

Young Israel Shomrai Emunah - Shabbos Shorts ^{ת"ח}

June 25 - 26, 2021 - 16 Tammuz 5781 - Balak

Light Candles by 8:19 - Havdalah 9:27

The Shabbos Shorts is sponsored this week by Sheila Gaisin & her children, Miriam, Meredith, Arthur, Daniel, Jeremy, Reuven, & Shlomo to commemorate the 2nd Yahrzeit of their beloved husband & father, Dr. Allen Gaisin, Eliyahu ben Menachem Mendel Hakohen, Z"L, and by Arleeta & Rabbi Ivan Lerner in honor of the publication of their daughter D'vorah Miller's book, *Up To God*. <https://mosaicpress.com/product/up-to-god/>

Mazel Tov

- **Barbara & Mel Ciment** on the marriage of their granddaughter, Ariella Ciment, daughter of Aimee & Daniel Ciment, of Englewood, NJ, to Hillel Katz, son of Ellen & Richie Katz, of Los Angeles, CA.
- **Arline & Dr. Irving Katz** on the birth of a great-grandson and to **Sharona & Shlomo Katz** on the birth of a grandson, born to Avigail & Ze'ev Katz of Baltimore. Mazel Tov to great-grandfather Rabbi Sam Vogel and to grandparents Annie Shimanovich and Gedaliah Shimanovich and to the extended family.
- **Lisa & Eli Landy** on the marriage of their daughter, Leora, to Josh Finkelstein of Fair Lawn, NJ. Mazel Tov also to Leora's brothers, Ariel, Yosef and Amitai and to Josh's parents, Stacey & Yitz Finkelstein.
- **Jodi & David Mazel** on the engagement of their daughter Shayna to Chad Kaplan, son of Florine & Michael Kaplan of Edison, NJ. Mazel Tov also to Shayna's siblings, Jacob, Suzanne & Jack and the entire Mazel & Kaplan families.
- **Judy & David Marwick** on the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson Avi Marwick, son of Dr. Miriam S. & Rabbi Binyamin Marwick of Baltimore.

Condolences

- **Rochelle Dimont** on the passing of her son, Chayim Dimont, and **Sahra Ginsburg** on the passing of her brother. The funeral took place on Sunday.
- **Ben Kalish** on the passing of his father, Paul Kalish, Melech Yonah ben Yiddel Dov. Shiva is being observed at 3017 Temple Gate Road, Baltimore, MD 21209 through Tuesday morning. Shacharis: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday: 7:30 AM, Mincha/Maariv: Sunday, Monday: 8:25 PM. The family requests visitors 8:00 AM - 12 Noon, 1:00 PM - 6:00 PM and 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM.

Shabbos Schedule

Minyan locations are listed as B = Belonofsky Sanctuary, S = Social Hall. All Sephardi Minyanim take place in the Beit Medrash.

Friday Night:

- Light Candles by 8:19
- Mincha: 7:00 (S), 8:20 (B), 7:15 (Sephardi)

Shabbos Day:

- Shacharis: 7:00 (B), 8:45 (B), 9:15 (S), 8:00 (Sephardi)
- Mincha: 5:00 (B), 8:15 (B), 7:45 (Sephardi)
- Shabbos ends/Maariv: 9:27 (B and Sephardi)

Divrei Torah:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| • 8:45 Main Minyan | Rabbi Rosenbaum |
| • 9:15 | Rabbi Rosenbaum |
| • Shiur after Mincha | Rabbi Rosenbaum |

Fast of Shiva Asar B'Tammuz Sunday, June 27

- Fast Begins 4:00 AM
- Early Mincha 2:00 PM
- Mincha 8:00 PM
- Maariv 9:00 PM
- Fast Ends 9:27 PM

Weekday Shiurim

Options for remote learning are listed below. For the latest list and times, go to: <https://wp.vise.org/remote-learning-schedule/>

- **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim followed by a 15-minute Shiur on the Parsha. Sunday through Friday 8:30 AM - **Zoom A**. *Shiur will meet at 9:00 AM on Sunday, June 27.*
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum** - Daily - one chapter of Tehillim, followed by a 15-minute Halacha Shiur. Sunday through Thursday 7:00 PM - **Zoom A**.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Mussar Study Group for Women (spiritual self-improvement), Sundays at 9:30 AM, **Zoom A**.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Gemara Shiur for Men, Tuesdays and Fridays, 6:00 AM, in the room behind the balcony.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Nach Shiur, Wednesdays at 11:00 AM, now learning Megillas Eichah, **Zoom A**.
 - **Rabbi Rosenbaum's** Women's Navi Shiur, now studying Sefer Yehoshua, Wednesdays at 8:00 PM, **Zoom A**.
 - **GWCK Sunday Kollel Brunch and Learn for Men and Women** - Sunday mornings, 9:30 AM.
 - Unraveling the Navi with Rabbi Hillel Shaps, **Zoom B**.
 - **Rabbi Tuvia Grauman** - Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur, Sundays at 10:00 AM, **Zoom F**.
 - **GWCK presents CLAS (Community Learning at Shomrai)** - 8:15 PM - 9:15 PM (except as noted). For more info. contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps, hshaps@gwckollel.org 347-869-9361.
 - For Men & Women - **Zoom C** (except as noted):
 - Mondays: (for men only) Rabbi H. Shaps, On the Same Page Gemara, **Zoom B**.
 - Tuesdays: Rabbi Winter - Torah Topics
 - Wednesdays: Rabbi Grossman - Reading Responsa
 - Thursdays: Rabbi Grossman - Parshas Hashavua, 9:00 PM.
 - For Women - **Zoom D**
 - Mondays: Mrs. Sara Malka Winter - Parsha Journeys, *will resume in the fall*.
 - Tuesdays: Mrs. Sara Malka Winter - Bereishis in-Depth, *will resume in the fall*.
 - **Semichat Chaver Program**, Tuesdays at 9:00 PM with Rabbi Hillel Shaps. For more information, please contact Rabbi Hillel Shaps: hshaps@gwckollel.org Registration required at gwckollel.org/scp
 - **The Golden Network Presents: Rabbi Barry Greengart's** Shiur on Daily Halachos for men & women, Tuesdays 9:15 AM, **Zoom E**.
 - **Rabbi Yitzchak Scher's** Shiur for Men and Women, Tuesdays, 1:30 PM, "A Second Look - Stories in the Torah from a Deeper Perspective", *will resume in the fall*.
 - **Rabbi Moshe Arzouan's** Advanced Gemara Shiur for Men, learning Maseches Kiddushin on Wednesday evenings, 7:00 PM, *will resume in August*.
- Connection Details:** Go to <https://zoom.us/join/> and enter the meeting ID, or call 301-715-8592 and enter the meeting ID & password:
- Zoom A: ID: 416 963 9000, password 492019
Zoom B: ID: 349 754 2180, password Learn
Zoom C: ID: 746 455 2195, password Learn
Zoom D: ID: 601 853 4021, password Winter
Zoom E: ID: 970 1398 4837, password 613
Zoom F: ID: 978 8156 7874, password RabbiHyatt
Zoom H: ID: 713 7408 5130, password 045079

YISE Youth Announcements

Shabbos Groups will take place this week from 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM, weather permitting. Masks required indoors for age 3+. Age 18-35 months will be located in the toddler room off the Lower Lobby. Ages 3-5 years will be located in the Shomrai yard, facing Arcola under the tents. Ages 6-9 years will meet at Shomrai and walk over to the Yeshiva. For more info. contact Michal Merkin, YISE Youth groups coordinator, at mmerkin@yise.org *See flyer for details.*

Camp Shomrai is back for another fun-filled summer with programming for children in preschool through ninth grade! Camp runs from July 5th to August 13th. For more info or to register, visit our website at <https://campshomrai.org> *See flyer for details.*

COVID-19 Updates

- Minyanim currently take place with both social distance and regular seating. Regular seating is for vaccinated people only. Social distance seating is for unvaccinated people and for vaccinated people who prefer social distance seating. Masks are required for everyone in the social distance seating.
- The Shul office is still open, but hours may vary.

