

Portion

The Six Day War and Yom Yerushalayim

50 years of reunified Jerusalem. What a milestone. There is so much to write. 50 years. The mishna teaches that someone who reaches the age of 50 is worthy of giving advice to others. So first I will start with my advice for this Yom Yerushalayim which is to read Dr. Hagi Ben-Artzi's book The Six-Day War Scroll. The Story of Yom Yerushalayim and the Six Days of Deliverance. His small book, is written in the form of a MEGILA - a scroll, attempting to reveal (מגילה) the Hand of God throughout the unbelievable events of those six days of war. Rabbi Doron Perez in his introduction to the English version of the "Megila" published by Mizrachi and Sifriat Beit-El, writes that "the events of these six days were so unbelievable that they brought some of the main protagonists to the most unlikely Divine, if not religious, reflections." Ariel Weizman, head of operations during the war, when asked to explain the astounding success of the air force on the first day of the war could only answer with the Biblical verse "It is the Finger of God" (Sh'mot 8:15). And the then Chief of Staff, Yitzchak Rabin summed up the war with a verse from Hallel - ZEH HAYOM ASA HASHEM NAGILA V'NISM'CHA VO -This is the day that Hashem made; we shall exult and rejoice on it.

Dr. Ben Artzi writes in his introduction "In the entire 4000 years of Jewish history there has never been a war in which the Hand of God has been evident and obvious as in this one. In this generation and in coming generations, it is our obligation to tell of the wonders and miracles we witnessed in this war of rescue and deliverance. No less, it is our obligation to publicize the courage and sacrifice of Israel's soldiers, who exemplified the Jewish people's treasure trove of spirit and spiritual resourcefulness. Could this have made us worthy of the miracles and Divine revelations?"

His "megila" is designed to tell the story of the war, (with photographs and maps) and emphasize the miraculous, faith-based aspects of Israel's amazing success. He recommends that everyone should spend at least one hour on each of the Six days (26th of Iyar to the 2nd of Sivan) to study the special story of what was liberated each day of the war: 1st day, Gaza Strip; 2nd day, Samaria Hills; 3rd day, Jerusalem; 4th, Hebron Hills; 5th, Sinai Peninsula, 6th, Golan Heights. Reading his "megila" can help us give thanks for each and every day, for all parts of the Land we have been fortunate to return to.

And what is the advice that Jerusalem would want to share with this generation? I believe it is what Yuli-Yoel Edelstein, Speaker of the Knesset, said at the Bible contest this year. He told the story of how on his first hours in Israel after being liberated from Russian prison he wanted to go straight to the Kotel,

but the official taxi driver, who himself had emigrated from Russia 6 years before, didn't know what the Kotel was. He had never even been to the Kotel, and certainly didn't understand its significance. So much so, he thought that his passenger wanted to go to a "cottage" (which sounds like Kotel). Edelstein told the story with humor and the audience was laughing throughout, but at the end he sobered and said, that this is one of the saddest stories he knows. He said that we have an obligation as a community to make sure that everyone throughout the country, has been to the Kotel at least once and can explain its significance to others. My relative who is doing her army service as a commander in the Hod education unit told me that one thing she has to do is explain to her soldiers who are new olim, with very minimal Jewish education, what the Beit HaMikdash was and why the Kotel is important for us, and why we would want to fight for it.

We host lots of groups (such as Birthright, Aish, Israel advocacy) of all ages, from places all over the globe. I always ask them what was the most meaningful part of their fun-filled trips. At first I was surprised when people answered "the prayers Friday night at the Kotel when everyone is singing and praying together". But now I've learned to expect this answer from 99.9% of the people. Jerusalem would advise us that we must all help to make it possible that every Jew has this opportunity to visit the Kotel and to have the holiness of Jerusalem touch their Jewish soul.

We have been worthy to live in a unified Jerusalem under Jewish sovereignty. May we constantly appreciate and thank God for this opportunity. May our prayers be answered to see the rebuilding of the Temple, speedily in our days.

THIS WEEK'S RECIPE is from the cookbook, "Jerusalem of Delights" by Rina Valero. This recipe was prepared for Henry Kissinger, by the Mishkenot Shananim restaurant, when he visited on one of his many peace negotiation journeys between Morocco, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Israel. The dish included six different types of stuffed hors d'oeuvres - MEMULA'IM, one representing each of the six countries that he was traveling to. It's an appropriate dish to serve for Yom Yerushalayim - one type of hors d'oeuvres for each one of the days of the war. I only can include one for lack of space, but you can add your other favorites. I chose stuffed grape leaves, since I've seen such lush grape leaves growing now in Jerusalem.

KISSINGER'S PLATE

- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- 50 fresh grape leaves, cleaned
- 1 cup rice
- 250 gr. ground meat, turkey or chicken
- 3 tomatoes, chopped
- 1 Tbsp celery leaves, chopped
- 2 onion, chopped

4 garlic cloves

2 Tbsp tomato paste

Salt & pepper to taste

Fill a big pot $\frac{3}{4}$ full with water. Add lemon juice and bring to a boil. Add grape leaves for a few minutes till their color changes. Remove and drain. Rinse the rice in boiling water. Strain. Mix meat, 2 tomatoes, celery leaves, 1 onion, garlic. Place a grape leaf on your working surface shiny side down. Add 1 tablespoon of the rice mixture to the middle of the grape leaf. Fold the sides over the rice and roll the leaf into a small log shape, about the size of a thumb. Repeat with all the leaves. Place remaining onion, tomato, tomato sauce, salt and pepper at the bottom of a big pot. Fill with the stuffed grape leaves. Add a few cups water till they are all covered. Place a fireproof plate over the grape leaves then cover the pot with its lid. Bring to a boil, then cook for about two hours on a very small flame. Serve hot. 🍴