



“Hashem, his G-d, is with him, and he is the King’s beloved friend”

The Names בל"ק בלע"ם Are an Anagram for עמל"ק Establishing the Kingship of HKB"ח Abolishes These Two Major Klipos im

This week’s parsha is parshas Balak. We wish to present to our royal audience a startling passage in the Zohar hakadosh (Bechukosai 112a); it behooves all Jews to be familiar with what it says. In this week’s haftarah from the navi Michah, HKB"ח requests of Yisrael in no uncertain terms (Michah 6, 5): **עמי זכר נא מה יעץ בלק מלך מואב ומה ענה אותו בלעם בן בעור מן השטים עד הגלגל למען דעת צדקות ה'**—**my people, please remember what Balak, King of Moav, schemed, and what Bilam son of Beor answered him, from Shittim to Gilgal—so that you may realize the righteous acts of Hashem.**

The Zohar makes a startling assertion: Although we cry out and plead with HKB"ח daily to end this galus, He does not heed our supplications, because we neglect to fulfill His request: **“My people, please remember what Balak King of Moav schemed.”**

Here is a summary of the passage: **HKB"ח urges Yisrael to remember what Balak plotted. Woe that we scream daily and weep bitterly (Eichah 5, 1): “Remember, Hashem, what has befallen us!” and (Tehillim 137, 7): “Remember, Hashem, the offspring of Edom” (who destroyed Yerushalayim). Yet, HKB"ח does not wish to gratify our requests, because we do not fulfill His request. Hence, we continue to suffer and cry out to Him.**

According to the passuk, in addition to remembering Balak’s scheme, we are also required **“to acknowledge the righteous acts of Hashem.”** Here is a pertinent passage in the Gemara (A.Z. 4b):

“אמר רבי אלעזר אמר להן הקדוש ברוך הוא לישראל, עמי ראו כמה צדקות עשיתי עמכם שלא כעסתי עליכם כל אותן הימים, שאם כעסתי עליכם לא נשתייר מעובדי כוכבים משונאיהם של ישראל שריד ופליט, והיינו דקאמר ליה בלעם לבלק מה אקוב לא קבה אל ומה אזעם לא זעם ה', וכמה זעמו רגע... רגע כמימריה, ומנלן דרגע הוה ריתחיה דכתיב כי רגע באפו חיים ברצונו, ואיבעית אימא מהכא חבי כמעט רגע עד יעבור זעם.”

Rabbi Elazar said: HKB"ח said to Yisrael: My nation! Observe how many benevolences I performed for you in that I did not become angry in the days of the wicked Bilam. For had I become angry with you, no remnant whatsoever would have remained from the enemies of Yisrael (a euphemism for the Jews themselves). And this is the meaning of that which Bilam said to Balak (Bamidbar 23, 8): “How can I curse? G-d has not cursed. And how can I anger? Hashem has not become angry.” And how long does His anger last? “Rega” (a moment) . . . A moment is equal to the amount of time it takes to say “rega.” And from where do we know that He is angry for a moment? For it is stated (Tehillim 30, 6): “For His anger endures but a moment (‘rega’); His favor extends

for a lifetime.” Or if you prefer, say it is derived from here (Yeshayah 26, 20): “Hide for a moment (‘rega’) until anger passes.”

Since it is the nature of Torah to be elucidated from seventy different perspectives, we will endeavor to fulfill the wish of HKB”H—to examine what Balak schemed to do to Yisrael and also to recognize the righteous acts the Almighty performed on our behalf, i.e., not becoming angry for even a “rega” at that time. For, had He become angry, the people of Yisrael would have been wiped out, chas v’shalom.

An Insight from the Gra regarding Bavel and Amalek

We will begin to shed some light on the subject by examining the two resham involved in this nefarious plot—Balak, the King of Moav, and Bilam, the son of Beor. They joined forces to curse Yisrael to exterminate Yisrael spiritually. As we are taught in the Torah, HKB”H, in His infinite mercy and kindness, intervened and thwarted their efforts by coercing Bilam to bless Yisrael. We will endeavor to explain what prompted Balak to wage this war against Yisrael specifically by engaging the services of Bilam.

