

BS"D Parashat Toledot 5783

Inertia

Textbooks define "**inertia**" as an inherent (installed by the Creator) property of matter that causes it to resist changes in speed and/or direction. According to Newton's first law of motion, an object with a given velocity maintains that velocity unless acted upon by an external force. Meaning: an object at rest will remain at rest until an external force acts upon it to move, and an object in motion will continue to the same uniform motion until an external force acts upon it to change

All of the estimated 200 billion trillion planets and stars in our closed universe will continue to act as they do now until HaShem decides that they change.

The same applies to human beings. Had the serpent, as an external force, not enticed Adam and Chava to eat from the Tree of Knowledge, which induced in them the yei'tzer hara (evil, egotistical inclinations and vain initiatives), they and all humanity would have continued to this day to be passive, indifferent, aloof, apathetic residents of the perfect Gan Eden, resistive to change.

And had HaShem not planned out the disappointments of Yishmael and Aisav, the world would be today in another place.

Batteries

How does a dry cell battery work; the kind that produces power

to run our household appliances?

Every atom consists of three basic subatomic particles: protons, neutrons and electrons. Protons and neutrons form the nucleus of the atom, while the electrons encircle the nucleus. While protons and neutrons are tied together, electrons can be discharged from their positions in the atom and made to flow, as a river; this is called electricity.

A battery is a device that converts its stored chemical energy (exchange between two chemicals) to produce energy in the form of a flow of electrons.

A battery consists of three separate parts: the top (under the little cap is the cathode), at the base is the anode, and they are separated by paste material called the electrolyte. The anode at the base contains an excess amount of electrons that the anode wished to be rid of, while the cathode contains a vastly less number of electrons; so the anode has a compulsion to release its excess electrons by flowing into the cathode. However, the electrolyte serves as a barrier that retards the flow.

However, we can induce a flow of electrons by by-passing the electrolyte barrier, connecting the anode and the cathode through an external path such as a conductive wire on the outside of the battery. Now if we introduce an appliance, such as a light bulb or a heating device in the middle of the wire, the appliance will resist the flow producing heat and light.

This is very interesting but, what you ask has it to do with this week's parsha? Everything!

HaShem influences and directs the world's history by producing a historical, world-wide "battery".

Last week the world's population passed the 8 billion mark. However, the direction of humanity from time immemorial was not centered around the 10 major Chinese dynasties: Shang,

Zhou, Qin, Han, Sui, Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing of today's 1.5 billion Chinese. Nor by India's dynasties: Haryanka, Shishunaga, Nanda, Mauryan, Indo-Scythians Kingdom (The Shaka), Kushans/ Yeuchi, and Sung dynasties. The world in the macro was developed and advanced by four individuals and their descendants: Yitzchak and Yishmael, Ya'akov and Aisav.

How?

Yishmael was the first son of Avraham. He was a good son, God-fearing to the degree that Avraham tells the angel that he loves Yishmael. Then Yitzchak was born and Yishmael was filled with jealousy as he discovered that the spiritual and material heir to Avraham would be Yitzchak and not he.

Yishmael is the anode in our story. He became outraged by hate and jealousy, feeling the need to release his evil desire to destroy the passive, modest tzaddik, Yitzchak.

Yitzchak is the "cathode", the target of Yishmael's hatred. However huge, Yishmael was forced to contain his hatred in the presence of their father Avraham.

Avraham is the electrolyte in the story.

Ya'akov and Aisav were twins. Ya'akov was the learner, the talmid chacham, the tzaddik. Aisav was a man of the field, of the jungle. After Ya'akov succeeded in convincing Aisav to abdicate and transfer his rights and responsibilities as the first born over to Ya'akov, Aisav regretted it and here the profound hatred began to beat in his heart. And when years later Ya'akov received the desired blessing of their father Yitzchak, Aisav's hate expanded exponentially until Aisav decided to murder Ya'akov after their father would pass away.

Ya'akov is the passive "cathode" in the saga, while Aisav is the active, aggressive anode that seeks to overwhelm the cathode. But Aisav is held at bay by the live presence of their parents Yitzchak and Rivka.

In time, the descendants of Yishmael, the Muslims, continued their hatred of the Jew. And the descendants of Aisav, the Christians, sought to bring to fruition the desires of Aisav.

But as stated above, Yishmael and Aisav were contained by the presence of their holy parents who acted as the electrolyte in these episodes.

As we learned above, it is possible to work around the electrolyte by connecting an external path between the cathode and the anode to produce an energy current. In our history, the connections are the sins of Am Yisrael. That by our behavior in not living up to the requirements of HaShem's chosen nation, the overwhelming number of hatred electrons in the hearts of Islam and Christianity were able to flow freely and cause so much suffering to our people.

But just as in a battery, there is a limit to the ability of the chemicals in the battery to produce free electrons, so too one day and very soon our enemies will lose their ability to cause harm to our people in Eretz Yisrael.

Conclusion: Three thousand plus years ago, HaShem set down the direction that humanity would take. He caused the two progenitors of the world's major "movers and shakers"- Yishmael the Muslim and Aisav the Christian – to be compulsive enemies and haters of Yitzchak and Ya'akov and their descendants – the Jews.

How many decisions – political, religious, and military – were taken by these "daughter religions" because of their animosity towards HaShem's chosen people?!

So, in effect, at the very basic core of history, who is the dominant factor in the way the world revolves?

The Jews – of course!

Shabbat Shalom

Nachman Kahana

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