

There are those who deny that the Torah was given at Sinai and who yet call themselves “rabbis” and their houses of worship “synagogues,” when they are, in reality, clerics and temples of another religion.

In the Holy Land, a Jewish state was established by governing officials and lawmakers who were heretics, flagrantly desecrating the holiness of the Jewish People. Their laws are the antithesis of Torah, yet these officials shamelessly called their *medinah*, their Jewish state, by the name “Israel,” appropriating the holy name “Yisrael.” Just as Samael, Yaakov’s adversary, called himself “Yisrael,” the sacrilege still persists today; the use of holy names to disguise profane entities is a common subterfuge in the world of sheker.

Remember the story of Columbus?

Five hundred years ago, he conceived the idea of sailing westward from Europe to reach the East Coast of India in order to prove his contention that the world was round. When he and his 120 men finally sighted land, they were fully convinced that they had indeed reached the other side of the globe. All they really did was land on some island in the Bahamas. Yet Columbus sincerely believed that he had set foot on India itself. He subsequently named the red-skinned aborigines he encountered “Indians,” a misnomer which has survived until this day. There was no doubt in anybody’s mind in those days that the islands which Columbus had discovered were located in the east of the Indian subcontinent, and the label “East Indies” has stuck to this geographic region ever since.

As a matter of fact, all of this eventually turned out to be a most embarrassing mistake. Surely, the world was round, but India was still a far distance away, and it took some time until the new and unknown continent was traversed and another immense body of water—the Pacific Ocean—was discovered, which proved to be much larger than its Atlantic counterpart. Not until a great many years later was the east coast of India finally reached by courageous navigators.

What Columbus had discovered was not the shore of Asia, his real goal, but a new continent, the New World. However, to his dying day it never dawned on him that he had erred. If anybody at that time had dared to doubt the commonly accepted belief he would have met with derision or outright antagonism.

SELECTED WRITINGS

**A Collection of Addresses and Essays
on Hashkafah, Jewish History
and Contemporary Issues**

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YRSRH

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27 ■ **A Parable on Redemption**

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traversed and another immense body of water -- the Pacific Ocean -- was discovered which proved to be much larger than its Atlantic counterpart. Not until a great many years later was the East Coast of India finally reached by courageous navigators.

What Columbus had discovered was not the shore of Asia, his real goal, but a new continent, a New World. However, until he died it never dawned on him that he was caught in an error. Anybody within his generation who had dared at that time to doubt the commonly accepted belief would have met with derision or outright antagonism.

All this is by now history and familiar to every school child. Why rehash it? Because it may serve as a fitting parable to our own historic experience.

In our own days, there are a great many of our contemporaries who believe deeply and sincerely that the rise of the Jewish State in Eretz Israel is identical with the beginning of the messianic redemption. They believe this wholeheartedly, religiously, and, sometimes, fanatically. And those who dispute this dogma are looked upon with suspicion, bordering on animosity.

However, to all who have learned their Tanach well -- and there are not too many around -- to all those who are intimately versed in the sayings of our Sages, to all those who earnestly search for the truth of authentic Torah philosophy, it is obvious that our generation has fallen prey to an historic illusion. True, there is some kind of an "ingathering of exiles," the desert blooms again, the swamps have turned into gardens, new towns and cities have replaced the ruins. It looks very much like the real thing; but it isn't.

On the surface some of the glowing biblical predictions have been fulfilled - but merely on the surface.

Our Jewish people, which 2,000 years ago embarked on its Golus journey, has indeed discovered a "New World" which is exciting and still somehow mysterious, but it has by no means arrived at the shorelines of ארץ חמדה וגאולה. The Jewish State is not even distantly related to the messianic

promise for which we yearn and pray.

A secular Jewish State, its remarkable accomplishments notwithstanding, even with allowances made for a thriving Torah life, is at its best a Golus phenomenon. It can be likened to a heavily fortified island surrounded by a stormy sea of unspeakable hatred, bloody intrigues and political conspiracies by hundreds of millions of sworn enemies.

No, the Golus has not even begun to end as long as the ominous cloud of nuclear self-annihilation hovers over the human race. The Jewish people is still very deeply caught within the tragic grasp of the Golus and, by the way, so is all of mankind. The sovereign Jewish State is the most recent development of our 2,000 year old Golus history and by no means the answer to our prayers, let alone the self contradiction of a secular "Israel" with all its insoluble problems: Jewish identity (Mihu Yehudi), the religious educational dilemma, autopsies, conscription of girls, missionaries, to name but a few.

The horizons of mankind are covered with black darkness and we still scan the heavens for the first faint glimmer of dawn.

As far as we are concerned, the first sign that would initiate the end of Golus would be: the absence of bloodshed. Imagine, for the first time in 2,000 years no Jews are killed by Jew-haters! No Jewish blood will be spilled anymore, once and for all! But instead of the fulfillment of this basic requirement we face a stark, raving-mad alliance of sworn enemies busily turning their plowshares into swords and their scientific know-how into ever deadlier missiles.

On the other hand, let us spell out some of the true characteristics of the ultimate Geulah, the promised redemption we yearn and pray for.

It means the restoration of the Jewish people as a Kingdom of Priests and a Holy Nation.

It means the supreme rule of the Divine Torah over Am Yisroel and Eretz Yisroel.

It means the complete abolishment of all traces of G-dlessness, heresy and idolatry from the Holy Land.

It means the pacification of mankind and the end of the reign of violence and terror.

It means the unification of all men in justice and righteousness, to recognize the G-d of Yisroel as the Supreme Ruler of all human affairs.

In short, it means: "Hashem shall reign as King over all the Earth."

Let us therefore continue to support with all our might all honest efforts to help secure the life and fortune of our embattled brethren in Eretz Israel. Let us double and triple our sacrifices to support all endeavors that encourage and fortify Torah life in our Holy Land. Let us beware of dismay and disillusionment because of recent defeats and disappointments. These are the ups and downs on the rough voyage through the troubled seas of the Golus. And let us put our faith in Him who has so miraculously allowed us to survive throughout the centuries of turbulence and turmoil. He will continue to hold His compassionate hand over us and guide our ship to the ultimate shores of our historic destination. Soon and speedily in our days . . .