

RAV TZVI YEHUDA KOOK: WAITING FOR REDEMPTION

RABBI DANIEL KANTER

Avrech, YU Torah Mitzion Kollel of Chicago

The State of Israel that HaRav Tzvi Yehuda Hakohen Kook zt”l lived in, much like the State of Israel today, was a complex, multifaceted tapestry of different Jewish ideologies and levels of religious observance (and non-observance). Especially after the Six-Day War, but even after the Israeli War of Independence, there were many who saw the coming of the Messiah as imminent. In their eyes, the massive ingathering of exiles from around the world, the reestablishment of a Jewish State, and the miraculous events of the aforementioned wars, all attested to this. Yet there were those who had difficulty reconciling the seeming incongruence between the impending Messiah and the disparate levels of religious observance that were evident in Israel at that time.

The confluence of these two concepts were a topic that Rav Tzvi Yehuda spoke about often and loudly. In a *sicha* given at the height of the Six-Day War, he described the then-current reality as not inhibiting the coming of the Messiah, but possibly even enhancing it.¹ The Gemara explains that the materials used for the building of the Beis Hamikdash would only become sanctified after they were put into place.² The reason given is that the Torah, and by extension the Beis Hamikdash, was given not to ministering angels, but to man. Since, unlike angels, there is a limit

to man’s endurance, the builders will inevitably lean on the bricks, or sit in their shade to rest from the sun. This innocuous action, if done on an already consecrated Beis Hamikdash, would result in a grievous offense to the glory of the Beis Hamikdash, as well as transgressing the prohibition of *me’ilah*, of receiving benefit from already consecrated items.³

Rav Tzvi Yehuda explained that our redemption develops in the same manner. The stones used in the building of the Beis Hamikdash were not sanctified until completion, yet everyone knew of their immense importance and significance. So too in regard to building the Land of Israel; there may not be a monolithic sort of religious observance. However, the ultimate “consecration,” that of the final redemption, is intended to be accomplished by every segment of the Nation of Israel, regardless of ideology and level of religious observance. In ways that cannot be fully comprehended, every element of the nation of Israel is integral to the furthering of the ultimate redemption and the coming of the Messiah.

The concept that every element of the modern State of Israel was in some way connected to the furthering of the redemption was a primary ideological belief in the mind of Rav Tzvi Yehuda. It was a concept that he championed



Rav Tzvi Yehuda Kook zt”l
1891–1982

his entire life and is lived on in many of his students today.⁴ Indeed, today the tapestry of Jewish life in Israel, as well as the Diaspora, is no less diverse and chaotic today than it was in 1967. Yet if we take the lessons of Rav Tzvi Yehuda and his students to heart and realize that there is a larger plan in play for the Nation of Israel as well as for the Land of Israel, then we may soon merit seeing the coming of the final redemption in our own lifetimes.

Endnotes

1 *Sichot HaRav Tzvi Yehuda*, 28th of Iyar, 5727 (June 7th, 1967).

2 Gemara *Me’ilah* 14a-14b.

3 Rambam, *Hilchos Meilah* 8:4.

4 Sampson, David. “Torat Eretz Yisroel: The teachings of HaRav Tzvi Yehuda HaCohen Kook.” Page 347.