

This parasha deals with Avraham Avinu but has a message for us in 5781, 2020.

Our parasha tells in great detail the story of the rebellion of the 4 kings against a group of 5 kings. Why was it necessary to relate this episode in such detail [14:1-24]? The domination of the kings by K'darla'omer and their refusal to pay tribute to K'darla'omer sparked the battle. At first glance their conflict had no relevance to Avraham, yet we see, Rav Soloveitchik noted, a precedence that has followed the Jewish people throughout the ages, that the Jew always finds himself thrust in the middle of international conflicts.

Avraham got involved in the conflict because his nephew Lot was captured in the war. He went to protect his own. We Jews have been accused of clannish behavior, this I take, is a compliment. No one else will come to our aid, we must take matters into our own hands when it comes to the survival of our brethren. Kol Yisrael Areivin Zeh Bazeh,[Sotah 37b] Avraham did all this for Lot even though earlier, Lot rejected him saying that he wanted no part of Avraham or his GD. When the time came to help his "brother", Avraham was ready to go. Their previous disagreements faded away and Avraham focused on the need to help his "brother".

On July 4, 1976, the dramatic and miraculous counter-terrorist hostage rescue mission took place. An Air France plane with 248 passengers of which 103 of them were Jewish was hijacked by terrorists and landed in Uganda. The terrorists demanded the release of terrorist prisoners and threatened to kill the Jewish passengers if their demands were not met. A team of Israeli commandos, led by Yonatan Netanyahu [Binyamin's brother] was sent on a rescue mission, which was, with the help of Gd, successful. There was no discussion as to what kind of Jews the hostages were, whether religious, not-yet religious, Chareidim, Chassidim, Chiloni'im, white or black. It made no difference! The rescuers too were a mixed group, several religious commandos among them, who were told to begin the Operation on Friday night. Unfortunately, Yonatan was a casualty. Avraham rescued Lot, the IDF with HaShem behind them, rescued 103 Jews.

When we Jews are successful, it elevates the Kavod [honor] of HaShem, and if not, it reflects poorly on HaShem. The Holocaust period, was a time of terrible Chillul HaShem, desecration of the honor of GD. Medinat Yisrael is a most important factor in kavod HaShem. Even if one is critical of the leadership of The State of Israel, we must acknowledge the respect of HaShem, Torat HaShem and Klal Yisrael that it can foster among the nations of the world.

Avraham's battle with the kings and the covenant with HaShem showed him that he and his descendants will always be embroiled in conflict, yet we will always be victorious because Ha'Shem will be with us. Avraham was promised that his children will be uncountable as the stars in heaven and sand of the ocean. On the other hand we are called the smallest (population) of all nations. This contradiction can be resolved that in qualitative terms we are the greatest as the stars above and sand below. We have lost battles, yet we have won the war. Our existence has been guaranteed not only by a *promise* of HaShem, but through a *covenant* of HaShem between Him and the descendents of Avraham- and that is US!

Shabbat Shalom from Yerushalayim,

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**QUESTIONS FOR PARASHAT LECH LECHA:**

**1-Who notified Avraham that his nephew Lot was captured?**

**2-What does the Torah mean in 12:5 “and the souls they made in Charan”?**

**3- The Midrash tells us that Avraham was a gentleman. He pitched Sarah’s tent before his own [12:8]. From which word does the Midrash derive this?**

**4- What prompted Par’oh to suspect that Sarah was Avraham’s wife?**

**5- From our parasha, under what circumstances may one leave Eretz Yisrael?**