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6:58 * פלג המנחה עש"ק - Monsey, NY)

8:14 הדלקת נרות לשבת -

8:39 זמן קריאת שמע/המ"א -

9:15 זמן קריאת שמע/הגר"א -

10:30 סוף זמן תפילה/להגר"א -

8:32 שקיעת החמה שבת קודש -

9:22 מוצש"ק צאת הכוכבים -

9:44 צאה"כ / לרבעו תם -

ימי שמדליקמוקדם אין לאחד מזמן עצם קבלת השבת (משיאמר "בואי כלה")

שבת קודש פרשת בלק – י"ז תמוז תשע"ה

Shabbos Parshas Balak - July 4, 2015

טוב התבלין

פרק ו'
דאבות

מאת הגה"צ רבי גמליאל הכהן רבעוביץ שליט"א ר"י שער השמים ירושלים ע"ה

וירא בלק בן צפור את כל אשר עשה ישראל לאמרי וגו' (כב-ב) - מאותות השמים אל תחרו

אָנוּ, בפרשתינו רואים אנו במדחש איך נתקיימו בדור המדבר ענין האמור ע"י הנביא (דמיה' ב) ו"מאותות השמים אל תחתו" ופרש"י (בראשית א יד) בעשותכם רצון הקב"ה, אין אתם צדיקין לראונו מן הפורעניות (ועי' סוכה כט). באותה שעה שנתן השי"ת את סיחון ועוג ביד ישראל, ראה בלק כי כוחם של ישראל גדול מאד, והוא שלא דע כי הכל הוא בעזרת שמים, ואינה אלא בזכות מעשיהם של ישראל, תלה את הגבורה בכוחם הגשמי, ולכן ביקש מבלעם לבוא ולהשתמש בכוחו שבפיו, כי אם ברם תלוי הדבר הרי בכוחו של בלעם לבטלו בכוחו שבפיו. כמ"ש (כ"ב ו) כי ידעתי את אשר תברך מבורך וגו', אבל לאמיתו של דבר לא היה הדבר תלוי כי אם במעשים של ישראל, וכיון שכן לא היה בכוחו של בלעם להשתמש נגדם בכוחו שבפיו.

בלעם אכן זכה וניתן לו כח הדבור, אבל מאידך הרי אמרו חז"ל (שבת קנו) אין מויל לישראל, אין הם נתונים תחת הכחות ותחתונים, אלא הכל תלוי במעשים, אם הם רצויים למקום מעלה אותם הקב"ה מכל הטבעים העלולים לרדע ח"ו, וכן היה כשבא בלעם לקללם, כיון שבאותה שעה רצויים היו ישראל לבוראם סילק מהם כל הגורמים העלולים להביא שרצונו של אותו רשע יצא לפועל, וכמו שאמרו חז"ל (ברכות ז) אמר להם הקב"ה לישראל, דעו כמה צדקות עשיתי עמכם, שלא כעסתי בימי בלעם הרשע, שאלמלי כעסתי, לא נשתדתי משונאיהם של ישראל שרדי ופליט. ולא זו בלבד שלא היה ביכולת אותו רשע לקללם, אלא עוד נתהפכה הקללה לברכה, כדרכתיב (דברים כג, ו) יזל אבה ה' אלקיך לשמוע אל בלעם, ויהפוך ה' אלקיך את הקללה לברכה. והסיבה היתה כמו שאומר הכתוב בעצמו: 'כי אהבך ה' אלקיך'.

