

LAMPLIGHTER

6 Tammuz
Parshas Balak

1146

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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

The prophecy of Bilaam, contained in this week's Torah portion, Balak, concerns the End of Days - the Messianic era. Based on the verses of Bilaam's prophecy, Maimonides rules that a person who does not believe in the coming of Moshiach denies the entire Torah. Believing in Moshiach and actively anticipating his arrival is a fundamental principle in Judaism incumbent upon all Jews.

The prophecy of Bilaam foretold of two anointed kings. The first was King David, who delivered the Jewish people from their enemies; the second is Moshiach, a descendant of King David, who will redeem the Jewish people from our present exile. Some of the verses of Bilaam's prophecy pertain to King David, while others pertain to King Moshiach.

Significantly, both King David and King Moshiach are referred to as "Moshiach which means "the anointed one."

The knowledge of the existence of a prior Moshiach makes our belief in the arrival of the final Moshiach that much stronger.

Our faith is further reinforced by the fact that Bilaam's prophecy was said about both Moshiach's. For just as the first part of his prophecy was fulfilled in its entirety, so too are we assured that the second part will ultimately be fulfilled, and King Moshiach will usher in the Messianic era.

In reference to King David, Bilaam declared, "A star shall step forth out of Jacob." Concerning King Moshiach, he foretold, "and a sceptre shall arise out of Israel." Israel and Jacob are both names for the Jewish people. Jacob (Yaakov) is related to the Hebrew word for heel, eikev; Israel (Yisrael) comes from s'rara, meaning authority and rule.

In this we see the superiority of Moshiach over King David, for the name Israel expresses a more noble quality than the name Jacob. Indeed, in the Messianic era, the Jews will be known as "Israel."

Concerning King David, Bilaam said, "He will smite the corners of Moav." King David subdued the Moabite people and ruled over them. Moshiach, however, will rule over all the nations of the world, as it is written, "He will break down all the sons of Seth." In the Messianic era, the Jewish people will be ascendant over all other nations and peoples.

Bilaam continued: "Seir shall also be an inheritance." An inheritance is something which is passed on from one person to another, without conflict or the need to wage war.

Similarly, in the Messianic era, the gentile nations will be pleased to help the Jewish people and will willingly participate in the worship of the one G-d, as Maimonides writes, "[Moshiach] will amend the entire world, to serve G-d together...All will call on the name of G-d in unison."

Adapted for Maayan Chai from Likutei Sichot, Vol. 18

Privacy and Modesty

By Tali Loewenthal

Near the beginning of the daily prayer book there is a passage from this week's Torah reading. The Torah tells how Balaam, a non-Jew with spiritual power, tried to curse the Jewish people. Each time, G-d forced him to give a blessing instead.

This happened twice. The third time was different. Balaam, standing on a hilltop overlooking the camp of the Jews, underwent a temporary change of heart. He himself was moved to give them a blessing: "How good are your tents, Jacob... They are like gardens by the river, like fragrant herbs planted by G-d..."

Rashi's commentary tells us why Balaam was so moved by the sight of the tents of the Jewish people. From the way they were pitched he could sense an atmosphere of modesty and privacy. From the entrance of one tent you could not peep inside the entrance of any other. It was clear to Balaam that in this nation, the Jewish people, there was great respect for the integrity of family life and for the sanctity of the person.

The opening words of Balaam's blessing entered the prayer book, and have been repeated daily for thousands of years by Jews all over the world. The values expressed in these words have contributed, together with many other aspects of Judaism, to the comparatively high level of stability in Jewish family life.

The ideal of modesty applies to both men and women. It relates to clothes, behaviour, speech and thought. Why is modesty considered so important in Jewish life?

A basic human perception is the idea that something holy is also something special, kept apart, reserved, even hidden. For example, due to the holiness of the Temple, one could not always go there, and certain areas were restricted to kohanim, the Priests. The Holy of Holies could be entered only once a year, on Yom Kippur, and then only by the High Priest.

Similarly a Torah Scroll is generally kept hidden. It is kept wrapped in its mantle or silver case in the Ark, unless it is actually being read in the synagogue. If for some reason it has to be taken from one location to another, it is usually wrapped in a tallit. These images suggest ways in which one might respect the sanctity of the human body, created in the Divine Image, with the task to make the world a dwelling for the Divine.

