

Yamim Nora'im 5777

BS"D Yamim Nora'im – Days of Awe 5777

Rabbi Nachman Kahana

Avinu Malkeinu

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Our Father, our King, renew for us a good year

Our Father, our King, abolish all evil decrees against us

Our Father, our King, annul the plans of our enemies

Our Father, our King, frustrate the counsel of our foes

Our Father, our King, rid us of every oppressor and adversary

Our Father, our King, close the mouths of our adversaries and accusers

Medinat Israel: The Sling-Shot Nation

Medinat Yisrael has many soubriquets: Start-up Nation; Originative Nation, Productive, Imaginative, Innovative, Inspiring Nation.

All are correct to a degree, but none succeed in conveying the essence of the Medina and its universal game-changing mission.

Therefore, I suggest the soubriquet – “The Sling-Shot Nation”. Why?

Let’s return to the dramatic saga of David, the young shepherd boy vs. Goliath the Philistine military monster, as recorded in the Book of Samuel 1 chapter 17. The Jewish and Philistine armies were facing each other in the Valley of Elah, south of the present city of Bet Shemesh. Today, the valley can be identified by the huge communication disks pointing to our space satellites scanning the earth hundreds of kilometers above the Holy Land. (Where are the Philistines today?)

Goliath, the human military machine, would step forward into “no man’s land” dividing the two armies and challenge the Jews to send forward a soldier to challenge him. No Jew volunteered.

For a period of 40 days and 40 nights, whenever the Jews would recite Kri’at Shema, Goliath would advance to “no man’s land” and curse the Jewish God and His nation Yisrael; while no Jew dared to silence the defiler of Hashem’s holy name.

David, who was not yet of military age, stayed at home. At some point in time, his father Yishai sent David to the front in order to deliver some items to his older brothers who were warriors in Tza’hal (Tz’va Hashem Le’Yisrael). When he arrived, David was so enraged by what was unfolding before his eyes; that this despicable Philistine was cursing the Creator

of Heaven and Earth and mocking Hashem's chosen people, that he volunteered to engage Goliath in battle – man against boy.

It is interesting to note that David and Goliath were in fact cousins, with David being the great grandson of Ruth and Goliath the grandson or great grandson of Ruth's sister, Orpah.

Goliath ridiculed the Jewish army for sending as their military representative a teenager who in one hand held a shepherd's staff and in the other a crude slingshot; while Goliath was covered from head to toe with – copper – armor, as a fish is covered with scales, except for a small aperture near his forehead.

Time and again, Goliath ridiculed, condemned, taunted and belittled the God of Israel, Am Yisrael, and the Jewish army that stood in fear of him, and promised to feed David's "flesh to the birds".

David had five stones in his pouch, one for each of the five books of the Torah. Goliath began running towards David. David removed one of the stones from his pouch and placed it in the slingshot. When Goliath came into range, David swung the slingshot and released the stone. It penetrated the small aperture in Goliath's helmet and sank deep into his brain. David then beheaded the Philistine with Goliath's own sword, and the birds ate from his flesh.

The incidents in the Tanach are informative in themselves; but each of them conveys a message for the future of Am Yisrael.

The analogy of Goliath the Philistine for Am Yisrael is the ongoing, seemingly impenetrable cloud of anti-Semitism that just never seems to disappear.

This Goliath of anti-Semitism is protected from top to bottom by a thick armor composed of the nations that make up the UN, Christianity, Islam and many people who envy the Jews, as well

as others who cannot understand the Jews' ability to survive and thrive while the greatest empires have degenerated, wilted and faded into the yellowing pages of old history books.

However, within the armor of falseness, deception and treachery protecting the anti-Semites, Hashem has imbedded a small aperture called EMET – the truth just waiting for the stone of Am Yisrael.

In the near future, we can expect to see concerted efforts by these anti-Semitic entities to lay the groundwork for the demise of the Medina. The initial stage would be our forced retreat from Judea, Samaria and the Golan. The armor of these virulent anti-Semites will be the so-called International Law that has baselessly declared our presence in historical Eretz Yisrael as illegitimate. One of the UN's committees has already declared that the Jews have no historic or religious connection to the Temple Mount; and that is just the tip of the iceberg.

