

VeChol Maaminim

A Weekly
Pamphlet
From
"Bney
Emunim"



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Parashas BALAK | 5784 | Issue No. 542

Peninei Emunim

Pearls of Tefillah in the Parashah

Balak Was Afraid of Am Yisrael's Koach Hatefillah

“וירא בלק בן צפור את כל אשר עשה ישראל לאמרי” (כב ב)

Why does it say “and Balak saw,” instead of “and Balak heard”? Did Balak, the king of Moav, really see with his eyes the war between Am Yisrael and the Emori? The Kli Yakar explains that this passuk does not refer to the war of Bnei Yisrael with Sichon and Og, the kings of the Emori, but rather regarding Yaakov Avinu, who is called Yisrael (Bereishis 32:29). After the abduction of his daughter Dina, he fought with the Emori and captured Shechem, as Yaakov described to his son Yosef (Bereishis 48:22): “I have given you one share more than your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Emori, with my sword and with my bow.” It is regarding this war that the passuk says “Vayar Balak,” because Balak saw the history of this war when perusing historical records, as kings in those times used to do. When he studied the outcome of the war between Yaakov and his sons and the Emori, despite them facing off with a whole nation, he became afraid of their descendents who were at the threshold of his country.

The Kli Yakar adds that when Balak saw that the reason for the miraculous victory of Yaakov was his tefillah – as Chazal explain (Bava Basra 123a) and as Onkelos explained, the word “kashti” alludes to tefillah and “charbi” to pleading – he decided to be wise and use this weapon against them. Therefore, he called upon Bilam to win this war for his nation with the power of his mouth.

Pischu Shearim

A word from the founder and Nasi of Bney Emunim

Awakening to Answer Amen

Rashi explains the words that Bilam used to praise Am Yisrael (Bamidbar 23:24): “Hein am kelavi yakum uk’ari yisnasa” as follows: “When they rise from their sleep in the morning, they are as vigorous as a young lion and a lion, to grab the mitzvos...”

From Rashi’s explanation on this passuk it emerges that the praise and virtue of Am Yisrael is not only with the mitzvos that they do in the morning, but rather, and perhaps mainly, in the way they do them: “Like a young lion and a lion”! No delay or obstacle will stand in the way of a Jew to fulfill what he is obligated to do! But the expression “to grab the mitzvos” needs explanation: Aren’t we commanded to prepare properly to fulfill the mitzvos and to do them with dignity and with calmness? That’s exactly why we have to be vigorous like a lion and get up early, as the early chassidim who would “spend an hour” (Brachos 30b) preparing for prayer. So what is the meaning of grabbing the mitzvos that is mentioned by Rashi?

I thought that it can be explained according to the words of Rav Yaakov Di Alba, one of the sages of Italy four hundred years ago, who writes in sefer Toldos Yaakov that the final letters of the words הן עם כלביא make up the word amen, to allude that the merit of answering amen is what prevented Bilam from cursing Am Yisrael.

In light of this, we can understand Rashi’s term of “grabbing the mitzvos.” The mitzvah of answering amen is not in the

complete control of the person, because it depends on the mevarech. And because one who recognizes the value of every amen is not able to miss out on even a single one, he finds himself in the morning, when the brachos are coming out of the mouths of mispallelim, going from one to the next to “grab” more and more amens...

So we find that the passuk testifies that Am Yisrael rises early like lions each morning to come early to the shul, to go from one mispallel to the next, listen to their brachos and to answer amen after them. That is the characteristic, that is the identity. Rising early is an excellent opportunity to amass many angels of amen, and we need to take advantage of it!

The dorshei reshumos, the ones who record history, also added proofs for the custom of Am Yisrael to run to Shacharis in shul to merit to answer amen to Birchos Hashachar from the words of the passuk (Shir Hashirim 1:4): “Mashcheinu acharecha narutzah,” and the acronym of these words is amen, while the second letters of these words is שחר – from here that we should run to grab as many amens as possible for Birchos Hashachar.

Let us remember that in a few minutes of getting up early to go to shul we can easily merit so many amens, which will protect us from those who seek to harm us and will bring upon us endless goodness all our lives. Amen.

Good Shabbos
Yaakov Dov Marmurstein

In honor of the yahrtzeit of the Ohr Hachaim HaKadosh, this coming Sunday, 15 Tammuz, we present this wondrous story that took place in his time, which indicates the importance of saying Birchos Hanehenin.

This story was written in the introduction to sefer Otzar Michtavim, Vol. II, by the writer Rav Yosef Mashash, the Rav of Haifa, as he heard it “with great emotion” from Harav Raphael Elnekaveh, the Rav of Morocco and a native of the city of Sali, where the Ohr Hachaim was born “as it was passed down from his holy fathers.”

