

Balak and Pinchas 5772

BS"D Balak and Pinchas 5772

Balak:

In the week of parashat Balak, the world's scientific communities were in ecstasy. After spending billions of dollars and thousands of great minds who participated in the project, they finally *proved* empirically the existence of the Higgs boson. Peter (Josiah) Higgs was the American physicist who theorized how sub-atomic particles (photons etc.) which are otherwise similar in their physical properties (bosons), have different masses, which is expressed in the speed of the particle.

What is the great discovery?

Picture a room full of people, and one person who is friends with all the others. This individual wishes to get to the other end of the room. But since he is personally involved with each person he will stop and make small talk, resulting in his reaching the other end of the room in ten minutes. Enter a stranger who wants to reach the far corner of the room. He will do it in one minute, because he does not interact with anyone in the room.

The Scientists' claim that was proven is that the entire creation is totally filled with a certain entity, like water that fills all the space in a pool. The various sub-atomic particles interact with this entity to different degrees. The sub-atomic particle that causes light (photon), does not interact at all with the surrounding entity, therefore it travels at the maximum speed of 300,000 kilometers a second (speed of light). Other sub-atomic particles cannot reach the speed of light, because they interact with their surroundings. The degree of interaction determines the mass or speed of the particle.

The principle behind the discovery is that the more a particle interacts with its surroundings, the more stunted is its advancement, and it ultimately will never reach the ultimate speed of light.

Now, why did the Creator open up this secret just on the week of parashat Balak? The answer lies in the parasha, since all that happens during a week is alluded to in its parasha.

Bilaam was as devious as he was evil. He looked out at the Jewish people and understood the secret of our existence as God's chosen people:



The Jewish nation can achieve the goals that HaShem has set down for it only to the extent that the Jews do not interact with the surrounding gentiles and their cultures. Bilaam advised Balak to create an interaction between the holy Jewish nation and the profane daughters of Midian and Moav, with the unfortunate result of 24,000 Jews who sinned and died, which set the nation back spiritually.

The physical world meets the metaphysical as we delve deeper into the hidden areas of our existence.

Sub-atomic particles gain speed to the degree that they do not interact with their surroundings, and the Jewish nation achieves kedusha (holiness) when we are free of external gentile influences.

The Tanach is replete with admonishments of the prophets to refrain from alliances with foreign powers, as we see when Yirmiyahu warned Tzidkiyahu, the last king of the Davidic lineage who ruled at the time of the first Temple's destruction, not to depend on Egypt.

One need not be a great historian to know that when the Jews

dwelled alone in the ghettos, Judaism was secure, but when “emancipation” was granted to us we escaped the Torah with a vengeance.

American Reform, Conservative and unaffiliated Jews will disappear by the “kiss of death” of their gentile surroundings. Even the religious in the galut have perverted the principles of Judaism because of their interaction with their surroundings, and the desire of many of them to be accepted into American society or at the very least to be able to live the “great American dream” without too much anti-Semitism. Very few American religious Jews visit Eretz Yisrael, and it is not politically, socially or financially correct to speak of aliya, or to appear as enthusiastic devotees of the State of Israel. And with time Israel will become for them an object of disdain and even hate.

Even in Eretz Yisrael, one can trace our problems to our interaction with the gentiles. Our dependency on the United States paralyzes our government from implementing actions which are necessary for our security and survival. The United States warns Israel, “Don’t build in your Biblical areas of Yehuda, Shomron and the Golan. Don’t build a security fence. Don’t over-react when hundreds of rockets and missiles are fired at your cities. Don’t sell military equipment. Don’t build the Lavie aircraft. Don’t attack Iraq in the first Gulf War. Don’t attack Iran even though they have explicitly stated their intention to eradicate you. Just prepare to disappear.

Not only in the political arena is our interaction with America and the gentile world detrimental to our Judaism. Even their culture of music, art, films, dress etc., has permeated into our society to the detriment of the holiness of our nation.

No wonder the Rambam states that one of the features of the Messianic era will be the freeing of the Jewish people from foreign influences of all sorts.

It began with Bilaam and continues to our day, victimizing our people and scarring our national consciousness.

Now since we live in a reality where we cannot escape interacting with gentiles and their cultures, Israel would do well to draw away from its Western orientation and seek a more balanced relationship with the gentile world. To begin with by growing closer to China and other nations of the east, until that time when we will be independent of other nations and be dependent only on HaShem.

Pinchas:

In our parasha, Moshe is commanded to lead the Jewish army into war with Midian and destroy them as a nation.

War is never a good option, but in this case it was a personal challenge for Moshe.

Moshe lived many good and happy years in Midian. His father-in-law was the noted Yitro, and through him Moshe became acquainted with the intelligentsia and the "who's who" of Midian society. Moshe's wife was born there as well as his two sons.

Moshe is now being told to make war upon the people he knows and with whom he feels some degree of kinship.

This is no easy task. But the ever faithful eved HaShem (servant of God) did not falter for a moment, and fulfilled HaShem's command despite the difficulties.

The lesson of this episode is one of allegiance. Where does your allegiance as a Jew lay? With the foreign nation where you were born? To the culture that feels so right? Or with the dictates of the Torah?

Every Jew is tested in his life. That's one of the reasons we were brought to this world.

Avraham was told by Hashem to break the three bonds that define allegiance: leave the land where you now dwell, leave the land where you were born and leave your family.

As difficult as it might seem, our generation was chosen to restore the honor of HaShem and the Jewish people by returning to the Holy Land to lay the groundwork for the rebuilding of the holy Temple and the Messianic era.

A sincerely religious Jew who does not lie to himself has no way of escaping his responsibilities at this unprecedented juncture in our history.

So don't believe the lies perpetuated by modern day meraglim (spies), regardless of their titles or outward appearance. But most important do not lie to yourself which is tantamount to spiritual and intellectual suicide.

Shabbat Shalom

Nachman Kahana

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