

Tzav – Purim 5776

BS"D Parashat Tzav – Purim 5776

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The Final Defeat of Amelek

The Gemara (Megila 7a) tells of Esther's request that the miraculous salvation of the Jewish people and the events leading up to it be included in the TaNaCh (Bible) as its 24th book, to be an everlasting remembrance of HaShem's intervention for the Jewish nation in our miraculous victory over the forces of Amalek.

The rabbis rejected her request, basing their rejection on a verse in Mishlay (Proverbs 24:20)

:שְׁלֹשָׁה אֲמָרֹת כָּתַבְתִּי לְךָ אֲמָרֹת חָכְמָה וְדַעַת

Have I not written three sayings for you, sayings of counsel and knowledge

The rabbis explained to Esther that this verse is the basis of our oral tradition that victory over Amelek may not appear in the TaNaCh more than three times, and since it already appears three times there is no possibility to include the events of Purim. The three times are: once in parshat Beshalach in the book of Shemot, the second in parshat Ki Taytzay in the book of Devarim, and the third in the Book of Samuel, where King Shaul vanquished Amalek.

Eventually, Esther convinced the rabbis that the two victories mentioned in Shemot and Devarim are to be counted as one entry, since they appear in the Torah; the episode of King

The 70-year count began sometime between 1945-47 and will conclude in 2015-17.

In 1945 Nazi Germany, unmistakably Amalek, was defeated. Between 1945-47, ten of the German leaders – the same as the number of Haman's sons – were sentenced to be hung; 9 were put to death by hanging with the tenth, Hermann Goering, escaping the gallows by committing suicide in his prison cell.

Forty-six years later, in 1991, the leaders of the evil Soviet Union, also sons of Amalek, together with their anti-Semitic ideology, were discarded into the trash bin of history.

In the time frame between 2015-17 the destruction of the third and last Amalek power will have begun or will begin.

Who will it be?

Perhaps it will be the Haman of the Koran spinning his hatred from Persia-Iran; or perhaps world Christianity or Islam; possibly both.

What makes this projection even more interesting is the fact that the year 2015 was a Shmitta (Sabbatical) year corresponding to our calendar year of 5775 ה'תשע"ה which means salvation.

I submit this in full knowledge that, at the end of the day all human calculations could be proven false in the face of what HaShem has in store for us

The Fear of the Jews

The Megila records that Achashverosh permitted the Jews to defend themselves on the 13th of Adar against their murderous neighbors in the 127 areas under the King's control. On that

day, the Jews killed 75,000 of the enemy in the outlying areas. An additional 800 were killed in Shushan, the capital, on the 14th of Adar. In the two days of fighting on the 13th and 14th of Adar 75,800 Persians were killed!

וְכָל־מְדִינָה וְכָל־עִיר־אֲשֶׁר־בָּרַח־לְפָנֵי־הַמֶּלֶךְ־וְהַדְּבַר־שֶׁל־הַמֶּלֶךְ־בָּרַח־לְפָנֵי־הַיְהוּדִים
וְהַיְהוּדִים־שָׂשׂוּ וְשִׂמְחוּ וְשָׂבְעוּ וְשִׂמְחוּ וְרַב־הָיָה־מִגֵּוֹיִם־שֶׁבָּרְחוּ־לְפָנֵי־הַיְהוּדִים
:וְהָיָה־לְיִשְׂרָאֵל־כִּי־יִרְאוּ־אֶת־הַיְהוּדִים

And in every state and in every city wherever the King's decree reached, the Jews were happy and joyful, feasting and celebrating, with many of the gentiles drawing close to Judaism because fear of the Jews was upon them.

Fear of the Jew is a mighty weapon. It is alluded to in the Song at the Sea (Shirat Hayam) recited daily in the morning prayer (Shemot 15:14-16)

וְהָעַמִּים־יִשְׁמְעוּ וְיִרְדָּפוּ; וְהָעַרְבִים־יִפְתָּחוּ־אָזְנוֹתָם וְיִרְדָּפוּ
וְהָעֵדוּמִים־יִפְתָּחוּ־אָזְנוֹתָם וְיִרְדָּפוּ; וְהָעַמִּים־שֶׁבְּאֶרֶץ־כְּנָעַן
יִמְצָחוּ וְיִפְתָּחוּ־אָזְנוֹתָם וְיִרְדָּפוּ; וְהָעַרְבִים־יִפְתָּחוּ־אָזְנוֹתָם

The nations will hear and tremble; anguish will grip the people of Philistia. The chiefs of Edom will be terrified, the leaders of Moav will be seized with trembling, the people of Canaan will melt away. Terror and dread will fall on them. By the power of your arm Eretz Yisrael will be petrified as stone, until your people pass by, LORD, until the people you acquired pass by.