Let us Daven to Hashem to keep all of us in good health and to return our lives to normal as soon as possible. In protecting each other as we navigate this unfolding situation, may we grow stronger as individuals and as a community.

YISE Programs and Listings

Ask The Rabbi! Come join our virtual, interactive monthly program featuring Halachos of Shabbos and holidays! This month's Shiur, on the topic of Muktzah, took place on June 22. Recording available at <https://wp.yise.org/ask-the-rabbi>

Virtual Banquet - The Banquet Journal is available online at <https://wp.yise.org/banquet-2021/> If you registered for the Banquet and were unable to attend or had technical difficulties watching the Zoom session, contact webmaster@yise.org for a link to a recording of the program. Thank you to the volunteers who delivered the banquet food: Simi Franco, Hershel Katz, Masha Katz, Larry Korb, Valerie Kugler, Carol Lazar, Rona Lerner, Susan Levi, David Marwick, Louis Morris, Barbara Price, Elaine Taragin, Mitch Taragin, Mindy Tolchinsky,

Domestic Violence in the Jewish Community - Sunday, June 27, 11:00 AM - 12:15 PM on **Zoom A**. Organized by Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington and YISE. *See flyer for details.*

Happy Birthday! Happy Anniversary!

- Nissy Moskowitz in celebration of **Eva Moskowitz's** 39th birthday (again), and her 52nd wedding anniversary!

Dvar Torah Dedications/Sponsor a Shiur

During this difficult time, we pray to Hashem that the day that we can all come together again in Tefillah and Torah study in good health arrives speedily. Until that point, YISE continues to offer a number of different remote learning options. These options are now available for sponsorship on an individual Shiur or a daily basis.

Our current limited ability to Daven with a Minyan and to say Kaddish is difficult and a challenge. However, sponsoring a Shiur or other Torah learning is a meaningful way to commemorate a Yahrzeit or honor a loved one. Sponsorships are also a great way to celebrate a Simcha or any other milestone, while helping YISE at a time when many of the Shul's other sources of revenue are not available.

1. The following individual Shiurim are available for sponsorship at \$18 (per day):
 - Daily Morning (Sunday through Friday) Tehillim and Parsha Shiur
 - Daily Evening (Sunday through Thursday) Tehillim and Halacha Shiur
 - Rabbi Rosenbaum's Sunday Morning Mussar Study Group for Women
 - Rabbi Rosenbaum's Tuesday or Friday Morning Gemara Shiur for Men
 - Rabbi Rosenbaum's Wednesday Morning Nach Shiur
 - Rabbi Rosenbaum's Wednesday Night Navi Shiur for Women
 - Rabbi Grauman - Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur, Sunday Morning
2. Sponsorship of the Morning and Evening Tehillim and Parsha/Halacha Shiurim together is available for \$25.
3. The Shabbos Drasha is available for sponsorship at \$54.

Please email office@yise.org to sponsor. Thank you for your support.

Thank you to this past week's Shiurim sponsors:

Rabbi Hyatt's Gemara Shiur

- **David Jaray** in honor of a Refuah Sheleimah to Rabbi Hyatt and in honor of Rabbi Grauman and all those who attend his Shiur.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Tehillim/Parsha/Halacha Shiur

- **Judy & David Marwick** in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson Avi Marwick, son of Dr. Miriam S. & Rabbi Binyamin Marwick of Baltimore.
- **Nancy Karkowsky** in memory of Dr. Avi Karkowsky, Z"L, on his Yahrzeit on the 14th of Tammuz.

Rabbi Rosenbaum's Shabbos Drasha

- **Sheila Gaisin & her children, Miriam, Meredith, Arthur, Daniel, Jeremy, Reuven & Shlomo** to commemorate the 2nd Yahrzeit of their husband & father Dr. Allen Gaisin, Eliyahu ben Menachem Mendel Hakohen, Z"L
- **Bette Ellen Weigert, the Krakow family, Wendy Penn and Bernice Cohen** in memory of their beloved Father and Grandfather Bernard Krakow, Dov Beryl Ben Yitchak Moshe, Z"L on the occasion of his 47th Yahrzeit.

YISE Programs and Listings (continued)

Come Join Rabbi Koss's Monthly Jewish History class on Zoom! Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington and the YISE Chessed Committee: Rabbi Koss will be speaking on a topic in Jewish history, Monday, July 5, from 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM on **Zoom A**. For more information, contact Miriam Friedman at mfriedman2@yahoo.com

Update: Being Social - In the past few months, YISE's Social Committee has organized a range of programs to bring us together virtually, including: Jews (in our community) discussing their service in the US military, Trivia Nights, Painting with Talya, Purim Shpiel, Chagim goody bags ... We have also expressed our thanks to the Holy Cross Hospital health workers, and treated the Wheaton Rescue Squad to a special dinner. As we come together again, we would like your ideas and help in organizing fun, interactive, and safe activities. Please contact social@yise.org

Registration for Shomrai Preschool 2021-2022 is now open! We are excited to be offering a Torah-rich, child-centered program for children entering 2 year-old Nursery - 4 year-old Pre-K. School day runs from 8:30 AM - 3:00 PM. Extended care options available from 7:30 AM -8:30 AM and 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM. Register early for maximum savings! Visit our website for tuition rates and online registration at <https://preschool.yise.org/registration> For more information about the program email Sarah Dollman at director@yise.org See flyer for details.

Helping Hands Across Kemp Mill is a part of YISE's Chessed Committee. The program helps members undergoing serious medical crises. We are always looking for volunteers to help. To be a part of this program by helping with meals, visitation, shopping, childcare, etc., contact: Melanie Karlin, 301-681-4740, mkskarlin@gmail.com or Miriam Friedman, 301-754-1517, mfriedman2@yahoo.com

The Rachel Bassan Horwitz Fund is used for medical needs in our area, elsewhere in the US, and in Israel. In order to continue this much-needed medical fund, your financial help is needed! Tax-deductible contributions may be made payable to: YISE Charity SPECIAL Fund, c/o Norma Burdett, 11720 Lovejoy St., Silver Spring, MD 20902. Earmark: Bassan Fund. For more info: Norma Burdett, 301-593-5964 or Pearl Bassan, 301-649-3137.