Yeshuah Sasportas was a resident of the city of Sali at the time when the Ohr Hachaim lived there. Yeshuah was fabulously wealthy, and he had numerous estates throughout the region. His fields and vineyards yielded an abundance of crops, which filled his treasuries with a fortune.

At the same time, as wealthy as he was, he was also rather ignorant. He tried to keep the mitzvos he knew



about, but they were few and far between.

But his emunas chachamim was very strong. He didn't do anything without consulting the tzaddik in his city, the Ohr Hachaim. Whenever he was about to close a big deal, or he needed a yeshuah, he would head for the modest little house at the edge of the city, where Rav Chaim Ben Attar sat day and night, learning and serving Hashem.

At the time, Yeshuah was about to close one of his biggest deals ever. He was preparing to purchase a well-known orchard in the heart of Sali. The large trees yielded beautiful fruits, and they were known throughout Morocco. The demand for this orchard's fruits

was very strong, and whoever owned the orchard would be very rich from the profits.

The secret of the orchard's special fruits were two sweet springs that bubbled between the trees of the flowering fruit trees. The clear water flowed between the trees and watered them generously.

Over time, the orchard became a rare gem, and the clear air, the green trees and juicy fruit, as well as the bubbling water, made it into a preferred vacation spot for residents of the area, Jews and non-Jews alike.

There were vacation homes scattered on the outskirts of the orchard, and they were rented out to whoever sought to flee a bit from the hustle and bustle of the city. There were visitors there almost every day of the year.

Purchasing the orchard from the Arab owner was not an easy task for Yeshuah. He had dedicated most of his fortune to it. But he was also a seasoned businessman, and if he had chosen to invest most of his fortune in this deal, it was because he expected that within a few years, the profits would cover his investment, and then he'd double and triple his fortune, endlessly.

Before he closed the deal, Yeshuah went to the home of the Ohr Hachaim, and shared the details of the deal. He received a warm brachah from the sage, and proceeded to sign the contract.

Two months passed, and one morning Yeshuah walked through the gates of the orchard, as he did every day. But he realized right away that something wasn't right. He looked around and recoiled, the irrigation canals that watered the orchard were dry.

He hurried to the water sources; perhaps something was blocking the water from passing. But there he also discovered that the springs were dry, and were no longer giving water. The best experts were summoned; they dug, they calculated, and they gave their assumptions, but nothing helped.

Yeshuah's world went dark.

Dried up springs was a death blow for the orchard, and for the vacation village that nestled there, but most

importantly, it meant that his money had been invested into a failed enterprise and he would be left with almost nothing.

In desperation, he hurried back to the home of the Ohr Hachaim, sat down at the table and burst into uncontrollable sobs. A few minutes passed until he was able to speak, but not before he sipped from the cup of cold water that the tzaddik served him.

With great patience, the Ohr Hachaim listened to the dismal story. His compassionate eyes studied the man with pain and sympathy, and when he finished the Ohr Hachaim said in a low voice, measuring each word:

I watched you when you drank the cup of water and I was shocked to see that you did not make a brachah before it or after it! Know that the lack of these two brachos – brachah rishonah and acharonah - is why the wells have dried up!

The Ohr Hachaim added: I am sure of this, and it is alluded to in the Navi, as the passuk says (Yeshayah 12:3): “Ushe'avtem mayim besasson mima'ayanei hayeshuah” – בששון is an acronym for בברכות שתים שהכל ובורא נפשות because only one who is careful with these brachos will merit to drink mayim chaim from the wellsprings of yeshuah, and someone who is not careful risks losing the brachah. If you take upon yourself from this day on to be strict about brachos, I promise you that the springs will return to give their water!”

The words that emerged from the tzaddik's pure soul found a path into Yeshuah's heart. He took upon himself to strength his recital of brachos, and even promised to urge others to do the same. The Ohr Hachaim warmly blessed him, and Yeshuah left the house with a calm heart.

Wondrously enough, a day later, the wellsprings began to bubble as before.

Yeshuah was extremely scrupulous about his commitment. Form that day on, all visitors to the orchard were welcomed with a big sign bearing the words of the brachos of Shehakol and Borei Nefashos in large letters, with a reminder: “It is an obligation to make a brachah before and after drinking the water!”

From that point on the place was named Ma'ayanot Chaim, in the name of the tzaddik, and for many years, those springs were known as a segulah for healing and yeshuos, in the merit of the Ohr Hachaim hakadosh, zt"l.

