

A-146

"THE WEALTH OF NATIONS"

1. In that special portion which we will read from the second Torah tomorrow morning, we learn of G-d's command to the Children of Israel to give, each and every one, a half of a shekel as his charity-tax or enforced contribution for the upkeep of the Holy Temple
2. HE'ASHIR LO YARBEH VE'HA'DAL LO YAAMIT....Income Tax on absolute scale...
3. Would seem prosaic enough, technical way of solving financial problem... But Torah then calls this Tax of $\frac{1}{2}$ -shekel as KOFER NEFESH, or Ransom for the Soul, a spiritual expiation....

Would any of us, at March 15 or April 15, get feeling spiritual elation, religious ecstasy and insight?....And second, can money "buy" KOFER NEFESH? Don't we Rabbis, religious Jews, always maintain can't "bribe" G-d, that charity only one Mitzvah?.....

4. Rabbis provided answer. To understand it, must realize that currency of every nation has standard....Gold...Sterling (silver)....More primitive countries: other commodities highly valued....What is standard of Israel - gold, silver, uranium?....
5. Torah mentions shekel, says its value is ESRIM GERAH - 20 geras...i.e. the $\frac{1}{2}$ -shekel is 10 geras....Rabbis: ten geras symbol of: TEN COMMANDMENTS....

Not gold standard, not silver standard, but T.C. Standard! Our currency is symbolic of and backed up by not the gold in Ft. Knox but the spiritual resources, the religious treasuries locked up in the breast of every Jew since time immemorial.

When the Jew gives $\frac{1}{2}$ -shekel, 10 geras, he demonstrates knowledge that ~~his~~ HIS standard is ASSERES HA'DIBROS, that the wealth of other nations may be in rare metals, but the wealth of our nation is in a rare spirit. Giving the $\frac{1}{2}$ -shekel based on the T.C. Standard, he expressed his reliance on our national treasure, the treasure of a heritage which bespeaks service of G-d and friendship to all men. Certainly, this kind of Charity Tax - and it could ~~not~~ be more or less than the 10 geras of $\frac{1}{2}$ -shekel, for one may not add or subtract from the number of the commandments - this kind tax is KOFER NEFESH, expiation of the soul, for this kind of donation is the giving, indeed, of the whole NEFESH, the whole soul. It gives a commitment to the belief in G-d, to the aversion to idols, to the observance of Sabbath, to honoring parents, to keeping far from stealing and murder and adultery and coveting.... The Wealth of Israel is the Ten Commandments, or more simply phrased: TORAH.

6. Any business-man knows that when he is seeking credit from others, he must show his worth, his resources and the durability of his business. It comes with a sense of shock, frustration and disappointment, therefore, to learn that some people who are in the "higher ups" in American Jewish life are completely ignorant of this fact.

I refer to the way that a good part of the Tercentenary celebration in America has been handled. Our wealth is the spiritual legacy of generations - the TORAH which made us the People of the Book. Our standard is an ethical-religious standard - the Decalogue. In seeking "credit" from America at large - which is one of purposes of Terc. celebrations - it would seem logical to show the world what our resources are, what we have done & are doing religiously, ethically, Torah-wise, what we are doing to observe & teach T. Commandments.

7. Instead, leaders of Celebtrn have acted like businessmen who apply for credit and stupidly do not reveal extent of their great worth, tremendous resources, their true wealth.

I refer to following incidents which are only SOME of disturbing facts of how this over-played and over-done mardi-gras type of self-glorification known as Tercentenary has degenerated into self-hatred and sheer anti-Jewishness. Facts to be mentioned: at dinner where Eisenhower spoke short time ago....

- a)) Rabbis who participated in Invoc, benedict, Prayer, told most EMPHATICALLY that absolutely no Hebrew words to be used even if translated....
- b)) While on Hebrew: Terc. seal contains Arab numerals "300". Was originally suggested to ADD a SHIN (numerically 300) - refused! SO....NO HEBREW on seal

(discuss at length: language which ancestros....which reveived Israel from exile-come to independence...literature which far outshines any other lang... lang which has associations martyrdom and beauty and prophecy and law and prayer and ritual and sentiment and holiness...lang. in which we keep records of our special kind of Wealth....THIS LANGUAGE NOT GOOD ENOUGH FOR THESE SELF-HATING, UNINTELLIGENT, UNAUTHENTIC, UNJEWISH NONENTITIES WHO HAVE ARROGATED TO SELVES TITLE "AMERIC-JEWISH LEADERS", "LEADERS" WHO ASHAMED TO SHOW PRES. U.S.A. THAT WE AMER JEWS NOT ASHAMED SPIRITUAL HERITAGE WHICH IS GREATEST WEALTH ANY NATION EVER HAD & WHICH IF AMERICA HAD IT, IT WOULD NOT BE AS FEARFUL AND FRIGHTENED AND CONFUSED AND PERPLEXED AS IT IS TODAY.

ONLY CONCLUSION IS THAT THESE PEOPLE ARE EITHER MISERS OR FOOLS: MISERS BECAUSE THEY WILL NOT LEND OTHERS OF THEIR PECULIAR TYPE WEALTH, OR FOOLS BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT EVEN AWARE OF IT).

- c)) From sublime ro most ridiculous: Will concede that at this particular dinner, "leaders" did admit SOME Jewishness: served Gefilte Fish (Pristine-pure Amercanism and Jewish self-hatred not allowed to interfere with appetites). Now who has not heard G.Fish? It is a contribution of Jews to American LANGUAGE as wellas to Amer. culinary art. Every non-J....out midOwest....Now, ask you: what did our Terc. friends call it? Gef. Fish? No...oo...oo...What then?...~~TRAD~~FRESH WATER STUFFED FISH"...name itself detracts delights this particular delicacy....Story Rabbi who pronounced Chicken Treifah when really kosher, lehend that in Olam Haba will be called to Din Torah by it...same here: Terc Amer J Leadrs will, in spiritual realms of other world, be placed in a tank of FRESH WATER STUFFED FISH for all eternity in order expiate their sins....

TRADIT.

8. Tomorrow we bless new month Adar...ask for CHAYIM SHEL PARNASSAH (sustenance).... Sephardic version: SHEL PARNASSAH TOVAH....i.e. different kinds Parnssah...all of us want to make living, security....but greatest kind wealth:(Parn Tovah): TORAH. Best legacy for children. Leave them a fortune and they can dissipate it. Leave them character, faith, soul, personality molded by a Torah approach and based on T.C. standard and you have left them greatest wealth in world, WHICH NO ONE CAN TAKE AWAY FROM THEM. It's in this spirit, I welcome MR & MRS CLUB....delighted by your sincere, profound interest things Jewish, particularly in problems of how to transmit to children... Continue to be active such manner...teach tyem, each other, true value of $\frac{1}{2}$ -Shekel.... accumulate a fortune of this kind wealth, so you can leave them something lasting.. make for your families PARNASSHAT OVAH,...& so you will be making more than a living, you will be making ...a LIFE.

9. May G-d grant us this month and every month a life of Parnassah, of sustenance and riches, but even more so: a month and lifetime of PARNASSAH TOVAH, of spiritual sustenance and, not only riches, but wealth - the kind of wealth expressed by the 10 gerahs of the $\frac{1}{2}$ shekel: the Ten Commandments.