

# AN INVITATION TO ATTACK

*by Rabbi Label Lam*

You shall not have in your pouch a weight and a weight - a large one and a small one. A perfect and honest weight shall you have, a perfect and honest measure shall you have, so that your days shall be lengthened on the Land that Hashem, your G-d gives you. For an abomination of Hashem, your G-d, are all who do this, all who act corruptly.

Remember what Amalek did to you, on your way when you were leaving Egypt, that he happened upon you on the way, and he struck those of you who were hindmost, all the weaklings at your rear, when you were faint and exhausted and he did not fear G-d. (Devarim 25:13-18)

If you lie about your weights and measurements, then be fearful of the aggression of your enemy. (Rashi)

A remarkable story circulated around Eretz Yisrael a number of years ago. Even if it is not confirmed as true, it still conveys a deep and relevant message that may help explain why we are made more vulnerable to an enemy attack when our business practices are less than honest.

It was during the time of when a young soldier whose last name was Wachsman was captured. His parents took an immediate and active role in rallying the entire nation to pray and light extra candles. There were huge prayer rallies lead by the parents at the Western Wall and there was a profound sense of unity and common purpose that crossed all kinds of ideological lines and stated philosophies of life.

The end of the story, however, is less pleasant. The young man, on whose behalf these forces were set in motion, was brutally murdered and the momentary solidarity faded as fast.

Around that same time a young man who had been in a coma awoke shortly afterward and asked to be brought to a certain luminary personality in our generation. He told the elder Rabbi that he had been visited in a dream by an elderly woman and was told to deliver a specific message. The Rabbi displayed a picture of his deceased wife and asked if that was the woman. He confirmed that it was.

She had asked him to relay the following: That the unity at the time of the incident of that young soldier's capture and the events that followed was so profound that Mashiach (the Messiah) could have come at that very moment, if it had not been for the sin of theft and ill-gotten gains in the marketplace.

There are many contradictory and variant ideologies that bound around the ionosphere of the

Jewish world, but when confronted with an external threat many of those otherwise easy chair postures are adjusted to face the realities of life in the foxhole. People who might have fought against each other are bonded in a common sense of purpose and urgency that transcends the stated differences when core survival is the pressing issue.

However, when someone has taken your money, set you up for a fall, taken advantage of your naivety, changed the rules of the game, or failed to deliver on a promise, then the hurt is deep and personal. A moment of inspiration is not sufficient to bind two souls made distant by a lie.

A real rift exists that cannot be easily overcome or reconciled. The scars from those financial wounds create a deeper divide than any often -superficial lifestyle dialogue. That gap created by a real breakdown in trust, is the open window, the point of vulnerability that our ever-present enemies see as an invitation to attack.

Have a good Shabbos

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