

BH

Title: Stand Tall & Be Counted!

This sermon addresses two painful questions about Anti-Semitism:

Why do people hate us anyway?

How do we raise children who will be proud of being Jewish and won't be marching in support of our enemies on college campuses?

Sermon delivered by Rabbi Shalom M. Paltiel

At Chabad of Port Washington

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A biker was visiting the zoo in Paris, when he saw a little girl leaning into the cage of a huge fierce **African lion**.

Suddenly, the lion grabbed her by the cuff of her jacket and tried to pull her inside to slaughter her, under the eyes of her screaming parents.

The biker jumped off his bike, ran to the cage and hit the lion square on the nose with a powerful punch. Whimpering from the pain the lion jumped back and let go of the girl. The biker then took her to her terrified parents, who thanked him endlessly.

Reporter: 'Sir, this was the most gallant and brave thing I saw a man do in my whole life.'

'Why, it was nothing. The lion was behind bars. I just saw this little kid in danger, and acted as I felt right.'

"You kidding? This is huge - you're a hero! I can see the headline tomorrow morning: Tourist heroically saves little girl..."

BTW

'I noticed a patch on your jacket,' said the journalist.

'Yeah, I ride with a Israeli motorcycle club'

I see... you're from Israel - scribbles a few notes..

The following morning headline:

'ISRAELI GANG MEMBER... ASSAULTS AFRICAN IMMIGRANT... AND STEALS HIS LUNCH'

With the GAZA war, the double standard, the Israel bashing, the stupidity...

It really tested our Jewish nerves...

Russia invades and occupies an entire area in the Ukraine – no protests on the streets of Paris!

Syria causes the death of close to 200,000 people, including 10,000 children – no protests on the streets of London!

But when Israel acts to defend itself – going to greater lengths than any country in the history of war... the whole world is in an uproar!

Quote attributed to Adolf Hitler ym"s:

"If you tell a big enough lie and tell it frequently enough, it will be believed."

Joan Rivers, of blessed memory:

"They're criticizing us! We're the only sane nation in that part of the world... Let me just tell you, if New Jersey were firing rockets into New York, we would wipe 'em out. If we heard they were digging tunnels from New Jersey to New York, we would get rid of Jersey."

(I now refer to her as Rebetzin Rivers)

In an article entitled: Why I canceled my subscription to the NY Times a reform rabbi, life-long liberal writes:

“What would you do if your neighbor across the street sits down on the balcony, puts his little boy on his lap and starts shooting machine gun fire into your living room?”

You know the definition of CHUTZPAH:

A man kills his parents, and then throws himself on the mercy of the court on account that he’s an orphan.

That’s exactly what GAZAN leaders sound like when they lamented the deaths of civilians whom they put up as human shields!

PLUS GLOBAL ANTI SEMITISM UP:

A survey conducted this year by the ADL in over 100 countries, showed Anit Semitism on an all time high since WWII

And that over one billion people have anti-Semitic attitudes... and many could not even give a reason why they hate Jews!

We’re watching riots, pogroms almost, in France and England against synagogues

Even more upsetting:

Climate on college campuses

It’s not Arab leaders giving their rhetoric

US Ivy League professors!

Educating the future doctors, lawyers, teachers, leaders, college professors, future members of Congress...

It really isn't that easy to live in a world where so many believe that whatever Israel does is wrong!

Husband: "My wife says I have only two faults ...everything I say, and everything I do"!

But what saddens and surprises me, is the fact that it's not just the world that is in uproar... It's our Jewish world too! A growing number of our kids question Israel too.

Amy Klein, writing in the Haaretz newspaper some weeks ago, spoke of her "Love" of Israel, but then she writes, "I believe the incursion into Gaza was wrong."

I read her words and I thought: Amy, you write of your "love" towards Israel? They are living in fear of a missile attack or a tunnel that can pop out literally in their dining room - and you don't support their battle to eradicate this evil?

So tell me: What is it about Israel that you "love?" Ahava creams? The hummus? Is that what it means to "love" Israel... that our people can't count on you when the chips are down?