We find an incredible insight from the brilliant Gra, Rabbi Eliyahu of Vilna, zy”a, in Aderes Eliyahu (Bamidbar 22, 11). The names **בלק בלע”ם** are an anagram for **בבל עמלק**. As such, Balak hoped to elicit the powers of these two formidable klipos to defeat Yisrael. Both of them are considered heads of the klipah.

Of Amalek, it states in our parsha (ibid. 24, 20): **ראשית גוים עמלק—Amalek is the first among nations**. Similarly, when Nevuchadnetzar, the King of Bavel, saw an idol in a dream with a head of gold, Daniel informed him (Daniel 2, 38): **“אנת הוא ראשה די דהבא”—you are the head of gold**. And regarding Nimrod, the King of Bavel who rebelled against Hashem in the generation of the dispersion, it is written (Bereishis 10, 10): **“ותהי ראשית ממלכתו בבל”—the beginning of his kingdom was Bavel**. Both references infer that Bavel represents a leader of the klipah. Thus, **Balak and Bilam** joined forces to invoke the klipos of **Bavel and Amalek** in their war against the head of kedushah—Yisrael.

We also find in Likutei Torah (Ki Seitzei) that our mentor, the Arizal, teaches us that the four galuyos—**Bavel, Madai,**

Yavan, and Edom—form the complete body of the klipah. Since galus Bavel was the first galus, it represents the head of galus. Hence, it says: **“You are the head of gold.”** Madai and Persia represent the two arms; Yavan (Greece) represents the body; Edom (Rome) and Yishmael represent the two legs.

This concurs fantastically with what the great Rabbi Tzadok HaKohen, zy”a, writes in Pri Tzaddik (Shemos 10): **All the galuyos are included in the galus of Bavel**. It appears that he learned this from the teaching of the Arizal cited above. For, as the head of the klipah, galus Bavel encompasses and influences the entire body, since the brain controls all of the body’s limbs and functions.

For this reason, when the generation of the dispersion gathered in Bavel to mutiny against Hashem, their initial declaration was (ibid. 11, 4): **הבה נבנה לנו עיר ומגדל וראשו כשמים—let us build a city for ourselves and a tower, whose head reaches the heavens**. They specified **“וראשו”—its head**—because they intended to elevate and empower the head of the klipah—**“the head of gold.”** Similarly, when the Gra asserts that Amalek is a head of the klipah, in keeping with the description: **“ראשית גוים עמלק”—this is confirmed by Moshe Rabeinu’s pronouncement before the skirmish with Amalek (Shemos 17, 9): “מחר אנכי נצב על ראש הגבעה”—tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill** (literally: “on the ‘head’ of the hill”). As the head of Bnei Yisrael, the **head** of kedushah, it was his task to oppose and subdue the **head** of the klipah, Amalek.

The Great Rabbi of Ruzhin: HKB”H Transformed the Letters **כל”ם** into **מלך**

I would now like to suggest a marvelous explanation concerning the relationship between **Balak and Bilam**—who

are associated with the two preeminent klipos of **Bavel** and **Amalek**. Let us refer to one of the Berachos HKB”H coerced Bilam to utter (Bamidbar 23, 21): **“לא הביט און ביעקב ולא ראה עמל”**—**He perceived no iniquity in Yaakov and saw no perversity in Yisrael. Hashem, his G-d, is with him, and he is the King’s beloved friend.**

Tosafos (A.Z. 4b) interpret the berachah **“ותרועת מלך בו”** based on the Gemara cited above—that Bilam harasha planned to curse Yisrael at the precise moment of HKB”H’s anger. But what curse could he have uttered in the brief time it takes to utter the word **“rega”**? Tosafos answer that he could have uttered the word **כל”ם—ka’lem**—meaning “annihilate them”; however, HKB”H rearranged the letters, so that he uttered the word **מל”ך—me’lech** (meaning king)—instead, as it is written: **“ותרועת מלך בו”**.

