

Vayikra 5771

BS"D Parashat Vayikra and Chodesh Adar Two 5771

Part A

Last week we completed reading the book of Shemot, and this Shabbat we shall be"h begin reading the book of Vayikra.

There is much to be learned not only from the texts of the parshiot but even from their order of appearance.

The last five parshiot of Shemot are: Teruma, Tetzaveh, Ki Tisa, Vayak'hel and Pekudai.

Teruma and Tetzaveh deal with the Mishkan and its implements, parashat Ki Tisa interrupts the sequence and tells of the sinful, disastrous episode of the Aigel Hazahav (the Golden Calf).

The two final parshiot, Vayak'hel and Pekudai, return to the subject of the Mishkan and its implements.

Mishkan, Mishkan, tragic episode of idolatry, and again Mishkan, Mishkan – what does it mean?

I submit:

The Torah, through the sequence of these five parshiot, is informing the Jewish people of the future that awaits them.

The instructions in parashat **Teruma** allude to the 479 years of the Mishkan before the Bet Hamikdash was established in Yerushalayin: 39 years in the desert , 14 years at Gilgal, 369 years at Shilo, and 57 years in Nov and Givon.

Tetzaveh alludes to the 410 years of the Bet Hamikdash of King Shlomo on the Temple Mount.

The disastrous, sinful act of idolatry in parashat **Ki Tisa**

alludes to the destruction of King Shlomo's Bet Hamikdash for reasons of idolatry and the 70 years of exile.

Parashat **Vayak'hel** alludes to the Bet Hamikdash built by Ezra and the Jews who returned with him from Babylon and Persia.

Parashat **Pekudai** alludes to the magnificent Bet HaMikdash built by Hordus (Herod).

The Temples of Ezra and Hordus stood for 420 years before being destroyed by the Romans and the subsequent 2000-year exile of the Jewish people from our holy land. This tragic period of death and destruction in the galut of our physical, religious and moral being is alluded to by the break between the books of Shemot and Vayikra.

On this coming Shabbat, we will begin reading parashat Vayikra. But more so: The Jewish people are now standing in the new age of Vayikra, the parasha that instructs the nation as to the various kinds of sacrifices. It is as if to say, "prepare – it is not far off."

For those who understand, the time we are living in is one of profound celebration for the beginning of our redemption and salvation. After 2000 years of unspeakable calamities to our nation, HaShem has recognized and honors the unflinching loyalty of His people and has returned us to our ancient holy land.

To remain true to the Torah even after the Shoah is worthy of the highest rewards by our Father in Heaven.

He has restored our sovereignty over a large part of Eretz Yisrael and over Yerushalayim.

He has protected us in times of war and has made us prosperous in times of peace. We are creating a Torah empire here the likes of which has not existed anywhere for over 2000 years.

What is transpiring today in the lands of our enemies is a

remarkable, miraculous sign of Hashem's protective wing over His children in Eretz Yisrael.

In the Song at the Sea (Shirat Hayam, Shemot 15:7) the survivors sang:

*"With Your infinite **genius** You destroyed those who rose up against You. You unleashed your burning anger; it consumed them like straw"*

At first glance, one would think that instead of:

"With Your infinite **genius** You destroyed those who rose up against You"

the wording should be:

*With Your infinite **strength** You destroyed those who rose up against You*

But indeed, "With Your infinite genius" is absolutely more accurate. Because it comes to describe how HaShem, in His infinite genius, time and again frustrates the diabolical plans of our enemies in ways which are totally unpredictable, and yet keeps the hidden presence of the Creator intact.

In keeping with this, just consider what is happening in our region so suddenly and unexpectedly.

The Arabs will be busy fighting each other for years to come. Sunnis vs. Shiites and both against the Alawis. Arabs against Iranians. Libyans against each other. Christian Copts vs. Moslems in Egypt. Everyone against everyone in Lebanon and Syria. The Sunnis of Iraq against the Shiites of Iraq and all of them against the Kurds. The Turks against the Kurds, and the former Southern Moslem states of the USSR against Russia and against themselves. The flood of Arab refugees from North Africa into Europe; Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Yemen, Bahrain, Oman, Somalia and more.

And within the midst of all this, in the eye of the hurricane, stands the tiny State of Israel – prosperous and happy in the knowledge that HaShem has spread over us His holy cloud of protection, as in the time of our forefathers' sojourn in the desert.

Indeed, the greatest of life's experiences is to be a Jew living today in Eretz Yisrael.

Part B:

The Mishna (Shekalim 1,1) informs us that beginning with the month of Adar (the one closest to Nisan), nationwide announcements were made that the time for the annual payment of one half shekel had arrived. When the Bet Hamikdash and the various Mishkanot were standing, this payment was a Torah mitzva; and the money was earmarked for the purchase of animals for public sacrifices.

