

Vayaishev 5772

BS"D Vayishlach and Vayaishev 5772

In parashat Vayishlach, Ya'akov's two sons, Shimon and Levi, took center stage when they destroyed the evil inhabitants of Shechem. In parashat Vayaishev, all but one son were active participants.

Reuven tried to save Yosef, Shimon and Levi initiated the idea to act against Yosef and his dreams of grandeur, Yehuda suggested they sell Yosef into slavery and all the others played a part – if only by tacitly concurring with the act of betraying their brother.

Binyamin was the only son who had no role in the entire episode, and in fact appears to be a nonentity in the politics of the family. His father kept him at home, not even permitting him to join his brothers in caring for the sheep. And even in parashat Miketz, where Yosef demands that the brothers bring Binyamin to him, Binyamin played no active role. Indeed, not one utterance of his is recorded in the Torah.

But as time progressed, Binyamin's position in the affairs of Am Yisrael changed from passive and inactive to one of disunity and great shedding of Jewish blood.

At the end of the book of Shoftim (Judges), we read of the tragic, ruthless and brutal civil war that was instigated by the tribe of Binyamin. It is called the episode of Pilegsh Be'Givah – the Concubine in the city of Givah.

In this civil war, untold numbers of Jews from among the other eleven tribes of Yisrael were killed. At the war's end, we find that the tribe of Binyamin was nearly eradicated – with a mere 600 men surviving and all the other men, women and children of the tribe having been killed in the battles. In

light of the misery that Binyamin had wrought on the nation, every other tribe that had participated in the battle vowed not to marry with any of the Binyaminites.

When the attempt was begun to repopulate the tribe of Binyamin, the nation's elders brought 400 young women from the city of Yavesh Gilad, whose citizens did not participate in the fighting nor in the vow against marriage with the tribe of Binyamin. This left 200 men of Binyamin without wives and without the chance of being given a wife from the other tribes because of their vow.

Once again, the elders of Israel found a solution. There was a yearly event in the town of Shilo in which the young women who had reached marriageable age would dance in the vineyards in the hope of finding eligible young men to marry. Since the wording of the vow stated that the nation would not **give** their daughters to the tribe of Binyamin, the elders reasoned that it would be permissible for the remaining 200 fighters of Binyamin to "kidnap" the young dancing women for purposes of marriage. The ruling was accepted, and every one of the unmarried men found wives from among the girls of Shilo.

As we read in the Book of Samuel, HaShem informed Shmu'el HaNavi (the prophet) that, on the following day, a young man from the tribe of Binyamin would come to him and that he should anoint this young man, whose name was Shaul ben Kish, as the first King of Israel. Shaul was one of the 200 men of Binyamin to have found a wife among the daughters of Shilo.

Two questions:

1- Why did HaShem raise a soldier from the smallest, least active and most problematic tribe of Binyamin to the exalted position of first King of Israel? Indeed, this negated HaShem's promise of the monarchy to the tribe of Yehuda, from which would stem the family of David!

2- The Jewish people were commanded to fulfill three mitzvot

upon entering Eretz Yisrael: To appoint a king, who would then lead the nation in destroying Amalek, and then proceed to erect the Bet HaMikdash on the Temple Mount. Why did it take 400 years after entering the land under Yehoshua before HaShem appeared to Shmu'el the prophet to instruct him to appoint a king?

I suggest:

In parashat Vayishlach, the Torah records the agonizing episode in which our father Ya'akov and the entire family prostrated themselves before the evil Aisav, grandfather of the arch-evil Amalek.

It is a fact in human relations that when one prostrates himself before another, the downtrodden figure feels forever psychologically inferior. When Ya'akov and the family were forced into the demeaning state of submission, lying "spread eagle" with their faces in the mud before the feet of the jubilant Aisav, they were overcome with profound feelings of inadequacy, mediocrity and weakness. These feelings of submission were transmitted in many subtle ways to the future generations, and could have even been responsible for the lack of courage of the *miraglim* (scouts) and the people when they refused to enter Eretz Yisrael and make war on the Canaanite nations.

However, Binyamin was the only member of the family who did not suffer the scars of the others because of two major differences. He was the youngest son of Ya'akov and Rachel and had not yet been born when the family laid prostrate before the upright figure of Aisav. Moreover, he was born in Eretz Yisrael. It would be the combination of these two factors that would permit Binyamin to overcome the inadequacies which gripped the others in regard to Aisav and his descendants.

The tribes were fully aware of the three mitzvot incumbent upon them once they entered the land. However, the fear of

confronting Amalek prevented them from appointing a king. This impasse continued until the time of Shmuel the prophet, when Hashem decided to intercede by bringing Shaul, a Binyaminite, onto the scene. Shmuel would then anoint Shaul as the first king of Israel, commissioned to lead the nation in destroying Amalek and restoring Jewish national pride.

Shaul did not live up to the historic task assigned to him. Apparently, the task was postponed until, in the "eyes" of Hashem, the appropriate generation would emerge to annihilate the evil Amalek from the world. That generation is the Jews now living in Eretz Yisrael.

We know that after the northern tribes were exiled from the land, the only remaining tribes were Yehuda, Binyamin, sections of the tribe of Levi and perhaps some from Shimon.

So a great percentage of our people in Eretz Yisrael are from Binyamin, and the majority of the Jews presently here were born in Eretz Yisrael.

It is now that the real story begins.

Normative humanity is facing an existential problem in the form of the insane Shi'a Islam. These demons incarnate believe that their messiah can come only on the backdrop of a global catastrophe, such as a nuclear war, which they want to promote in any way possible.

Iran and other Shi'ites have no specific target. For them, the entire world – including Christian Europe, the United States and the Asian nations of mixed religions – would be part of the global catastrophe!

Logic dictates that the nuclear powers of the US, England, France, India and perhaps Pakistan would initiate a preemptive attack on Iran in order to foil their depraved intentions.

But what is the reality?

At the time of Shmu'el, when the Jewish nation stood inert and helpless, HaShem summoned the nation's rescuer from the small and complex tribe of Binyamin. So, too, today as the world casts its evil eye on the tiny State of Israel to villainize and condemn it, HaShem will summon our heroic sons born in the holy land, in planes and submarines and by all other methods produced by the Jewish mind, to take down the Amalek of our times.

May HaShem bless our holy sons who were born in Eretz Yisrael with the spirit of Binyanim, who never submitted to the threatening power of our enemies and whose first breath in this world was taken in the holy land.

Shabbat Shalom

Nachman Kahana

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