Standing Strongly Brings Joy

“הוד והדר לפניו עז וחדוה במקומו”

The Meshech Chochmah expaliend:

While Bnei Yisrael are suffering from the yoke of galus, and despite the persecution that they endure, they stand with “oz” with strength, and fulfill the mitzvos of Hashem to the best of their ability, even if not with perfection – that brings to “chedvah bimkomo,” joy in the place of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, more than when Am Yisrael are dwelling in tranquility and fulfilling the laws of the Torah with perfection. (Meshech Chochmah, Haftaras Shabbos Hagadol)

The Shechinah Did Not Dwell in the Second Bais Hamikdash

“הוד והדר לפניו עז וחדוה במקומו”

This passuk is from sefer Divrei Hayamim, but in sefer Tehillim it says (96:6): “Hod vehadar lefanav oz vesiferes bemikdasho.” Harav Eliyahu Schick explains the difference between the pesukim:

The passuk in Tehillim was said by Moshe Rabbeinu (Rashi Bava Basra 15) who lived in the days of the Mishkan when the Shechinah dwelled, and therefore it concludes: “Oz vesiferes bemikdasho.” But the passuk in Divrei Hayamim was written by Ezra Hasofer, who lived at the beginning of Bayis Sheini (Bava Basra ibid) where the Shechinah did not dwell (Yoma 22b) and therefore the language reflects that and the passuk concludes with the words “oz vechedah bimkomo.” (Ein Eliyahu Yoma 22b)

Derech Emunim

Pearls of Halachah in the Weekly Parashah

A Curse Said Without Mentioning a Name

“הנה עם יצא ממצרים הנה כסה את עין הארץ והוא ישב ממולי: ועתה לכה נא ארה לי את העם הזה...” (כב ה-ו)

Why didn't Balak mention Yisrael by name? And why did he ask Bilam to come to Moav? Couldn't he have cursed them from where he was in Pesor?

Harav Shlomo Kluger expaliend:

The Gemara (Brachos 34a) explains that one who prays for his friend does not need to mention him by name. But the poskim write that the words of the Gemara apply when his friend is present, but if he is not present with him, he should mention his name. (Magen Avraham 119 1 in the name of the

– Hodu –

The Kavod and Oz for Hashem

“הבו לה' משפחות עמים הבו לה' כבוד ועז”

Rashi (Divrei Hayamim I 16:28) explains that this passuk is divided in two. The first half is a call to the families of the nations to give to Hashem, without explaining what they should give. The second part of the passuk details what they should give, and that is “kavod v'oz.”

Rav M.D. Vali further explains this passuk in his commentary on sefer Tehillim (96:7): “This passuk is an invitation to all of the families of the nations to give of theirs to Hashem. But what should they give him? He does not need His creations! Give him kavod v'oz, honor and strength. Because everything Hashem created was only for His Honor, and that is all He asks from His creations. The concept of oz is that they should attribute the greatness to its Owner and recognize that oz belongs to Hashem, to force all His creations to do His will and to submit themselves to His rule.”

We Should Adorn Ourselves First

“הבו לה' משפחות עמים הבו לה' כבוד ועז”

The **Chofetz Chaim** said:

Each morning, we turn to all the nations of the world and call to them “Havu l'Hashem kavod v'oz.” But did we ever stop before making this call and thinking if we ourselves are properly careful with the kavod of Hashem? Don't we have to adorn ourselves first before we issue a call to all the nations? (Chomas Hadas, Chizuk Hadas Ch. 1)

Mahari"l)

Because Balak knew that “the name of Yisrael is very great and holy” which would prevent his curse from taking hold, he did not want to mention them by name, and he said “Hinei am yatza miMitzrayim, behold a nation has emerged from Egypt.” But because without mentioning their name the curse would not take hold, unless the one cursing was facing them, like one who prays for a friend, therefore he said to Bilam: “Go please and curse for me this nation” – in the place where I am, because “vehu yoshev muli” – the nation is sitting across from me, and when you will face them your curse will be able to take hold even if you do not mention their name.

Imrei Shefer

Shaarei Yeshuah

The Segulah of Answering Amen

The following is the moving story of Yosse'le, a sweet child from central Israel, who stuttered terribly and merited to recover with the power of answering amen. This story was sent to us by a family member.

“Abb-b-a...I-I w-w-want to g-g-g-o to sh-sh-shul...” Yosse'le asked with great effort as he lowered his eyes in shame and from the intense exertion.

The father looked at his son's weary face, and his heart clenched. Yosse'le his dear son! He'd begun to talk before he turned two, and from then on, he'd never stopped chattering. Now, he could hardly utter the shortest of sentences. Talking was extremely difficult, and the shame exacerbated the constant stutter.

The stutter struck Yosse'le out of the blue, without any advance warning. His life was transformed almost immediately. Instead of his constant stream of talking, he could utter only broken sentences and halting syllables.