לימוד גדול הוא לכל המנינים ישנן בעולם כמה וכמה דברים אשר בדרך הטבע עלולים הם להביא לידי צרה ר"ל, אבל אם בני ישראל הולכים בדרכי השי"ת נשמרים הם מכל אלו הדברים, יכולים הם להיות בטוח בהשי"ת שלא יאונה להם ע"י שום צער ח"ו, וכמסופר בגמרא (ברכות לג.) שמעשה היה ובמקום אחד היה עירור, והיה מויק את הבריות, באו והודיעו לו לרבי חנינא בן דוסא. אמר להם: הראו לי את חורו! הראדו את חורו, נתן עקבו על פי החור, יצא ונשכו ומת אותו עירו. נטלו על כתפו והביאו לבית המדרש. אמר להם: ראו בני, אין עירור ממית אלא החטא ממית. וכעין זה היה בכל הדורות שראו בחוש שאותן הצדיקים שהיו דבוקים תמיד בבוראם היו נשמרים בהשגחה העליונה מכל הדברים שבדרך הטבע מוויקים הם, כי מאד שלא היו ראוים לעונש נצלו, וכל הגורמים הטבעיים אינם אלא על אותן שעוברים את פי השי"ת כי או אין ההשגחה מונעת את האדם מאלו המויקים ואו פועלים את פועלת ח"ו.

כמו שרואים אנו מיד אחד שאותו רשע הלך למקומו, כשהתחילו ישראל לננות עם בנות מואב, אז מיד חרה בהם אף ה' ושלח בהם מגפה וגהרגו ארבעה ועשרים אלף (כט, ט). כיון ששוב לא היו ראוים לשמירה, היה ביכולת אותו רשע לגרום בעצתו מה שגורם, הרי שחבל תלוי במגלת ישראל, כל המויקים המצויים תחת השמש מויעדים הם לזמנים שבהם ראוים להיענש. אבל לא בזמנים בהם הם הולכים בדרכי השי"ת.

"Here I am now," he remarked regretfully, "and I didn't even know that writing is forbidden on *Shabbos*." **נמשל**: How many signs did *Hashem* give to Bilaam, warning him not to attempt to curse *Bnei Yisroel*? Is a talking donkey and a sword-wielding angel not enough to convince him not

A SERIES IN HALACHA LIVING A "TORAH" DAY למעשה הלכה
Selected Halachos of Shmittah (3) - "זה דבר השמיטה"

Laws of ספיחין. Another concept which has great relevance in the laws of *Shmittah*, is that of "ספיחין" - which is loosely translated as "self-growth" or "aftergrowth." Even during the *Shmittah* year, when no planting is permissible, there are two types of produce that continue to grow. One is fruit from the trees and bushes that are produced from year to year without requiring planting, and give off fruit annually. The second is even vegetables, grains, beans etc., that need to be sown yearly and can still sprout forth in *Shmittah*. This happens because during harvesting many seeds fall to the ground and the wind blows in seeds from elsewhere. These seeds often take root by themselves and grow fully without any human intervention. According to *Torah* Law, these items are considered regular *Shmittah* produce that has "קדושת שביעית" (sanctity of *Shmittah*) and may be eaten by one who keeps the *halachos* properly, including not destroying or wasting it. However, the Sages decreed that these "*Saphichin*" (self-growth items) from species that require sowing each year are forbidden to eat.

Reason for the Prohibition. In the past, very few people would openly defy the contemporary *Beis Din* and work in the fields during *Shmittah*. However, there were some devious and shady individuals who would do things quietly, like sow at night or at

הוא היה אומר
(1) משנה שביעית ט"א (2) משנת הגר"ש פרק ו' (3) שם (4) חזון איש ח"ט

R' Meir Simcha HaKohen of Dvinsk ZT"l (Meshech Chochma) would say: "ש'לש רגלים" by the donkey as a rebuke to Bilaam by saying, 'Jerusalem?' (עולה רגל) to Jerusalem? - 'ש'לש פעמים בשנה יראה' - three times a year the people shall be seen (יראה), which means that when *Bnei Yisroel* do the *mitzvah* of *Oleh Regel*, they envision *Hashem's* Countenance at some level. If so, said the donkey, how does Bilaam, who cannot even see an angel, a mere messenger of *Hashem*, expect to overpower *Bnei Yisroel*, an entire Nation who merits seeing a level of *Hashem's* Countenance?"