By contrast, today we live in an epoch of communication. This is a very positive aspect of our society. Yet communication needs to have limits. The idea that one can reveal everything and say anything can be of great value in appropriate situations. Yet, used unwisely, it can also be harmful to the basic sanctity of the human being and the world.

It is a simple fact of life that modesty is particularly at risk when one is in a 'tent,' when traveling, on holiday, in a relaxed and less guarded mode. Yet it was the modesty expressed by the Tents of Jacob which impressed Balaam, and transformed his desire to curse into the desire to give a blessing.

Our role as Jews is to be an example. The Torah describes us, thousands of years ago, as expressing the virtues of modesty and privacy. Through affirming these values now, we can help make a world in which every detail of life is illuminated by the radiance of the Divine.

Slice of LIFE

BASEBALL HEROES

By Rabbi Paysach Krohn

At a Chush fund-raising dinner [Chush is a school in Brooklyn that caters to learning-disabled Jewish children], the father of a Chush child delivered a speech that would never be forgotten by all who attended. After extolling the school and its dedicated staff, he cried out, "Where is the perfection in my son Shaya? Everything that G-d does is done with perfection. But my child cannot understand things as other children do. My child cannot remember facts and figures as other children do. Where is G-d's perfection?"

The audience was shocked by the question, pained by the father's anguish, and stilled by his piercing query. "I believe," the father answered, "that when G-d brings a child like this into the world, the perfection that He seeks is in the way people react to this child." He then told the following story about his son Shaya.

Shaya attends Chush throughout the week and a boys' yeshiva on Sundays. One Sunday afternoon, Shaya and his father came to the yeshiva as his classmates were playing baseball. The game was in progress and as Shaya and his father made their way towards the ball field, Shaya said, "Do you think you could get me into the game?"

Shaya's father knew his son was not at all athletic, and that most boys would not want him on their team. But he also understood that if his son were to be chosen in, it would give him a comfortable sense of belonging. So he

approached one of the boys in the field and asked, "Do you think my Shaya could get into the game?"

The boy looked around for guidance from his teammates. Getting none, he took matters into his own hands and said, "We are losing by six runs and the game is already in the eighth inning. I guess he can be on our team and we'll try to put him up to bat in the ninth inning."

Shaya's father was ecstatic as Shaya smiled broadly. Shaya was told to put on a glove and go out to play short centre field.

In the bottom of the eighth inning, Shaya's team scored a few runs but was still behind by three. In the bottom of the ninth inning, Shaya's team scored again - and now with two outs and the bases loaded and the potential winning runs on base, Shaya was scheduled to be up. Would the team actually let Shaya bat at this juncture and give away their chance to win the game? Surprisingly, Shaya was told to take a bat and try to get a hit. Everyone knew that it was all but impossible, for Shaya didn't even know how to hold the bat properly, let alone hit with it. However as Shaya stepped up to the plate, the pitcher moved in a few steps to lob the ball in softly so Shaya should at least be able to make contact.

The first pitch came in and Shaya swung clumsily and missed. One of Shaya's teammates came up to Shaya and together they held the bat and faced the pitcher waiting for the next pitch. The pitcher took a few more steps forward to toss the ball softly towards Shaya.

As the next pitch came in, Shaya and his teammate swung the bat and together they hit a slow ground ball to the pitcher. The pitcher picked up the soft grounder and could easily have thrown the ball to the first baseman.

Shaya would have been out and that would have ended the game. Instead, the pitcher took the ball and threw it on a high arc to right field, far and wide beyond the first baseman's reach. Everyone started yelling, "Shaya, run to first! Shaya, run to first!"

Never in his life had Shaya run to first. He scampered down the baseline wide eyed and startled. By the time he reached first base, the right fielder had the ball. He could have thrown the ball to the second baseman who would tag out Shaya, who was still running. But the right fielder understood what the pitcher's intentions were, so he threw the ball high and far over the third baseman's head, as everyone yelled, "Shaya, run to second! Shaya, run to second."

Shaya ran towards second base as the runners ahead of him deliriously circled the bases towards home. As Shaya reached second base, the opposing shortstop ran towards him, turned him towards the direction of third base and shouted, "Shaya, run to third!" As Shaya rounded third, the boys from both teams ran behind him screaming, "Shaya, run home! Shaya, run home!"