What are the lessons for our time?

Medinat Yisrael was awarded the rare opportunity of “fear of the Jews was upon them”. When we could do no wrong, and the opportunities for a major leap towards our final redemption was in our hands.

It happened in 1967, as a result of the Six Day War. The

world, both Jews and Gentiles, were preparing for the devastating, unspeakable destruction of the nascent Jewish State and the annihilation of all its Jewish citizens. Preparations were being made in the US to save the surviving Jewish children; as if there would have been any Jewish children to save had we lost the war. I recall reading that money was collected to erect a great memorial for the gallant State of Israel which is no more!

Israel at that time was small in area and tiny in population. Our army and air force were a mere shadow of what they are today.

The war erupted in the early hours of Monday morning, the 25th of Iyar (June 5th) when Israel made a preemptive attack, destroying the air forces of Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan and Saudia.

The ground war commenced. In 6 days we liberated Yehuda, Shomron, the Sinai Peninsula, the Golan Heights and Azza. On Wednesday the holy soldiers of Tzahal liberated the Old City and for the first time in 2,000 years the Temple Mount was in our possession. Tzahal, with the aid of HaShem, did more in six days than what Yehoshua Bin Nun had accomplished in seven years!

The world was aghast – as if they had seen a ghost. For indeed we emerged from the grave of history to take our rightful place at the peak of God's miracles.

During those six days and even a bit later we could have removed the desecration of HaShem's holy Mount by demolishing the Al Aksa mosque and the golden domed building in the heat of battle, as was suggested by Rabbi Shlomo Goren, but rejected by Moshe Dayan.

And the world would have been silent.

We could have conquered Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and

established pro-Israel puppet governments. And the world would have been silent.

We could have transferred all of the alien peoples from our lands and had a totally Jewish country. And the world would have been silent.

We could have expelled the murderous Arabs of Hevron and other potential threats across the Jordan River. And the world would have been silent.

But we did not do any of these justified acts because we were afraid to act like proper Jews. The 'fear of the Jews was upon them' did not register with our leaders.

Today Israel is being accused of war crimes. I admit to one unforgivable omission, when in 1948 and again in 1967 we did not expel all our enemies from the country, including the entire Gaza Strip. This is our crime, for which we, our children and grandchildren might yet have to pay the full price.

We did not learn the lesson of Purim; that when HaShem performs miracles, it is incumbent upon us to advance the opportunities afforded us and proceed with conviction and courage along the path of Jewish redemption.

The Pasuk (verse) says (Devarim 28,10):

וְכָל עַמְּיָם אֲדָמָה יִרְאוּ כִּי אַתָּה נִקְרָאתָ בְּשֵׁם יְיָ וְיִרְאוּ אֶתְּךָ

And all the peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the LORD, and they shall fear you

Rabbi Eliezer the Great explains (Berachot 6a) that the object that will instill fear in the hearts of our enemies is tefillin (phylacteries) placed on one's head.

The opportunity for 'fear of the Jews was upon them' will

again present itself.

In view of the political and security experiences of the last 40 years, and the religious awakening, I am confident that we will know how to seize the next opportunity to sanctify HaShem's holy name in Eretz Yisrael.

While in the Purim mode, I would like to conclude with a light story with a serious message.

An Arab once entered a bank in Yerushalayim, just as the automatic mechanism closed the safe. In reply to his demand to receive some cash, the teller told him that the safe could not be opened until eight o'clock the following morning. The Arab became very nasty, even threatening the life of the teller. At this point, the manager approached the Arab, picked him up, and threw him out.

While the Arab was nursing his wounds, the teller approached him saying: "Didn't I tell you that the safe is closed until tomorrow morning?" The Arab turned to the teller and said: "Yes. You told me, but he explained it".

It is senseless to tell our enemies of the folly of their ways. They will understand only when it is explained to them, in the spirit of "Fear of the Jews was upon them".

Shabbat Shalom ve'Purim samayach

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