R' Chaim Zimmerman ZT"l (Rosh Yeshivah of H.T.C. in Skokie, IL) would say: "The *Gemara* (ב"ב די: *Moshe wrote his book (the Torah) and the parsha of Bilaam*.' The question is obvious: Isn't the *parsha* of Bilaam part of the *Torah*? Why is it singled out? The answer is that entire *Torah*, other than the *parsha* of Bilaam, is *Hashem's* word to His nation. The *parsha* of Bilaam, however, is *Hashem's* words ABOUT His nation. It is directed not only to the Jewish people, but to the world at large. Indeed, that is why it was said through the mouth of a non-Jewish prophet. It teaches the world that *Klal Yisroel* is a unit. Individual Jews may be righteous or wicked, but the Jewish people as a whole is always righteous in the eyes of *Hashem*."

A Wise Man would say:

"Be kind to unkind people. They need it most."

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נתגרב ונתקדש לעילוי נשמת ר' סנדר חיים זאב ב"ר יחיאל ישראל הורט ז"ל * תנצב"ה

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Mazel Tov to Moshe & Leah Spilman on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Eliyahu. May he grow up to be a ben Torah and they see nachas from him and all their children.

מעשה אבות ... סימן לבנים

ויאמר מואב אל זקני מדין עתה ילחמו הקהל את כל סביבתינו בלחך השור את ירך השדה וכו' (כב-ד)

The **Zohar** (בלק קפט) writes a remarkable thing: “*The posuk states, ‘And Moav said to the elders of Midian...’ It does not say, ‘The elders of Moav said to the elders of Midian,’ but rather, ‘Moav said.’ This means that the young took counsel of the elders, and the older ones followed after and gave them advice. What was the advice with which they counseled them? They took for themselves bad advice. They said to Moav, We have grown a bad crop among us. And who is it? It is the (Jewish) master, Moshe. There was among us a priest (Yisro) who took care of him and supported him in his house and gave him his daughter for a wife. Furthermore, he gave him money and sent him to Egypt to destroy the whole country. And he and his entire household went after him. If we could root out from the world that master of theirs, all his people would be uprooted from the world. The disastrous advice in the matters of Pe’ or stemmed from Midian.*”

Sometimes, the difference between good advice and bad advice is where the advice came from. A story is told about a young rabbi who was once traveling on a train when his suitcase containing most of his possessions got lost. The train stopped in a small town near Premishlan and the man was disconsolate. Since he was rather poor, this was an extremely distressing situation. He would go to the train station every day to inquire whether his suitcase had been found, but the reply was always in the negative. What should he do? He could not afford to replace all his belongings but he couldn’t stay in this little *shtetl* forever! His quandary was brought to the attention of a number of townspeople and elicited their sincerest sympathy. Finally, one man gave him some advice. “You know, there is a big *Tzaddik* in the next city of Premishlan who might be able to help you.” The rabbi was not a chassidic follower and did not take kindly to the idea of consulting with the famous *Chassidish Rebbe*, **R’ Meir Premishlaner ZT”L**, to retrieve his suitcase. But day by day went by and a better idea did not present itself to him. So, he decided to go to the R’ Meir’s home and speak to the *Tzaddik*.

He arrived in Premishlan and was directed to the correct. The line of petitioners, men, women and children seeking a *beracha* from the *Tzaddik*, stretched nearly out of the house, with R’ Meir himself seated at a table at the front end consulting with each person in private conversation. The rabbi walked in and was hoping to be recognized as a *Rav* from a different community, but to his chagrin, nobody knew who he was. Not receiving the preferential treatment he desired, he was sorely disappointed and forced to wait in line with all the simple folk for quite some time.

After an hour had gone by, the man thought in exasperation, “How long will I have to wait here for this *Rebbe*? Is it fitting that I should have to stand in line with everyone else? Don’t I deserve to be treated better?”

He waited another hour until his patience gave out and his frustration reached its zenith. He decided to leave. He was about to walk off the line when suddenly the surprisingly strong voice of R’ Meir carried to the back of the waiting room and interrupted his thoughts. “*Yidden*, there is a man here, a *Torah* scholar and a rabbi, who cannot understand why he is forced to stand and wait together with the rest of the crowd. He is disappointed that nobody is taking notice of him!”

