

BS"D Parashat Shlach 5783

Stand Proud

Last week's parashat Beha'alotcha opens with the mitzva of preparing and lighting of the Menorah in the Mishkan and in the following 830 years in the two Batei Mikdash.

Rashi explains that the Torah places the issue of the Menorah adjacent to the event when the heads of the 12 tribes each brought sacrifices on the consecration day of the Mishkan. He explains that Aharon was saddened by the fact that his tribe – Levi , was not invited to participate in the sacrificial offerings with the other heads of tribes. So HaShem compensated Aharon with the permanent responsibility of lighting the Menorah.

Ramban states that the compensation was not the daily lighting of the Menorah in the Mishkan and Bet Hamikdash, as Rashi explains, but the future war against Greece and the rededication of the Bet Hamikdash where Aharon's descendants will light the purified Menorah.

I feel that something is incomplete in Ramban's explanation. How can an event which will take place 1000 years later serve as compensation for Aharon's disappointment at being omitted from the sacrificial ceremonies?

But an afterthought, I understood what Ramban meant. HaShem was informing Aharon that the events which would serve as compensation will occur indeed 1000 years later, but that's exactly the point. That a millennium after your departure from this world, your descendants will still be as enthusiastic and dedicated to the Torah and the Bet Hamikdash as you. They will be instilled with the love of Am Yisrael and the land that will be passed down through the generations of your lineage.

They will encourage the nation to fight the mighty Greek empire and be victorious . They will cleanse and purify the Bet Hamikdash and reinstate the Kohanic service. They will establish the period of the Tannaim who will pass down the traditions received at Mount Sinai. That great generation will be empowered by your influence which will last until the Mashiach.

Aharon was joyous at the knowledge that even after 1000 years, his descendants would cling to the Torah and spearhead Am Yisrael in a war of liberation and rededication of the Bet Hamikdash.

But let's think together. Am Yisrael was in galut since the destruction of the second Temple. Those 2000 years are twice as long as the time from Aharon to the Maccabim. And we are a part of the contemporary Maccabim who have remained loyal and dedicated to the Torah and Am Yisrael. We survived the Shoah and had the inner strength to reestablish the Medina while fighting overwhelming enemies. We don't have the Bet Hamikdash, but we established in Eretz Yisrael thousands of batei kneset and yeshivot.

We have every reason to be proud of ourselves for repeating the efforts of the Maccabim and building a Torah empire not seen in Eretz Yisrael since the days of the Maccabim. Stand proud that we are the generation preparing for the appearance of the Mashiach and the fulfillment of all the prophecies of greatness of the Jewish nation.

How to achieve a Heavenly protected military

Former IDF Deputy Chief of Staff MK Yair Golan announced in public, that if the government continues with its current policy of exempting yeshiva students from army service, parents (secular) will refuse to send their children to the

army.

General Golan is quoted as saying, "We have a lot of tools left in our hands. Up until now it has been a soft fight. But non-violent disobedience has three main tools – demonstration, strike, and civil disobedience. It should be clear to this government that the reservists simply will not show up for duty. A country that sends me to risk my life is obligated to me, and if the government reneges on its commitment to its citizens and if it denies me my basic freedoms as a citizen, there is no reason for me to serve this government. Therefore, until you change your policy, we will not serve you, forget it.

The general is known for his inflammatory remarks. In March he called for "more force" to be used in anti-government protests, in order to attain the protest organizers' goals of drafting the Chareidim. "If use of force doesn't work, we'll use more force. We have to strengthen this campaign. We will hold mass protests every single day of the week; hold massive strikes across all sectors and engage in civil rebellion. The price to pay for this won't be insignificant, but it is imperative that we be determined. This is a fight for the very soul of Israel, and we will never give in", he said at the time.

In January, he published a tweet in which he called for a wide-scale civil uprising against the government.

I don't know why General Golan is not being accused of incitement, sedition, treason, coup d'etat and more. My brother Harav Meir hy'd was arrested and jailed for statements far less dangerous to society and democracy. But perhaps HaShem has a larger mission for the former General. Perhaps he and those who think like him are unwitting tools in the hand of HaShem to bring about a game changing direction for the Medina.

Let me explain:

When encountering a serious issue, the initial step is to define your desired goal; it could be based on logic, human nature or on religious and ethnic traditions.

The Torah (Devarim 23,15) states regarding the letter and spirit that should prevail in a Jewish military base, camp or unit; the spirit of sanctity – kedusha.

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Because the Lord your God is present in your (military) camp, to save you and to deliver your enemies to you. Therefore, your camp must be holy, so that He may not see anything indecent among you and turn away from you.

Victory depends upon well trained troops, quality weapons, good strategy and tactics. But above all, as our Jewish 3300-year history demonstrates, beginning with the war between Avraham against the four kings and up to this very day, it is the accompanying spirit of HaShem that provides for each of these factors to function properly and in synchrony. In accordance with an old Jewish adage: "When HaShem wants, even a broom can shoot", but when Am Yisrael is spiritually deficient we add another Tishah be'Av to our calendar.

One example how this plays out on the battlefield: A soldier is ordered to storm an enemy position. Who does he prefer to be at his side, a God-fearing comrade or one who eats shrimp on Yom Kippur?

General Golan, you and your friends, as I wrote above, could be unwitting tools in the hands of HaShem to transform Tzahal into a military force surrounded by the protecting spirit of

the God of Yisrael. So, I support what you are doing! Bring, in any way you can, more and more God-fearing young men to Tzahal even if your intentions are diametrically opposed to kedusha.

As things stand today, with the moral and spiritual level of the army as is, it is very difficult for a lone dati soldier serving in an all-secular unit to protect his spirituality, unless he serves with at least 20 others to guarantee praying daily with a minyan and having the self-confidence to make sure that their religious rights are protected.

General, here is where you and your friends can be influential
.

I wish you success in bringing in more and more religious young men. When dati soldiers serve in a unit by their sheer presence, the pornography comes down from the walls, the cursing is contained, and his comrades begin to receive the Jewish education they were deprived of as children; and female soldiers are transferred out. And when the numbers of religious soldiers reach critical mass, the army will be kosher in spirit, in actions, and on its influence on the nation. The army will be a place for learning Torah and fulfilling Halachic Judaism. Between military needs there will be time for serious Torah studies, and to be a soldier will be an experience of Jewish pride.

We need look no further than the last chapter in tractate Kedoshim that informs us that in King David's combat units only the most spiritually gifted served, because they brought with them heavenly protection; the others would be used only for morale purposes, such military parades.

Tzahal, as the most respected institution in the country, will one day be a holy Jewish army, and it will cast its influence on the land and all its people. And if what I wrote has validity, you General Golan will have an honorable place in

Gan Eden.

Since I mentioned woman soldiers, let me say: This is a very sensitive issue that to be addressed since so many religious girls want to serve. In the classic Jewish army, women did not serve in combat units. However, today they perform essential work in the areas of intelligence and cyber and other non-combat roles. Women should continue to serve and contribute to the national needs, but not as members of the military, rather as civilian employees of the army, sworn to secrecy and paid like civilian employees.

Shabbat Shalom

Nachman Kahana

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