Mitch Kornhaber's question

So dear friends, the question becomes:

How can we live proudly in a world surrounded by one billion people who hate us - without even knowing why?

And the other 4 billion - for the most part - tolerate the hate...

It's kind of scary... and unnerving...

This question was actually asked of me about two weeks ago by a young man, a young dentist, named Mitch Kornhaber. He asked me this when we met just a few days before his recent marriage...

And more importantly: What can we do to help raise our families so that they walk proud and tall – in a world where at times they feel all alone?

And why do they hate us anyway? Why?!

Is there something wrong with us?!

I'm gonna tell you what I told Mitch:

When a person endures pain, knowing there's a purpose for it makes it much easier to endure the pain

Best example is childbirth – the pain is unbearable I'm told...

The pain would be impossible to handle if not for the knowledge that there's a great purpose to this... that something really wonderful is about to happen...

It's painful living in a world where so much hate is directed at you by a billion people, and tolerated by the other five billion...

Knowing there's a reason and purpose to it, that it's not all bad news, makes it manageable...

YOU'RE THE MAYOR!

Imagine this example: An unknown man, completely low profile, who happens to be incredibly brilliant and when discovered is quickly elected MAYOR of the city, deemed the best man for the job hands down

He begins to notice people don't like him, hate letters, blogs on the internet against him

Innocently says to his wife: Why do people hate me? Am I a bad person?

Honey, don't you understand – YOU'RE THE MAYOR!

It's nothing personal

Comes with the territory

The Creator came down to earth, only once, and chose us, a small unknown entity, to be the MAYOR

To guide and teach the world's morality in the way He wants it to go

Setting the stage for the time of Redemption, of world peace

Paving the way for the day when G-d will call this world His home...

This is the task with which we were entrusted...

To introduce the world to its great Creator

And that each of us are created in His image... and that each human life is priceless... and was created on purpose... with a purpose...

We're not exactly low profile, some unknown entity minding our own business

We're the leaders of the world's direction

We're doing an important job, a high profile job

We need to expect to be in the headlines

We can't expect to be under the radar, we can't expect unnoticed...

Many people will like us, admire us, salute us, emulate us

Others will hate us

... what do we expect?!

It's not fun feeling isolated, and not liked

But it's real important to understand why

Because we're the carriers of the torch, G-d's messengers to the world

Those who hate G-d, and His message: morality, justice, the sanctity of human life

will also hate the Jew

It's an important job

It's a privilege, an honor

But it's a high profile job...

There's a price to pay...

Comes with the territory

We need to realize the source of the hate, it's our heritage, our history, our peoplehood, our destiny, it'll make some sense of it and give us a perspective, and the strength to stand up proudly to it

Steve Emerson lecture/Glen Ruben:

Steve Emerson delivered a lecture here Thursday night two weeks ago, he's a recognized international expert on terrorism (thanks to Carol & Bill who arranged and sponsored it)

In the Q&A many interesting questions were raised, he had good answers

One question he couldn't answer

“Why are our own children and grandchildren on college campuses marching for the Palestinian cause?”

He had no answer

Glen Ruben stood up:

(another dentist... today's sermon is inspired by two dentists...

Btw I'm also a dentist...

You didn't know?

You think I'm only a rabbi?

I'm also an anesteziologist and a dentist...

On Shabbat... I put people to sleep

During the week I have to raise money... trust me it's pulling teeth...)

So Glen gets up and says:

I'll tell you how to insure your children won't end up on college campus demonstrating against Israel...

Send you child to Jewish day school & they'll know who they are

No one will be able to lie tell them lies and confuse them

They'll be clear about who they are and the justice of Israel's cause...

WOW he hit the nail on the head!

If our kids have no idea what a Jew means,

If the entire world is against us, well it's quite closed minded to think we're right and they're all wrong

Especially if "THEY" includes their college professor

Not wanting to feel close minded, isolated and on the wrong side of the issues

Jewish kids, and Jewish adults, become the staunchest supporters of the modern day Jew haters, without realizing it...

