

**פרק ו'
דאגות**

Mazel Tov to the Friedman and Pomerantz families on the marriage of their children Devorah & Eli.
ידיד שתתן לבעת בית נאמן בישראל

מעשה אבות... סימן לבנים

וישם ה' דבר בפי בלעם ויאמר שוב אל בלק וכה תדבר וגו' (כג-ה)

A young mother once came to the **Belzer Rebbe, R' Yissachar Dov Rokeach ZT”L**, and tearfully told him the problem with her sweet young son who stood beside her: he was mute, completely unable to speak. She asked for a blessing and the *Rebbe* blessed the boy that *Hashem* should help his condition to improve.

However, the young mother was not satisfied with this. “Please, *Rebbe*,” she insisted, “help my little boy now! I know the *Rebbe* has a special connection to Heaven. Please do whatever you can and give my son the ability to speak!”

R’ Yissachar Dov was quiet for some time. Finally, he indicated to the mother to listen carefully. “I will do what I can to help your little boy, but you must never, under any circumstances, divulge how it came about!”

Having secured her commitment to secrecy, the *Rebbe* told the woman to come to the *Beis Medrash* with her son on the following morning, where he would speak to them after he had immersed himself in the *mikvah*.

The next day, when the *Rebbe* entered the *Beis Medrash*, he called over the boy and, pointing to an open *siddur* before him, told the boy to repeat the *Alef Beis* after him. The boy stood helplessly, tears flowing down his cheeks. He shook his head vehemently, then threw his hands up in despair. He could not utter a sound! Again the *Rebbe* instructed the boy to read, but, try as he might, he could not. Once again the *Rebbe* pointed to the *siddur*, raised his voice, and commanded the child to read. The boy looked down at the page, at the letters dancing before his eyes, and suddenly he opened his mouth and the sounds of the letters came tumbling out, one by one, shaky at first, but then in a clear and vibrant voice.

“My son is speaking!” cried the young mother in delight. “My son is speaking! I am forever grateful to the *Rebbe* for my child’s miraculous recovery. This is the happiest moment of our lives!”

She joyously returned home with her son, surprising the townspeople and arousing their curiosity more than a bit. They were delighted that the child could talk, but wondered how the cure had been wrought. There were several theories bantered about, some claiming that it was the work of a great professor, others insisting that it was a miracle of a *Tzaddik*. A few people decided to resolve the matter by approaching the boy’s mother directly.

At first, she resisted her questioners staunchly, reminding herself of the solemn promise she gave to the *Belzer Rebbe*. “There is no way I can reveal the secret!” she declared firmly. However, one day, in the face of persistent inquiry, she let slip the mention of the *Belzer Rebbe* as the one who had effected the dramatic recovery of her son.

As soon as she uttered that fateful remark, her heart sank. Realizing her grave mistake, she frantically tried to retract her words, but it was too late; the promise had been broken. “What have I done?” she cried. “What will become of my son now?” She called to him, but there was no reply. He stood rooted to the spot, motioning with his hand that his speech was lost.

Shattered, the woman raced to the home of the *Belzer Rebbe* with her son, though she was almost too ashamed to face him. Sadly, R’ Yissachar Dov shook his head, informing the heartbroken woman that there was nothing more he could do. “I am afraid that I can no longer help you. You did not keep your word - that was the condition of your son’s relief. I can only advise you to consult with a top professor in Vienna; perhaps he will be able to do something.”

Disappointed, and under far different circumstances than their last visit, mother and son left the *Rebbe*’s house. Following his suggestion, they traveled to Vienna and sought out a renowned specialist named Professor Neuman.

After months of intensive treatment, the Professor succeeded in restoring some speech to the boy; however, it was clearly not the same as it had been the first time, after the *Belzer Rebbe* had effected his cure.

“Look at the difference between the *Rebbe* and this Professor!” declared the distraught mother with great emotion. “The holy *Belzer Rebbe* was able to cure the boy instantly, and his speech was perfect. The Professor, on the other hand, did not manage to cure him completely, even after many months.”

משל למת הדבר דומה

אם יתן לי בלק מלא ביתו כסף זהב לא אוכל לעבור את פי ה' אלקי לעשות קטנה או גדולה וגו' (כג-ה)
משל: At an emergency gathering to discuss attempts by the government to change traditional *yeshivos* and *chadarim*, a non-religious Jew speaking on behalf of the Czar said, “In truth, if we wanted we could shut you down entirely. But we respect the rabbis and wish to work with you.”

At that, the **Beis Halevi, R' Yosef Dov Soloveitchik ZT”L** jumped to his feet and said, “You think you can but you cannot!” In an agitated state, he continued, “Imagine if I told you that if you slapped the Czar across the face, I would give you a treasure chest full of gold and silver. Would you

do it? No, of course not! You would tell me, ‘Even if you gave me all the gold in the world, I would never do such a thing!’ Could you do it? Yes. But would you do it? Never!”

The man nodded his agreement. “But if I were to tell you,” continued the Beis Halevi, “to pick up a mountain and carry it on your shoulder, this is something you cannot possibly do for all the money in the world. Correct?”

“The same thing here. You think you have the power to shut us down? Trust me, all the money in the world cannot stop *Torah* - no matter how hard you try, it cannot be done!”