Shiurim from Rabbi Gedaliah Anemer, ZT"L, are available at <http://audio.yise.org>

Community Programs & Listings

Kemp Mill Toastmasters - Wednesday, June 30, 8:00 PM - 9:15 PM. See what Toastmasters is all about and find out how you can become a more confident communicator. Contact Manasseh Katz at vppr@kempmilltoastmasters.com for more info. Zoom meeting ID: 986 546 841, password: 3671
Dealing With the Darkside: Halachic Perspectives on Ransomware - Join us Thursday, July 1, 12 Noon on **Zoom C** for a virtual Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman.

NO FEAR: A Rally in Solidarity with the Jewish People - Sunday, July 11, 1:00 PM - 3:30 PM at Lafayette Square, Washington, DC. For more information, go to <https://www.alliance4israel.org/>

Help our Senior Neighbors - What if you had to give up your car keys and depend on someone else to get you where you needed to go? This is happening to more and more of our senior neighbors. Consider volunteering with the Senior Connection to drive seniors to medical appointments, shopping, etc. Training and liability coverage are provided, and you can set your own volunteering schedule. COVID-19 precautions are followed for the health of drivers and riders. Contact volunteer@seniorconnectionmc.org, call 301-962-0820 or visit www.seniorconnectionmc.org for more information.

Capital Kosher Pantry Summer Collection - Please donate non-perishable items. Specially needed: canned pineapple, graham cracker crusts, olives, olive oil, Wacky Mac, yeast. Always needed: paper napkins, paper towels, tissues & toilet paper. You can buy items at your local store & place them in a Capital Kosher Pantry donation bin at Shalom, Moti's and area Shuls, or buy online & ship directly to us! Go to: www.yadvehuda.org/kosher-pantry for more information.

Yad Yehuda Donation Policy Update - Many unsolicited items are being dropped off at Yad Yehuda's office. We incur costs to dispose of those items. Please do not drop off: clothing/shoes/coats, household and baby items, electronics, books, Judaica/Sheimos. Donations of non-perishable food for the Capital Kosher Pantry are welcomed and appreciated.

Newly married? Growing family? Just need a budget check-up? Izun is a community resource that provides free and confidential coaching to help you examine your budget and achieve financial stability. Email us at barbara@getizun.org

Fundamentals of Prayer - Wednesdays, 8:00 PM on Zoom. Presented by Rabbi Hillel Shaps. Join any time! No cost. Zoom info and registration at linksgw.org/classes

Remote Night Shiurim from YGW - Sunday 8:30 PM - 9:15 PM, Rabbi Moshe Chaim Blate; Monday/Wednesday 9:00 PM - 9:30 PM, Rabbi Ahron Lopiansky; Tuesday/Thursday 9:00 PM - 9:30 PM, Rabbi Eliyahu Reingold. Register at https://zoom.us/join/register/1715843153121/WN_n6jNGqUpTpCN6ikCabUutA

Daf Yomi Shiur currently meets online via a WebEx video conference. There is still room for a few more participants. Anyone interested may email Judd Lifschitz at lifschitz@sllslaw.com to be added to the invite list. Sunday 8:30 AM, Monday - Thursday 9:00 PM.

Daily Halacha Program from Rabbi Eliyahu Reingold - Receive one every day in your inbox. Visit dvarhalacha.com and click "Sign Up."

Kemp Mill Village is providing friendly phone calls and limited deliveries during the pandemic. Call 1-833-KMV-20902 to request service or to volunteer. See kempmillvillage.org for more information.

Silver Spring Gemachim - For a complete list: www.gemachexchange.com

The Week Ahead	Sunday, June 27 Shiva Asar B'Tammuz	Monday June 28	Tuesday June 29	Wednesday June 30	Thursday July 1	Friday July 2
Ashkenazi: Shacharis: Sunday 6:30 AM (B)/7:30 AM (S)/8:45 AM (B); Monday/Thursday 6:15 AM (B)/6:45 AM (S)/8:45 AM (B); Tuesday/Wednesday/Friday 6:15 AM (B)/6:55 AM (S)/8:45 AM (B);						
Mincha/Maariv: Sunday: 2:00 PM (B) and 8:00 PM (B); Monday - Thursday: 8:25 PM (B).						
Sephardi: Shacharis: Sunday through Friday: 7:30 AM; Mincha/Maariv: Sunday: 8:15 PM; Monday - Thursday: 8:30 PM.						
Halachic Times: Latest Alos Hashachar 4:04 AM, Earliest Talis and Tefilin: 4:43 AM, Latest Netz: 5:48 AM, Latest Krias Shema: 9:27 AM, Earliest Mincha: 1:50 PM, Earliest Shkia: 8:37 PM, Latest Tzeis Hacoachavim: 9:27 PM						

Next Shabbos

July 2 - 3, 2021 - 23 Tammuz 5781

Parshas Pinchas

Light Candles: 8:19

Havdalah: 9:26

Next Shabbos Shorts Deadline: Wednesday, June 30 at 12 Noon

Submit items for the Shabbos Shorts to: announce@yise.org

Office Phone: 301-593-4465 Office Fax: 301-593-2330

Eruv line: 301-593-5561 E-Mail: office@yise.org Website: www.yise.org

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Friday 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum

Yale Ginsburg - President

Simi Franco - Office Manager

A Quick Thought on the Parsha from Rabbi Rosenbaum

Balak 5781:

The Jewish View

The following is kindly transcribed by a congregant from the video at

<https://wp.yise.org/shabbos>

Near the beginning of the *Parsha, Balak*, the king of *Moav*, sends a message to *Bilam* urging him to come and curse the Jewish people. *Balak* conveys to *Bilam* the great danger of allowing the Jewish people to continue to flourish and succeed and progress on their way to the land of Israel, and part of what he says is *הנה כסה את עין הארץ*, literally translated behold the Jewish people are covering the eye of the land. The standard *P'shat* in what that means is that the Jewish people are all over, wherever you turn the Jewish people are there. *Rashi* has a *P'shat* that it actually refers to people who were kind of protectors in the region and have been conquered by the Jewish people. But the phrase is certainly an interesting phrase, *הנה כסה את עין הארץ*, behold the Jewish people cover the eye of the land.

The *Sfas Emes* has a very interesting perspective on that phrase. He says there are different ways to view things in this world. There's a very physical, superficial way of viewing things and there's a deeper, spiritual way of viewing things. The *Sfas Emes* says that the perspective of looking at things from a very physical, superficial, shallow way without seeing deeper meaning of things is the eye of the earth, looking at things in a very earthly type of way. According to the *Sfas Emes*, *Balak's* complaint about the Jewish people is they're covering up that perspective. They're bringing a new perspective to the world, a perspective of spirituality and meaning, and that makes *Balak* and many others uncomfortable. So he complains to *Bilam* they're covering the perspective, the earthly perspective of things, and therefore we have to do something about this.

We're living in a time that people are clearly looking at us differently because we're Jews. It's obviously a very uncomfortable thing. It's obviously a very concerning thing. In such a time it's so important to not try to be like everyone else. Obviously you have to try to get along with everyone else, we have to be good neighbors. It's essential that we be good neighbors. But we also need to be proud of who we are. The Jewish people, throughout the generations, have represented a different, loftier, spiritual perspective on this world, because we're G-d's chosen people. That's been our mission through the generations and that continues to be our mission and that is something we should always be proud of. That's not to say that others can't see the world through lofty perspectives as well. Of course they can. But we, throughout the generations, have had this as part of our mission. And with G-d's help and G-d's protection we should continue to fulfill that sacred component of our mission.

