The Marseille Synagogue that is becoming a Mosque

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Today we celebrate with great joy and gratitude to HaShem the 68th anniversary of the creation of the State of Israel. In the opinion of many rabbis, to which I adhere, the establishment of Medinat Israel it is part of the fulfillment of a Biblical prophecy, that in our days is materializing.

In chapter 30 of the book of Debarim (Deut.), the Tora says that the Jewish people will be exiled and persecuted, if it does not fulfill its part of the covenant with HaShem. Then the Tora describes a process of reconciliation between God and His people, which culminates with the return of the chosen people to the land of Israel. This process is incredibly compatible with what we are seeing and living in the present day.

Let’s see:

3500 years ago the Tora anticipated that we will be exiled from our land, but unlike all other peoples in the history of mankind who went into exile, the Tora assured us that will not disappear, we will remain “the people of Israel” in exile. We will live as “aliens and foreigners among other peoples,” and we will pay a price for not assimilating: not be welcomed by our hosts. This universal antipathy, in turn, will protect us from any sort of temptation to assimilate…

The Tora also anticipated that, unlike other exiled peoples, who usually relocated in one place, like the ancient Phoenicians who concentrated on Carthage, the Jewish people will be scattered by all the ends of the earth …

Then comes the prophecy of reconciliation:

The Jewish people will awake from their lethargy and apathy:

Chapter 30: *1 And when all these [bad] things will happen (= exile, persecution, suffering) … you will reflect on your heart …* 30: 2 *and you will return to HaShem your God and obey*

His voice. .. you and your children, with all your heart and with all your soul. "
HaShem, then, will bring us back home …
30: 3 *"And HaShem your God will bring you back from captivity (= exile), and have compassion on you, and gather you from all the peoples where HaShem your God has scattered you.."* 30: 4 "*and although your exiles are beyond the horizon, from there HaShem your God will gather you and from there He will take you.. ."* 30: 5 *"And HaShem your God will bring you into the land of your fathers, for you to take possession of it, and He will make you more prosperous and numerous than your ancestors.."*
The process of returning to the land of Israel from all corners of the planet (from Russia to South Africa, from North America to South America, from Sweden to Australia …) is happening today. The land is already there, transformed into a country that awaits us with open arms. More and more Jews are returning to the land that HaShem granted our parents. Israel is a prosperous and modern country, and the number of Yehudim who live there has never been higher. No doubt, much remains to be done to improving our personal and collective reconciliation with HaShem. But this process of Teshuba, coming back to God *and* to His land, has begun , and is becoming more and more solid.
I want to end with a recent news report that, I think, is an unmistakable symbol of this prophecy, and it possibly marks a trend of *positive* unimaginable results for the years to come…
One of the biggest challenges for the realization of this prophecy is the difficulty that emigrating to Israel represents for many Jews. Ironically, the more prosperous and advanced is the country where a Jew lives (think of the United States, England or rance) the harder it is for a Jew to make the decision to emigrate.
In this context, let's look at what happened in France last week. This is the news as reported by the BBC: "The Marseille synagogue that is becoming a mosque". 6 May 2016, *"For the first time, a synagogue in Marseille is in the process of being sold to a Muslim organization, which has plans to turn it into a mosque…"*
This event seems to be part of the inevitable trend and the inexorable fate that Europe has chosen for its own future. But

still, closing of a synagogue, seemingly, is a big tragedy …
I believe, however, that we should read these "sad" news from a different angle. Namely, **this synagogue is not closing because Jews are abandoning Judaism, is closing because Jews are abandoning France**! In recent years the emigration of French Jews to Israel has grown exponentially. In the 90's very few Jews emigrated to Israel from France. In 2014, however, more than 7,000 French Jews settled in Israel. In 2015, more than 8,000. And another 12,000 are expected to arrive this year. French Jews, Baruch HaShem, are "invading" Israel . I saw them in Netanya, Ashdod, Bet-Shemesh, Yerushalayim. French Jews are, for the most part, very traditionalist. And I can assure the reader that**for every synagogue that closes in France, at least 50 new synagogues are opening in Israel for French Jews!**
This modern miracle is possible and feasible only because HaShem gave us the merit of having our own Jewish State, Medinat Israel.
We are probably the most privileged generation in the entire history of the Jewish people. I think, that rather than witnesses, we are the protagonists of this prophecy.
"WE" are this prophecy.

MUST WATCH

Hertzel Bitton, an Israeli bus driver who prevented a terrorist attack last year, said these beautiful and profound words last night in Jerusalem, when lighting one of the torches at the official celebration of Yom haAtsmaut

