

Vayikra 5775

BS"D Parashat Vayikra 5775

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The Nation's Mandate to Perform Three Duties

The last chapters in the book of Shoftim (Judges) relate two incidents which occurred between the time of Yehoshua Bin Nun's passing away and the appearance of Shmuel as the reigning prophet; a period of approximately 400 years.

1- Pesel Micha (the idol of Micha). A man named Micha, established a sanctuary for avoda zara in the town of Gerev, in the tribal area of Binyamin. However, not being versed in its ceremonies, he required the services of a "talmid chacham" in avoda zara.

While searching for the "right" man, a Levite passed his door. One thing led to another, and Micha offered him a handsome salary if he would serve as the priest for the avoda zara. The Levite's name was Yehonatan ben Gershom ben Menashe. The letter "nun" in Menashe is enlarged in order to hide his true identity. If we remove the letter "nun" from the name Menashe, we are left with "Moshe". Yes! The Levite who dedicated himself to avoda zara was the grandson of Moshe Rabbeinu!

2- Pilegish B'Givah (the concubine in the city of Givah). A man and his concubine were passing through the tribal area of Binyamin on their way home in the tribal area of Efrayim. At the approach of darkness, they decided to spend the night in the town of Givah in Binyamin. Several of the town's people took the woman and assaulted her to the point where she died. When the leaders of Binyamin refused to place the criminals on

nation's systems, leaving more room for the individual to think and act independently.

No rigid halacha; no Kehuna; no monarchy; no coercion, just "make us a god who will go before us" – before us, but not amongst us.

It was their desire to democratize the nation to the extent of near spiritual and social anarchy, where the by-words would be, "don't tell me what to do". Where every man will be at liberty to choose how much of "god" he wants. With no limits on who can marry whom. With the right of every person to define what is a family – one man and one woman; even two men and two women, or even two women with a child that came from a test tube.

It would signal a release from the responsibilities of being God's "chosen nation". No Eretz Yisrael. No religious uniformity. No limits on sexual behavior. Just "make us a god who will go before us" – before us, but not amongst us.

Moshe returned and with him Jewish democracy was restored, but according to the limitations established by the Torah.

A Lesson Learned Regarding Para Aduma

The tahara process of Para Aduma necessitated by an encounter with a corpse was understood by only Moshe Rabbeinu. The Gemara (Yoma 14a) states that even the wisest of men, Shlomo Hamelech, after investigating the natural and supernatural aspects of Para Aduma threw up his hands, exclaiming that the matter was beyond his understanding.

To understand that which the wisest of all men was incapable is certainly beyond the reach of mortal man, but that is what

makes the matter all the more enticing – to try and succeed where others have failed.

When studying the matter of Para Aduma the following thought occurred to me, which might allow us a direction in making the matter just a little less obscure.

The atomic table contains (to my last knowledge) 115 elements, some natural, some artificial. However, according to the Zohar's table of elements there are only 4 which due to the qualitative and quantitative mixtures produce every physical object in the universe:

afar – dust or soil

mayim – water

aish – fire

ru'ach – wind

The Torah relates that at the early dawn of mankind there were 4 major holocausts:

- 1) One third of mankind was killed when Kayin murdered his brother Hevel
- 2) The deluge in the time of Noach
- 3) When the five centers of culture – Sedom and Amora and their three sister cities were destroyed
- 4) When the army of the super power of Egypt was destroyed in the Red Sea.

Each involving one of the 4 elements:

- 1) Tradition states that Kayin murdered his brother with a rock and then buried him in the ground, over their dispute on

ownership of Mount Moriah. All on the background of soil and dust.

2) Humanity was destroyed in the time of Noach through the second element "mayim" water.

3) The advanced cities of Sdom and Amora were decimated by the third element "aish" fire.

4) The waters of the Red Sea (Parshat Beshalach) were split by the fourth element "ruach" when a great wind raged all night and then the wind blew again to restore the waters to their natural state.

Para Aduma utilizes all of these elements: 1) Fire burns the para, 2) which turns into "ayfar" ashes or dust; 3) the Kohen then mixes the ayfer with water. 4) He does not pour the liquid on the person coming to be tahor, but flings it on him using the wind which the Kohen creates by the force of his arm.

The lesson to be learned from this is that when each element is taken separately it brings death and tuma; however, when taken together through the Para Aduma the joint forces of all the elements bring tahara and life.

The lesson is applicable to our time: unity of the Jewish nation based around a common Torah and common values. A land where the nation can give forth the fruits of its genius, creates an atmosphere of tahara, while disunity produces strife and tuma.

The Miracle of the Elections of 5775

Freedom and democracy, like all good things in life, are

positive and sweet only when they are kept within acceptable bounds.

The non-observant call themselves “chofshi'im” – free people. They are the non-spiritual heirs of those who desired the Eyal Hazahav – people who yearned to be absolutely free.

To maintain a Jewish Medina requires a society which is “traditional” – at the least. Shabbat. Kashrut. Family Purity. Charity and good works. The resettlement of Eretz Yisrael. Military and social services.

The past elections in Israel saw two major camps “slugging” it out. The Likud which represents a nationalistic, ideological perception of the Medina; vs. Hamachaneh Hatzioni which is willing to compromise every ideal for the here and now, including the establishment of the 23rd Arab country right in the heart-land of Eretz Yisrael.

In the episode of Akeidat Yitzchak (the binding of Yitzchak; parashat Vayeira 22,6) the Torah relates:

וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָהָם אֵשׁ וְכַיִּים וַיֵּלֶךְ יִצְחָק עִימוֹ וַיִּשְׁחָטוּ אֶת-יִצְחָק וַיֵּלֶךְ אַבְרָהָם וְיִצְחָק יַחְדָּם...
:וַיֵּלֶךְ

And he (Avraham) took in his hand the fire and the knife to slaughter his son, and they went together.”

To whom is the Torah referring when it says “and they went together”? It cannot be Avraham and Yitzchak, because two pasukim later it says again “and they went together”. I suggest that “and they went together” in the pasuk of the fire and the knife refers to the very same fire and knife. At that moment Hashem brought down a decree that for now, as far as the Jewish nation is concerned, fire and knife will always go together. If we abide by the Torah, it will be the shechita knife of the sacrifices in the Bet HaMikdash, and the fire on the altar. But if we rebel against our spiritual calling,

exile will ensue and we will be punished by fire at the hands of Christianity, which will burn our books, our homes and eventually our bodies; and the Arab descendants of Yishmael will kill us with their swords.

However, we were witness to a third usage of the fire and the sword.

If not for Godly intervention which aroused people to vote for nationalist parties, the others were prepared to use a political knife to dissect the Holy Land which would result in the fires of war.

Baruch HaShem the vast majority of Israelis love this land. They have proven that they are willing to fight for it and even to offer the ultimate sacrifice of one's life for our return to our Biblical homeland.

The majority of Israelis desire to maintain their status of God's chosen people, and are proud to be part of the greatest ongoing miracle of the past 2000 years.

These are the people who would never even consider compromise over the Land; certainly not over Yerushalayim.

These are the Jews who are not interested in "make us a god who will go before us" – before us, but not amongst us. They desire the Torah as given to Moshe Rabbeinu, to be fulfilled in HaShem's holy land. And pray and live for the day when we will be able to fulfill the three mitzvot given to the nation at the time of Yehoshua: to appoint a king, to destroy Amalek and to build the Bet Hamikdash.

Shabbat Shalom,

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