

Kedoshim 5771

BS"D Parashat Kedoshim 5771

Vayikrah 19:5-8

When you sacrifice a shelamim offering to the LORD, it should be done in a way that it will be accepted on your behalf: It shall be eaten on the day you sacrifice it or on the next day (and in the intervening night); anything left over until the third day must be burned: If any of it is eaten on the third day, it is defiled and rejected: He who eats from it will bear the sin, because he has desecrated what is holy to the LORD; that soul will be punished with karet.

Every true artist adds a descriptive, discriminative touch to his work.

Beethoven is not Bach and Renoir is not Picasso. The graceful, gazelle-like movements of a Dimaggio in center field are a far cry from the lumbering gaits of a Charlie (King Kong) Keller, and a colossal movie by Demille is significantly different from a spine-tingling Hitchcock production.

From the narrow perspective of our human intelligence, what is the most distinctive characteristic of the ultimate, most sublime, incomparable, paramount, pre-eminent artist of all – The Holy One Blessed Be He, Creator of all the worlds – in His dealings with mortal man?

I would submit that it is His acts of radical, unconventional innovation.

The Jewish nation – paralyzed with fear of the impending retaliation of the Egyptian army – stood before the impassible Red Sea. If Moshe Rabbeinu had taken a sampling of what would happen next, it would be safe to assume that none of the hundreds of thousands of replies would have suggested that the

Sea would split into 12 paths – one for each tribe and each path lined with fruit trees and other sumptuous delicacies.

No one could have foreseen that the placing of a bitter tree into bitter waters would sweeten them for all to drink. Nor would anyone have ever imagined that the falling dew would contain Manna as sweet as honey, or that every evening thousands of quail would descend near the camp to supply the nation with delicious meat, or that a well of water would follow the Jewish camp in all their travels in the desert.

No one could have imagined how the nation would pass through the tempestuous springtime waters of the Jordan in order to enter the Holy Land, until the moment when the flow ceased as the waters piled up into a huge liquid mountain, creating the path through which the Jewish people entered the Land.

Barak and Devorah could not have predicted that the Kishon River would overflow and sweep away the army of Sisera and Yavin, or that Sancheriv's army would all die on the night of Pesach in the time of King Chizkiyahu.

In 1948, who could have predicted that the tiny yishuv of Jews with its ragtag army would defeat the standing armies of seven Arab states? Or that in two hours on the morning of the 26th of Iyar 5726 (June 5, 1967) the Israeli air force would destroy the combined air forces of all the Arab states in the Middle East, and two days later we would be sovereign over Yerushalayim for the first time in over 2000 years?

Who could have dared to imagine that we would create a Torah dynasty here unparalleled since the time of the Mishna or that Israel would become an economic miracle?

And who could have predicted how our Father in Heaven would come to our aid at this moment of need, when the world would love nothing better than to dismember the holy Jewish State?

Today, Hashem is signaling to our holy Jewish soldiers and to

the holy people in Eretz Yisrael that we should sit back, while our enemies kill each other.

Libyans kill Libyans; Egyptians devour Egyptians; Syrians destroy Syrians, Yemenites trample Yemenites; Bahrainis crush Bahrainis. With more to come.

To be sure, the Mashiach has not yet arrived; and ominous military, political and social struggles still await us. But events, which were once unthinkable and are now mainline news, are signals from Hashem that we are not alone and that all is under His control.

Where is all this taking us? What is behind the confusion and confrontations in the lands right across our borders?

One of the most pressing issues now confronting us in Eretz Yisrael is to maintain the Jewish majority through aliya and by the Arabs, Bedouins and other gentiles leaving the land – including 350,000 non-Jews from the former Soviet Union.

Now since the present legal system in Israel is based on democratic principles, expelling these people from the land is not a realistic alternative. Enter HaShem with His acts of “radical, unconventional innovation.”

As the winds of war increase in intensity, and the rhetoric increases in belligerence, we will witness a mass exodus of people whose souls are not meant to be here. Arabs (both Moslem and Christian), Christians of all sorts, non-believers, and in general people who do not possess an irrational love for Eretz Yisrael will suddenly find reasons not to be here.

To be sure, Jews will also leave, as we have seen in the three weeks prior to the Six Day War. The ones who are solidly imbedded in the land and who will remain to witness the breathtaking miracles of HaShem, are: the old entrenched families of Yerushalayim, Tzfat, Tiveria and Hevron; the religious Zionist segment; and Israelis who are perceived

today as being secular but bear a deep awareness and love of being Jewish.

They will not be easy times. Indeed, they will be very stressful.

What is incumbent upon us is for every Jew to follow the blueprint of the Torah to be “kedoshim” before Hashem.

For the Jews in the galut, it is not a matter of one more page of Gemara or one more turn of a gartle. It is the call from Sinai to escape the inevitable physical and spiritual death of the galut.

For just like holy korbanot (Bet Hamikdash offerings) whose halachic times have passed are rendered as “pigul”, contemporary religious centers of the galut that overstay their temporary sojourn in those lands are pigul; and their fate will be like all the great Jewish centers of the past.

As the necessity for the Jews in the galut to come on aliya will loom every larger, the window of opportunity will become ever more limited – adding another sad chapter to our already pitiful history.

As for us in Eretz Yisrael, the call is to bring the Torah to every centimeter of the Holy Land – to Yehudah, to the Shomron, the Golan, to Tel Aviv, to all of the Galil and the Negev.

The call to us is to prepare ourselves religiously, psychologically and militarily for the bumpy ride ahead and to witness HaShem’s acts of “radical, unconventional innovation,” as we say three times a day in the “amidah” prayer:

May all evil be instantly destroyed...

Shabbat Shalom

Nachman Kahana

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