



Parashat Balak - #355

Ask Rav Aviner: toratravaviner@yahoo.com

Prepared by Rabbi Mordechai Tzion

Visit our blog: www.ravaviner.com

The Murder of the Kidnapped Teens, may Hashem avenge their blood

One Who is Merciful to the Cruel is Cruel to those Who Require Mercy

We must remember that we are dealing with an enemy. We are at war. During war we are not merciful to the cruel. One who is merciful to the cruel is cruel to those who require mercy (Tanchuma, Parashat Metzora 1; Yalkut Shimoni Shmuel 1 #121). We are the merciful and they are the cruel, and when you are merciful to the cruel, you are cruel to your brothers and sisters. This is a war like any other war. There is a concept of the Total War which means that, while we do not look for wars (we are a Nation which loves peace, searches for peace, and loves all people), if someone attacks us, we respond with all our might. When the enemy "merely" shaved half of the beards of some of King David's soldiers and tore their clothes, he went to war. In a war, the most important aspect is deterrence. You cannot place a soldier on every square meter. The Rambam in Moreh Nevuchim (vol. 1 #41) discusses his national philosophy and writes that the secret to security is deterrence. One must therefore strike his enemy with all his might. It makes no sense to provide terrorists, evil people and murderers with electricity, gas and weapons! Are you crazy, providing terrorists and murderers with weapons?! The Gemara in Avodah Zarah (15-16) says that it is forbidden to provide regular murderers with weapons, and you give weapons to these people, not only in the past but also now? Have you lost your mind?! This mercifulness towards the enemy is harming us. Other countries need to understand that we need to fight with all our might. Perhaps they will yell and scream, but they would do that anyway, regardless of what we do. I

remember a joke – though it is certainly not a night for jokes – from Meir Uziel, a comedian and grandson of former Chief Rabbi Rav Uziel: in the competition among the 200 nations of the world for "Ms. Ethical", we always come in last place, since we are the only ones who show up! We must certainly be ethical, but to our brothers, not to the enemy. During the Second World War, the Allied power destroyed neighborhood after neighborhood in Berlin, because everyone understood that there was no other way to wage war. Did King Hussein of Jordan deal with Black September with kid gloves? No, he killed 17,000 Palestinians and ended his Intifada once and for all. President Assad killed 21,000 Palestinians in one month when there was an uprising in Syria. And when Hamas wanted to take over Gaza, they killed many, many people. This is the language they speak and understand. This is how we must deal with them.

I remember that a terrorist once attacked a woman in Neveh Dekalim. She lay down on the baby carriage to protect her baby, and he stabbed her fifteen times in the back. By some miracle, someone came and shot him and saved her. Later, an unethical reporter interviewed the rescuer on the radio and asked: "How do you feel after killing a person?" He responded: "The thing which I killed was not a person." I remembered this and quoted it various times. I once met someone and I said "shalom." He said: "You don't know me but you quoted me. I am the person who killed that thing which was not a person." I said: "Yashar Koach – Way to go. Your actions followed what the Rambam says in Moreh Nevuchim (vol. 1 #7)." The Rambam discusses the "demons" mentioned in the Gemara. He says that a "demon" looks like a person on the outside, but is a wild animal on the inside. It is more dangerous than a wild animal in that it has intellect. People periodically ask me: Is the theory that we came from animals true? I answer: "I do not know. I was not there. The question, however, does not bother me. What bothers me is whether we have ceased being animals." We must therefore wage war with strength and courage and strengthen the Nation of Israel in our Land.

Shut SMS - Text Message Q&A from the today

Where did all the Prayers Go

Q: Where did all the prayers, Tehillim, Mishnayot and acts of kindness, which were said and performed for the kidnapped teenagers who were murdered, go?

A: To the same place as all of the prayers from the time of the Holocaust, from 2000 years of the Exile, and from all of the sick and suffering. We are not idol worshippers who believe that prayer is magic which forced something on some god. Prayers are not wasted, but service of Hashem is not doing business.

The Three Kidnapped Teens

Q: What should we tell young children about the murder of the kidnapped teens?

A: It is impossible with such deep and sensitive matters to relay the "facts", which someone else told you to say. Rather, you should relay what you understand and feel. Things that come from the heart enter the heart.

A Person's End

Q: Is it true that when a person's end, which Hashem has decreed, arrives, he will definitely die, and Hashem has many agents to do his work?

A: It is true. It is written in various places, such as Nedarim 41a which tells of a big man riding on a small mule. The mule threw the man when they were crossing a bridge into the water and the man drowned. It is also told there about a scorpion on the back of a frog. The frog took the scorpion across a river, the scorpion then bit a person, and the person died.

Collective Punishment

Q: Following the murder of the kidnapped teens, is it permissible to collectively punish the Arabs?

A: According to the basic Halachah, it is forbidden to punish one Arab for the crime of another Arab. However, when we are engaged in a war, we must wage war. This idea is also accepted among the non-Jews. During the Second World War, the Allied Forces bombed Berlin and destroyed neighborhood after neighborhood, until they reached the bunker of Hitler, may his name be blotted out, who then committed suicide. The Allied Forces killed two million people during the conquest of Berlin and no one said a word because they understood that there was no choice. This is what Carl von Clausewitz, a military theorist, refers to as "Absolute War," i.e. we prefer not to wage war but if we are forced to go to battle, we are obligated to do so in the most cost-effective way in which we save the most lives and equipment. King Shaul already said to the "Keni" (Shmuel 1 15:6): "Go, depart, go down from among Amalek, lest I destroy you with them." This means, even though you are my friend, if you are there, you could get hurt or killed. And this is all the more so when terrorists hide among civilian populations. If innocent people are thereby wounded or killed, it is they who are guilty, not us. We are all for "Purity of Arms" and for saving civilian lives. But which civilians? Our civilians, who are being attacked (This is also the ruling of Ha-Rav Shaul Yisraeli in the book "Amud Ha-Yemini" at the end of chap. 16).

Work with Arabs

Q: There are Arabs in the place that I work. After the kidnapping and murder of the teens, I am unable to work with them or even look at them...

A: Do to the best of your ability and remember that not all Arabs are murderers.

Death Penalty for Terrorists

Q: Is it proper to impose the death penalty on terrorists?

A: Yes. In order that they not murder again, and so that others see and fear, and do not murder (Shut Igrot Moshe, Choshen Mishpat 2:68).

Murder of the Kidnapped Teens

Q: What is Ha-Rav's reaction to the murder of the kidnapped teens?

A: For hundreds of years, the Arabs have been cowardly, weak, debased and unsuccessful in the military, cultural, economic, familial and ethical realms. 350 million Arabs around us, supported by a billion Christians and another billion Muslims, have feared the State of Israel for over 40 years and do not dare wage war against us. They are jealous of our successful and ethical young State, and they therefore murder teens.

"Death to Arabs"

Q: Why is it forbidden to say "Death to Arabs"?

A: Because it is not true. Only murderers and those who aid them are deserving of death.

Q: What is the source?

A: Do not murder.

Special thank you to Orly Tzion for editing the Ateret Yerushalayim Parashah Sheet



Yeshivat Ateret Yerushalayim P.O.B. 1076 Jerusalem 91009 Tel.02-6284101 Fax.02-6261528

www.ateret.org.il To subscribe, send e-mail to: toratravaviner@yahoo.com