Teach them, day school, shul, Shabbat table, kosher home,

And they'll know their history

They'll understand who we are, our peoplehood, our mission

They'll stand up tall and proud!

Don't tell them who they are and where they come from,

And we've left them completely in the dark

They don't have a choice but to find a way to justify why the world is right and we're wrong

And to become embarrassed with their Jewishness...

There's an old joke about an army captain trying to determine the religion of his men for their dog tags. He calls each one's name and each steps up and answers affirmatively: "Jones, Catholic, sir... O'Donnell, Protestant, sir... Smith, Unitarian, sir... Then Davidson is called. Davidson! The private gets up and stammers, "Well, sir, you see, my family wasn't really religious, we did some of our traditions, but mostly we... and the captain interrupts and says: "Jewish!"

Jews sometimes need a lesson in standing up tall

And we can't stand up tall for the Jewish state unless we stand up tall for Judaism...

BIB writes TORAH DURING WAR

I found it fascinating that in the midst of the Gaza War and the daily military briefings, while the Prime Minister of Israel canceled almost all his normal commitments he chose to host in his office a ceremony where he took a quill and a parchment and began writing the first letters of a new Torah.

Ben Gurion - Torah is our KUSHAN

It reminded me of the first PM, Ben-Gurion.... when asked in the late 1930's by the British high commissioner, Lord Pili "what gives you a man born in Poland the ownership to Palestine? Do you have a Kushan, a Title, on Palestine?" And spontaneously Ben-Gurion lifted up a Bible and declared: "This is our Kushan!" - this more than anything shows our undisputed ownership to this land!...

Pita In Israeli Prison:

Salah Tamri, a Palestinian leader jailed during the Lebanon War, he advocated a peaceful coexistence with Israel and a sharing of the disputed land. That all changed when he was freed from jail in one of the infamous prisoner exchanges.

Tamri was asked what happened to him. Why the sudden turnaround, advocating resistance and friction with Israel until the bitter end?

Tamri related that he had previously wanted to reach a peace deal with Israel because he feared that Israel would win any war against the Arabs. He thought

that Israel would swallow up the Palestinians and completely overtake the West Bank if prompted to take military action.

That all changed in jail the day he saw one of his Israeli guards eating falafel and pita, on Passover. He said to the guard, "What are you doing? Why are you eating that?"

The guard was incredulous, "What is it your business what I eat?" he said. "Don't tell me what to eat. I am the guard and you are the prisoner."

"But today is Pesach, your holiday of liberation, and the Torah says you should not eat bread today," scolded the prisoner. "How can you be eating pita so impassively?"

"I couldn't care less what a four-thousand-year-old book says about anything."

WOW! That changed everything for him

"A people that has lost its belief in its own Torah, its own destiny and place in history, is a people that has lost its will to fight for its survival, for its lost its faith in its right to its G-d given land"

Charles Goldberg

I want to tell you a story that occurred just a few months ago. For me, it sums it all up.

An anti-Semitic preacher came to the University of Kansas, with some of his groupies, holding ugly signs, filled with messages of bigotry and intolerance. One sign read: **"All Jews belong in hell."** He stood there ranting and cursing Jews.

Dozens of Jews of the university, shaken by the sight, came out and screamed at him. They held a counter demonstration.

But then something very moving happened.

Charles Goldberg, was a Jewish student in the University. He was completely secular, with almost no affiliation and completely no involvement with Judaism. But this incident aroused something very deep in him. A part of him he did not think much of, his Jewish spark, his neshamah, emerged. Charles ran to the fraternity where he lived. There, the **Chabad Rabbi on campus, Zalman Teichtel**, once forgot a tallis of his many months earlier. Charles remembered it was laying there somewhere.

Charles returned to the demonstration, stood up on a bench, wrapped himself in the tallis, and began to shake and shukel in heart of hate

SHOW PICTURE - (there are pictures scattered on seats in each pew...)

All of the Jewish kids and many others began cheering him. The media arrived, and the next day, the front page of the University Daily Kansan featured a large picture of Charles Goldberg wrapped in a tallis praying. The headline of the article was: **The Jewish Response to Bigotry!**

The best answer to Anti Semitism is A TALLIS! PROUD STAUNCH YIDDISHKEIT!

