



DVAR TORAH CHUKAS/BALAK



By: Rabbi Noach Peled

ביטוח לאומי - National Life Insurance - Bituach Leumi

Anti-Semitism is nothing new. It seems Am Yisrael are always under attack. If it's not one enemy it's another, and it feels like most of the world is against us.

But let's think about this. Isn't it a little too coincidental, a little too ironic that **we**, Hashem's holiest favorite people, are hated by just about everyone?

In this week's parshios, we find plenty of Jew haters and enemies. **Parshas Chukas** opens with Rashi telling us (19:2) that the nations of the world mock us and our mitzvos. We are then threatened by a huge mass of sword wielding Bnei Edom (20:18-21), followed by a war with Amalek (21:1-3), and a bloodthirsty ambush by the Emoriim, from which Hashem miraculously saved us, literally moving mountains (Rashi 21:15). We were then attacked by Sichon and his army (21:23-24), followed by Og and his army (21:33), which brings us to **Parshas Balak** (22:2) in which we are introduced to multiple Jew-hating nations led by passionate anti-Semites, all too eager to devastate and destroy us.

And so we ask ourselves, **how is it that we are so hated? Why do they so despise us? We must ask ourselves, what is the cause of anti-Semitism? And how should we combat it?**

Some say it's because they are jealous of us – jealous that we are chosen/unique, jealous of our success etc. Others say the world hates us because of fake news and bad PR – false accusations pertaining to territorial crimes against refugees etc. They thus conclude that for one of these two reasons (or both), **we are unfairly hated and attacked.**

Unfairly hated and attacked you say? Nothing could be further from the truth.

For as the **Ramban** tells us in the end of Parshas Bo; **"A person has no part in the Torah of Moshe Rabbeinu until we believe that every single aspect and event of life, personal and national, is Divinely ordained, not nature or incidental way-of-the-world, rather, if we do the Mitzvos, we will be rewarded (by Hashem) and meet success, but if we will violate them, (Hashem's) punishment will strike us, everything is divinely ordained."**

Nothing's unfair, nothing just happens, it's not about jealousy, or bad PR and fake news. Rather, HKBH keeps His finger on our Torah-umitzvos-pulse, and deals with us as such.

Rashi in Parshas Chukas (21:1) **reveals the secret:** "Amalek have been designated forever a **rebel-lashing whip** for Klal Yisroel, always on standby to bring punishment". This means that when Klal Yisroel rebel and chalila stray from the path of torah and mitzvos, **Hashem uses our enemies** to whip us back into shape. These whippings are not merely a form of punishment; rather they are used to trigger us to do teshuva. Hashem **uses Amalek** (generic name for our enemies) to get us back on track, to keep us in line.

So we see clearly that the **Jew-hating and anti-Semitism is actually self-induced**, the direct result and reaction to **our correctional needs**. As such, **there is only one way to combat it – teshuva** – repairing our commitment and relationship with Hashem.

In every generation HKBH guarantees our national continuity, by maintaining this **national life insurance program**, with plenty of hateful enemies everywhere we turn. Now these enemies don't know it, and if they did they would probably retire, but by hating us and attacking us, they are actually **helping us continue being the chosen ones!** We need them. By threatening our existence, they keep us in line, and we thus remain Hashem's favorite forever.



KIBBUD AV VA'EIM PART III



There are many additional details and practical applications of this mitzvah. A wise child will seek to learn these halachos thoroughly and seize every opportunity to fulfill this precious mitzvah. May we all be *zocheh* to properly honor our parents and merit the blessings promised to those who fulfill this great mitzvah.

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