The great Rabbi Yisrael of Ruzhin, zy”a, explains the practical significance of Tosafos’s answer—transforming the word **כל”ם** into its anagram **מל”ך**. To better comprehend his sacred words, we will introduce a concept of the Arizal’s (Eitz Chaim 20, 5). There are three distinct parts of the neshamah; they are the **“nefesh,” “ruach,” and “neshamah.”** Each has its specific location in the human body. The most spiritual part, the “neshamah,” resides in the brain; the “ruach” resides in the heart; the “nefesh,” the lowest part of the neshamah, resides in the liver. The Shela hakadosh explains this concept as follows: The **“neshamah”** in the brain is the source of thought and intellect; the **“ruach”** in the heart is source of will and desire; the **“nefesh”** in the liver is the source of action.

The ideal is for man to act and serve Hashem in this order: **מל”ך - מ’וה ל’ב כ’בד**. Working together in this order, a person becomes a loyal servant of Hashem. Let us elaborate. First, man must process a matter intellectually—what is the proper course of action. Next, after weighing the pros and cons in keeping with the Torah’s guidelines, the “neshamah” in the brain must exert its influence on the will and desire of the “ruach” in the heart not to want to do something wrong and improper. Lastly, the heart must exert its influence on the “nefesh” in the liver to refrain from doing things that are improper.

Understood in this light, Bilam wished to reverse the ideal order of intellectual processing, desire, and action; he planned to curse Yisrael by uttering **“כל”ם**—making the order **מ’וה ל’ב מ’וה**. Thus, the guiding force would be the animalistic “nefesh” in the liver, which desires all of the whimsical and senseless things in Olam HaZeh. It would then influence the heart to desire these things. Ultimately, the heart would impose its will on the brain and force it to figure out how to fulfill and satisfy all of its desires.

Tosafos’s answer is now clear: **“והקב”ה הפכו ואמר מלך”**—HKB”H reversed the order of the word uttered by Bilam. Instead of uttering **כל”ם**, HKB”H made him utter **מל”ך**, symbolizing the ideal method of serving Hashem—where the influence begins above in the brain and works its way downward, and not the other way around. This concludes his illuminating insight.

The Torah Advised HKB”H to Create the World since There Cannot Be a King without a People

Following this line of reasoning, we must now explain its practical application. How can a Jew serve Hashem according to the format of **מל”ך—brain, heart, and liver**—and not in the reverse order of **כל”ם**? Now, our sacred sources teach us that the purpose of creation was for HKB”H to be recognized as King of the entire universe, and, of course, a king must have subjects, a people. In Sha’ar HaYichud V’HaEmunah (Chapter 7), the author of the Tanya writes: **“It is known to all that the purpose of the creation of the world is the revelation of His (G-d’s) blessed sovereignty; for there is no king without a nation.”**

Along these lines, Rabeinu Bachaye writes (Bereishis 38, 30): **We say on Rosh HaShanah, on which the world was created: “the holy King” and “the King of Judgment”—because that day represents the beginning of His deeds; for there cannot be a king without a people.** This idea is also expressed in the Gemara (R.H. 34a): **בששי היו אומרים ה’ מלך גאות לבש, על שם: שגמר מלאכתו ומלך עליהם—on the sixth day, they would say (Tehillim 93, 1): “Hashem has reigned, He has donned**

grandeur,” commemorating the fact that He completed His work and reigned over them.

In truth, however, the original source for this notion is the Pirkei D’Rabbi Eliezer (Chapter 3):

“עד שלא נברא העולם היה הקב”ה ושמיו הגדול בלבד, ועלה במחשבה לברוא את העולם... מיד נתייעץ הקב”ה בתורה ששמה תושיה לברוא את העולם, השיבה לו ואמרה, רבון העולמים, אם אין צבא ואין מחנה למלך על מה הוא מולך, ואם אין עם מקלסין למלך איזה הוא כבודו של מלך, שמע אדון העולם וערב לו. אמרה תורה, בי נתייעץ הקב”ה לברוא את העולם, שנאמר לי עצה ותושיה... מכאן אמרו חכמים, כל מלכות שאין לה יועצים אין מלכותה מלכות.”

