

The Rebel Rabbi With a Cause.

By Yehudah ben Shomeyr

What's a band wagon? You mean people don't march to an individual beating drum of their own!? I thought "Pop Culture" was bacteria discovered in a lab on a Coke can. I thought propaganda was a rare species of Panda! Peer Pressure? Is that the barometric pressure reading at major peers of import and export around the globe?....

I learned very young to be my own person, to make up my own mind, to think for myself and not care what people think regarding everything from TV to Politics to Religion. I've always stood up and stood out. I have always questioned and check most everything I have been told... especially when it comes to TV, Politics and Religion! I have made up my own mind. I've always stood without apology for what I believe in, no matter the threats, consequences and societal lash back. I have grown a thick skin and duck feathers. I do not need acceptance or the stamp of legitimacy from others. I know very well what it means to walk alone.

I am baffled why more people are not this way; how few and far between it is to find people of like mind. I marvel how many lemmings we have in society, how many "sheeple" there are in this world. I am still amazed that there are still people who fall for spam e-mails that are title; "Congratulations! You have won the UK Lottery!" and such. I just don't get those sleepy headed, shallow, zombified and satisfied Hollywood types out there. How can one survive without attempting to suck the marrow out of life!? How can one be satisfied and exist with just the icing of a cake ate from a silver spoon!?

This must be why I am drawn to those who were called out and stood out, like Avraham Avinu and Moshe Rabbinu, and why I like the Prophets such as Jeremiah, Hosea, and Ezra. I suppose I like David and his mighty men, Judah Maccabee and his rebel forces for similar reasons. I guess this is why I like vigilantes like Robin Hood, Zorro and Batman; outcasts like Quasimodo, the Elephant Man and Hellboy. They were all willing to fight and lay down their life for what they believed in and brought out this trait in others. I like someone who is ballsy, gots chutzpah and is the underdog. There is a fine line between bold humility and brash arrogance, faith and insanity, tact and belligerence, justice and crime. These things are like a razors edge, yet a fine line that's meant to be

deliberately trod; this is like Frost's road less traveled by that makes all the difference.

Because I am this way I tend to scare and intimidate (sometimes with intention, sometimes without) the ones who are blindly compliant and complacent. Those who are conformist and yes men, those who are apathetic, scared of change and satisfied with the status quo. Daniel and his three Hebrew peers were like that, they put the fear into the dictators of the day. I'm the type of boy who would have been kicked out of a Yeshiva's Talmud class and fail an exam on the Shulchan Aruch.

Don't get me wrong, I believe in One G-d and One Torah, I believe in Universal Absolutes. But I also believe that within this concrete realm there is plenty of wiggle room for individuality and the proper expression of such.

Why were David and His mighty men successful? Why did the Maccabees triumph? Why does Batman and Hellboy always come out on top? I believe it is because they are dissatisfied and disgruntled with things "as is", they see a vision of how it could and should be and dedicate themselves to that vision no matter the price. They will either achieve it or die trying; they wouldn't be happy to have it any other way.

Fight! Struggle! Don't give up or give in! This is what allows a butterfly to fly and a chick to escape its shell. Shake up, wake up! Live life to the fullest and without man imposed restraint! Don't pass from this life full of could'a, would'a, should'a, it's much too short for that!

Shalom,
-- Yehudah ben Shomeyr