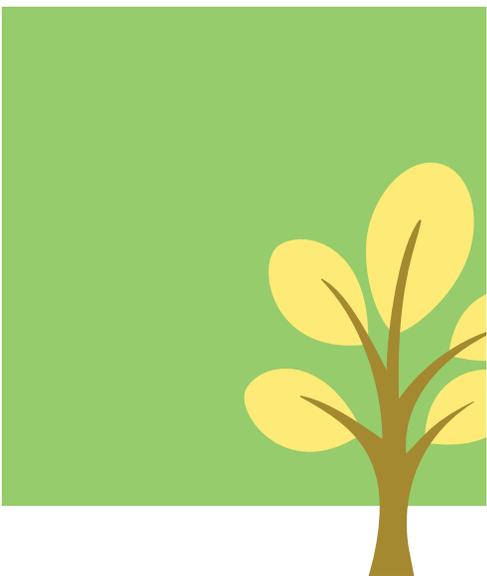
Have a wonderful *Shabbos*!



- 4 Groups:**
- 1. Age 2**
 - 2. Ages 3-5**
 - 3. Ages 6-9 Boys**
 - 4. Ages 6-9 Girls**



**June
26!
10:00-
11:00am**



Domestic Violence in the Jewish community

Those suffering from domestic violence tend to endure it in silence and shame for a long time. It is as pervasive in the Jewish community as it is in the general public. Twenty-five percent of women and 10 percent of men will suffer from some form of intimate partner violence in their lifetime. Violence is not always physical, but can be emotional, sexual, spiritual, and/or financial.

Our panel will discuss:

- **What domestic violence is and its impact on our friends and neighbors**
- **How to recognize early warning signs**
- **The dynamic of abuse over time**
- **How you can help, including community resources and services available**
- **A rabbi's perspective on domestic abuse in our community.**

Speakers: Rabbi Dovid Rosenbaum, Young Israel Shomrai Emunah; Amanda Katz, JCADA executive director; Tova Zimm, JCADA Victim Advocacy Manager; and a domestic abuse survivor

Sunday, June 27, 2021
11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Zoom Meeting: Go to: <https://zoom.us/join/> and enter the meeting ID, or call +1 301-715-8592 and enter the meeting ID & password:

ID: 416 963 9000 **Pass code:** 492019

Organized by Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington and Young Israel Shomrai Emunah; co-sponsored by Kemp Mill Synagogue, Silver Spring Jewish Center, Kehilas Ohr Hatorah of Silver Spring, South East Hebrew Congregation, Chabad of Silver Spring, and Mikva Emunah Society of Greater Washington





SUMMER

2021

JULY 5 - AUGUST 13

Preschool *Division*



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profound commitment to
safety and a creative and
joyous attitude towards
learning and discovery!

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Elementary *Division*



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Boys and Girls**

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- Learning
- Specialized Crafts
- Dance

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**BOYS ENTERING
7TH-9TH GRADE**

- Weekly Trips
- Swim
- Sports
- Learning
- Woodworking

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit our website: www.campshomrai.org
or Email: camp@yise.org

REGISTER ONLINE

<https://shomrai.campintouch.com/ui/forms/application/camper/App>

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FOR CHILDREN 2-5 YEARS OLD



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Likutei Divrei Torah

Gleanings of Divrei Torah on Parashat Hashavuah
via the Internet

Volume 27, Issue 36

Shabbat Parashat Balak

5781 - B"H

Covenant and Conversation Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, z"l

Leadership and Loyalty

Is leadership a set of skills, the ability to summon and command power? Or does it have an essentially moral dimension also? Can a bad person be a good leader, or will their badness compromise their leadership? That is the question raised by the key figure in this week's parsha, the pagan prophet Bilaam.

First, by way of introduction, we have independent evidence that Bilaam actually existed. An archaeological discovery in 1967, at Deir 'Alla at the junction of the Jordan and Jabbok rivers, uncovered an inscription on the wall of a pagan temple, dated to the eighth century BCE, which makes reference to a seer named Bilaam ben Beor, in terms remarkably similar to those of our parsha. Bilaam was a well-known figure in the region.

His skills were clearly impressive. He was a religious virtuoso, a sought-after shaman, magus, spellbinder and miracle worker. Balak says, on the basis of experience or reputation, "I know that whoever you bless is blessed, and whoever you curse is cursed". The rabbinic literature does not call this into question. On the phrase "no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face", the Sages went so far as to say: "In Israel there was no other prophet as great as Moses, but among the nations there was. Who was he? Bilaam."

Another midrashic source says that "There was nothing in the world that the Holy One blessed be He did not reveal to Balaam, who surpassed even Moses in the wisdom of sorcery." At a technical level, Bilaam had all the skills.

Yet the ultimate verdict on Bilaam is negative. In chapter 25, we read of the ironic sequel to the episode of the curses/blessings. The Israelites, having been saved by God from the would-be curses of Moab and Midian, suffered a self-inflicted tragedy by allowing themselves to be enticed by the women of the land. God's anger burns against them. Several chapters later it emerges that it was Bilaam who devised this strategy: "They were the ones who followed Bilaam's advice and were the means of turning the Israelites away from the Lord in what happened at Peor, so that a plague struck the Lord's people". Having failed to curse the Israelites, Bilaam eventually succeeded in doing them great harm.

So the picture that emerges from the Jewish sources is of a man with great gifts, a genuine prophet, a man whom the Sages compared with Moses himself – yet at the same time a figure of flawed character that eventually led to his downfall and to his reputation as an evil-doer and one of those mentioned by the Mishnah as having been denied a share in the world to come.

What was his flaw? There are many speculations, but one suggestion given in the Talmud infers the answer from his name. What is the meaning of Bilaam? Answers the Talmud: it means, "a man without a people" (belo am).

This is a fine insight. Bilaam is a man without loyalties. Balak sent for him saying: "Now come and put a curse on these people, because they are too powerful for me. . . . For I know that those you bless are blessed, and those you curse are cursed." Bilaam was a prophet for hire. He had supernatural powers. He could bless someone and that person would succeed. He could curse and that person would be

blighted by misfortune. But there is no hint in any of the reports, biblical or otherwise, that Bilaam was a prophet in the moral sense: that he was concerned with justice, desert, the rights and wrongs of those whose lives he affected. Like a contract killer of a later age, Bilaam was a loner. His services could be bought. He had skills, and he used them with devastating effect. But he had no commitments, no loyalties, no rootedness in humanity. He was the man belo am, without a people.

Moses was the opposite. God Himself says of him, "He is [supremely] loyal in all My house". However disappointed Moses was with the Israelites, he never ceased to argue their cause before God. When his initial intervention on their behalf with Pharaoh worsened their condition, he said to God, 'O Lord, why do You mistreat Your people? Why did You send me?'

When the Israelites made the Golden Calf and God threatened to destroy the people and begin again with Moses, he said, "Now, if You would, please forgive their sin. If not, then blot me out from the book that You have written". When the people, demoralised by the report of the spies, wanted to return to Egypt and God's anger burned against them, he said, "With Your great love, forgive the sin of this nation, just as You have forgiven them from [the time they left] Egypt until now".

