

The Dwarf and the Giant

Share This Story, Choose Your Platform!

The Dwarf and the Giant

By Rabbi Yaakov Paley

The Battle of Britain

In 1940, the German armies ploughed their way through Europe. With every stomp of the German boot another country fell. To secure its grip on its thrashing prey, and to dominate the surrounding waves unchallenged, the Reich had to subdue or destroy the British forces. To conquer Britain via land invasion would be impossible without eliminating the significant threat from the Royal Air Force. Otherwise, every ship sent to the island would be sunken on approach. So began the famous Battle of Britain.

A nation held its breath with their eyes towards the skies, as the British watched a most vicious series of dog-fights. Week after week, Berlin sent steel ravens to claw at their skies, pieces of airplane hurtling earthwards togetherwith the bombs. They followed in horror and hope as their own sons braved the lead-filled skies, to again and again repel the flying Nazis from their country's clouds.

At stake was victory against a tyrannical world order. Should they lose the skies, their countrymen would have their orders barked at them in German, and possibly their future generations would too. Europe would have less hope with the British Forces subdued. They had no choice but to win, and

they did. Not due to their skill, for many pilots' first engagement with the enemy was also their last, and planes were being lost almost as quickly as they were being built. Rather it was their relentless courage and sheer perseverance that won freedom for generations and gained Europe a vital base from which to wrest the knife from its attacker.

The Prime Minister, famous for his wisdom in expressing sound truths in simple sentences, coined a statement of gratitude in honor of the brave airmen. He produced such an eloquent phrase, that it is surely fitting to convey an inspirational message in our own service of our Creator, as the Baal Shem Tov taught us to take a lesson in our Divine service from all we see or hear.

Winston Churchill: "Never was so much owed by so many to so few."

If you and I are soldiers, our planet a battlefield, our galut ("exile") a state of war, and redemption the victory, then we must recognize the power that our arsenal of good deeds unleashes, and the uniquely privileged duty that our present generation bears. Indeed, we were informed by our officers that "Every mitzvah brings Moshiach closer." To understand the magnitude of advancing the onset of the final redemption, one must first appreciate the enormity of each prolonged moment in exile.

It is not the Jewish people alone who are in a state of spiritual and physical displacement. The King of Kings, Creator of All-G-d Himself is in exile too, so-to-speak! The Talmud declares: "When the people of Israel were sent into exile, the Divine Presence was exiled with them. And when they will be redeemed, the Divine Presence will be liberated along with them." "In all their afflictions," prophesies Isaiah, "He is afflicted." Our Sages describe the Divine 'weeping' at His creature's sufferings, and 'grieving' each day in which the Redemption does not arrive. He does not sit in His palace

whilst His subjects do battle; rather He is found alongside of us.

Together with G-d, all of His ministering angels are likewise in exile. Not just a few of them, but the entire "a thousand thousands serve Me, and a myriad myriads rise before Me" (Daniel 7:10) suffer the concealment of Divine radiance in their heavens. Moreover, these figures describe one encampment of angels, whereas "His troops are without number"!

The Lubavitcher Rebbe spent hours closeted in deep discussion with statesmen and scholars, yet he was also able to express profound concepts for the consumption and mind of the child. He described the above thought for a youngster: A child may have a few pennies or even a large collection of pennies, but the child can readily appreciate that his local bank holds far more pennies than he has. And he could only imagine how many pennies there are in the federal bank in Washington...

So a child could readily understand that because G-d has many, many, more angels than the federal bank in Washington has pennies, and each of these individual angels are suffering every second that the exile continues, then to bring the Redemption even one moment sooner brings relief to each one of these countless spiritual beings! Put in this perspective, a moment is not a mere fraction of time; rather it is immeasurable in quantity and certainly in quality.

A child will also appreciate that together with himself, his mother and father, sisters and brothers, are all waiting for Moshiach too. And all the Jews of his neighborhood and country along with millions of Jews across the entire world! In addition, there are untold millions of Jews from hundreds of past generations, whose souls likewise mourn the Divine concealment in the spiritual spheres and whilst in the Garden of Eden still yearn for the future Resurrection.

"In that time, there will be no hunger nor war, no jealousy

nor quarrelling, and goodness will be in abundance..." Maimonides describes an era that mankind has always dreamt of. Every moment without starving continents, without countries torn by war and misery, is another great liberation for millions worldwide.

Yet, by Divine Providence, the immense honor of cutting the ribbon on this wondrous Era has fallen to... us! It has not come to us due to our merits, accomplishments or skills, for we pale before the deeds of past eras. Rather, as "dwarfs standing upon the shoulders of giants," our final deeds piled upon the accumulative pyramid of all generations past have reached the defining point. "He who affixes doors onto the house, is as if he had built the entire structure." When that final mitzvah performed at any moment by 'someone who is anyone' has slipped into place, then the entire world and all those souls in Heaven, with all the countless spiritual beings including G-d Himself, will be released into a blissful era of divine revelation, peace and plenty.

They will all turn to the relentless fighters who won the final skirmish in a war of good deeds against a dark and unhappy world—that's us—and exclaim:

Never have so many owed so much to so few!