

BS"D Parashat Tazria-Metzora 5785

The Chareidi View

Chareidi, is a branch of Judaism that adheres to strict Halakha, encompassing a wide range of groups with varying customs and approaches, but fundamentally sharing the following: Rejection of Secular Culture; Emphasis on Torah Study; Strong Rabbinic Authority; Distinctive Dress and Community Living.

Another shared feature among most, if not all, of the Chareidi religious leadership is the rejection of today's Medinat Yisrael as the **beginning** of the final stage of the Jewish nation's redemption, leading to the Mashiach, the Bet Hamikdash and restoration of the Davidic monarchy.

The Chareidi view maintains that the Medina is a political entity that grew out of the Shoah, and not an end of the galut, which will come about only by HaShem's miracles through G-d fearing leaders, or a leader, as in the time of the Exodus from Egypt when Moshe was sent as Hashem's emissary.

In the Chareidi view it is not conceivable that the secular Zionist personalities were and are the tools of HaShem to end the 2000-year galut and usher in the final stages of our redemption.

This narrative dictates their religious, social and political positions, including opposition to serving in Tzahal, the military wing of the secular Medina, even at this crucial juncture in our history. In addition, they claim that the army has an agenda to weaken the religious fervor of the Chareidi youth.

It is this position that I will address in this week's message.

A difficult question: Where is the essence of the Medina expressed in the Torah?

I submit:

In Bamidbar (Numbers, 5,11-31), the Torah outlines the procedure to be followed when a husband, in view of certain circumstances, suspects his wife of infidelity (Sota). The husband brings her to the Bet Hamikdash where she undergoes a complex ritual which will either confirm or refute his suspicions.

Among these procedures is the act of a kohen copying on parchment verses from the Torah that contain curses that will befall the woman if she is guilty. These verses include the name of HaShem twice.

The kohen then erases what he had written into an earthen cup of hallowed water and some dust taken from the floor of the Temple which she must then drink. If she is guilty of adultery, there would be physical changes in the woman, and she would die, if innocent she would remain unharmed.

The purpose of this ritual is to restore the love and faith that was compromised because of the husband's suspicions.

Chazal (our rabbis of blessed memory) elaborate on the command of erasing the Torah verses from the parchment, including the name of HaShem, which is prohibited in Devarim 12,2. The Almighty Creator of heaven and earth takes a "step back" and permits His name to be erased in order to demonstrate the importance of restoring love and trust within the family.

Back to the issue of Chareidim and their rejection of any sanctity in the present Medina.

Granted, the Jewish State was established through the blood,

sweat and tears of mostly secular Jews; so today the Medina is not **mehadrin** kosher. Therefore, Chareidim maintain a cold, distant relationship, where the Medina is the giver, and they are the takers (the largest philanthropist of the Torah world is the present Israeli government).

In the Chareidi view there is no proactive mitzva to live here and some leaders even oppose making aliya.

Let's take a step back and consider:

As of now, Jews in the holy land number close to 8 million. This is a very small number for a modern nation that has to maintain a standing army, an international competitive economy, the highest academic and technical educational standards, social welfare systems, research and development institutions, and the highest medical standards, etc.

In the late 19th century, with the beginning of political Zionism, and the efforts to create an independent Jewish state in Eretz Yisrael, HaShem, in His absolute wisdom, knew that in human terms if the future Medina would have any chance of surviving in this part of the world and in this point of time, surrounded by hundreds of millions of fanatical Moslem Arabs, it would need the close cooperation of world Jewry.

If the future Medina would be headed by a dati leadership that would create a halachic state, religious people would come here, but the secular would not. They would not invest in the country, nor would they lend political support, and the Medina would wilt like a fading flower. The situation of world Jewry would in that case be a small Medina of religious Jews, with the majority of secular Jews remaining in the galut, where in one or two generations they would disappear by assimilation.

So, HaShem took a step back (as with the issue of erasing His name), and brought about the situation where Zionist leadership was secular. In the nation that they would create there would be room for religious Jews to come and live freely

in their halachic societies, with the knowledge that in time the Medina would grow into maturity and Am Yisrael would return to the way of the Torah.

That is the true way to understand the beauty and genius of how HaShem cares for His nation Yisrael.

It is time for the Chareidim to come out of the cold and recognize the wisdom of HaShem in history and the great potential that this Medina brings to ALL parts of Am Yisrael.

In my humble opinion, the Chareidi leadership should go 180 degrees. Not to prohibit their youth from serving in Tzahal but sending them in their thousands and tens of thousands to fill the ranks of the army. They will be protected religiously by their religious peers, and they will influence their fellow soldiers to return to the Torah.

Encourage these young men to go to officer training and in time the spirit of love of the land, love of fellow Jew, will be felt in all elements of our holy army.

Unfortunately, this will not happen in the foreseeable future!

Shabbat Shalom,

Nachman Kahana

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