The men and women on the line looked all about and the rabbi himself just stood in his place, his face masked in stone. The *Tzaddik* continued speaking. “To this, Meir’l (as he would humbly refer to himself) wants to answer in the same way that *Moshe Rabbeinu* replied when the Jews were in the desert. *Moshe* famously told his father-in-law, ‘*Because the people will come to me to seek Hashem.*’ (שמות יח-טו) They came to Moshe for spiritual advice. Similarly, when people come to me to discuss spiritual matters, I show honor to a *talmid chacham* and do not allow him to stand in line waiting. However, if a person is not interested in advice on spiritual matters, but only comes ‘*when he has a matter*’ not pertaining to *ruchniyos*, but for a material matter like losing a suitcase, then what does he need me to help him for?”

Looking in the direction of the rabbi, R’ Meir stated, “*Reb Yid*, what do you think? That I am a ‘*peckel-treffer*’ (finder of packages)? Go home, and find your luggage yourself!”

משל למה הדבר דומה

ויחד אף אלקים כי הולך הוא ויתיצב מלאך ה' בדרך לשמן לו וכו' (כב-כב)

משל: **R’ Shlomo Zalman Auerbach ZT”L** once saw a man writing on *Shabbos*. When he reminded the man about the holy day, the man said he didn’t know it was forbidden. Then, he shared the following story: “During the first world war, I was a scared Jewish soldier sitting in a foxhole for weeks. Many soldiers were losing their sanity, but there were two men who were able to maintain their balance and good cheer. They were religious Jews who kept their sanity due to their faith in G-d and continuous recital of Psalms (*Tehillim*).

“I was mightily impressed and began to wonder whether I

should explore the faith of my forefathers,” he said.

One day, he offered G-d a deal. “If You are truly out there, allow me to be discharged and I will learn about my heritage.”

Suddenly a shot rang out and a bullet struck his trigger finger, excusing him from further service in the armed forces. Could someone discern a more obvious sign from the Lord? For some reason, though, the man decided to earn a degree in college before acting on his promise to study Judaism. By the time he finally got around to it, his heart was no longer “in it,” and he left soon after, still ignorant of his glorious heritage.

מה טובו אהליך יעקב משכנותיך ישראל (כד-ה)

מחשבת הלב

Did you ever wonder why we begin our day by reciting the words of Bilaam, “מה טובו אהליך יעקב,” when the *Torah* has so many other *berachos* to choose from? What is it about this *posuk* that gives us the will to start a new day?

I have a *machshava*, which differs a bit from the common understanding of this *posuk*. The *Mishna* in *Avos* (5:22) teaches that Bilaam had an “עין הרע” (evil eye.) This means that he looked at the world in a non-generous fashion, always wishing bad upon others and looking to curse them. He was a very powerful man and for this reason, he was hired by Balak to cripple *Klal Yisroel*. *Hashem*, in His great mercy, would not allow Bilaam’s *ayin hara* to manifest itself, and instead of cursing, he blessed them. Rashi tells us that on his last try, Bilaam raised his eyes and saw *Bnei Yisroel*: “*Their doorways were not aligned, one opposite the other.*” Many *meforshim* explain this to mean that he saw their great modesty and it moved him to bless the people.

Another way to explain this is that Bilaam, who always viewed things in a negative light, saw how the Jewish people were never aligned against each other. In other words, rather than look at each other with an *ayin hara* - wishing bad upon a fellow Jew, or coveting what the other person had - each *Yid* was happy for his friend, each *Yid* “*fargined*” his neighbor, and what was in his friend’s tent belonged to him and no one else. Not one Jew looked at his friend and felt “opposite him” - they were all on the same page, and loved one another with a *Lev Tov* (good heart) and an *Ayin Tov* (good eye). Upon seeing such a sight which was foreign to him, Bilaam could not help but comment, “*How beautiful are your tents, Yaakov.*” The idea of joy, love and being truly happy for another Jew is all rolled up into that one sentence. Is it any wonder that we begin our day with this mission statement?

