REVEALING ITS TRUE MESSAGE

This mitzvah will always be called by your name. It will forever be referred to as "the cow that Moshe prepared in the wilderness." -- Rashi

Sefer Birkas Shmuel cites the writings of the Ar’i HaKadosh who writes that if a person is not familiar with the intentions and various hidden meanings contained within the Shemoneh Esrei, he can think in his heart and pray: “Let it be Your will, Hashem, that my Shemoneh Esrei be accepted as if I infused it with all the insights and meaning which the Men of the Great Assembly intended it to have.” With this thought, the Shemoneh Esrei is considered as if it was said properly.

CONSIDER THE SOURCE

Sefer Michtav Me’Eliyahu (Vol. 1) notes that we often hear someone talk about “an injustice” or “an outrage”. We can have no idea of the kind or degree of wrongdoing that is being referred to unless we know something about the character and moral standards of the speaker. Everyone has his own evaluation of wrongdoing.

The Torah’s standards are certainly the highest possible. It is way above all human prejudice and its judgments represent the absolute truth. Therefore, we should realize that the way the Torah perceives sin is extremely subtle. For example, the Torah tells us that Moshe and Aharon committed a sin at the Waters of Meriva, for which their punishment was that they were not allowed to enter Eretz Yisrael. Yet, the Torah commentators have been unable to agree on precisely what they did wrong to deserve such severe condemnation. We must, then, look for their sin not in the sphere of action, but in the innermost recesses of the heart, bearing in mind the high spiritual level expected of these people. Their act revealed a very subtle fault based on who they were. For us to say that they
sinned according to our standards would be completely wrong.

We have to know that the language which the Torah uses to describe the sins of its great ones follows its own standards. Our sages in the Gemara understood the truth of the Torah more than anyone else. They had the power to penetrate its profundity and reveal the rigor of its standards. They are the ones to interpret its severe modes of expression.

The Gemara (Shabbos 55b-56) presents a series of puzzling statements that intimate that the sins attributed in Tanach to Reuven, the sons of Eli, the sons of Shmuel, David HaMelech and Shlomo HaMelech were not actually committed. The wording in each case is: “Whoever says that Reuven, the sons of Eli…etc. sinned is completely mistaken.” This means that whoever thinks that these men sinned according to his own standards is completely mistaken. In other words, he has misunderstood the simple meaning of the text. If the Torah or the Navi says that these men sinned, it is only because the Torah or the Navi holds them to a higher standard of conduct.

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**JUDGMENT BY MANNA**

How can we understand the usage of such derogatory terminology on the part of the people of that great generation, especially regarding the manna which was sent from Heaven? It even appears that their words are nothing but a complete falsehood!

The Rebbe of Sadigura notes that it seems that the people were not describing the manna itself by calling it degenerate, but rather they were referring to its ability to reveal the sins and transgressions of the people. Chazal learn from the description (BeMidbar 11:7) - “It was like a coriander seed” - that the manna fell at a distance from one’s doorstep proportional to the righteousness of that individual. A perfect tzaddik would find it exactly at his doorstep, while those who were evil would have to spend the entire day tracking down their portion and preparing it. This, then, is the aspect of the manna which the Jews in the desert were criticizing when they called it “the bread which detects evil and corruption”.

The Jews at that time were punished merely for their criticism of the nature of the manna (see Verse 21:6). How much more so should a person be extremely careful never to criticize another human being.

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**A BATTLE FOR TRUTH**

This verse is allegorically interpreted to refer to the battle of Torah scholars with each other as they seek truth and pursue the quest of halachah.

Sefer Be’er Shmuel points out that a physical battle is waged between enemies who hate each other and violently seek to destroy each other. As Torah scholars engage in their heated arguments to understand Torah and delve into its depths, the encounter is not between adversaries, but rather between those who mutually seek to understand and share their ideas and thoughts. Each partner firmly defends his ideas, but at the same time each is eager to hear the other’s input and insight. Honesty gives each the strength to be forceful in his arguments, but at the same time, integrity demands that each be sincere and fair. The exchange can be lively and even aggressive, but, at the end, all are victors as they all share in the truthful spoils of the war of words. There is no personal animosity or insult, as even fathers and sons, and teachers and students, engage in the battle. At the end, the spokesmen of each side of the debate appreciate the input and challenge which the other provided, and they lovingly embrace (see Kiddushin 30b).

