

THE SONG OF THE WILD GOOSE



אָנוּ הֵבֵר הַמְשׁוֹטְטֵת בַּמִּדְבָּר כְּשֶׁרוֹאָה אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל עוֹסְקִים בַּתּוֹרָה אוֹמְרֵת "קוֹל קוֹרָא
בַּמִּדְבָּר פָּנוּ דְרֹךְ יִשְׂרָוּ בַּעֲרֵבָה מְסֵלָה לְאַלְהֵינוּ" וְעַל מְצִיאוֹת מְזוֹנוֹתֶיהָ בַּמִּדְבָּר אוֹמְרֵת
"אֲרוּר הַגֹּבֵר אֲשֶׁר יִבְטַח בְּאָדָם. בְּרוּךְ הַגֹּבֵר אֲשֶׁר יִבְטַח בְּיְיָ וְהָיָה יֵי מִבְטָחוֹ."
(ירמיה יז, ה-ז)

When the Wild Goose flies over the wilderness and sees the Jewish people engaged in Torah study it says: *A voice calls in the wilderness, "Clear Hashem's path! Straighten through the plains a pathway for our God!"*

Concerning that which it finds its sustenance in the wilderness, it says: *Cursed is he who places his trust in man! Blessed is he who places his trust in Hashem, and Hashem shall be his support!*

The wild goose forages in the wilderness and eats from the hand of its Creator, lacking nothing. Remarkably, it is much larger and better off than its domesticated cousins, which are often fed and fattened by man — only to be consumed.

The wild goose thus sings of the blessing bestowed upon a person who trusts in the Almighty, and of the foolishness of one who places his lot in the hands of people and forfeits this blessing.

Hashem's support enables a person to devote his time to spiritual pursuits, such as Torah study. The Torah was given specifically in the wilderness of the Sinai Desert, to a nation fed by the hand of Hashem, who had no financial worries, for this is the ideal environment for its study. It was in that historic generation that the Wild Goose's song was most beautifully expressed. Nonetheless, it can also be heard today, when we – so to speak – “exile” ourselves from the comforts and distractions of our homes to the “wilderness” of the study halls. It is only in this manner that Torah has survived millennia unchanged — and continues to change *us* for the good.

In its song, the wild goose speaks of the Heavenly voice that the prophet Yeshayah heard resounding across the desolate Land of Israel, calling for a path to be cleared for Hashem to lead the Jewish exiles back home. This is the same voice that emanates from Mount Sinai every day and proclaims, “Woe is man for the disgrace of the Torah!” It urges the Jewish people to remember the reason for the world's creation and to engage in the study of the sacred Torah, so that Hashem can bring about the redemption.

As nation in Exile, our very vulnerability compels us to rely upon Hashem alone. We have learned time again that we cannot rely on the kindness of other nations, and that doing so decreases our deservingness to merit Hashem's protection. Upon Him alone do we trust for all of our needs. And He alone will soon restore us to our former glory, against all odds.

Sources: *Yaavetz; Knaf Renanim; Alshich; Likutei Amarim; Li Lishua.*