

מאת הגאון מיר הדב ברוך הידשפילד שליט"א,
ראש טלל עטרת חיים ברוך, קליבלנד הייטס

A SERIES IN HALACHA LIVING A "TORAH" DAY

תורה
תורה
TORAH TAVLIN

פרק ו' דאבות

טיב התכלית

עדותיך אתבונן



(Courtesy of MyZmanim.com)

On behalf of thousands of Shomer Shabbos Jews - www.chickensforshabbos.com - The charity that simply helps families of Meland'im, Agunos and Grushos in Pretz Yisroel at ZERO expense

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

אם יתן לי בלק מלא ביתו כסף וזהב לא אוכל לעבר את פי ה' אלקי לעשות קמנה או גדולה ... (כב-ה)

Balak, King of Moav, sends high-ranking officials to commission Bilaam to curse the Jewish people. *Hashem* appears to Bilaam and tells him not to go. Bilaam’s response to Balak’s officials is: “*If Balak would give me his household of silver and gold, I could not transgress the word of Hashem.*” Our Sages see in this response the corrupt nature of Bilaam’s character. **R’ Yaakov Kamenetsky ז”ל (Emes L’Yaakov)** makes a very interesting observation: “If Balak will give me a house full of gold and silver, I won’t do it!” What about two houses? What about five houses? For one house? *Nu!* What is one house full of gold and silver worth? For that price alone, Bilaam will not consider coming. By specifying that a single house is the offer he refuses, he implies that if the price were right then maybe there would be what to discuss.

The following story is told about the famous **Baron Rothschild**, who arrived in a small town early one morning and asked when they *daven* the morning prayers. They told him at seven in the morning. He entered the synagogue and saw that everyone was already present: the rabbi, the *chazan*, the *dayan*, the *mispallelim*, and yet they did not begin to pray.

When he inquired about the delay, it was explained to him that the “*Gvir*” - the wealthiest man in town, had not yet arrived, and it was expected that they wait for him each morning. Five minutes passed, then ten minutes, and everyone was still waiting. Finally, at a quarter past seven, the *Gvir* arrived with sleepy eyes that he’d just woken up from, walks to his place at the eastern wall, sits down next to the rabbi, and gives the signal that it is permissible to begin the prayers.

Baron Rothschild was appalled at the audacity of that *Gvir*. The rabbi of the synagogue has to wait for him? The whole congregation has to wait for him? What *chutzpah!* So he has some money - who does he think he is?

When it was time to read from the *Torah*, the baron asked for an *aliyah*. He was given one and afterward, they recited a “*Mi Shebeirach*” for him. When the *gabbai* reached the part where people donate to the *shul*, Baron Rothschild said, “I am donating the amount of all the wealth of the ‘*Gvir*’ who sits upfront.” People began to murmur since they did not know that Baron Rothschild was the man standing one before them. The *gabbai* yelled, “*Meshugener!* This *Gvir* has a fortune!”

But the baron remained steadfast: “I am willing to donate the entire amount of the wealthy man’s estate.”

One of the trustees came over and said, “Sir, please do not joke! If you want to donate to the synagogue, state an amount! And if you don’t want to donate, no one is forcing you.” The baron answered, “I already said that I want to donate! And I even stated the amount I want to donate! Tell me how much he is worth and that is what I will give.”

“But do you have that amount to donate?” the trustee asked. “Don’t worry,” he replied, “I have much more than that!”

Only then did the trustee realize that Baron Rothschild was the man he was talking to. Well, he certainly can afford to pay so he hurried over to the “*Gvir*” and asked him to specify the amount of his wealth, so that Baron Rothschild would know how much to give. But the *Gvir* refused, claiming he did not wish to disclose his private matters in public.

Others tried to convince him. “This money which the baron will donate, will help all the needy in the community! If you do not disclose the amount of the property you hold, the baron will leave the town, and we will have lost everything.”

The wealthy man remained firm in his refusal. “Impossible! I will not disclose my private matters in public.”

The rabbi, *dayan* and the entire community went to the house of the *Gvir* and began to demonstrate, but Baron Rothschild told them to stop. “There is no need for him to reveal! I can find this out by myself. I will pay an attorney and an accountant, and they can review the relevant ledgers and accordingly, I will know his capital.”