The verse describes that this battle begins with “Therefore it will be said...” The discussion of Torah is joined by all who wish to speak. Whether someone is acquainted with another person or not, or whether the speaker is older or younger, the battle may be waged. The proof to this is that all are beloved (בראשית) and admiring friends when the battle is ended (런א).
destroy the Jews by hiring Bilaam. Although the curse was changed to a blessing, not enter into the congregation of God”, for they did everything within their power to establish Ammon or Moav. Later, in Parashas Ki Seitzei (Devarim 23:4), when the fate of Moav is reported (Sanhedrin 105a), it was Bilaam’s intent to destroy the entire Jewish nation. Although Hashem interceded, and the Jews were not only saved but even blessed, this miracle should be attributed to the credit and worthiness of the Jews, and not due to Hashem performing a miracle to save me! The miracle was done for my welfare, not in order to save him!

The fact that he failed is not due to his intentions being good-natured, but simply because Hashem performed a miracle to save me! The miracle was done for my welfare, not in order to save him!"

The nation of Moav hired Bilaam to go and curse the Jews. As the Gemara reports (Sanhedrin 105a), it was Bilaam’s intent to destroy the entire Jewish nation. Although Hashem interceded, and the Jews were not only saved but even blessed, this miracle should be attributed to the credit and worthiness of the Jews, and not due to Moav. Later, in Parashas Ki Seitzei (Devarim 23:4), when the fate of Moav is established, the Torah refers to this condition. “A member of Ammon or Moav may not enter into the congregation of God”, for they did everything within their power to destroy the Jews by hiring Bilaam. Although the curse was changed to a blessing,
and the Jews ended up benefiting from the encounter, “God changed the curse to a blessing for you.” (23:6) Hashem acted out of love for Bnei Yisrael. We, however, are commanded (23:7) “not to inquire about the welfare or peace of these nations for all of our days, and forever”.

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BEING PREPARED

When they get up from their sleep in the morning, they exert themselves like an awesome lion - ἀλών - and like a lion - ἄρος - to grab commandments to wear a tallis, to read the Shema, and to put on tefillin. -- Rashi

Rabbi Yosef Karo is the author – Mechaber – of the Shulchan Aruch. In the opening remarks to Orach Chaim, which encompasses the laws of daily conduct, he chose Torah and its teachings as their mission. Considering the prominence and worthiness of the Jewish nation, he was shown that the Jews use their energies for blessing and bounty. This sharp contrast demonstrated the prominence and worthiness of the Jewish nation, which he was shown that the Jews use their energies for blessing and bounty.

This is indicated in the words of the evil Bilaam.

“This nation will arise like an awesome lion and raise itself like a lion.” Bilaam could not help but notice that the people awoke to accomplish their mission of fulfilling the mitzvos with a passion. This was only possible, however, because “it will not lie down until it consumes prey”. Rashi explains that this refers to their reading of Krias Shema before they retire at night, as it will not lie down until it consumes prey. If someone goes to sleep like a horse, how can he hope to be ready the next morning and awaken like a lion? If someone goes to sleep like a horse, how can he hope to be ready the next morning and awaken like a lion?

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A COMPELLING CONTRAST

Sefer Pardes Joseph notes that our sages (See Sota 10a) report that Bilaam became lame as a result of having his leg crushed against the wall of the vineyard by his she-donkey in 22:25. This particular punishment was appropriate for him, as Hashem used this ill-fated mission was based upon deceit and pride. The Gemara (Shabbos 104a) teaches that falsehood has no footing. The trait of conceit is also associated with one’s stance, as the verse states (Tehillim 36:12): “Let not the foot of arrogance come to me.” Let not the foot of arrogance come to me.

Another aspect to Bilaam’s leg’s being crushed was, as Rashi reports, that "Let not the foot of arrogance come to me." We therefore see that the crushing of Bilaam’s leg was symbolic of the collapse of his falsehood and pride. At the moment Bilaam attempted to use his feet for destruction and devastation, he was shown that the Jews use their energies for blessing and bounty. This sharp contrast demonstrated the prominence and worthiness of the Jewish nation, which chose Torah and its teachings as their mission.

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Halachic Corner

Pirkei Avos Chapter 5

Zmanim for Parshas Chukas-Balak 5780

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According to the Gaon of Vilna

According to the Magen Avraham
Halachic Corner is dedicated by Benyomin Freeman in memory of his father
Gedalia Freeman. May his memory be for a blessing.