When God threatened punishment during the Korach rebellion, Moses prayed, "Will You be angry with the entire assembly when only one man sins?". Even when his own sister Miriam spoke badly about him and was punished by leprosy, Moses prayed to God on her behalf, "Please God, heal her now." Moses never ceased to pray for his people, however much they had sinned, however audacious the prayer, however much he was putting his own relationship with God at risk. Knowing their faults, he remained utterly loyal to them.

The Hebrew word *emunah* is usually translated as "faith," and that is what it came to mean in the Middle Ages. But in biblical Hebrew it is better translated as faithfulness, reliability, loyalty. It means not walking away from the other party when times are tough. It is a key covenantal virtue.

There are people with great gifts, intellectual and sometimes even spiritual, who nonetheless fail to achieve what they might have done. They lack the basic moral qualities of integrity, honesty, humility and above all loyalty. What they do, they do brilliantly. But often they do the wrong things. Conscious of their unusual endowments, they tend to look down on others. They give way to pride, arrogance and a belief that they can somehow get away with great crimes. Bilaam is the classic example, and the fact that he planned to entice the Israelites into sin even after he knew that God was on their side is a measure of how the greatest can sometimes fall to become the lowest of the low.

Those who are loyal to other people find that other people are loyal to them. Those who are disloyal are eventually distrusted and lose whatever authority they might once have had. Leadership without loyalty is not leadership. Skills alone cannot substitute for the moral qualities that make people follow those who demonstrate them. We follow those we trust, because they have acted so as to earn our trust. That was what made Moses the great leader Bilaam might have been but never was. Always be loyal to the people you lead.

Shabbat Shalom: Rabbi Shlomo Riskin

"My nation, remember what Balak the king of Moab advised and what Bil'am the son of Be'or... answered him in order that you may know the compassionate righteousness of the Lord".

Who, or what, defines Israel, and why does it matter? If deeply concerning trends continue in the United States, research and ample anecdotal evidence indicate that those succeeding in affecting views toward Israel are the very people who attack it as a racist, discriminatory occupier lacking any moral or political legitimacy. Noble attempts to brand Israel as a high-tech haven ("start-up nation") notwithstanding, Israel is increasingly being effectively defined by foes, not friends. What, if anything, can be done to reverse these deeply troubling developments?

In our weekly Biblical portion, Balak, we read that efforts by enemies to define the Jewish People have ancient antecedents. King Balak of Moab, frightened by the "Biblical Israelis," vastly overestimates their global designs as well as their military might: "This multitude will lick up all that is round about us as the ox licks up the grass of the field". He therefore turns to Bil'am, a magician and a soothsayer, an accomplished poet and master of the spoken word, to curse the Israelis in order to vanquish them.

Bil'am represents the giant media corporations and social media platforms that play a dominant role in shaping public opinion. Is it not true that these manipulators of minds have the power to destroy a world with a word? And indeed, Bil'am sets out to curse the Israelites.

Nevertheless, the Torah goes on to say that the prophet ultimately blesses the Israelites. At first he is struck by his donkey's refusal to take him where he wanted to go. Apparently even a donkey can be amazed by the miraculous events that contributed to the preservation and preeminence of Israel from abject slaves to recipients of God's Presence at Sinai, despite their smallness in number and scarcity of power.

And then Bil'am sees for himself—to the extent that at least he attempted to record the truth as he composes his tweets and Facebook posts. He may have come to curse, but he stays to praise. He evokes Jewish destiny in glowing terms, extolling the uniqueness of Israel and evoking our ultimate Messianic victory. He affirms unmistakably that "no black magic can be effective against Jacob and no occult powers against Israel" – evil words spoken by evil people are impotent before the modesty and integrity expressed by the Israelites in their daily lives.

Ultimately, however, it is not the speaking donkey that will succeed in changing the minds of the many Bil'ams around us; rather, it is the deeds of the Jewish People itself that will evoke change: "Your deeds will bring you close, your deeds will distance you".

First of all, Bil'am takes note of the military success of this fledgling nation against every one of her enemies—Israel had just emerged from a great military victory against the terrorizing Amorites. And, more importantly, the chaste and sanctified

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lifestyle of the Israelites and their commitment to their traditions and ideals made an even greater impact on Bil'am.

"How goodly are your tents, O Jacob, your Sanctuaries, O Israel". Bil'am was amazed as to how the Israelite encampment (ohel) was constructed to respect everyone's privacy, so that no one could see into his neighbor's home. He was moved by the sensitivity toward interpersonal relationships, the love and respect displayed toward one another by family members and the harmony with which neighbors lived together.

And when Bil'am saw the commitment the Israelites had to their study halls and synagogues (mishkan)—their fealty to traditional values and teachings and their faith in Divine providence—he understood, and proclaimed the invincibility of this Divinely-elected people.

Alas, what a person might—and words could not—do to the Israelites, the Israelites managed to do to themselves. Bil'am and Balak returned to their homes to leave Israel in peace—but the Israelites themselves self-destructed. They chased after the hedonistic blandishments of the pagan societies of Bil'am and Balak. The very next chapter opened with "And the people began to commit harlotry with the daughters of Moab... and Israel joined himself to the [idolatry of] Ba'al Peor [Bil'am ben Beor]".

We failed in the desert not because of what our enemies did or said, but rather because of our own moral weakness and rejection of the birthright that had initially formed our nation's definition and mission. Indeed, we are "a people who dwells alone, not subject to the machinations of other nations".

In this generation, in which detractors and haters attacking the Jewish People and Israel are on the ascent in capturing public opinion, we must remember to ignore the noise, and to focus on our national mission. To rephrase Ben Gurion, indeed it is not what the nations say that matters, but rather it is what we do or what we do not do, especially in the spheres of ethics and morality, which is of supreme significance.

OU Torah: Parsha from OU

Through the Eyes of a Donkey

Rabbi Eliyahu Safran

Picture the unfolding scene – as the forty-year sojourn in the Wilderness is ending and the Promised Land is within reach, the Israelites have already defeated two kings and now Balak, King of the Moab, is fully awakened to their might. In fear, he sends Bilaam, the sorcerer, to curse the Jews. Stealthily approaching their camp, Bilaam is prepared to do whatever it took to curse and malign the Jewish people...

Chazal teach that deep hatred causes people to lose grasp of their most 'basic norms of conduct.' Here, Bilaam, the nations' prophet, is so filled with hatred that he dispenses his own dignity and saddles his own donkey! Motivated by his evil emotion, he moves rashly, never considering his donkey might be more perceptive than he. Vayakam Bilaam! Bilaam arose!

The Torah devotes more than ten pesukim telling us about this donkey and her role in making clear Bilaam's folly and wickedness. Bilaam had taken on this "assignment" only with God's permission, hoping to ultimately and arrogantly flout His will. Fool! To demonstrate the weakness of Bilaam and his Moabite escort, God dispatched an angel with a drawn sword to block his way.

Of course, driven by his hatred and arrogance, Bilaam could not see what his "lowly" donkey could – an Angel of God blocking his way. What an odd, comical scene! This "prophet", tasked to curse God's chosen, finding himself in a shouting match with his donkey. He curses the animal. He beats her. The

animal moves sideways rather than forward. This happens not once, not twice but shalosh regalim and still Bilaam continues to beat his donkey until God opens her mouth, so she can protest to her master, "What have I done to you that you struck me these three times?"

"I've been your loyal donkey for years. Have I ever endangered you?"