Yom Kippur Appeal

We don't usually make appeals publicly on YK as many synagogues do. We think it's better to allow people to deal with their YK or Yiskor appeal privately without the fanfare and pressure of a public announcement.

However, this year, because of the challenges we've faced, the very difficult year... we need extra strength... I decided this year to actually make a public appeal...

Except that it's going to be a mitzvah appeal...

Not that we don't need money...

Joke – break in at synagogue office... they stole \$50 in cash and \$50,000 in pledges...

We need the gelt...

So yes we do need your help, as Alan just said

I'll leave that up to your generous hearts

Please give, it's a mitzvah

Make a gift, or better yet, join our membership, upgrade your membership...

Whatever you can do...

And may Hashem upgrade your blessings!

But today's appeal here and now is for mitzvah pledges...

Like Charles Goldberg, I am asking people to stand tall and be counted!

- **Please rise and stand tall if you pledge to grow and enhance your Jewishness by attending at least one of the JLI adult education courses during the upcoming year**
- **Please rise and stand tall if you pledge to grow and enhance your Jewishness by joining at least one or more of the monthly Sisterhood Family Shabbats during the coming year**
- **Please rise and stand tall if you pledge to grow and enhance your Jewishness (for the guys) by joining the Minyanaire's Club – those who attend our minyans other than Shabbat morning - Sunday, Monday, Thurs or Fri evening**
- **This is a biggie... Please rise and stand tall if you pledge to grow and enhance your Jewishness by observing one Shabbat, together with thousands of Jews around the world (The Shabbos Project) on October 24/25**

- **Those were all communal mitzvahs... And finally, please rise and stand tall if you pledge to grow and enhance your Jewishness by making a mitzvah commitment, any mitzvah, daily or weekly tefillin, Shabbat candles, kosher, Torah study, mikvah, anything, large or small but a serious commitment to an added Jewish observance – please rise and stand tall!**

Tefillin closing story:

Berel's close friend Eli Nochum Block, son of the Chabad rabbi in San Antonio, Texas, spends a few weeks each summer visiting random Jewish families in the city, offering inspiration, mezuzahs, Torah books, etc. Once, he realized he had forgotten the tefillin at the prior home, so the wife says 'he has tefillin'. He hadn't seen them in 50 years... but she was sure it was someplace, and eventually she found them in the attic and brought them down... Took them in his hand, like an old friend whom he missed... I used to do this, from my bar mitzvah until age 20, each day...

He put on the arm tefillin and was visibly moved. As he took out the head piece a yellowed piece of paper fell out. He picked it up and started to cry. It was a letter from his mother which read –

“Mazal Tov on your bar mitzvah. Please remember, these are the same tefillin that my father used, they were a gift to him from his grandfather, our great elte Zeidie Moshe. This is the most precious possession of our family... Whenever you will put on these Tefilin you will make me very proud!

Dear friends, as we prepare for yiskor, to remember our loved ones... who join us in Shul on this holy day...

...As I always tell you, they're really here...

You need to simply close your eyes and envision them sitting right next to you, inquiring about how everything is, blessing you, and empowering you

Remember to tell them about your Yom Kippur pledge

Tell them you haven't forgotten the priceless heritage they've passed along to you, from their bubbies and zeidies

Tell them you promise to stand tall and proud even as clouds of hatred seem to thicken

Ask them... to please.... please plead and cry before the Heavenly throne to finally bring an end to the hate...

It's time for Moshiach... We're ready...

We've done our job leading the world in His ways, we've taught the world goodness, kindness, morality, fidelity,

...respect for the value and dignity of every human life, rooted in faith in the One True G-d who created each of us in His image...

We're ready for a time of world of peace, when all of humanity

All of us children of our Father in Heaven

Will live together in harmony, brotherhood, mutual respect

In a world that mirrors and reflects its Great Creator

A time when G-d will call this place His home!

Shana Tova & Thank you.