers were brought to eat in Yosef's home (43,32):

32 They served him (Yosef) by himself, the brothers by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because Egyptians could not eat with Hebrews, for that is detestable to Egyptians.

and in 46,33-34:

33 When Paro calls you in and asks, 'What is your occupation?'

34 you should answer, 'Your servants have tended livestock from our boyhood on, just as our fathers did.' Then you will be allowed to settle in the region of Goshen, for all shepherds are detestable to the Egyptians."

But from here we get a glimpse of HaShem's intervention in directing human affairs without negating the principle of free choice, as follows:

Why was it necessary for the parasha to inform us of the financial transactions that occurred during the initial years of famine? That during the first year, Yosef concentrated all the county's currency (gold and silver coins) in the hands of Paro. In the second year, the Egyptians purchased seed and food from the central government by paying with all their livestock; in the third year the people sold themselves and their lands to Paro in return for seed and food.

The Egyptians were farmers who detested the culture of livestock breeding, except for horses which were used for war. But suddenly at the end of the second year of famine, Paro finds himself in control of all the nation's livestock with no one to manage the millions of animals. At this crucial time in Paro's governing, Yosef's brothers arrive on the scene. Paro is informed that they are masters in managing livestock.

Paro was elated that the brothers would now create a system for dealing with this national problem, even turning it into a profitable venture. He did not suddenly become a Judeophile, he gave them the choice grazing area of the country to fulfill their task.

HaShem did not dictate what Paro should do. HaShem directed the timing of events that led to the obvious rational decision that He wished to come about in history.

HaShem's timing is the major factor in human decision-making in every generation, as He guides the Jewish people through the difficult challenges of galut, He is working overtime in our generation.

The contemporary Egyptians, Jordanians, Saudis and others detest the Jews and the Jewish state. However, HaShem has timed it so that their fear of Shi'at Iran is greater than their hatred of the Jews. So, we Israelis find ourselves being wooed and solicited by our enemies.

In conclusion: As in the words of King Solomon, "There is nothing new under the sun... after all is said and heard, the essence of life is to be in awe of HaShem and to follow His commandments".

FAKE NEWS – FAKE JEWS OR REAL JEWS WITH FAKE BELIEFS

Many years ago, when I was young and naive, I was interviewed twice by different newspapers here and once by radio, which was recorded and edited. In all three interviews, my words and intentions were misrepresented to serve the interests of the interviewer or his editor.

I learned my lesson. Since then I have refused all offers to be interviewed. The well-known television interviewer, Peter Jennings, came to my home and requested an interview regarding Yerushalayim in its many aspects. I consented on the condition that it be live and unedited. He claimed that it was against company policy. He left disappointed. Several months later, he called again and received the same answer. He has since passed

away.

Perversion of the truth, distortion of reality, aberration of the intentions of well-meaning people, intentional creation of a hostile atmosphere and attitude towards a person or an ideal is in one word – sheker.

Goyim; Christians and Moslems are masters of sheker when it comes to Jews. The top experts came out of Berlin with the big lie that eventually ended with people being incinerated in death camps.

President Trump coined the term “fake news”. I would humbly borrow a leaf from his book and say we suffer from “fake Jews” and from “real Jews” who possess fake beliefs.

From the time when HaShem appeared at Mount Sinai to this day, our nation has suffered from “real Jews” with fake interpretations of Judaism. Its first manifestation was the episode of the Golden Calf. Korach contributed his distortion, as did the ten scouts who convinced the people not to enter the holy land.

It continues to this very day in the galut. When the Reform movement recognizes the offspring of a Jewish father and gentile mother as Jews, they create “Fake Jews”. On the other side of the coin, there are the “Real Jews” who cling to “Fake” presentations of Judaism. Such as the deniers of the most fundamental truth of the Torah: that our status as God’s chosen people is not based on human rights or on liberal equality for all (as long as one’s neighbor is not black), but on living a Torah life in Eretz Yisrael. Shabbat in the public domain and halacha governing industry, the military, import and export, the medical field. In short, in every human endeavor and discipline.

“Real Jews” with “fake” beliefs are to be found even among people who fulfill the mitzvot, but whose practical application of Torah is perverted. The fact that with rabbinic

consent Jews are still in the galut after the establishment of Medinat Yisrael, whose first law was the “Law of Return”, is a distortion of the will of HaShem – “Real Jews” with fake beliefs.

Shabbat Shalom,

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