Bilaam explodes in anger. "Because you mocked me! If only there were a sword in my hand I would have killed, you!"

Rashi mocks Bilaam and his pathetic response, picturing him humiliated by his donkey. Here was a man who could presumably wipe out an entire nation with his voice, yet he needs a sword to deal with one poor donkey!

Ultimately, of course, God awakens Bilaam to the Angel, sword drawn, blocking his path. The Angel chastises him for his cruelty and unfairness.

"I have sinned," Bilaam admits. "For I did not know that you were standing opposite me on the road." Yes, despite his boasts of knowing the mind of God, he – unlike his donkey – never saw an Angel of God. But what kind of an answer is this? Why not just concede, "I didn't see you? I thought my donkey got lazy"? Sure, he grew angry but "I have sinned"? What was his sin really – that he hadn't seen the Angel? Surely that wasn't his fault, was it?

Malbim tells us that Bilaam's sin was not that he didn't see but that he should have seen! Had he considered his donkey's stubbornness rather than been driven by hatred, he would have known that an Angel was present. "I'm sorry I didn't get it," isn't enough. Why didn't you get it? The Angel is as astonished as we are. "Don't you recognize an omen when it's right before you?"

Sefarim explain that a sin of omission is still a sin. Some things in life must be known. Not knowing or seeing certain things is the failure. The great ba'al mussar Rav Shlomo Wolbe said it perfectly, "In life we often find ourselves in situations in which we perceive only the donkey and fail to see the angel!"

It is on us to see the Angel!

Pirkei Avot teaches us the difference between the disciples of Avraham and those of Bilaam. Whereas Bilaam's disciples possess an evil eye, an arrogant spirit and a greedy soul – characteristics which blind one to the spiritual; characteristics that prompt one to argue, to be shortsighted, to "beat one's donkey" – Avraham's disciples possess a benevolent eye, a humble spirit and a meek soul. They get it where Bilaam didn't.

Bilaam was sure he "knew it all".

There are so many like Bilaam these days. Know it all's. They have their eyes on "the prize" – the right yeshiva, the right house, the right mate but then... things don't work out. So, they "double down." They beat "the donkey once, twice, three times", each time harder and harder. Yet, the more they strike the donkey, the more their "dream" job, their "perfect" home, their "ideal" wife slips away from them.

Why? Just like Bilaam's donkey "turning aside", life has a way of recognizing that the path is blocked. Just like Bilaam, we grow angry and blame others for our failings, for our inability to realize our goals, we blame circumstance and fate for our shortcomings when it is really our inability to see that has caused our failures.

But why should we not be able to realize our dreams? For the same reason Bilaam did not realize his. As Rashi writes, an angel of mercy was stationed in his path by God to stop him, in effect to save him from himself.

Rav Avraham Pam Zt'l teaches that we often convince ourselves that we must attain a particular goal, so we try harder and harder, redoubling our efforts with ever greater passion, frustration and

Likutei Divrei Torah

anger. And each time, more obstacles seem to sabotage our efforts. We just don't get it. We need to "see" what we have ignored – an Angel of mercy God has stationed in our way to spare us from the impending disasters we cannot fathom along that path.

We need an angel to save us from ourselves; and we need to be aware of the warning signs blinking red at the boundaries of our determined desires. We need to know that if it doesn't happen, it's not meant to be.

Rav Dovid Feinstein Zt'l notes that when the donkey chastised Bilaam she said, "For you have struck me now three times (shalosh regalim)" (22:28). Generally, when the Torah uses the word regalim the term means "legs" or "feet". If so, why use the term here. Why not use the term, peanim (times, occurrences)? Rav Dovid explains that regalim is also related to the word rageel, which means "habitual" or "regular". So here we understand that the donkey was complaining that her master had become so rageel, so habituated, to striking her that he no longer recognized the singularity of her behavior. Bilaam didn't "get it"; he didn't comprehend that the animal's unusual behavior was a message from God. As the Angel tells Bilaam a few verses on, had he not finally listened to the third message, there would have been no fourth one; the Angel would have killed him.

Insanity is said to be doing the same thing over and over but expecting a different result. Bilaam's behavior was textbook insanity! Only by being tuned in to God's message of mercy may we truly effectuate change; only God's mercy frees us from the insanity of our endless desires.

The Seforno notes that it was God who opened the donkey's mouth and gave her the power of speech so that Bilaam might "awake" to teshuva.

"Why did you hit your donkey three times" the Angel asks Bilaam. Seforno comments that, having seen all the "signs", Bilaam should have concluded that going out to curse the Jews was unacceptable. The onus was on Bilaam to have seen what he didn't see. Like Bilaam, we are too often arrogant, greedy, needy and petty. We intentionally blind ourselves to the Angel of mercy who stands in our path.

That is on us.

It is our choice and obligation to open our eyes and to see.

Balak and Korach: Who Not to Be Steven Genack [Excerpt]

Rabbi Tzadok HaKohen of Lublin writes that the names of the parshiot speak to the heart of the parsha's message. The fundamental question then becomes what's the message of naming a portion after Balak? On the one hand he persisted in trying to realize a curse against Israel, yet Ruth is a descendant of his, due to his sacrificing to G-d, though he lacked any intent. How are we to identify Balak?

I believe the answer is that he is another person whose example we should use for how not to act. Balak missed a fundamental point. He hired Bilam because he believed the Jewish military victories came by way of sorcery. This was a fundamental error. A king must be a student of history and internalize examples of the past.

Indeed, the names of parshiot and people's names define their essence. By studying them we can clearly see how not to act. After all, there are only two ways one can learn how to act: either to model or not model one's behavior after someone else. The gift of Balak and Korach is that we are taught not to base our philosophies based on short sightedness and periphery glances, but rather on introspection and that we should not covet honor and glory, but rather seek humility, for it is in the humble that G-d resides.

In this week's *Parashah*, we read how Bil'am tried unsuccessfully to curse *Bnei Yisrael*. R' Nosson Sternhartz z"l (1780-1845; foremost student of R' Nachman of Breslov z"l) writes: The power of *Bechirah* / free will is so great that a person can use it to draw the Divine spirit down from above and bring holiness into the world, or, G-d forbid, the opposite--*i.e.*, a person can draw some aspect of the Divine spirit upon himself in such a way that he mistakenly believes that he has *Ruach Ha'kodesh* / Divine inspiration and that he sees accurate visions. For example, who was more abominable than the evil Bil'am, may his name be blotted out! Nevertheless, our Sages say that his prophecy appeared, in some respects, to be equal to Moshe Rabbeinu's prophecy.

Therefore, continues R' Nosson, a person must be very cautious. As long as one knows that he is not yet as holy as he could be, he should humble himself and not reach above his station, for many people have reached too high and have stumbled greatly, R' Nosson writes. Rather, one should ask *Hashem* to help him ascend from his current level and assist him in sanctifying himself appropriately. One should use his *Bechirah* to choose to speak to *Hashem* often and at length, with the intention that, in this way, he will merit to subdue any wickedness within oneself completely.

The key, writes R' Nosson, is to use one's ability to speak to *Hashem*, for speech has immense power. Even one who has fallen very low can lift himself up by speaking to *Hashem*. (*Chumash Im Likkutei Halachot* 22:6)

Tefilah

This year, we will iy"H devote this space to discussing various aspects of our prayers. This week, we continue discussing the thirteen types of prayer identified by the *Midrash Rabbah* and *Midrash Yalkut Shimoni*.