Questions for Thought and Study

1. Did Hashem tell anyone the reason for the death of Korach (red cow)?
   See Ohr HaChaim 19:2
2. How does the Torah indicate that the laws of impurity (impurity) regarding a dead body are significantly different than other types of impurities?
   See Ha’amek Davar 19:14
3. How was Bnei Yisrael’s second request to pass through Edom different from the first?
   See Ramban 20:19
4. To which two places did Bnei Yisrael travel without the direction of the Clouds of Glory? How do we know this?
   See Ohr HaChaim 21:12
5. Why did Bilaam and Balak want to curse both Yaakov and Yisrael? Why switch the names?
   See Ba’al HaTurim 23:7
6. How was Bilaam like the angels that accompany Bnei Yisrael every Friday night as they come home from shul?
   See Ohr HaChaim 23:24

This Week Likutei Peshatim is Sponsored

- Gourmet Torah at Shallots Bistro is not meeting in the restaurant, so we are bringing Torah to you. Please join Rabbi Binyamin Ohsstein over Zoom on Thursday, July 9, at 12:30 PM. Topic: “The 17th Day Of Tamuz and Birkas HaTarah”. Zoom info: https://zoom.us/j/99921240863 or call in +1 312-626-6799. Zoom ID 999 2124 0863.
- Blitstein Institute announces that Fall registration will begin soon. Students interested in learning about the outstanding opportunities at Blitstein Institute can speak to Rita Lipshitz at 773-973-0241.
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- Former students, colleagues & admirers of HTC’s late esteemed faculty member, Rabbi Dr. Abe Lipshitz, z”l, are spearheading the organization of a periodic Memorial Shiur on his writings. Rabbi Lipshitz served our student body and the greater Chicago community while a professor at HTC for over 50 years in the fields of Tanach, Medieval Jewish Commentaries, and Hebrew. Attendance at the Shiur may be accomplished online by Zoom and/or by telephone hook-up. If interested, please call 773-764-4677.
- JDBY-YTT is seeking an administrative assistant for our very busy business office. Staff is currently working remotely. The ideal candidate will possess a passion for organization, ability to multitask, excellent verbal and written communication skills, and advanced computer skills, including complete familiarity with Microsoft Office. JDBY-YTT administrative assistant candidates should be able to manage areas of responsibility and assist others in a variety of projects. Graphic design experience a plus. If you would like to join the staff of a fast-growing school and assist in the chinuch habonim v’habanos of nearly 1300 children, please submit a résumé by email only to hr@jdbyytt.org with “Administrative Assistant” in the subject line. Please include several references.
- JDBY-YTT is seeking an Assistant to our incoming CEO. The ideal candidate will possess excellent verbal and written communication skills, organizational and computer skills, and the ability to multitask. If you would like to join the staff of a fast-growing school and assist in the chinuch habonim v’habanos of nearly 1300 children, please submit a résumé by email only to hr@jdbyytt.org with “Assistant to CEO” in the subject line. Please include several references.
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Please join La’briut, No Shame on U, Madraigos Midwest and Refuah311 as they present a discussion on the topic of mental health treatment and the shidduch scene in a Zoom webinar on Sunday, July 12th, at 7:30 PM, for women and girls 16+. Register for free at www.madraigosmidwest.org/shidduchevent. The webinar will feature a keynote address by Rabbi Zev Cohen, followed by a Q&A panel with Yaffa Kagan, Rachel Zimmerman, and Freyda Leah Falik.

Pop by our “pop up” food truck! Glatt Chicago is open Thursday nights, parked in the parking lot of the Wi-Fi Building, 8170 McCormick Blvd. Order on the “curl and go app” or on our website, www.glattchicago.com. Can’t wait to serve you all! Make sure to try our famous Yapchik!!!

By Roberta Lavi in loving memory of her mother, Jeanne Klaas, י�组装א אמא,脲ユ on the occasion of her yahrtzeit on 16 Tammuz. May her memory be for a blessing. (Adas Bnai Israel)

By Herb, Evelyn, Larry, and Linda Friedman, and their families, in loving memory of our mother and grandmother, Mildred T. Friedman, י�组装א, on the occasion of her 19th yahrtzeit on 15 Tammuz.

