

Balak 5781

BS"D Parashat Balak 5781

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The Root of our Fears

The world's most advanced engineering company has just designed and completed its most complex outer space satellite. It was the combined minds of hundreds of engineers, computer experts and technicians in creating thousands of new parts and elements designed to work in synchrony without a loss of even one split second between its many stages. Now after years of planning and assembling, the apparatus is ready for operation.

At this moment the apparatus is a dead conglomerate of wires, transistors etc., lacking the energy to bring it alive when all the elements will begin interacting to their full capacity. The press of a button and the flow of electrons will bring it life.

5781 years, 9 months and 12 days ago on the first of Tishrei year one, HaShem completed the initial elements of His world: Gan Eden, Adam, Chava and the Nachash (snake). According to Chazal (our rabbis) Adam and Chava became alive at 3 PM in Paradise and met the nachash. By 6 PM they had all sinned and were expelled into the reality that we call "this world".

Adam, Chava and the Snake were strangers to each other, but the goal that HaShem intended for them was to interact and begin what we call "society". What was the "energy" that HaShem introduced into the trio that began the interaction between man, woman and the snake?

It was the energy called "Fear". Fear stemming from who they were.

Adam feared the limiting human constraints imposed on him by the Creator and sought to achieve Godly qualities, as stated in parashat Bereishiet (3,22):

וְיֵדְךָ-אַתָּה
לֹא תִּקְרַב אֶל־עֵץ־חַיִּים
וְלֹא תִּקְרַב אֶל־עֵץ־בְּנֵי-הָדָם
וְלֹא תִּקְרַב אֶל־עֵץ־בְּנֵי-הָדָם
וְלֹא תִּקְרַב אֶל־עֵץ־בְּנֵי-הָדָם

And the Lord God said: Man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat and live forever.

Chava feared her future being secondary to Adam from who she was formed.

The Nachash lusted Chava and feared his unfulfilled future existence.

The fear that gripped each of the three initiated the attitude of each one to himself and to the others. Their fears formed the future competition and rivalry between individuals and between nations and the blood lust history of Mankind.

Fear of One's Personal Welfare

In our parasha, Balak takes Bil'am to a place overlooking the Jewish encampment from where Bil'am will be able to curse the entire Jewish Nation. Bil'am disappoints when instead of cursing, the evil sorcerer blessed the Jews. At this point Balak should have realized that Bil'am would not bring him victory; however instead of sending Bil'am away, Balak takes him to another area from where he would be able to view the Jews. However, Bil'am again blesses them, and surprisingly, Bil'am is taken to a third overlook where he blesses the Jews again.

How bizarre that Balak repeats his disappointment three times.

However, Balak was one smart goy. The entourage of Balak and Bil'am were high above the Jordan lowlands where the Jews could not hear what was going on the mountains of Moav. But Balak knew that they were able to discern the machinations and hand motions that were going on atop the mountain. Balak knew that the Jews below would conclude that they were being cursed.

Balak's intentions were to put fear in the hearts of the Jews, that it would be sufficient to weaken their resolve to militarily conquer the Canaanites.

Here again fear for one's personal welfare would corrupt and turn one away from fear of Hashem even after witnessing the great miracles that Hashem had performed over the last 40 years.

Today's Many Forms of Fear

Unfortunately, what is preventing mass aliyah to the holy land is the multiple mass fears the Jews of the galut experience; fear of change, fear of financial failure, fear what their neighbors will think about their "irrational behavior" on making aliyah, etc.

The leadership of our Medina is gripped with many forms of fear. If not for their fear of what the world might say, we would have long ago destroyed Hamas of Azza. A strong hand against the local Arabs, that would overcome fear of being called an apartheid state, would force the Arab terrorists to behave as a minority should.

HaShem expects the Jewish nation to live with trust in Him, without fear of the goy.

However, there is a positive side to fear which I will put forth, next week be" H.

Shabbat Shalom

Have a meaningful fast this coming Sunday, the 17 of Tamuz.

JLMM

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