Shaya ran home, stepped on home plate and all 18 boys lifted him on their shoulders and made him the hero, as he had just hit the "grand slam" and won the game for his team.

"That day," said the father who now had tears rolling down his face, "those eighteen boys reached their level of perfection. They showed that it is not only those who are talented that should be recognized, but also those who have less talent. They too are human beings, they too have feelings and emotions; they too are people, they too want to feel important."

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ISSUE 1146

MOSHIACH MATTERS

Nine red heifers were prepared...: the first was prepared by Moses, the second by Ezra, and there were seven from the time of Ezra until the destruction of the [second] Holy Temple. The tenth will be prepared by the King Moshiach-may he speedily be revealed! Amen, may this be G-d's will! (Maimonides, Laws of the Red Heifer, 3:4)



INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE

15th of Tammuz, 5718 [1958]

Greeting and Blessing:

I was pleased to see you at the Farbrengen [Chasidic gathering] of the 12th-13th of Tammuz, which is dedicated to the sacred work of my father-in-law of saintly memory, who disregarded every danger to his life in his work to strengthen and spread Torah and Yiddishkeit [Judaism]. As you no doubt know, he had to contend with overwhelming odds and evil forces that tried to stop him, but nevertheless he came out victorious, for he had the strength of the Torah on his side. This is also the purpose of the Farbrengen, when we all meet together to strengthen each other in our attachment to the Torah, and to the spirit of self-sacrifice in the cause of true Yiddishkeit, that we may not be afraid of any difficulties and obstacles. In reality, most of such obstacles are only in the imagination, and when there is a strong will, all difficulties disappear.

I hope that your parents encourage you in your studies and in your conduct in accordance with the Torah and your teachings at the Yeshiva, and the Alm-ghty will surely reward them with much Nachas from you.

With prayerful wishes, and

With blessing,

Under separate cover you will receive one of our publications which we trust you will read with much interest.

End of Tammuz, 5719 [1959]

Hon. --

London

Shalom U'brachah [Peace and Blessings]:

Rabbi Hodakov has conveyed to me the gist of his telephone conversation with you. Needless to say, I was gratified to hear of your reaction, and thank you also in anticipation of the information, which you promised to send.

I wish to add here that according to information received, though I cannot vouchsafe for its absolute accuracy, R.- is said to have applied for a visa to Rabbi-'s place and was denied.

No doubt you are informed that the contract, which is being prepared for Rabbi-, is limited to himself, whereas insofar as his son is concerned, efforts are only now being made to find one for him. Common sense would indicate that Rabbi- would hardly be willing to depart and leave his son in the present situation. Moreover, even his contract has been progressing with difficulty (it is hoped that on Wednesday it will be confirmed), though the efforts began several weeks ago. From this one gathers the difficulties that would attend the obtaining of a contract for his son.

In view of the above, it would be well if you could ascertain what are the chances of obtaining a British visa for both of them together. I would very much appreciate your information on this.

I cannot conclude at this time without reference to the significance of this month of Tammuz, with its historic anniversary of the liberation of my father-in-law from Soviet imprisonment (12th-13th of Tammuz). The experiences of our leaders are surely a living lesson and inspiration to all of us, that when one fights for the truth to the extent of real mesiras nefesh [self-sacrifice], one person can single-handedly overcome the greatest power on earth.

With kind regards and with blessing,

CUSTOMS CORNER

Safeguards against Immorality

Our Sages established various safeguards to protect us against immorality. They recognized that in order to overcome natural temptations, a person must control his sight and thoughts—the faculties through which he can be led astray.

The following are several relevant details of this law:

- A man may not be alone with a girl above the age of three. A woman may not be alone with a boy above the age of nine. There is no upper age limit to these prohibitions.
- If the man and woman are in an area that is visible from a public thoroughfare, or if the area is open to the public such that someone may enter at any time, it is not considered being alone.
- These prohibitions apply to any man and woman who are not yet married to each other, even if they are dating each other or engaged.

Purity in Speech

- One should not converse excessively with members of the opposite gender. Certainly one may not talk, with anybody, about topics that may lead to sinful thoughts.
- A man may not inquire about the welfare of a woman in a manner which shows that he is attracted to her, but his inquiry is permissible if it stems from genuine concern for her wellbeing or merely from politeness.