13 Tammuz is the 13th yahrtzeit of Magda Singer - י�组装א אמא, יוהד אמא, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, whose gentle, loving spirit, dignity and grace uplifted all who knew her. May her memory continue to inspire us. May her memory be for a blessing. With, love, Anna Goldstein, Lillian (Fred) Sudok, Harvey (Cathy) Singer, Ben (Chani) Goldstein, Rifka (Scott) English, Ariel Sadok, and the “kinderlach”.

By Aaron Lisager of Chicago and Beverly Edelstein of Ranaana, Israel, in loving memory of our father, Irving Lisagor, יבר, on the occasion of his 25th anniversary on the 13th of Tammuz. May his neshama be for a blessing.

By Ben, Gloria, Jeffrey, Michael, Ryan, and Daniel Macks in loving memory of our dear beloved dad and zaidie, Cantor Philip Silverstein - י�עמש תולס, on the occasion of his 10th yahrtzeit on 23 Tammuz, the 18th of Tammuz. His love of learning Torah, love of Eretz Yisrael, helping needy people, his beautiful voice and sense of humor are sorely missed. May his neshama have an aliyah.

By Shoshana Benditzson, Noemy & Oren Skidelsky and family, Michelle & Yaakov Steinhart and family, Jeremy & Rebecca Amster and family, and Ranan & Rebecca Amster and family, in memory of Rabbi Victor Amster, י�组装א, on the occasion of his 31st yahrtzeit on 13 Tammuz. His memory lives on through the example he set and the legacy that he left for his family. (KJB, Adas Yeshurun, KINS)

In loving memory of our Papa, Milton Saltzman, יבר, on the occasion of his 26th yahrtzeit on the 16th of Tammuz. Your memory lives on in your grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great-grandchildren who follow in your footsteps of Yiddishkeit. - By the Buckman, Drapkin, Gerson, Weinstein, Gottlieb, Saltzman, Yaffe, Steiner, and Rosby families.

In loving memory of our dear mother and grandmother, Helene Rubin, יבר, on the occasion of her 4th yahrtzeit on the 11th of Tammuz. - Esther and Glenn Kapetansky and family.

By Rosalie & Daniel Novick and family in memory of their beloved father, zaidie, and big-zaidy, Cantor Philip Silverstein - י�עמש תולס, on the occasion of his 10th yahrtzeit on 18 Tammuz. May his neshama have an aliyah and may he be a meilitz yoshar for us. He is truly missed.

By Rabbi Dr. Jerold Isenberg, Moshe, Devora, Mimi, Eliyahu and Yitzchak Isenberg, and Rabbi Yehuda, Chani, Eliana, Akiva, Yocheved, Ezra and Kayla Isenberg, in commemoration of the 11th yahrtzeit on 14 Tammuz of their beloved wife, mother, and grandmir, Miriam Yocheved Isenberg, יבר.

Likutei Peshatim is endowed by Les & Ethel Sutker in loving memory of Max and Mary Sutker and Louis and Lillian Klein, יבר. May their memory be for a blessing.

1. Hashem told Moshe the reason for the יספוק הגרעס and for all of the mitzvos. The wording of Pasuk 19:2 indicates that Hashem commanded Moshe not to reveal, specifically, the reason for השפוק הרעש.
2. By saying יספוק הגרעס (“this is the teaching”), the Torah is indicating that the laws of impurity by a dead body are new and different than all the impurities that were previously mentioned.
3. Originally, Bnei Yisrael said that they would go through the cities of Edom. After Edom’s refusal, they said that they would go on the public highway (יפסוק הגרעס) and repay Edom for any resources they might consume.
4. The journeys to the brooks of Zered and Arnon were not directed by the בורא (“from there they traveled”). This is indicated by the unusual language of יספוק הגרעס ("from there they traveled").
5. Bilaam and Balak wanted to curse both Yaakov and Yisrael because Hashem had blessed Yaakov when he had that name, and blessed him again when He gave him the name Yisrael.
6. Every Jew, as he comes home Friday night, has two “angels” accompanying him. If the house is prepared for Shabbos then the “good” angel says “May it be that next Shabbos will be the same.” (See Shabbos 119b) Similarly, the word יב (“indeed”) indicates that Bilaam had to agree to the blessing of Bnei Yisrael against his will.

Prepared by Rabbi Ben-Zion Rand, Editor, and Mrs. Naomi Samber, Managing Editor

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