

# Mi Lashem Eilai

by Pesach Lerner

I once heard HaRav Shimon Schwab, zt"l, of Congregation K'hal Adath Jeshurin, of Washington Heights, New York, (Rav Breuer's Community), tell about the one Shabbos that he spent in Radin, with the Chofetz Chaim, zt"l.

During the course of the Shabbos, the Chofetz Chaim asked Rav Schwab, perhaps you are a Kohen. Rav Schwab replied that he was not. The Chofetz Chaim then asked, perhaps your father or grandfather were Kohanim, and Rav Schwab, not fully understanding the rationale for the follow up question, responded that they were not. The Chofetz Chaim then asked, perhaps you are a Levi, to which Rav Schwab replied that he was not.

The Chofetz Chaim then said, have you heard that I am a Kohen; Rav Schwab answered, that he had heard.

The Chofetz Chaim sighed and said to Rav Schwab, what a pity. Moshiach will come soon, the Bais HaMikdash will be rebuilt, and since you are neither a Kohen nor a Levi, you will not be able to be involved with the Avodah, the Korbanos, the Shira, the service of the Bais haMikdash.

And do you know why not, asked the Chofetz Chaim? Because, over 3000 years ago, in the desert, at the incident of the eigel hazahav, the golden calf, Moshe rabbeinu called out, Mi laShem Eilai, whomever is for G-d, come to me!

My alter zaida, my great grandfather, answered Moshe's call, your alter zaida did not.

Said the Chofetz Chaim, next time you hear the call, Mi laShem Eilai, whomever is for G-d, answer that call!

This is the message of the Chofetz Chaim, explained Rav Schwab. In every generation there is a call, and we must be prepared to answer it!

I am reminded of that story because, in my humble opinion, today, we are being called, but not enough people are answering.

We are being called to protect Kedushas Eretz Yisrael, Kedushas haMikdash, Kedushas Shabbos. Are we listening?

The American reform and conservative movements, the women of the wall, numerous liberal organizations, have declared war on Torah Judaism in Eretz Yisrael.

I cannot understand why the American (and to some degree, the Israeli) organized Torah community, and

individuals of great influence, are remaining in the comfort of their offices and homes, basically, sitting on the sidelines of this battle. Don't we hear the call?

Everyone reading these words knows of the battle going on for Kedushas HaKotel. The liberal American movements (yes, this battle originates from America and the American Torah community has a responsibility to fight this battle) want a mixed prayer section at the Kotel, equal in size, prestige, exposure, access, etc. to the traditional Kotel.

They want it, no, they demand it, to be under their direction and control. And, if G-d forbid, they win, today it will be mixed prayer services, but tomorrow, it will be non-kosher events, chillul Shabbos, even intermarriages, at the Kotel!

These liberal American movements, and their Israeli

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counterparts, want their clergy's conversion, divorces, etc. to be accepted. Such acceptance will be a spiritual tsunami for Israeli Jews, worse than what is already happening in America.

And what's next? Public official chillul Shabbos, official non halachic-- weddings and divorces, conversions and burials, etc. And these liberal movements clearly state their goals, we do not have to use any imagination.

Gedolei Yisrael in Israel, from the Yeshiva and Chasidic worlds, have said--this is a battle that needs to be fought. So, where are our generals?

Who is answering the call of Mi laShem Eilai?

The Chief Rabbis of Israel are leading the fight, various Chareidei and Orthodox MKs, and a few, too few, Giborei Koach, men and women of valor, in Israel and the United States, are active.

But where are the organized Orthodox and Torah communities? Where are those individuals who are usually involved in everything holy?

Don't they hear the call?

The leaders of the American liberal movements have made this their battle. They are losing their members, their youth are not interested nor involved. Their intermarriage rate is passing 70%. They have lost



relevancy in America. So, they have made Israel their last stand.

They send their leadership, often, to Israel, to lobby for their cause, to walk the halls of Knesset, to harass the Prime Minister. They have drafted America's and Israel's left-wing media to deliver their message. They apply their pressure wherever they can. They make up their own rules; all in the name of "true" Judaism. They know, deep down, this is their last battle, they are giving it everything they have.

And, I humbly ask, where are we, the Orthodox and Torah community of America and Israel?

Are we sending missions to lobby in Knesset, to meet with the Prime Minister and members of his cabinet?

Have we met with the official Israel government representatives in our communities?

Have we sent thousands of emails to members of Knesset, to thank those standing up for Torah, and to encourage the other MKs, to do the same?

Have we written articles and op-eds, sent hundreds of letters to the editor, to the media?

Have we discussed the issues in our Shuls?

Have we inquired of those organizations who represent Torah values, where are you, what are you doing, how are you fighting this battle?

Have we added a few chapters of Tehillim to our daily davening?

I write these words out of fear of what may happen.

I pray that I write these words out of genuine concern. HaKadosh Baruch Hu is waiting to see what we will do, for His Honor.

We dare not let Him down.

He is calling, are we listening?

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