R' Shimshon Dovid Pincus z"l (rabbi of Ofakim, Israel; died 2001) writes: "*Tze'akah*" is a (usually) wordless cry emitted by one who feels as if there is such a storm in his heart, due to the enormity of his need, that he cannot articulate his prayer in words. The *Zohar* (*Shmot* 20a) teaches that this form of prayer is the most beloved to *Hashem*, and that one who uses it is never turned away completely empty-handed.

R' Pincus continues: When a person analyzes his situation and realizes that he is desperate, and he articulates his request to *Hashem*, that is "*Shav'ah*" [discussed last week]. This may be compared to someone who is accosted by highwaymen and shouts, "Help!" When a person cannot even form the word "Help," so he screams wordlessly, that is *Tze'akah*. If a person merits, he will understand that life is made up of a series of situations in which we are desperate for *Hashem's* intervention, and he will, from time-to-time, employ this form of prayer.

R' Pincus concludes: *Tze'akah* does not need to be audible; it may remain in the recesses of a person's heart. It does not need to be completely without words; it merely is characterized by the inability to form coherent thoughts. Sometimes, *Tze'akah* results from great pain; other times, it results from a feeling that one has distanced himself from *Hashem* and is unworthy to approach closer. Often, these feelings cause a person to stop praying altogether, but what he really needs instead is *Tze'akah*. (*She'arim B'tefilah* p.41)

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Harav Yechiel Shraga Feivish Halevi Tarshish a"h (16 Tammuz)



The editors of *Hamaayan* extend condolences to our dedicated reader and supporter, Mrs. Dimont, on the passing of her son Chayim a"h.

“Who has counted the dust of Yaakov?” (23:10)

R' Yosef Shaul Nathanson z"l (1808-1875; rabbi of L'vov, Galicia and leading *Halachic* authority) writes: *Bnei Yisrael* are compared many times to the dust or sand of the earth. Just as mankind tramples the earth, but ultimately will be covered by it, so the Jewish People are trampled upon now, but ultimately will rise above all other peoples. (*Divrei Shaul*)

“How good are your tents, Yaakov, your dwelling places, Yisrael!” (24:5)

R' Yisrael Yaakov Algazi z"l (1680-1757; Izmir, Turkey, and Yerushalayim) writes that these words of Bil'am are what *Midrash Bereishit Rabbah* refers to when it relates that the gentile nations gathered before Bil'am and asked how they could wage war successfully against *Bnei Yisrael*. Bil'am answered: “Circulate amongst their *Shuls* and *Batei Midrash*/ study halls. If you hear their voices emanating from within, you cannot wage war against them, for their Patriarch Yitzchak promised them (*Bereishit* 27:22), ‘The voice is the voice of Yaakov’--If the voice is the voice of Yaakov, then the hands of Esav will not prevail. But, if Yaakov does not use his voice, then the hands of Esav will prevail!” [Until here from the *Midrash*]

Why? R' Algazi explains: The *Gemara* (*Bava Kamma* 97a) discusses whether a person--call him Reuven--would be liable for damages if he does work using the servant of another person--call him Shimon. If the servant was performing Shimon's work at the time, and Reuven took him away from that to do Reuven's work, then Reuven would be liable for damages. However, if the servant was idle, then Reuven would not be liable for damages. To the contrary, he would have been doing Shimon a favor, because idleness is not good.

Similarly, writes R' Algazi, we are meant to serve *Hashem*. If we are doing so, then *Hashem* will not let anyone else enslave us. However, if we “slack off,” then *Hashem* will allow other nations to remind us that we are supposed to be servants. (*She'erit Yaakov*)

“The words of one who hears the sayings of Kel, and knows the knowledge of the Supreme One . . .” (24:16)

Midrash Rabbah asks rhetorically: “Bil'am did not know what his own donkey was thinking, but he knew what G-d was thinking?!”

R' Yerachmiel Shulman z"l Hy"d (*Menahel Ruchani* of the Bet Yosef-Novardok Yeshiva in Pinsk, Poland; killed in the Holocaust) comments: Before one can attain lofty spiritual levels, one must first know his animalistic self. (*Peninei Ha'chochmah* 1:24)

“Balak son of Tzippor saw all that Yisrael had done to the Emorite.” (22:2)

R' Yosef David Sinzheim z"l (1736-1812; Chief Rabbi of France; author of the Talmud commentary *Yad David*) explains: Balak knew that *Hashem* had promised the territory of the seven Canaanite nations to *Bnei Yisrael*. But, Balak thought that the fulfillment of that promise was contingent on *Bnei Yisrael*'s remaining in Egypt for 400 years. Thus, Balak believed, since *Bnei Yisrael* had left Egypt prematurely, he did not need to fear them.

However, continues R' Sinzheim, when Balak saw that *Bnei Yisrael* defeated the Emorite kings, Sichon and Og, he realized that he had been mistaken; *Bnei Yisrael* were a threat. Therefore, he sent a message to Bil'am (verse 5): “Behold! a people has come out of Egypt”--they came out on their own, before the time appointed by G-d, so I thought they were not a threat. But, “Behold! it has covered the surface of the earth”--a reference to *Bnei Yisrael*'s defeat of Sichon and Og, “and it sits opposite me”--therefore, I, too, am afraid.

In this vein, concludes R' Sinzheim, we can understand what *Hashem* told Bil'am (verse 12): “You shall not curse the people, for it is blessed!” To what blessing was He referring? To the blessing that Yitzchak gave Yaakov (*Bereishit* 28:4): “May He grant you the blessing of Avraham, to you and to your offspring with you, that you may possess the land in which you lived, which *Elokim* gave to Avraham.” *Hashem* meant: Even if Balak's calculation had been correct, *Bnei Yisrael* still would inherit the Land because of Yitzchak's blessing. (*Shlal David*)

“Behold! A people has come out of Egypt.” (22:5)

R' Yitzchak Ze'ev Yadler z"l (1843-1917; Yerushalayim) writes: The miracles that *Hashem* performed at the time of the Exodus were well known to all the nations of the world, as we read (*Shmot* 15:14-15), “Nations heard--they were agitated; terror gripped the dwellers of Philistia. Then the chieftains of Edom were confounded, trembling gripped the powers of Moav, all the dwellers of Canaan dissolved.” Nevertheless, Balak attributed the Exodus itself to *Bnei Yisrael*--“A people has come out of Egypt”--because of the popular belief that there are two gods: one who does good and one who does bad. According to that belief, *Hashem* Who performed the Plagues could not also have redeemed *Bnei Yisrael*. Rather, Balak thought, *Hashem* only weakened the Egyptians to the point that *Bnei Yisrael* could leave on their own.

Later, Bil'am acknowledged the fallacy of this belief, and said (23:22), “It is *Kel* Who brought them out of Egypt according to the power of His loftiness.” (*Tiferet Tziyon*)

ISRAEL REPORT

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BILL THREATENING COALITION HITS NEW SNAG (JPost 6/22/21)

Coalition chairwoman Idit Silman postponed a vote set for Wednesday on a controversial ordinance preventing family reunification of Palestinians and Israeli Arabs to next week, due to new complaints from the Ra'am (United Arab List) Party.