Before the world was created, HKB”H, with His great Name alone existed, and the thought arose in Him to create the world . . . Forthwith, HKB”H sought advice from the Torah whose name is “Toshiyah” whether or not to create the world. She replied and said to Him, “Master of the Universe, if there is no legion and no camp for the king, over whom does he rule? If there is no people to praise the king, where is the honor of the king?” The Master of the Universe heard this, and it pleased Him. The Torah said, “HKB”H sought advice from me concerning the creation of the world,” as it is said (Mishlei 8, 14): “Counsel is mine and Toshiyah” . . . Based on this, the sages said, “Every monarchy which has no counsellors is not a proper monarchy.”

The Torah Enables the Brain to Reign over the Heart and Liver

Why did HKB”H, the source of “chochmah,” seek advice from the Torah concerning the creation of the world and becoming a full-fledged king? Let us refer to the Gemara (Kiddushin 30b); we learn that HKB”H told Yisrael: בני: בראתי יצר הרע ובראתי לו תורה תבלין, ואם אתם עוסקים בתורה אין אתם נמסרים בידו. —My son, I have created the yetzer hara, and I have created Torah as its antidote. If you engage in Torah-study, you will not be delivered into its hand. Additionally, the Gemara (Chagigah 14a) teaches us that the Torah is referred to as bread, as it is written (ibid. 9, 5): “לכו לחמו בלחמי” —come, partake of My bread.

Accordingly, the author of the Tanya explains in Likutei Amarim (Chapter 5) the analogy of the Torah to bread. When a person consumes bread, it is digested and becomes an integral part of his flesh and blood. In similar fashion, when a person toils intellectually to comprehend the teachings of the Torah, the intellect in the brain encompasses and incorporates the knowledge of the Torah within it. Thus, the Torah is internalized and nourishes the brain.

So, when a person exerts himself to attain the wisdom of the Torah, it illuminates his entire body. From the sanctuary of the neshamah in the brain, it illuminates the heart—the home of the “ruach”—and from there it continues to descend and also illuminates the liver—the home of the “nefesh.”

We can now appreciate HKB”H’s statement to Yisrael: “My son, I have created the yetzer hara, and I have created Torah as its antidote.” Indeed, the yetzer hara which I created causes a person to process and function from the bottom up—from the liver to the heart to the brain—the acronym of כל”ם. To counteract its effect, however, I created the Torah to reverse the process. By studying Torah, a person processes and functions from the top downward. The light of the Torah begins to shine in the brain and is subsequently transmitted stepwise to the heart and then to the liver. Thus, the Torah is an outstanding antidote to remedy the negative influence of the yetzer hara.

This explains beautifully what David HaMelech said (Tehillim 40, 9): “לעשות רצונך אלקי חפצתי ותורתך בתוך מעי” —to fulfill Your will, my G-d, do I desire, and your Torah is in my internal organs. He was expressing his fervent desire to use the intellect in his brain and the desire in his heart to use the “nefesh” in his liver to perform the will of Hashem. As we have learned, however, the yetzer hara strives to reverse the process by influencing man to function from the bottom up, in keeping with the acronym כל”ם. כיבד ל”ב מו”ח — כל”ם. Hence, we are encouraged ותורתך בתוך מעי—to incorporate the Torah in our internal organs—to

study Torah, which illuminates from the top down—from the brain down to the liver. Thus, we can overcome the influence of the yetzer.

We can now begin to comprehend the profound plan of HKB”H. He sought advice from the Torah concerning the creation of the world. She advised Him to create the world, because a king must have a people to call him king. HKB”H did this to teach us that the purpose of creation is to make Him the “מלך” specifically by means of the Torah. By studying Torah and illuminating one’s brain, its light also spreads to the heart and the liver. As a result, we are able to serve Hashem per the acronym מ”ח ל”ב כ”בד – מל”ך.

