

Why Are the Builders Crying? (2024)

While some are looking for flights to leave Israel, many travelers have tried to find their way back home to Israel as practically all airlines have canceled their flights due to threats from Iran. Like a concerned husband I prayed that I would not lose my ticket home. Hashem doesn't give everyone a ticket to Israel but He gave me one twenty-one years ago. I am always nervous to leave and only if I am forced to leave for a very important mitzva do I leave and beseech Hashem to come with me and bring me back safely.

The truth is He gives everyone a ticket but not everyone 'wants' a ticket. When I was overseas someone asked me 'So have you moved back home?' 'God forbid', I replied. When questioned with concerned looks 'How is it over there?' I said 'Fantastic' and they looked at me puzzled. 'Fantastic?'

Certainly, there is war. Certainly, there is tragedy and hostages living in hell and soldiers risking their lives trying to find them. But there is also life and joy and growth. In the exile everything is comfortable. Soft beds, soft towels, soft toilet paper, peace and quiet, lots of space and hardly any challenges. It's like being in the spa every day. Or like my friend Rav Twerky says, the only one with no challenges is a dead person.

In Israel you need to work more and sweat more and have more challenges. But you are with your people and it is within these challenges and adversities that we grow and live longer and have much more quality and meaning in each day.

Benzi Gopstein writes in his daily quotes from Rav Kahane:

“Precisely because of this illusion that in exile there would be security when there was danger in the Land of Israel, God's anger was provoked, and he condemned them to death in the wilderness, and those who were afraid that they would die in the land of Israel they actually died in the desert, while their children entered the Land of Israel and lived. To tell you that the only security for Israel is in the Land of Israel, while the exile is their burial place. And so the sages said: “And they shall dwell upon it securely, and they shall build houses and plant vineyards and dwell securely when I execute judgments against all those who plunder them from all around them, and they shall know that I am the Lord their God.” Yechezkel 28:26 (Rabbi Kahane)

Those who belong to Israel for better or worse understand this feeling. I am very grateful to be home again so that I can now hurry to the Har Habayit and add my small prayer to the others in the congregation. It may be the prayer that tips the balance and is needed. This is the true democracy that Hashem created. One must always be concerned about the scales of justice and consider that the mitzva they do today could tip the scales in Israel's favor.

Binyamin Kahane writes that to mourn the destruction of the Temple when we lived in the exile was a proper thing to do. However now that the Temple is in our hands how can it be that we are not building it? He mourns that we are still mourning. He mourns not for the past but the present, because we are now masters of our fate and we refuse to throw out our enemies and

rebuild it. The Churban of today that occurred on Shavuot continues to afflict our Nation from the tragedies of October seventh to every day another young soldier's life is taken. The rebuilding is also today. There is no time left to weep, it is a time to build.

As Moshe reviews our history in Parsha Dvarim it would be advisable to take note of our recent history as well. After the great miracles of Egypt and the splitting of the sea Israel experienced something no other generation experienced - receiving the Torah. After we sat in yeshiva by Har Sinai Hashem told us, it's enough (Rav Lachem), you are now ready to conquer the Land.

"The Lord our God spoke to us in Horeb, saying, 'You have dwelt long enough at this mountain'	הֲנִיָּה אֶלֶה־יְנוּ דִבֶּר אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּהַרְבֵּ לְאֹמֶר רַב־לָכֶם שְׁכַת בְּהָרִי הֲנִיָּה
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(Dvarim 1:6)

Among the many miracles we witnessed He added even another miracle by shortening the eleven-day journey to Israel into three days. Despite all these open miracles we failed the tests and angered Hashem with our provocations. Forty years later again Hashem said 'Rav Lachem.' The punishment is enough. Now it is time once again to conquer the Land with a new generation.

You have circled this mountain long enough; turn northward.	רַב־לָכֶם כִּבֵּ אֶת־הָהָר הַזֶּה פָּנּוּ לָכֶם צָפֹנָה
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(Dvarim 2:3)

Rav Biderman brings down:

There was a narrow river, called Zered Nachal, between the desert and Eretz Yisrael, but Am Israel couldn't cross it without Hashem's help. The Midrash (Bamidbar Rabba 19:24) states that this brook, was wide, an amah. "But they couldn't cross over it for thirty- eight years until Hashem said (2:13) "And now get up and go over the Zered Brook.' And it states (2:14)'The days that we traveled from Kodesh Barneia until we crossed Zered Brook were thirty-eight years.'" This is because without Hashem's help, one cannot pass over a river as narrow as an amah. On the other hand, with Hashem's help, one can cross the sea.

