

And an angel of Hashem stood on the road to impede him.

In a few seemingly simple words, *Rashi* conveys a profound message. He says that this angel was a *malach shel rachamim*, an angel of mercy, who was sent to divert Bilaam from sinning. *Horav Avraham Pam, Shlita*, derives from here that a number of times in our life we imagine that the *Satan* is bent on destroying everything for which we have worked. The specific situation in question is the area of *shidduchim*, marriage. One sees a young woman a number of times (depending upon his orientation). He feels she is the one that is right for him; she is his G-d- sent *zivug*, match. Alas, something happens: either she is not interested, her parents are not interested, or simply "things" are just not turning out to his satisfaction. The *Satan* stands in his way at every step. Nothing seems to go right. While this may sound familiar to some, the reaction is not always the same. Some young men and women become depressed when the *shidduch* does not work out, while others become angry. How many feel that Hashem is doing them a favor, averting a later disaster?

Bilaam cursed the angel that stood in his way. He thought that the *Satan* was attempting to prevent him from achieving success. Little did this arrogant, self-centered pagan realize that it was actually Hashem, who in His compassion for this miscreant, sent an angel of mercy to save him from sin. So, too, should we see Hashem's compassionate Hand throughout our every endeavor, so that ultimately we will benefit.