

Kinder Torah

Parashas Balak

בס"ד

I Love You Hashem

“Come, everyone, Imma is lighting the Shabbos candles.”

Everyone gathers around to watch the Imma light. This is the climax of the week. The candles are lit and peace descends upon the home.

“I am going, now.”

“When will you be home from the Beit HaKinesset, Abba?”

“In about an hour and a half.”

“Have good kavannah (concentration) in your prayers, Abba.”

“B’ezeras Hashem.”

The Abba walks out of the house and down the street. The Beit HaKinesset is on the right. The Abba, however, turns left, down toward the forest.

“It has been a long week,” the Abba thinks. “I have been looking forward to this time. I have a very special meeting now.”

The Abba turns into the forest to a narrow path. He continues along the path for a minute. Then he turns off the path and makes his way among the trees. He walks until he reached a place far away from human eyes. This is the secret meeting place. He sits down on a large rock and waits a moment until his mind settles.

Then he says . . . “I love You, Hashem.” He repeats, “I love You, Hashem. I love You so much.”

He looks up and sees the branches of the trees gently waving in the wind. The forest is so quiet. No one is there except him and . . . Hashem.

“I will tell you why I love You, Hashem. Because You have done so much for me. You created me. Without you, I would not be here. You have provided for all of my needs, all of the years of my life. You have given me food, clothing, shelter, wonderful parents, teachers, a beautiful wife, and children. I owe everything to You.”

The Abba begins to feel a warm feeling in his heart. He continues speaking to his Creator.

“You have not only given life to me, but to the entire world. All of the magnificent trees in this forest are Your handiwork. The world is filled with mountains, rivers, huge oceans, and crowned with blue skies - all of which sing Your praises. You have created untold billions of living things, from the smallest creature to the human

being. I am in awe of You, Hashem.”

The Abba begins to feel The Almighty’s Presence.

“Hashem, everything that You do is for the good. Some things are unpleasant, but I know that they are for the best. You sometimes give me difficulties in life - difficult people or situations. Why? Because You love me. You want me to grow. You love me more than I love You, and even more than I love myself. Hashem, please give me the clarity to see life’s difficulties as challenges, and the strength to meet them.”

The Abba’s emotions are reaching a peak.



“Hashem, You created me a Jew - a member of the Chosen People. You breathed into my body a holy neshama (soul), capable of reaching the highest spiritual heights. Then you gave our nation the Torah - full of 613 mitzvos, the means to reach those heights. You created the spiritual world - Olam Habbo. There You give unfathomable reward to those who earn it by learning Your Torah and keeping Your mitzvos.

“You are so generous. Hashem, You do so much for me. I want to do something for You. I want to give You nachas ruach by fulfilling your mitzvos perfectly. I want to make a Kiddush Hashem - to show the world how Great and Holy You are. Please give me the strength to do it, Hashem. Help me overcome my yetzer hara. I want to walk out of this forest and love every Jew that I see. I want to pray to You with all of my heart. I want to learn Your Torah with all of my capabilities. I want to delight in Your Shabbos

and rejoice in Your Holy Days. I want to let You completely into my heart, and walk with You all of the time. I want to love You with all of my heart, with all of my soul, and all of my might.”

The Abba is overcome with emotion. He begins crying tears of happiness.

“I love You, Hashem. I love You so much.”

He sits for a few moments, quietly crying. Then he composes himself, gets up, and begins to walk out of the forest. He has a very warm feeling of love in his heart.

“Good Shabbos!” he said to his neighbor, smiling warmly.

“Good Shabbos!” he enthusiastically answers.

The Abba reaches the Beit HaKinesset. He takes his seat and begins to pray. He speaks to Hashem from his heart, and welcomes the Shabbos with great rejoicing. Hashem is with him. He walks home, knocks on the door, and enters.

“Good Shabbos everyone!”

“Good Shabbos, Abba! You look so happy.”

“I am. I love you all. Come; let us enjoy Hashem’s beautiful Shabbos together. Let us all show Him how much we love Him.”

Kinderlach . . .

“You shall love Hashem your G-d with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might” (Devarim 6:5). How can we be commanded to love? How can we fulfill this commandment? One way to come to love someone is by appreciating what he or she has done for us. Another way is to give to them. Thus, you create a mutual giving and appreciation relationship. Expressing your gratitude directly to the person is a way to give and appreciate at the same time. It creates strong bonds of communication and love. This is the way to grow to love Hashem. Express your thankfulness to Him. Begin with little things, and gradually build up until you appreciate the world of things that He does for you. Tell Him how much you love Him. Do acts of kindness for Hashem. How? Give Him nachas ruach by keeping His mitzvos. Become a Kiddush Hashem (Sanctification of His Name). Speak to Him, both formally, in tefillah, and informally, as the Abba in our story. Walk with Hashem always, wherever you go. Enjoy His company. Begin now, kinderlach, and keep it up your whole lives. Hashem wants to hear from you. He loves you. Love Him too.