This can be insinuated in the words of prayer we utter in the berachah of Krias Shema (Ahavas Olam): “והאר עינינו—illuminate the eyes of our intellect in the brain, so that—ודבק לבנו במצוותך—the brain will influence the heart, and the heart will influence the liver to perform the mitzvos of Hashem—ויחד לבבנו לאהבה וליראה את שמך—with love and reverence.

The Klipos of Bavel and Amalek Disrupt the Connection between the Brain and the Other Organs

We can now complete this sacred journey by explaining why the wicked בל”ק בלע”ם—whose names are an anagram of בבל”ל עמל”ק—joined forces. As we learned from the Gra, both **Bavel** and **Amalek** represent heads of the klipah. And we are taught by the wisest of all men (Koheles 7, 14): “זה לעומת זה עשה האלקים”—G-d created the world with corresponding equal and opposite forces.

Now, in the realm of kedushah, the holy Torah is the intense light that illuminates the brain of every Jew who studies it. This enables him to control his heart with his brain and have his heart control his liver to perform all of Hashem’s mitzvos. Correspondingly, a similar hierarchy exists in the realm of the klipah. Bavel—the head of gold—does not want Jews to study Torah. For, it knows that as a result of studying the Torah, the brain in a Jew’s head will control the rest of his body per the acronym מל”ך—

symbolizing the order of **brain, heart, liver**. Therefore, HKB”H arranged for the Talmud Bavli to be revealed specifically in Bavel to subdue this head of the klipah by means of engaging in the study of Torah.

The same is true regarding the other head of the klipah, the klipah of Amalek, depicted as “ראשית גוים עמלק”. Its primary goal and focus is to prevent Yisrael from illuminating their brains by studying Torah. Therefore, the Torah admonishes us (Devarim 25, 17): “זכור את אשר עשה לך עמלק בדרך בצאתכם ממצרים אשר קרך בדרך”—remember what Amalek did to you while you were departing from Egypt, how he happened upon you on the way. Here are the comments of the Chiddushei HaRim, zy”a, on the phrase “אשר קרך בדרך”:

He cites the Midrash (Eichah Rabbah 2, 13): “If someone tells you there is chochmah in the goyim, you should believe him. It corroborates this with a passuk (Ovadiah 1, 8). However, if he tells you that there is Torah in the goyim, do not believe him. It corroborates this with another passuk (Eichah 2, 40).” This is because chochmah is in the brain, and this is present even in the goyim; but Torah is in the heart, and this pertains only to Yisrael. Now, there is a connection between the brain and the heart; this is referred to as “derech.” This is the meaning of the phrase “אשר קרך בדרך”. It is referring to the known “derech” (pathway) from the brain to the heart. Because Amalek, may his name be blotted out, wanted to create a disconnect between the brains and hearts of Yisrael in order to eliminate the power of the Torah from Yisrael.

This enlightens us as to how HKB”H thwarted the scheme of בבל”ל עמל”ק and their related klipos בלע”ם and בל”ק. Bilam planned to curse Yisrael with the term בל”ם, prevailing upon them to serve Hashem from the bottom up—from the liver to the heart to the brain. All they want is to not allow the light of the Torah in the brain to control the heart and the liver. Hence, as Tosafos teach us, HKB”H transformed the letters of בל”ם into its anagram מל”ך. This enabled Yisrael to make HKB”H their king by functioning according

to the format of מל"ך—allowing the brain to control the heart and the liver. This is the implication of the words "ותרועת מלך בו"—**and he is the King's beloved friend**. As we have explained, this can only be accomplished through the study of Torah that illuminates the brain and empowers

it to exert a positive influence on the heart and the liver. In this merit, we will be privileged to experience that which is written (Zechariah 14, 9): "והיה ה' למלך על כל הארץ"—**and Hashem will be King over the entire world**—swiftly, in our times! Amen.



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