Adapted from “Gut Voch” by A. Barash

ורא בלק בן צפור את כל אשר עשה ישראל לאמרי וגר מואב מפני העם מאד כי רב הוא וכו' (כג-ג)

Who was this Balak, who “*saw all that Israel had done to the Emoriyim*” but failed to take note of what the *Emoriyim* - or the *Amalekim* or the Egyptians - did to *Bnei Yisroel*? Who was this man who was so revolted by Israel that he could not judge them by the same standards that he used for prevalent international behavior? The *Medrash* records that Balak was a commoner, a rabble-rouser. He was neither royalty, nor mystic, nor intellectual. He was simply a gutter anti-Semite, who hated Jews and would use any means to stand in their way. But having called attention to the Jewish threat, with the impending economic and social upheaval that Moav faced, he was acclaimed as a leader, the new king. The *Medrash* cites the Book of *Eicha*: (א-ה) - “*Her enemies came to the head.*” Anyone who proclaims his enmity for Israel, becomes a leader of his people.

Jews have a tendency, to watch the ebb and flow of world leadership with the question: Is it good for Jews or bad for Jews? Kings, Presidents, even dictators, when they had a history of tolerance and fairness before assuming office, never seem to find a way to justify a Jewish nation in its own land, or to judge us by anything but a double standard. It is clear, writes **Rabbi M. Gordon Shlit’a**, that Jewish history is not guided by normal sequences of events. Neither our tragedies nor our victories are predictable or explainable, except in a spiritual sense. Balak himself realized that one does not attack, much less defeat Israel through military opposition. He ran to the Midianite sorcerer Bilaam, to seek supernatural means of solving his Jewish problem.

Through Balak’s experience in challenging Israel, we glimpse the *Torah*’s message about the true nature of Jewish history. Bilaam knew it when he said ואראנו ולא “אראנו ולא” - I sense their destiny though I don’t see it right now. It is a distant vision, but a clear one: Their enemies will be cut down, while *Bnei Yisroel* will survive with valor.

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH OF ... תוכחה

The “*mouth of the donkey*” which miraculously spoke, admonishing Bilaam for hitting it, was one of the ten items *Hashem* created at twilight on the first *erev Shabbos* of the world’s existence. Bilaam hit his donkey because the animal veered off the road after being frightened by an angel in its path. The donkey had eyes which saw and a mouth which spoke, whereas Bilaam, the prophet of the gentile nations had eyes but did not see and a mouth which chose to hit rather than speak gently. The *Medrash Raba* (צג-ו) comments here: “*Woe to us on the day of judgment, woe to us on the day of reproof.*”

R’ Avraham Pam ZT”L teaches us two very important lessons from this episode. He points out that sometimes in life, people suddenly act in a way that is totally out of character. A person who is usually calm and in control may suddenly “lose it” and begin to yell and scream for no apparent reason. One might become annoyed at this person for acting this way. However, we should learn from Bilaam how NOT to behave. Do NOT lash out at the person. YOU must remain calm and figure out what caused the uncharacteristic outburst of your spouse, child, neighbor or friend. Additionally, we can discern the tremendous power of *mussar* and the importance of rebuke. People tend to deflect any type of criticism that comes their way which can be a great impediment to spiritual growth. If *Hashem* found it necessary to prepare a donkey early on that would open it’s mouth to rebuke a prophet, then we must realize how difficult it is - at the very least - to get someone’s attention! And Bilaam actually accepted the rebuke, a miracle unto itself! Let us learn these important lessons and heed any rebuke that is served our way.

ויאמר בלעם אל בלק הנה באתי אלך היכל אוכל דבר מאומה הדבר אשר ישם אלקים בפי אתו אדבר (כג-ז)

Many commentators struggle to understand; what exactly was Bilaam thinking? He knew that *Hashem* loved and protected the Jewish people and he knew that no matter how much money he would be paid, he could not influence any change against the will of *Hashem*. Indeed, he knew, that *Hashem* knew, that he knew, that *Hashem* knew, what he was thinking and would not allow him to succeed in his quest to harm the Jewish people! So again, what was he thinking and what did he hope to accomplish?

R’ Tzadok Hakohen ZT”L explains that all Jews have a special connection to the *Torah*, which is rooted in their collective souls. As *Chazal* tell us (סנהדרין קד): “*Every (member of) Israel has a portion in the World to Come.*” The strength behind this unique bond is the great love that *Hashem* has for us, His Chosen Nation, and even if we sin, *Hashem* will never sever our unbreakable bond.

Bilaam, on the other hand, had no connection to *Torah*, to purity, to sanctity. He does not have any portion in the next world, despite the fact that he was on par with none other than *Moshe Rabbeinu* with respect to his level of prophecy. The **Zohar** teaches that Bilaam wished to insert an *ayin hara* - an evil eye - into this pure and untainted root (שורש) of the Jewish people, for he hoped that by doing so, he will be able to bring about an eventual collapse of Jewish values. Even if he could not destroy them immediately, even if it would take many years before they would fall under the spell of sin and iniquity, he recognized that all he needed to do right now was to make a small blemish, a hairline fracture in the foundation of *kedusha* and purity of the Jewish psyche. However, *Hashem* saw this coming too, and not only did He not allow Bilaam to weaken His people, He strengthened this bond, this connection to *Bnei Yisroel*, so that later on, even when they will sin, He will remain totally committed to them. He will never forsake us.

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHILOM

ויפתח ה' את פי האתון (כג-כה)

On behalf of thousands of Shomer Shabbos Jews - www.chickensforshabbos.com - The charity that simply feeds & clothes Shomer Shabbos Jews in Eretz Yisroel with zero overhead