If we review our own recent history, we had a generation that saw great open miracles in the six-day war of 1967. Hashem went before us reconquering our Lands and caused our enemies to flee in fear. Despite the open miracles we invited our enemies back, rejected Hashem and continued to provoke him. We invited another Tisha B'av by our increasing provocation and undermining of the moral order legitimized by a corrupted legal system. Now we have paid a terrible price. 'Rav Lachem'. It is enough.

Now it is time for us to do teshuva and instead of sitting and crying and fearing the nations to move forward. We have no choice. Rambam tells us that the mitzva of building the Temple is eternally binding and not dependent on the Moshiach, just like all other mitzvot. * We don't need to wait for Moshiach in order to keep Shabbat or put on Tefillin or to build a Sukkah. When we move forward and have 'had enough' 'Rav Lachem' of the corrupt judicial system that prevents our moving forward then instead of the wrath of the nations that we fear, our 'Rav Lachem'

graduation that will send us marching forward into a new book, will cause the nations to say ‘Yesh Li Rav’ (I have a Rabbi). We have begun to lead the world. This is no time to stop.

And they killed the Midianite kings upon their slain: Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian, and Balaam the son of Beor they slew with the sword.	וְאֶת־מֶלֶכִי מִדְיָן הָרְגוּ עַל־חֲלָלֵיהֶם אֶת־אֹוֹי וְאֶת־רֵקֶם וְאֶת־צֹוּר וְאֶת־חֹוּר וְאֶת־רִבְעֵי חֲמִשָּׁת מֶלֶכִי מִדְיָן וְאֶת־ בִּלְעָם בֶּן־בְּעֹוֹר הָרְגוּ בְחֶרֶב
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(Bamidbar 31:8)

Rashi writes:

with the sword: He came against Israel and exchanged his craft for theirs. For they are victorious only with their mouths, through prayer and supplication, and he came and adopted their craft to curse them with his mouth. So they too came against him by exchanging their craft for the craft of the nations, who come with the sword, as it says [concerning Esau], “And you shall live by your sword” (Gen. 27:40). - [See Mid. Tanchuma Balak 8]

We are in the process of destroying our enemies physically, while they pretend to be morally superior spiritually. Like the son who murdered his parents and now pleads to the court for mercy because he is an orphan, our enemies twist and corrupt the law that Israel had educated the world with. We are now educating and elevating the world through the weapons of Esav. However, complete destruction of our enemies will not come until we resettle the lands that they had occupied. Complete victory will not come until the builders stop crying and return to their work and rebuild our Temple that we now control. Hashem gave us all a ticket. How many want that ticket? How many understand its worth? Moshiach is not Santa Clause. He is waiting for us to join the battle so we can join the celebration. Being part of the battle is already a reward and every day is a celebration in Israel.

Come home and be with the brave men and women of courage and faith. Live among the living rather than a comfortable meaningless life of fear, that will only become more fearful as the comforts that masked the spiritual desert erode. As my friend Rav Spero said to me this is the greatest time to be a Jew. As the world falls apart from their moral decay Israel is leading the way for a brighter future for all mankind. We are beginning to shepherd the world and unite forces of good against forces of evil.

The softness of the exile is a prison of fear while the battles of Israel are full of glory, resilience and vision. They say on the Shabbat before Tisha Bav we are given a vision of the 3rd Temple. We are the Temple and we are the destruction. If we are with Israel in its battles and fight to redeem Israel from its enemies and to literally throw out the foxes on the Temple Mount and rebuild our Temple, then we are giving birth to Moshiach in our daily lives. If we choose to escape our multimillion-dollar inheritance we have that free choice as well. How good is my portion to be with my people. Even if some builders are crying, I am fortunate to join the Har Habayit minyan where we study the blueprints and the structural details of the house we plan to build once we remove some of the obstacles in our way. The 3rd Temple is here along with

Moshiach. Baruch Hashem I was given a ticket. I also have a few extra tickets if anyone would like.

*Rambam enumerates the building of the Holy Temple as one of the Torah's 613 positive commandments (Sefer HaMitzvot, Commandment 20; see also the beginning of Hilkhot Beit HaBechirah). Moreover, the great sage writes elsewhere (Sefer HaMitzvot, Shores 3) that any precept which is not meant to be practiced in all generations cannot be included in the list of the Torah's commandments. It is clear, then, that Rambam is of the opinion that the commandment to build the Temple is eternally binding and must be fulfilled whenever there is a need and a possibility of building it. (Rabbi Avigdor Nebenzal)

"The mitzvot (all of them) do not depend on the coming of Messiah, but rather we are obligated to immerse ourselves in Torah and mitzvot and try to perform them to perfection, and after doing what we have been obligated to do, if God allows us, or our children, or our children's children to merit to see Messiah, all the better. And if not, we have not lost a thing, but rather we benefited by doing what we were obligated to do." (Rambam - Egeret from Yemen)

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