

Behar and Bechukotai 5773

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During these very days, 46 years ago in 5728 (1967), the Medina was in the midst of a three-week period of preparation for a life-and-death struggle against the Arab-Amalekites surrounding us. The Arab world was sharpening its swords and their diatribes against the Jewish State, eagerly informing the indifferent and apathetic world what awaited every Jewish man, woman and child here.

It was a time when HaShem was testing the loyalty of His people. "Do you believe that the Galut has ended?" HaShem asked, "and that I have brought you back to Eretz Yisrael until the end of days, or is your skepticism stronger than your beliefs?"

While families were being separated from their fathers, sons and brothers who were called to report for active duty, other families were reporting to the various airline desks at Ben Gurion to make sure that they would leave before the bombs descended.

Years later, I had the opportunity to befriend an intriguing gentleman whose name was Ezer Weizman, who at the time of the Six Day War served as the Assistant Chief of Staff of Tzahal and later as President of the State.

At our first meeting, we sat for over three hours while he told me his incredible life story. Among many things, he told me about the life-and-death gamble the Medina made at the onset of the Six Day War.

Tzahal knew that we had to destroy the air forces of the Arab nations from Egypt to Iraq, which was logically and militarily a "mission impossible". Tzahal had to factor in the distances between the Medina and the enemy air bases, the limited number

of attack planes at our disposal, the moment of surprise and our defense system to deal with the enemy's counter attack.

The reality of our situation left no choice but capitulation or fight. The decision was taken to use every available plane to attack, while leaving no planes to defend the country. It was an authentic biblical situation where HaShem leaves no choice but to do His bidding.

People were streaming out of the country, and there was a bittersweet joke that the last one out should turn off the lights.

HaShem's angels attacked on the morning of June 5. Our planes reached every enemy air base, destroying their planes on the ground. Israel set a world record in refueling and rearming the planes, as they returned and very quickly were in the air again.

The outcome of the Six Day War had been decided in the first few hours of that Monday morning. As the day went on, our ground troops swept into Shomron and Yehuda. Every newscast was as if the reporter was reading from the Book of Yehoshua. "Our troops have just liberated Yericho. Our troops are entering Beit Lechem. The Tank Corps has just liberated Shechem. Our troops are advancing rapidly in the Sinai Peninsula towards Sharem Al Shech.

Then on Wednesday morning at 10 AM, the most significant event of the last 2000 years occurred. The radio announced that the Old City of Yerushalayim had returned to Am Yisrael, and we were now the masters of the Temple Mount and the Kotel.

Thursday and Friday were left to complete the liberation of the Sinai Peninsula and the entire area west of the Jordan River.

On Shabbat our troops did the impossible. They scaled the Golan Heights and in a few hours of fighting decimated the

Syrian army and liberated the entire Golan Heights.

This was not a war between soldiers. It was a war between angels and mortal men.

HaShem rolled out the red carpet for the Jewish nation. He invited every Jew in the world to come home and rejoice in His glory and the glory of His people Yisrael.

The gates of Shechem, Yericho, Beit Lechem and Chevron were open for all of HaShem's children. "Come, take it. It is all yours. Come in your millions, there is room for all," cried out the Voice from heaven.

HaShem is ready to start a new beginning with His nation. All is forgiven. The sins of the fathers have been cleansed for the sake of the children.

Peace in the family has been restored. Eretz Yisrael, Yerushalayim, Har Habayit, Chevron City of the Patriarchs, Yericho the lock (man'ul) of Eretz Yisrael has been opened, Shechem which was purchased by Ya'akov – it's all there for the taking.

HaShem for His part was preparing to cleanse the Temple Mount from the Moslem abominations.

The land was prepared to absorb millions of its sons and daughters in the mountain areas of Judea and Binyamin, in Yerushalayim, in the beautiful rolling hills of Shomron, in all the land. The land of Israel was ready to embrace all the Jews in the world. A Medina of 12-13 million Jews living in every area of the land, with nary an Arab to be seen, because they would finally understand that the God of Israel has returned His people to their homeland.

The table was set, the aroma of culinary mastery filled the air, the bottles of fabled wine were opened – but the invited guests did not come.

The millions of Jews in the galut turned their backs on their loving Father in Heaven and closed their ears to His supplications to come home.

The vast majority of their religious leaders in the galut continued in the tradition of the miraglim of biblical times, who led the nation in sharing their beloved wilderness with its snakes and scorpions.

In the tochacha (admonition) in parashat Be'chukotai, after every wave of punishment on the unrepentant nation, HaShem intensifies the next wave of punishments, until the Jewish nation wakes up.

The snubbing by the goyim and derogatory name-calling of Jews did not move them towards Eretz Yisrael, so HaShem sent the pogroms. The pogroms did not move the Jews to come home, so He sent the warnings of the early 1930s. They also did little to move the Jewish people, so then came the unspeakable Shoah which brought a large number of Jews home. But there are still millions who do not recognize the hand of God in our contemporary history.

No one can say if there will or will not be another physical Shoah, although we are undergoing a very real spiritual Shoah and losing the war against assimilation. But I do see a horrible punishment for the Jews who do not wake up to HaShem's call to return home, especially for the religious leaders who do nothing to encourage aliya – and quite often even discourage it.

What is that punishment?

As a young boy, I was never physically punished, even when it was justified. My parents were too smart for that.

The method that worked best for me was a surgically sharp rebuke of three words from my father. It happened when I would bring home a less-than-acceptable report card. My father

simply would say, "You disappointed me".

The low point in my life was to disappoint my parents.

HaShem expects the Jewish people to act like the chosen of nations that we are – to be one nation under HaShem and the Torah, living in the Biblical Holy Land.

He will not punish the Jews of the galut and their pulpit rabbis, roshei yeshiva, chassidic rabbis, and authors of musar and hashkafa books; but when each person's time comes, HaShem will say, "You invested your energies and Jewish genius in prolonging the despicable and hated galut. You disappointed Me"!

Shabbat Shalom

Nachman Kahana

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