The Gemara (Megila 13b) points out the direct connection between the mitzva of shekalim and the holiday of Purim:

Raish Lakish (the Eretz Yisrael amora Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish) said: It was apparent to the Creator of the world that, in the future, Haman will count out (give) shekalim to destroy the Jewish people. Therefore, Hashem pre-empted this attempt by having the Jewish people precede Haman's shekalim with their mitzva of shekalim.

Initially, the connection between the holy mitzva of shekalim and the Amalek Haman would appear to be imposed and illogical. What does the mitzva of shekalim have to do with Haman and the Purim episode?

Why did Achashverosh and Haman limit the time for the "final solution" to their "Jewish problem" to one day – the 13th of Adar?

Why did Haman offer the king 10,000 talents of silver, when

all property and belongings of millions of Jews in the King's 127 states would belong to him anyway after annihilating his loyal Jewish subjects?

How many divisions did Haman have to enforce the decree of killing all the Jews in one day?

Even Achashverosh's army could not accomplish such a widespread genocide, when taking into account that many Jews would hide on that day or change their appearance.

I suggest:

Haman had no soldiers, and Achashverosh's army did not know all the Jews in their various districts in order to kill every man, woman and child.

Indeed, the monarchy was unable to carry out its own dictates. However, the local people in each of the 127 states, who knew their Jewish neighbors and their whereabouts could perform the grisly task of murdering millions of Jews in one day. The plan was to give the goyim an incentive to rise up against their peaceful Jewish neighbors and murder them a la Hebron 1929.

The incentive was that any citizen in Bavel and Medes who murdered a Jewish family could keep their possessions. But it had to be done on the 13th of Adar in order to foment the hatred into a murderous frenzy and also to prevent the Jews from regrouping and retaliating.

Now, in order to compensate the King for relinquishing all that Jewish wealth, Haman offered him 10,000 talents of silver.

Haman's plan was to exploit the inherent anti-Jewishness of the tranquil peace-loving citizens of Persia and Medes by offering financial promises in return for their cooperation in annihilating the entire Jewish nation in one day. A brilliant, diabolical plan worthy of Amalek. This was not to be an

establishment-initiated and orchestrated genocide, but rather the general will of the loyal citizens who knew that the root of all evil in the world was the satanic Jewish people and their ancient "Protocols of Zion" whose goal was to control the world.

To fully grasp the extent of the danger that awaited the Jews of Persia and Medes, just imagine what would have happened in 20th-century Poland, Ukraine, Russia, France and all the other countries of Europe had the Germans allowed any gentile who killed a Jewish family to keep the spoils. All of Christian Europe would have fallen into the same evil trap that Achashverosh and Haman set for the Jews of Persia and Medes. But this was prevented by the very evil and greed in the German heart that so coveted the Jewish property to not want to share it with their gentile comrades of Europe.

Now comes into play the connection between the mitzva of shekalim and its capacity to abrogate and nullify the evil intent of Haman and Achashverosh.

Shekalim is the most universal mitzva in the Torah. It eliminates all distinctions between Jews. A rich man was not allowed to donate more than a half shekel, just as an indigent person had to do everything possible to acquire a half shekel. Wise or foolish, talmid chacham or unlearned, rich or poor, nobility or common man – all had an equal share in the same mitzva.

This universal act on the part of all Jewish men was the exact opposite of the planned universal act of all the men of Persia and Medes to destroy the Jewish nation. It was the universal national will of Am Yisrael to uphold HaShem's mitzva of shekalim for the Bet Hamikdash that exposed and highlighted the distinction between Hashem's chosen people who lived a life of Torah and the murderous common people of those 127 states.

The background of the Purim episode has returned to haunt us. Judenhass (hatred of the Jews) in today's world is not government initiated. Quite the contrary, in the free world it is prohibited to be anti-Semitic in public. However, it is present in all ranks of society from cocktail parties along the Potomac, to university campuses, to high schools and even to supermarkets where the common folk come out to convince people not to buy Israeli products. Walking today in most European cities while wearing a kipa is a courageous act.

Purim is here again with the same cast of players. We Jews still naively believe that there is inherent good in mankind. In reality, the goyim haven't changed, except that today they camouflage their murderous intentions with politically and morally accepted nuances.

And as in the time of the Purim episode, we must be prepared to defend ourselves against outwardly-unabashed Jew-hating enemies, and we must also be wary of allies whose "friendly" advice to Medinat Yisrael would lead us to extinction.

Shabbat Shalom

Nachman Kahana

Copyright © 5771/2011 Nachman Kahana