

Israel, the Mission

by Ariel Bar Tzadok

Copyright © 2013 by Ariel Bar Tzadok. All rights reserved.

“What is to give light must endure burning.” Viktor Frankl

What does it mean that God chose the children of Israel to be “His” people? Is this a statement of separatism, or elitism, or is it perhaps something entirely different? The only way to answer this question, and to understand the purpose of the role of Israel in history, is to look at the scriptural evidence out of the Bible.

In Exodus 19:6, it is written, **“You will be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation to Me.”** **A nation of priests?** A holy nation? **Are these descriptions of privileges, or definitions of responsibilities?** Before we consider this calling as being so very special, let us first ask the obvious question, what exactly was the role and function of the priest in ancient times?

While being a priest might be interpreted as being an elevated status, let us take a closer look at what this status entails. Rather than being elevated in status, to a position of being served by others, on the contrary, the priest was burdened with a heavier work obligation, towards both, God, and his fellow men. The Bible makes it clear that being holy is a heavy burden that requires more of the priest than it does from the laymen. As such, the priesthood was a much more restrictive and limited lifestyle.

No priest ever got rich by being a priest. No priest was better looking, smarter, or better than anyone else, in any way, just because of the accident of his birth. A priest was a man who was born to work for God. It didn't matter if he liked the job, or not, or whether he wanted the job, or not. This was his calling. This was his responsibility. This was his job and mission in life.

The priest is chosen, not for glory or for greatness, but rather for servitude. The life of the priest was not a pretty one. Most of his days in service he spend working in the Temple, which practically speaking, operated like a slaughter-house. The work was anything but clean and glorious.

Now we can understand what God meant when He called the children of Israel to be a nation of priests. As we see from the Biblical perspective, a priest is a man of servitude, working a job that creates no glory or praise. This is also the application of the priesthood that God has assigned Israel. **Israel becomes a nation dedicated to Divine servitude, in the performance of the nitty-gritty tasks that Heaven deems important.**

So, what is it that Heaven deems so important, that Israel has to be taken into Divine servitude in order to accomplish? Isaiah 49:6 has answers this question for us. *“I will make you to be a light of nations, so that My salvation shall be until the end of the earth.”*

God has chosen Israel to be a light to the nations, so that God's salvation would be able to encompass all humanity. God chose Israel as the Divine tool to reach out to the world. Yet, how is this supposed to be accomplished? To answer this, we can return to the words of Moses himself. In his final series of instructions to Israel, Moses hints to the role that Isaiah would later state verbatim.

In Deuteronomy 4:5-6, Moses, speaking to Israel says, *“See, I have taught you rules and laws as God my Lord has commanded me, so [that you] will be able to keep them in the land to which you are coming and which you will be occupying. Safeguard and keep [these rules], since **this is your wisdom and understanding in the eyes of the nations.** They will hear all these rules and say, This great nation is certainly a wise and understanding people.”*

The purpose of the rules and laws of Torah was to provide for Israel the tools to become the light to the nations. This was, and is, God's design and plan. Israel was supposed to be elevated by Torah observance to become a wise and understanding people.

The rules and laws of Torah were meant to present, and provide, a path towards higher morality, refined righteous behavior, and unwavering moral character. This is the light that God wants to shine. Israel was chosen to be God's tool. Israel was destined to be honed, and refined by the Torah, to become a people of the highest moral character, and righteous behavior.

Guess what? As the Bible records, the nation of Israel failed to live up to its potential. Because Israel did not live up to the Divine calling, human history, and specifically the history of Israel and the Jewish people, has unfolded throughout the centuries as it has.

Throughout the many quirks in history, God has allowed His Torah to be known and renown around the world. Today, the call of Biblical morality echoes everywhere. In recent times, the voice of Torah morality and righteous in under attack from the so many voices that seek to overthrow it, and to revert humanity to primitive forms of inhuman barbarisms. This is why the message and light of Torah is so much more important today!

Torah is not a doctrine, a theology, or a set of beliefs. Torah is a code for righteous, responsible human behavior. The natural wisdom and wonder of the simple, more natural path of Torah is clear to anyone who can see through all the

religious dark clouds that has buried the Torah's true and original light. Morality, righteousness and good character, a love of land, of nature, and one's fellow human beings, this is *“your wisdom and understanding in the eyes of the nations.”*

Those who embrace the natural path of Living Torah are transformed into wise and understanding human beings. These serve as role models for all others. These shine the light of God. These individuals, throughout the world, amongst every nation, amongst every race and religion, are fulfilling God's mission, *“so that My salvation shall be until the end of the earth.”*

Today, the bloodline identity of those who stood at Mt Sinai is blurred, and for the most part lost. Maybe, with future developments in DNA technology, we will be able to discover the genetic markers that can assuredly identify the bloodline children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Yet, until that future day, there is still a way to recognize who is of Israelite stock. All we have to do is look at each individual and see who is serving as God's priest.

The one who is in service to others, being a light to the nations, serving as a role model of morality, righteousness and character, this is the one bringing God's salvation to the ends of the earth.

Now, remember this! Salvation is not a theological concept, nor it is a reference to one's position in the after-life. ***Salvation has everything to do with this world, and how we live in it. Salvation is being saved from our very own human depravity, which brings out the inhumanity within each human being.***

Salvation means living in peace with ourselves, each other, our planet and our world. There is no greater salvation than this, when all is at peace, and right with the world. This is why we were given the Torah. This is why God has spread His Torah to the four corners of the Earth.

One who has natural, Living Torah, and lives it properly and wisely, might not be recognized today as a religious Jew, but will certainly be recognized as being wise and understanding. I, for one, believe that every wise and understanding soul must have stood at Sinai, present at the receiving of the Torah. If only we could confirm this with DNA evidence, but until then, ***the light of Torah shines from the soul, even when that soul's bloodline might be lost to our eyes.***

Histories can become confused or lost, but the light of God, and His true, non-religious, non-theological salvation will shine its righteous light out of the souls of all who are presently serving as the priests of God.

Priests do not preach. Priests serve, and lead by example. These are the ones today fulfilling Israel's mission.