



The First Passover: Exodus and The Aliyah

By Rev. Gary Cristofaro



We can credit the first aliyah to Abraham to whom God said; *“Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you. (Genesis 12:1)* Abraham crossed over the spiritual divide when he obeyed God. The call to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob go to Israel has been resonating and reverberating ever since. The word aliyah literally means to ascend or the act of going up. When one goes “up” to Israel and especially Jerusalem one also travels upward spiritually regardless of the physical elevation from whence he came.

It has been about four thousand years since Abraham’s day. One exodus, two dispersions and two returns later and not everyone has heeded the call to return home to Israel yet. One might be tempted to ask, “What is taking so long?” Yet, the better question might be why has the final exodus from the nations begun to progress at a newfound speed? I believe the realities of human nature and the events surrounding the first Passover (Pesach) can shed some light on this question.

In his article Pesach: We Were Slaves, Moshe Kempinski writes:

“And HaShem said unto Moses: ‘now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for by a strong hand shall he let them go, and by a strong hand shall he drive them out of his land.’ (Exodus 6:1) The text seems to imply that Pharaoh would have to chase them out of their bondage in Egypt.

He continues:

It was Pharaoh who let them out or chased them out. They were still under the psychological and spiritual control of Egypt. They still did not have the strength to seize their prophetic destiny in their own hands. This came to an end on the shores of the Red Sea.

God’s people had become accustomed to life in Egypt both physically and spiritually. Physically, although life was hard, they had their basic needs met. Spiritually, they had dwelt so long immersed in paganism and idolatry that they had become indifferent to the inheritance that awaited them.

In order to be liberated both physically and spiritually Egypt had to be removed. Egypt’s army was swallowed up by the Red Sea, thus removing the immediate physical threat. Yet the more important job of removing Egypt from the hearts of the people had just begun. An entire generation had to die in the wilderness before they were ready but eventually they made it to their promised land.

In the wilderness hardships would often drive the people to long for life back in Egypt. I believe it was this apparent human tendency to look back that led to so much tragedy. Before they set foot in the land for the first time Moses gave this prophetic warning. *“Then the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other... (Deuteronomy 28:64a)* Twice Israel would be scattered and twice they would return. This second prophetic return and final exodus is ongoing before our eyes.

Make no mistake, it was God who strengthened the heart of Pharaoh long enough to accomplish His divine plan. He chased Israel all the way to the Red Sea and as he pushed, God miraculously made a way through the sea. Likewise, today it is The Holy One of Israel who is behind this ongoing push for His people to go home. Pharaoh has simply been replaced by the likes of Vladimir Putin, Islamic terror, Neo-Nazis and every type of despicable anti-Semitism.

For example: In France Jewish people have grown accustomed to affluence and influence yet the push of Islamic terror and growing anti-Semitism have led to a surge in the exodus and return to Israel. Second only to France in 2014 was Ukraine. Although most of the Jewish families in Ukraine are poor, they have grown very accustomed to the only life they have ever known. The obvious reason for the spike in aliyah in Ukraine has been the push of war.

I believe the parallels in the first and final exodus are obvious.

- Firstly neither would have happened absent the miraculous hand of God.

Jeremiah 16:14-15 says: *“Therefore behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “that it shall no more be said, ‘The LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ but, ‘The LORD lives who brought up the children of Israel from the land of the north and from all the lands where He had driven them.’ For I will bring them back into their land which I gave to their fathers.*

- Secondly, in both scenarios’ the people had to have a divine push in order to fulfill their divine destiny.
- Finally, throughout the first exodus God had His chosen servant. Moses was God’s voice, hands and feet during their great deliverance.

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