

Balak 5778

BS"D Parashat Balak 5778

Rabbi Nachman Kahana

The Tragic Transgression Trilogy

This week's parasha completes the tragic transgression trilogy perpetrated by the Jews in their 40-year desert sojourn.

The first was the distortion of HaShem's revelation at Sinai by the heretical, idolatrous worship of the Golden Calf, causing the death of 3,000 Jews. Followed by the refusal of the majority of the men to enter the Holy Land while under the influence of the Meraglim, which took a toll of hundreds of thousands between the ages of 20 and 60 who were condemned to die over the coming 38 years.

And in our parasha the sinful relationships with the daughters of Moav and Midyan, leading to the death of 24,000 Jews, including the head of the Tribe of Shimon.

Distortion of religious practice, refusal to enter the Holy Land, and intermarriage with gentiles; these three episodes committed in the period of 40 years led to the total removal of the generation that left Egypt; as if to say that HaShem had lost all hope for that generation and was "clearing the table" for a better, purer one.

New Chairman of the Jewish Agency

Labor MK Isaac Herzog was elected to succeed Natan Sharansky as the chairman of the Jewish agency executive.

Several quotes of Mr. Herzog:

“I take this challenge humbly. I know how difficult and challenging it is”.

“The world is a very small bridge. And the Jewish Agency in my mind is the narrow bridge that connects the State of Israel and the Jewish people wherever they are. It is that bridge that created the State of Israel, and the bridge brought millions of Jews to the State of Israel and this bridge now has to confront the great challenges that face our people”.

“The Jewish people are at a crossroads (presumably referring to a wide rift between Jews in Israel and the galut) especially regarding the Western Wall and the refusal of Israel to formally recognize the non-Orthodox break away streams of Judaism”.

“We have to do whatever we can to unify the Jewish people and make sure it is not split and divided”.

“We have to strengthen the centrality of Israel within the heart of every Jew, especially the young generations; to fight BDS [the anti-Israel Boycott, Divest and Sanctions movement], to educate, to connect and to promote aliyah [immigration], and to bring more and more Jews to Israel”.

“A Jew is a Jew is a Jew, and it doesn't matter to what stream he belongs or what he wears on his head”. “We are all one people, and this is what we need to do to preserve and foster the great story of the Jews, and the great story of the State of Israel being the pumping heart of the Jewish people”.

My Advice for Mr. Isaac Herzog

Mr. Herzog gives the impression of being a sincere Israeli with a Jewish heart. His grandfather Harav Yitzchak Halaivi Herzog was one of the generation's most respected Torah scholars, even obtaining several PhDs with one in Marine Biology to better understand the background of the Chilazon snail for purpose of producing the techelet color.

Mr. Herzog's father, Chaim Herzog was a general in the IDF and a President of the country.

Mr. Herzog, I believe, is sincere in his desire to save what can yet be saved of the Jews in the galut.

However, sincerity is not enough to turn back the tide. The writing is on the wall, and like the last Babylonian king, Balshetzer, Mr. Herzog has been ill advised as to what the writing means. Because there is no way to save the Jewish communities in the galut, for two reasons:

1- The three cardinal sins of the Exodus generation are rampantly and shamelessly being repeated again today by the Jews of America, but this time they are being executed concurrently:

- Distortion of religious practice, where the Reform and Conservative have so distorted our Torah that they have nothing in common with traditional Sinai Judaism.
- The refusal to enter the holy land by all the various streams of Judaism from the unaffiliated to the extreme observant Chassidim and Lithuanian schools, qualify them as members in good standing in the Meraglim community.
- Intermarriage with gentiles at the rate of 70-80 percent places them well within the category of the Jews who sinned with the Moabite and Midyanite women.

2- Even if all the Jews of America were sincerely observant there would still be no hope for them there. Because on the

day the Medina was established a decree descended from heaven to end the 2000-year galut experience, and all Jews are now required to return home. When the gates of the holy land are wide open for aliya and a Jew refuses to enter, it is a major chilul Hashem that turns each and every one, regardless of status, into an ingrate before the great salvation of over 2000 years that HaShem has performed for his people Yisrael.

My advice to Mr. Herzog is to stop supporting groups and newly developing communities and concentrate on saving individual Jews by bringing them home.

Every dollar spent in trying to strengthen Reform and Conservative movements will only buy more nails for the coffin of galut Jewry.

I have said in the past and will continue to say that on the day the Medina was established a decree was passed in the Shamayim that the 2000-year galut will slowly wilt and fade away.

Those who will return will survive; the refuseniks will be eliminated from our history as if they were never born.

This applies to grand rabbis and pulpit rabbis down to the most ignorant reform leader who after voiding the Torah and Judaism from all truth are attempting to gain a foothold here in the Holy Land.

Godspeed to you Mr. Herzog in your holy mission to save as many Jews as possible, by bringing them from the "Jewish Titanic" of America into the life-giving shelter of Eretz Yisrael.

Shabbat Shalom,

Nachman Kahana

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