“*Who is rich? One who is happy with his lot.*” Whose lot? Your friend’s. Be happy with the lot that your friend has!

DRUSH V’CHIDDUSH

עתה לכה קבה לי אתו אולי אוכל להלחם בו וגרשתיו וגו' (כב-יא)

Balak, the king of Moav, is deathly scared of the Jewish Nation, who is camped just beyond his nation’s border. *Klal Yisroel* had recently defeated and conquered the adjoining lands of the two mighty Emory kings, and Balak fears that his nation will be next. He sends for Bilaam, a non-Jewish prophet, and contracts him to curse the impending invaders. The plan backfires, for *Hashem* transforms Bilaam’s curses into a cascade of eloquent blessings.

Why was Balak so afraid? *Hashem* had instructed the Jews not to provoke Moav into war, and he really had nothing to worry about. And if you want to say that Balak was unaware of this, surely Bilaam, the prophet who was “יודע דעת עליך” - “*perceives the thoughts of the Most High*,” was aware of the Jews’ neutrality towards the *Moavim*. Why didn’t he simply advise Balak that he had nothing to worry about? For the money? Bilaam could have charged him for the advice!

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON THE MIDDAH OF ... הצנע לכת

דרגה יתירה

Who are you? Who are you really? You are your *Neshama*, your soul. Your *Neshama* existed before your body and will continue to exist after your body is gone. **R’ Zev Leff Shlit’a** says that the relationship of body to soul is akin to a spacesuit for an astronaut. In order for an astronaut to function in the atmosphere of space, he must wear his protective suit which allows him to breathe, walk and function. But no one would think that that suit is the person, that this is his identity. Of course not! The real person is inside the suit. So why, by just looking at ourselves, do we think: this is the real me? Why do we focus on our exterior appearance without devoting as much, if not more, to our “internal design” - the person we truly are on the inside?

Tznius means “internality” - appreciating oneself on a deeper level. It is the key to spiritual growth. By de-emphasizing the physical, we automatically emphasize the spiritual. This is done, in large part, through the art of “concealment.”

Chazal teach us: “יפה הצניעות” - “(The) beauty of modesty,” is mentioned in four places. Each of these four contain extra *kedusha*, and thus, require extra concealment. The *Mishkan*, with its many layers of coverings; *Talmidei Chachamim*, who wear an extra long coat; *Kohanim*, with their “ריבוי בגדים” (extra layers of clothing); and women, who wear extra layers as well. Due to their excessive spirituality, these things need to conceal their physical character in order to truly appreciate the great spiritual potential and prowess deep inside. We, too, must never be blinded by the glamour and hollowness of “externality”; rather, each one of us must focus inward on the incredible internal greatness found inside - our pure and holy *Neshama*!

CONCEPTS IN AVODAS HALEV FROM R’ CHAIM YOSEF KOFMAN

R’ Pinchos Hoffman Shlit’a quotes the words of Rashi: “*Bilaam detested the Jews even more than Balak.*” Balak hated the Jews, but for good reason; in his estimation, they presented a mortal threat to him and his citizens. Bilaam, on the other hand, like so many anti-Semites throughout the ages, hated *Bnei Yisroel* for no reason at all. It was “שנאת חנם” - a hatred that defies rhyme or reason, and as such, he jumped at the opportunity to curse the Jews - for money, of course - though he knew quite well that Balak’s fear was groundless.

This point is driven home even further by virtue of the fact that this *Shabbos*, the 17th day of *Tammuz*, is the day we read about Bilaam’s hatred. It was on this day, thousands of years ago, that the walls of the holy city of Jerusalem were breached and just three weeks later, that the *Bais HaMikdash* was twice destroyed. We all know that the destruction was a result of “שנאת חנם” - baseless hatred amongst the Jews (in the second Temple). The timing is anything but coincidental!

Hatred is hatred - grief and destruction is what follows!

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R’ GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

וירא את ישראל שכן לשבטיו וחדה עליו רוח אלקים ... (כד-ב)