A WORD

from the Director

We are now in the Hebrew month of Tamuz, which oddly enough, was the name of a Babylonian idol! Why would our Rabbis choose such a seemingly inappropriate name for a month on the Jewish calendar?

The literal translation of the word Tamuz is "heat," which alludes to the intense heat of the sun at this time of year (in the northern hemisphere). The Book of Psalms explains that the heat of the sun is used as a metaphor for G-d's power. G-d's strength expresses itself in two ways, creating positive energy and destroying negative forces. By using the name Tamuz, our Sages emphasized the infinite power of the Divine. In the same way the idol Tamuz was destroyed by G-d's wrath, all negativity encountered by G-d will be mocked and ultimately destroyed. G-d is always in control.

Another interesting point about the name Tamuz is that the numerical value of the Hebrew word Tamuz is 453, which is the same as "tagein" meaning "a protection or shield." This refers to G-d's protection of the Jewish people from the dangers posed by our adversaries. G-d protects and nurtures us even during our darkest moments. And when the letters of "tagein" are rearranged, the word "ginat" is formed, meaning "a garden." This image is a metaphor for the love and pleasure G-d derives from the Jewish people. In the same way a gardener stands in loving admiration of the rose's beauty despite the thorns on the rosebush, so too does G-d forgive His people for all their transgressions, for His love for us is constant and unwavering.

May we utilize the special messages of this month and bring them all to the fullest with the coming of Moshiach speedily in our days.

J. I. Gutnick

IT HAPPENED *Once...*

THE LITTLE CHICKEN

A royal minister once debated with Rabbi Yonatan Eibeshitz in front of the king. "Your holy books say that the *Moshiach* will come as a poor man riding on a donkey," the minister said. "How is this possible? After all, he will have to conquer all the world's mighty kings and have them all yield to him."

"I will give you the answer in two months," Rabbi Yonatan replied.

Rabbi Yonatan then asked the king for permission to order in the king's name each of the royal ministers to buy a chicken, care for it very well, and bring it to the palace in two months' time. The king agreed, and Rabbi Yonatan issued the order.

Each minister brought a large chicken, personally cared for it, and fattened it for two months. On the appointed day they brought their chickens to the royal palace.

As they entered, they saw Rabbi Yonatan standing there holding a small, scrawny chicken, all skin and bones.

"Put all the chickens in one room," Rabbi Yonatan instructed.

The ministers did as they were told. Rabbi Yonatan included his own scrawny chicken along with the others. Then he, the ministers, and the king lined up outside, looking in the windows to see what would happen.

The strong, healthy chickens began to fight among themselves, clawing at one another, drawing blood. At the end of the lively battle, all of them were lying dead. Only then did Rabbi Yonatan's chicken, which had been hiding in a corner during the fighting, emerge from its hiding place. It went over to the dead birds and began pecking at them.

The minister laughed at the spectacle. Then Rabbi Yonatan explained.

"This is the way it will be in the times of *Moshiach*. Kingdoms will war with one another until all the mighty kings will topple from their thrones. Then our king, *Moshiach*, will come and conquer them all. May it happen speedily in our days. Amen!"

[Source: Adapted from "Stories my Grandfather told me" (Mesorah) by Zev Greenwald]

Biographic note:

Rabbi Yonatan Eibeshitz (1660 - 21 Elul 1764) died in Metz. He was Rabbi of many cities including Posen, Prague and Altuna, and the author of many books.

ALONE IN THE FOREST

Rebbe Yechiel of Alexander and the son who was to succeed him as the Alexander Rebbe, Rabbi Yerachmiel, were in an isolated village where they had gone for a health retreat. In the middle of the night, the father suddenly took ill and was in danger of his life. There was no doctor for many miles around. The *tzadik* thought his end was near, and wept, whereupon his son embraced him and swore that no harm would befall him.

Then he left his father for a few moments, walked out into the thick of the forest and cried out: "Master of the Universe! Is this what you do to the Rebbe of Alexander? In the forest, with no one at hand?! Do our Sages not teach us that "The Almighty cares for the honour of *tzadikim* [the righteous]?"

He quickly returned to his father and found him feeling better.

"How were you able to swear?" asked Reb Yechiel.

"I relied on the words of the holy Ruzhiner," answered his son. "In the book of Psalms, King David pleads: 'How long will You hide Your face from me?'"