When their efforts begin in earnest, Hashem will begin to twirl His celestial slingshot with its stone – Medinat Yisrael, which will rip into the delusional armor surrounding the SHEKER – falsehood of anti-Semitism. The stone of Medinat Yisrael will expose the hypocrisy of the gentile world, as it penetrates the tiny aperture of truth that still exists among some honest gentiles.

The Rock

The allegory comparing Am Yisrael to a rock or stone appears originally in chapter two of the Book of Daniel.

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylonia was disturbed by a dream, the details of which he forgot upon awakening.

Daniel reminded the King of its details, as follows:

In the dream the King saw an enormous, dazzling statue, awesome in appearance. The head of the statue was made of pure gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze, its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of baked clay. Then a rock struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and smashed them and the statue became like chaff on a threshing floor in the summer. The wind swept it away without leaving a trace. But the rock that struck the statue became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth.

Then Daniel went on to interpret the dream:

Your kingdom is like the head of gold.

After you, another kingdom will arise, inferior to yours, like silver is to gold. This will be the Persians and Medes.

Next, a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule over the whole earth. This will be Greece.

Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron—for iron breaks and smashes everything. That is Rome.

Then there will be a mixture of iron and clay, Rome and Yishmael, like the feet of the statue.

At that time, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed but will crush all the remaining kingdoms.

This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands. A rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold into fragments.

That rock is Am Yisrael.

This is the schematic outline of what awaits humanity in the near future.

In the meantime, the role of Am Yisrael is to return home and

rebuild the physical Eretz Yisrael and regenerate our holy soul after 2000 years of galut tuma (impurity).

A Special Message to our Brothers and Sisters in the galut

Yearly excerpt from the book "With All Your Might":

Reb Yisrael and his sons erected their succa adjacent to the kitchen door, as they had done for many years.

But this year was different. Reb Yisrael had just learned from his rabbi that one of the reasons for residing temporarily in a succah is in case one's destiny was to be expulsion into galut on Rosh Hashana, then the departure from the comforts of home into the succah should be considered to be that galut.

Reb Yisrael, his wife and children left the warm comforts of their beautiful house and entered the succah with the knowledge that by taking up temporary residence therein, they would be absolved of any galut-related sins.

As the family continued to reside in the succah, they got quite used to the pleasant smell of the schach and the pretty pictures on the walls and the overhanging decorations and were content to remain there even after the chag! They were able to peer into their permanent home with its luxurious amenities, electrical gadgets, state-of-the-art under-floor heating units, thick hanging drapes, lush carpets and much more, but entertained no interest in returning there.

As odd as it may seem, the family became accustomed to the crowded cold interior of the succah. Their relatives and neighbors tried to point out the irrationality of what they

were doing, but the very idea that this was galut did little to encourage them to return to their spacious home.

When their rabbi came to visit, it was surprising that he encouraged them to remain in the succah rather than to return home; because it was in the succah that the family felt comfortable and closely knit.

In the meantime, several strangers noticed that the previously brightly-lit home was vacant, and they decided to move in as if it were indeed their own!

Reb Yisrael and his wife and children saw the strangers living in the house; but in veneration for the succah, they stubbornly bonded with the thin walls and dried-out schach and refused to leave.

The whole thing was so absurd. To leave such a beautiful home for the feeble, fallible construction of the succah, despite the fact that their beautiful home was beckoning, was beyond the understanding of any rational person.

Then came the stones thrown by the local anti-Semites who wanted to rid the neighborhood of this eye-sore, but Reb Yisrael and his family dodged them one by one and steadfastly remained in their fragile dwelling.

Then came the terrible night when one third of the succah was torched by the local bullies.

Reb Yisrael and his family were aware of what was happening, but their minds had become so warped that no amount of reasoning could move them.

To them the succah was home and their home was galut.

Eventually the succah came crashing down, killing Reb Yisrael and his entire family – in their beloved galut!

Gemar Chatimaa Tova and Chag Sameyach,

Nachman Kahana

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