Well, the baron did as he said. His people checked, rechecked and searched again and again. In the end, it was determined that the “*Gvir*” owned almost nothing! He used his reputation as a “wealthy man” to impose his will on the community. “*Wealth held for its owner to his detriment.*” **Koheles (5:12) (Rabbi Reuven Karlenstein ז”ל – Yechi Reuven)**

תָּרַם יָדוֹ עַל צִדִּיק וְכֹל אֲבוֹתָיו יִרְאוּהוּ ... (מִכָּה-ה-ח)
Michah HaNavi describes the open miracles that *Hashem* performed for *Klal Yisroel* and says that *Hashem* will use His “Hand” to destroy the Jewish enemies: “*Your hand shall prevail over your foes, and all your enemies shall be cut down!*” Why does the *Navi* refer to *Hashem*’s “Hand” here when throughout *gantz Tanach* it is more common for *Hashem* to use His finger when exacting punishment?

The **Daas Zekeinim** has a long discussion regarding each of the “Fingers of *Hashem*” and what the Almighty used and continues to use each finger for. However, *Chazal (Zevachim)* quote the **Pirkei D’Rabi Eliezer** who describes the five “Fingers” on *Hashem*’s right hand, as all involved in the process of redemption and salvation.

תורת הצבי על הפטרות
The smallest finger of *Hashem* was used for this purpose when He described the construction of Noah’s Ark. The second finger was used during *Yetzias Mitzrayim* when Egyptian sorcerers described the plague of lice as the “*finger of Hashem.*” The next finger was used to inscribe the *luchos*, “והלוחות כתובים באצבע אלוקים”. The fourth was used to show *Moshe Rabbeinu* the new moon and the fifth finger was used to show Moshe the *Machatzis HaShekel*.

Thus, utilizing His fingers to exact judgment or the like obviously has a tremendous force, but *Hashem* intends to use His entire “Hand” when in the future He will wipe out the descendants of Yishmael and Edom - finally putting an end to our long exile, speedily and in our days.

ואלכה אולי יקרה ה' לקראתי ודבר מה ויראני והגדתי לך וילך שפי' ... (כב-ג)

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM THE FAMILY OF R' CHAIM YOSEF KOPMAN ז”ל

מחשבת הלב

Balak, the King of Moav, hired Bilaam for an exorbitant fee to come and curse the *Yidden*. The *posuk* says he went “שפי”, stealthily. **Rashi** explains that he went “quietly.” The **Tzror Hamor** explains that Bilaam endeavored to approach the Jewish Nation unobserved so that he’d be able to catch them off guard and thus be able to harm them. But he failed to realize, and I quote: “הוא לא היה ידע שיש להם שומר ישראל לא ניום ולא ישן”. *Klal Yisroel* at the same time, was oblivious to the dangers lurking just around the corner. Yet, as the *posuk* in *Tehillim* says, “שומר פתאים ה”. *Hashem* watches over the guileless.

In fact, the **Paneach Raza** says that the word “שפי” is an acronym for “שומר פתאים ה”. Interestingly, the *Tzror Hamor* himself says that the word “שפי” stands for “שה פזרה ישראל”. Meaning, Bilaam wanted to create a פירוד, a sense of discord, a lack of unity, amongst the *Yidden*. He knew that if *Klal Yisroel* is not united, it’s the ideal time to strike.

How timely is this thought. The perils that the *Goyim* so quietly formulate to harm us; the underground tunnels, the ambushes, the land mines, would cause indescribable damage, destruction, and pain, if not for our Divine Protector - the paradigm “שומר ישראל”. In *Tehillim* it says, “כל גוים הללו את ה”. Why are they praising *Hashem*? The answer is simple. Only our enemies know their devious plans for us, and see our Heavenly “Iron Dome” protecting us from their nefarious tactics, of which we are often blissfully oblivious. At the same time, we learn that we mustn’t be a שפה פזורה, a nation divided. Rather, each of us should strive to strengthen ourselves in *achdus*. And there isn’t a more auspicious time to work on this then now, as *Shiva Assar B’Tammuz* is the onset of the three weeks, known as המצרים.

May *Hakadosh Boruch Hu* continue showing us his constant and vigilant watch, protecting *Acheinu Kol Bnei Yisroel*.