How long shall I take counsel in my soul?' (Psalms 1:13) These words the *tzadik* of Ruzhin reads as a question and an answer, as follows: 'How long will You

hide Your face from me?' And the supplicant answers his own question: 'So long as I can take counsel in my soul.' That is to say, when the supplicant can do nothing whatever to remedy his situation, and help can come from G-d alone, in such a time the Almighty cannot hide His face.

"And here, out in the middle of a forest, when there was no way in which we could possibly take counsel and help ourselves, and no one could help us but G-d alone, I was perfectly certain that no harm would befall us. So that is why I swore as I did."

Source: Adapted/Supplemented from the rendition in *A Treasury of Chassidic Tales* (Artscroll), as translated by the esteemed Uri Kaploun from Sipurei Chasidim by Rabbi S. Y. Zevin.

Biographical notes:

Rabbi Yerachmiel-Yisrael-Yitzchak Danziger of Alexander [1853 - 29 Tevet 1910] was a popular Chasidic leader in Poland of a wide range of followers. His book *Yismach Yisrael* is studied by many different Chasidic groups.

Rabbi Yisrael Friedmann of Ruzhin [1797 - 3 Cheshvan 1850] was a great-grandson of the Maggid of Mezritch. At a young age he was already a charismatic leader with a large following of chasidim. Greatly respected by the other rebbes and Jewish leaders of his generation, he was-and still is-referred to as "The Holy Rizhinner." Six of his sons established Chassidic dynasties, several of which-Sadigora, Chortkov, etc-are still thriving today.

Thoughts THAT COUNT

Behold, a people has come out of Egypt, behold it has covered the surface of the earth (Num. 22:5)

Balak told this to Bilaam, a former advisor to Pharaoh. When Pharaoh feared that the Jews would multiply and take over the land, it was Bilaam who advised him to enslave the Jews and throw the Jewish boys in the Nile as a means of decreasing their number. Balak came to him and told him that his ideas hadn't worked, that the Children of Israel had thrived and grown in Egypt. (*Ohr Hachaim*)

So now, I beseech you, come and curse this people for me, for it is too powerful for me (Num. 22:6)

When Balak said "for me," he meant, "make something happen to me," because he knew that Ruth, from whom King David and *Moshiach* would descend, would come from Moav. Therefore, he told Bilaam to make something happen to him, so that there would be no Ruth, no David, and no *Moshiach*. He knew that this would be the greatest curse on the Jewish people. (*ChomatAnach*)

Behold, it is a nation that will dwell in solitude and not be reckoned among the nations (Num. 23:9)

Bilaam was amazed at the Jewish people's ability to thrive despite constant persecution. He attributed their success to the fact that they keep themselves separate from the other nations. By assimilating ourselves we do not gain acceptance and recognition from other nations, for our survival depends upon our being 'a people apart.' (*Likutei Betar*)

Now, flee to your place (Num. 24:11)

Balak had agreed to pay Bilaam a large fee for the job of cursing the Jews. Bilaam, expecting this large fee, had lived in a luxurious fashion in the city of Moav. Having failed in his task, he would not be receiving the money. Bilaam advised him to flee, to run away from his creditors. (*Fun Unzer Alten Otzer*)

CANDLE LIGHTING: 4 JULY 2014

BEGINS	ENDS
4:54MELBOURNE	5:56
4:58ADELAIDE	5:57
4:47BRISBANE	5:43
6:15DARWIN	7:07
4:45GOLD COAST	5:41
5:06PERTH	6:04
4:40SYDNEY	5:39
4:45CANBERRA	5:44
4:35LAUNCESTON	5:39
4:58AUCKLAND	5:59
4:45WELLINGTON	5:49
4:30HOBART	5:35
4:42BYRON BAY	5:39
6:57SINGAPORE	7:48



CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

439 INKERMANN STREET, CAULFIELD

PARSHAS BALAK
6 TAMMUZ • 4 JULY

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	4:54 PM
	MINCHA:	5:00 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	5:35 PM
SHABBOS:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	LATEST TIME TO SAY SHEMA:	10:00 AM
	MINCHA:	4:55 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	5:56 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS: SUN-FRI:	9:15 AM
	MON-FRI:	8:00 AM
	MINCHA:	5:00 PM
	MAARIV:	5:50 PM