At first, his surprised parents were not sure if his stutter was due to tension from a number of tests he was taking at the time in cheder, or perhaps it was an effect of the flu he had been sick with the week before, from which he had not

totally recovered.

But when the stutter continued, and even grew worse, they began to worry, wonder and pray. They asked the advice of experts in the field, visited top doctors, tried all kinds of various treatments – and nothing helped.

Having exhausted all avenues, the father decided to visit HaRav Chaim Kanievsky to ask for advice and a brachah. He joined the line on the famous staircase on Rashbam Street, and whispering Tehillim for his son's recovery.

His turn arrived. Rav Chaim listened to his woes, and responded briefly and piercingly: “Be strict about answering amen,” was what he said to the surprised father. Before he turned to go, Rav Chaim added: “Being that you are a talmid chacham, you should also engage in the subject of answering amen, and write a halachic essay on the subject.”

The father didn't ask anything more. He turned around and left the home in silent submission.

When he arrived home, the father sat down in his study and began to write a comprehensive halachic essay on the obligation of answering amen. He

delved into sugyos, clarified the words of the Rishonim, and slowly, his essay took shape and grew, until a month later, it spanned some thirty closely written pages. The essay was masterfully crafted, and the conclusions were clear and organized.

On the day he finished writing, the father wanted to return to Rav Chaim to show him what he had written.

As he was at the door, Yosse'le addressed him: “Abba, where are you going?”

The father emitted a cry. “Yosse'le!! Say that again! What did you say?”

“I asked you where you are going,” Yosse'le said simply and coherently.

This time, it was the father who was rendered speechless. The flow of words from his son's mouth sounded like a melodious song. The stutter had disappeared without a trace. The question that Yosse'le had asked him was just the beginning of a stream of clear, eloquent sentences that he began to utter, without a trace of a stammer that he'd been suffering from so badly.

— Amen Without a Stammer —

Shaarei Gan Eden

Amen and Brachos in the Teachings of a Baal Hayahrtzeit



The ohel over the tzivun of Harav Yaakov Aryeh of Radzymin.

The Rebbe of Radzymin 18 Tammus 5637

Harav Yaakov Aryeh Gutterman of Radzymin was born in 5552 to his father, Rav Shlomo, in the town of Vorka, Poland. Already in his youth, it was evident that he was destined for greatness. He learned from the renowned Rav of Vorka, the Toras Shmuel, and dedicated himself to avodas Hashem.

While still a bochur, he became close to the Chozech of Lublin. In the Chozech's court, he met the Yid Hakadosh of Peshischa, and became one of his prime disciples. After his passing, he followed the Yid's successors, Harav Bunim of Peshischa, his son Rav Avraham Moshe and Rav Yitzchak of Vorka. He also was close to the Kozhnutzer Maggid.

He married the daughter of Rav Berish of Ryczywół. After the passing of the city's Rav, Rav Yaakov Aryeh agreed to accept the position. He later moved to Radzymin and served there as the Rav.

After the passing of Harav yitzchak of Vorka in 5608, many began to flock to Rav Yaakov Aryeh of Radzymin. He lived longer than the other talmidim of Rav Bunim of Peshischa, and was considered the elder Rebbe of his generation. His name was uttered with awe as a holy baal mofess, and many streamed to his court.

On 18 Tammuz, Erev Shabbos Parashas Pinchas 5637, the Rebbe of Radzymin passed away. On that Sunday, he was buried in the cemetery on Gensha Street in Warsaw. After his passing, his seforim, Divrei Avi"v and Bikkurei Avi"v were printed.

Amen – All Encompassing Gratitude that Emerges from Deep in the Heart

When seeking to clarify the virtue of answering amen, the Rebbe of Radzymin compared it to the sound of joy a person emits when he is overcome with gratitude, such as a father bringing his child to the chuppah. At that time, he feels with all his soul the intense chassadim of Hashem that have accompanied him all the years, from when the child was born until now. But if he would try to start detailing all those chassadim, the reduction of his gratitude into words would dull the feelings that are bubbling up inside him. In contrast, when a shout of joy and gratitude erupts from inside him, which expresses the depth of his gratitude for all the miracles and chassadim that Hashem has showered him with over the years, “this sound includes so many words that he should have expressed, and doing so would have confused him.”

The mevarech, who details and expounds his gratitude, somewhat dulls the sense of gratitude. In contrast, one who hears a brachah from the mevarech, reduces all the emotions of his gratitude into one amen that erupts from the depths of his heart, and that includes all the feelings of gratitude that the mevarech did not include in his brachah. And because the one who answers amen thanks and praises more than the mevarech, we find that “the one who answers is amen is greater than the mevarech.” (Bikkurei Avi"v, Ki Savo)