משל למה הדבר דומה

הלא את אשר ישים ה' בפי אתו אשמר לדבר ... (כג-יב)

משל: When **R’ Isser Zalman Meltzer ז”ל** arrived in *Yerushalayim*, he visited **R’ Zelig Reuven Bengis ז”ל**, the *Raavad* of the *Eidah Chareidis*, and told over an incredible story in front of all those present.

“When I first came to *yeshivah*, I was overtaken by the intensity of the learning. Seeing the other *bochurim* and their abilities, I also applied myself to learning. Since I possessed a very good head, I dedicated days and nights to the study of *Torah* and indeed felt satisfaction in my learning. I felt my life changing for the good. One day, though, I noticed that everyone was dressed with such dignified attire, while all I had was ragged, worn-out clothing. I was completely ‘out of style.’ Humiliated and ashamed, I decided that I could not return to the *Beis Medrash*. Sooner than later, I’d be the talk-of-the-town. Instead of standing up to the challenge, I

decided to take the easy way out and just leave *yeshivah*.

However, as I was making my way out, a boy approached me and commented that the *Rosh Yeshivah* was very impressed with my learning. ‘It’s not easy to impress the *Rosh Yeshivah*,’ this boy said to me, ‘but after talking in learning with you, the *Rosh Yeshivah* has even recommended that other boys should come over and talk to you in learning.’ Hearing that changed my perspective. If the other boys admired me, despite my shabby appearance, then I realized that I had nothing to be ashamed about.”

With tears rolling down his face, **R’ Isser Zalman** turned to **R’ Bengis** and exclaimed, “You were the boy who delivered those impactful words to me!”

נמשל: The power of words is very much the topic of *Parshas Balak*. For better or worse, words are very powerful. They can make or break an individual, an entire group of people or even an entire community. How careful must we be...

מי מנה עפר יקרב ומספר את רבעי ישראל תמת נפשי מות ישרים ותהי אחריתי כמחור ... (כג-י)

GOLDEN NUGGETS ON THE PARSHA WITH A FOCUS ON LESSONS HOW TO SERVE HASHEM AND BE A BETTER JEW BY R' YEHOShUA GOLD

הנחמדים מזהב

Bilaam was tasked with cursing *Klal Yisroel* but instead, he heaped praise and blessing on them. **Rashi** explains: “*There is no calculation of the mitzvos which they can fulfill with dust, [for example] not to plow with an ox and donkey together, not to plant with mixed seeds, etc.*” The reason Bilaam highlighted these *mitzvos* is because when the *Meraglim* returned from their expedition, they said “אפס כי אז העם היושב בארץ” - “*But the people that dwell in the land.*” The *Gemara (Shabbos 85a)* explains that when the *Torah* describes the people of *Se’ir* as “יושבי הארץ”, it means that they understood agriculture very well thereby making them successful farmers. Using this idea, the **Shem M’Shmuel** reveals the *Meraglim*’s message. Indeed, they said, the land has beautiful fruit, but this is only because “יושבי הארץ”, professional agronomists live there and cultivate the land.

R’ Shlomo Gantzfried ז”ל, in his **Sefer Apiryon** furthers this idea to our *parsha*. Balak claimed that *Klal Yisroel* are עם “uneducated and simple-minded. In his opinion they did not possess the expertise to successfully build and establish *Eretz Yisroel* as a prosperous land. Bilaam retorted, “Do you think their success is grounded in their handiwork and skill? Their success lies solely in the *mitzvos* they do! Their *Parnassa* comes because of the *Avodas Hashem* involved!” Bilaam proved his point by stressing the amount of *mitzvos* involved while working the fields, the primary source of income at that time.

A story is told of a *chasid* who did a wonderful favor for the holy **Chozeh of Lublin ז”ל**. In a show of gratitude, the *Chozeh* offered the man a blessing with a choice: Either to sit next to him eternally in *Gan Eden*, or to acquire immense wealth in this world. The man chose the latter and the *Chozeh* happily blessed him. The *Chassidim* there wondered why the *Rebbe* had agreed to the man’s seemingly short-sighted decision. He explained, “This man is righteous and I know he will use his money to support those in need. In this way he will rightfully earn his place next to me in the World to Come!”