

“This is a people that shall dwell alone –

And shall not consider the other nations.”

“How good are your tents, Yaakov, your dwellings, Israel.”

TRANSLATED FROM HEBREW BY S. NATHAN
L'ILUI NISHMAT ESTHER BAT MORDECHAI

In what way is the Jewish people different from all the other peoples? Some would pin this difference on external considerations, but this is a superficial approach that misses the point and obscures the essentials.

From a general historical perspective, it is important to emphasize Rashi's position here: Since a promise was given to Moshe that God would not exchange the Jewish people for any other people, the Jewish people does not require a signature on a peace treaty, nor is it required to consider the nations from the political point of view. The goy can sometimes kill the Jew, but never the Jewish people.

In today's political situation, as long as the Holy Land is inhabited by a people that is called Yisrael as a political entity, we do not require the protection of any country whatsoever, and policy should be determined according to what is good for the Jews, without taking trouble to find favor in the eyes of the nations.

As to what is unique about the Jewish people, it seems absurd that the wicked goy would understand Jewish uniqueness more than the Jews themselves. Nevertheless, the two distinctions made by Bilam HaRasha, remain the reliable indicators, the litmus tests for the character of the Jewish people.

Bilam Harasha discerned the fact that the people of Israel excel at human quality. Psychology investigates the development of intelligence and of emotion, yet misses the essential: The talent for humanness.

When following the research into intelligence development, one finds a doubt stealing in: Maybe Piaget was right that emotions are determined by intelligence level. Fortunately,

the American “nerd” will not fit this theory, being that mentally, his level is that of a genius, while he is emotionally retarded.

It is true that emotions require confrontation with the social reality and with the battle for survival in order to mature. Yet emotional development also depends on other factors that are far more decisive than all environmental factors: These are heredity, and human quality.

Yet these basic elements require more than a supportive environment, as mentioned. They require a structure, a framework, “a vessel to hold blessing”. This takes the form of a balanced relationship between values (authority) and personal freedom.

The more a person is limited in his ability to enjoy freedom, due to his age or due to his personal level (not necessarily his mental level) the more he requires an authority to support him, and even to determine the extent of his decision-making ability.

External authority eventually merges and aligns itself with the internal system, as development progresses, to become a value-based sense of identity, and thus fear becomes awe. Personality develops by a process of internalization – from outer to inner. Mental awareness and judgment aspire toward objectivity, while on the emotional side, value-based judgment aspires toward the absolute.

Thus an external authority that initially motivated a limited person becomes transformed into the adoption of, and even *dvaikut* to the Godly absolute.

Though for a limited person, acceptance of authority is conditional on his egocentric feelings and his egocentric judgment – as long as it appears to him that God is good to him, he returns love to Him; the moment he imagines that God is not on his side, he rejects Him – yet a truly human personality becomes the receptacle in which all elements encounter one another: Emotions, intelligence, and the experience that one has accumulated through one’s battle for survival.

Without this human capacity, the general rule is that emotion overpowers all the other systems, and captures them, and penetrates into territories that do not rightfully belong to it. This creates conflict between all components: Each harms the other, and balance is disturbed.

The result is compulsive neurosis, born of the clash between “doing” needs and “being” needs, between duty and pleasure, between belonging and freedom, and all the other opposing pairs. Extremism in the direction of morality removes the justification for one’s existence and causes depression. The very justification for the fact that one exists is called into question. One begins to repress one’s own personal, physical needs, and this then becomes a cause for masochism. At this point, the entire package comes undone. The sexual needs, belonging to the physical side of the human component, lose the delicate balance that they require. After this, external stimulus comes forth to trigger the counter reaction: Sexual perversion.

Basic to an understanding of sexuality is the perception that the sexual mechanism does not exist on its own in human beings. It is only in the other animals that it functions as a separate unit. With man, it is an expression of all his personal/human needs. Therefore it requires balance, between “doing” and “being”, between duty and pleasure; it is a structure of reality that includes all existential and material needs, as well as one’s imagination and one’s personal feelings toward one’s partner.

In fact, sexuality contains all of the existential needs within itself, supplying them with a constantly renewing supply of energy. Uprooting sexuality, or isolating it, effectively uproots the central focus of the entire system that is called a human being.

“How good are your tents, Yaakov” is the secret of balance between all opposing vectors on the human plane and on the plane of values. Being a couple and being a family was invented by the Torah, and Bilam HaRasha discovers this and envies the Jewish people. Therefore he advises the enemy of Israel to focus on this specific point – this quiet pool in which all human needs are mended and find their completing balance, according to the

principle of *amad ve'irev midat hadin bemidat harahamim*: “God stood forth and mixed the measure of judgment with the measure of compassion.”

The Jewish home balances emotion with rationality and with reality, while the umbrella of authority finds human expression in the image of the father – the practical and human actualization of absolute authority.

A defect in the Jewish home throws off the balance. One becomes exposed to attack. Once the healing and repairing effect of sexuality within a framework of ‘in the right time with the right person’ is undermined, one becomes vulnerable to the perversions – such as cruelty, egoism, and above all sexual perversion.

A young man who is intelligent and aware of his condition (homosexual) relates that his mother passed away when he was very young, and that he grew up with a vicious stepmother who constantly and deliberately plotted against him. He hates women, and has developed severe paranoia towards men as well, but mainly towards women.

Sexuality is the yeast in the dough. Bilam HaRasha removed it from the dough, in order to present it as an independent issue, as having its own autonomous importance outside of human values. Molech.

Judaism has been influenced by this curse of his, and has forgotten to return it to the dough and to blend it into the entirety of human relations.