

100%

by Rabbi Label Lam

You will be torn from the land which you are about to acquire. And HASHEM will scatter you among all the people from one end of the earth to the other... (Devarim 28:63)

Although there are pockets of density, we Jews find ourselves scattered throughout 100 lands on five continents just as the Torah had stated more than 3000 years ago. This prophetic prediction seems to be in conflict with another oft repeated promise. "And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants for all generations, an eternal covenant to be your G-d and the G-d of the descendants after you." (Breishis 17:7) How is a nation to endure if they are spread throughout the world? Does that sound like a formula for longevity? Yet here we are!

Maybe the answer is that we are so well received and beloved wherever we go. We always find grace in the eyes of our hosts and that affords us the peace of mind and the luxury to practice our unique life style unimpeded by outside forces. There are two problems with this. If we were so popular there might also raise the risk factor of assimilation and a loss of national identity that would make more difficult the probability of historical endurance. Secondly is that it's just not true!

The verse forecasts with pinpoint accuracy, "You will become an object of horror, an example, and an abject lesson among all the nations to which HASHEM will lead you." (Devarim 28:37) Lloyd George had written, "Of all the extreme fanaticism that plays havoc in man's nature, there is none as irrational as anti-Semitism. The Jews cannot vindicate themselves in the eyes of these fanatics. If the Jews are rich, they are victims of theft and extortion. If they are poor, they are victims of ridicule. If they take sides in a war, it is because they wish to gain advantage from the spilling of non-Jewish blood. If they espouse peace, it is because they are scared and anxious by nature or traitors to their country. If the Jew dwells in a foreign land he is persecuted and expelled. If he wishes to return to his own land, he is prevented from doing so."

Maybe all this is because we are just so impossibly numerous like the Chinese. It's the law of large numbers working in our favor. The only small problem is that we are statistically quite small and the Torah had spelled that out as well. "And you shall remain few in number, whereas you could have become as numerous as the stars of the heavens, because you would not obey the voice of HASHEM your G-d." (Devarim 28:62) We are left with a question how this diminished, dispersed, and despised people managed to endure the hate-filled gauntlet of human history.

Well here we are bruised yet alive but perhaps we have had little influence and positive impact on

the nations with whom we have come in contact. The prophet had stated this unlikely outcome in advance, "I HASHEM, have called you in righteousness, and I will hold your hand and keep you. And I will establish you as a covenant of the people, as a light unto the nations!" (Isaiah 42:6) There is no doubt that the Jewish People have had a profound influence as John Adams noted a few hundred years ago, "They have given religion to three quarters of the Globe and have influenced the affairs of Mankind more, and more happily, than any other Nation ancient or modern."

So what are the odds of such a people returning to their land after a lengthy and brutal exile? Considering what's written in the Torah, "And it will be, when all these things come upon you the blessing and the curse which I have set before you that you will consider in your heart, among all the nations where HASHEM your G-d has banished you, and you will return to HASHEM, your G-d, with all your heart and with all your soul, and you will listen to His voice according to all that I am commanding you this day you and your children, then, HASHEM, your G-d, will bring back your exiles, and He will have mercy upon you. He will once again gather you from all the nations, where HASHEM, your G-d, had dispersed you. Even if your exiles are at the end of the heavens, HASHEM, your G-d, will gather you from there, and He will take you from there." My guess is, **100%**