Compromises were reached in a lengthy meeting late Monday night attended by Silman, Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, Interior Minister Ayelet Shaked and Ra'am head Mansour Abbas. At the conclusion of the meeting, there was hope that the ordinance could be passed on Wednesday.

The participants agreed on a series of measures that could enable Ra'am to vote in favor, such as enabling Palestinians who marry Israelis to obtain health treatment in Israel and drivers' licenses, and exemptions for couples married before they were prohibited from living in Israel in 1993. Shaked agreed to help humanitarian cases.

But on Tuesday, Ra'am MKs came under pressure from such families and they backtracked.

Ra'am MK Walid Taha called the ordinance racist and anti-democratic and said he would not vote for it even if it brought down the coalition. Two more Ra'am MKs joined him, leaving Abbas alone.

Abbas downplayed the dispute to his coalition partners, saying that his MKs were still adjusting to being in a coalition for the first time.

FACING DEMOLITION, NEW SAMARIA TOWN LOOKS TO SUPREME COURT (Arutz-7 6/21/21)

The IDF is reportedly determined to go through with the evacuation of the settlement of Evyatar, after rejecting a construction plan filed by its residents. In its response to the request, the IDF Central Command stated that Evyatar's residents "violated the law in a blatant and grave manner, and this is conduct that can in no way be condoned."

The IDF's response also noted that what they call "Givat Evyatar" was established illegally and that everything done there was done expressly against the law without any procedures put in place to establish ownership or regulate construction. The Central Command also claimed that, "The establishment of this illegal settlement contributed to the undermining of a stable security situation in the region."

With regard to the master plan submitted by the Samaria Regional Council last Thursday, the ombudsman for Judea and Samaria determined that the plan was not properly developed and that the settlers have no rights to the land concerned. His conclusion was, therefore, that the filing of a construction plan for land to which the petitioners have no right does not constitute an impediment to the initiation of procedures to enforce the law against the settlement.

The IDF also noted that its forces have already been diverted from other significant activities in order to secure the settlement, which impedes its ability to defend the security of the entire region.

What this means in practice is that the only route left open to the 50 families living in Evyatar is to appeal to the Supreme Court, and it is likely that they will do so.

Zvi Sukkot, one of the leaders of the settlement, attacked the Central Command's ruling, saying, "Any regional instability created by the existence of Evyatar is no different from that created by any other Jewish presence in the Land of Israel, for the past 100 years. They didn't accept our presence then and to this day they do not accept our presence anywhere. To drive Jews out of their homes because of Arab riots can only be called surrender to terrorism. They should be ashamed of themselves."

Last week, the Samaria Regional Council, in an attempt to avert the evacuation of Evyatar, submitted a master construction plan for the town asking that it be authorized and the town thereby granted legal status.

The residents' hope that submitting a request to authorize construction would lead to plans to evacuate the town being halted was not without basis, as the Civil Administration's regulations include a clause that states: "As long as applications for construction permits are being considered ... procedures toward enforcement [including evacuation] are frozen."

At the end of the day, approval for Evyatar's construction plans would involve the making of a specific policy decision by central government. The head of the Samaria Regional Council, Yossi Dagan, noted that, "The Council only submitted a request to authorize construction for the town of Evyatar after establishing beyond doubt that it is not situated on privately held land. Rather, it is situated on state-held land, and only the lack of a clear decision on the part of politicians is preventing its authorization. After going through such a difficult period, the State of Israel should be mobilizing all its forces to take this step, which would be both moral and ethical – it should be strengthening the 50 families who live here and giving Evyatar equal legal status to any other town in the country."

The town of Evyatar was first founded eight years ago, named for Evyatar Borovsky, who was murdered by Arab terrorists at the nearby Tapuah Junction. Construction was recently renewed at the site following the murder of Yehuda Guetta in a shooting attack, also at the Tapuah Junction. Around 50 families already live there, and another approximately 70 families are on its waiting list.

CABINET APPROVES STATE PROBE INTO MOUNT MERON DISASTER THAT CLAIMED 45 LIVES (YNet 6/20/21)

The new cabinet convened Sunday for its first working meeting since it was sworn in last week, immediately approving an official inquiry into the stampede during an ultra-Orthodox Lag B'Omer celebration on Mount Meron

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Cong. Etz Ahaim, Highland Park, NJ	The Learning Shul, Columbia, SC
Cong. Ohav Emeth, Highland Park, NJ	Torah Academy of Bergen County, NJ
Cong. Ohr Torah, Edison, NJ	Woodsburgh, NY Minyan
Cong. Rinat Yisrael, Teaneck, NJ	Young Israel Bet Tefilah of Aberdeen, NJ
Cong. Shomrei Torah, Fair Lawn, NJ	Young Israel of Brookline, MA
Cong. Sons of Israel, Allentown, PA	Young Israel of East Brunswick, NJ
Cong. Zichron Mordechai, Teaneck, NJ	Young Israel of Fort Lee, NJ
Cong. Zichron R. M. Feinstein, Brooklyn, NY	Young Israel of Hancock Park, CA
Delray Orthodox Synagogue, Delray Beach, FL	Young Israel of Holliswood, NY
East Denver Orthodox Synagogue, CO	Young Israel of Houston, TX
East Hill Synagogue, Englewood, NJ	Young Israel of New Hyde Park, NY
Flatbush Park Jewish Center, Mill Basin, NY	Young Israel of North Woodmere, NY
Harvard University Library	Young Israel of New Rochelle, NY
Hebrew Academy of Long Beach, NY	Young Israel of Sharon, MA
Hillel at Baruch College	YI Shomrai Emunah, Silver Spring, MD

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that killed 45 people in April.

The four-person panel to investigate the disaster will be headed a judge and have a one-off budget of NIS 6 million for administrative costs.

"The committee will investigate the chain of events and issue findings and conclusions regarding all aspects of the event," said the government decision on the probe, which was proposed by Defense Minister Benny Gantz and Finance Minister Avigdor Liberman.

The decision states that the commission would focus on the decision-making process that led to the approval of the event; the conditions under which the event was to be held; professional and legal questions regarding safety at mass events, including those of a religious nature; the locations used for public events, in particular those with large numbers of participants.

Two weeks after the tragedy, two people died and more than one hundred others were hurt when a stand collapsed during a mass prayer service at a makeshift synagogue in the settlement of Givat Zeev, near Jerusalem.

"Forty-five people lost their lives in this terrible disaster, and it is incumbent upon us to prevent the next disaster," Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said at the start of the cabinet meeting Sunday.

"The commission will not be able to bring back those who are no longer with us but the government must do everything it can to prevent unnecessary loss of life in the future," he said.

"All sectors of society visit Meron and it is our responsibility is to guarantee their safety," Bennett said.

Gantz called the inquiry a "our moral obligation to the Israeli public and to the families who lost loved ones."

Tens of thousands of ultra-Orthodox Jews thronged to the tomb of 2nd-century sage Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai in the Galilee on April 30 for the annual Lag B'Omer celebration that includes all-night prayer, mystical songs and dance.

During the ceremony part of the crowd surged into a narrow tunnel and the 45 celebrants, including children, were asphyxiated or trampled, shocking the nation and families of victims who had come from overseas. More than 150 people were injured in the crush.

Gantz, who also held the position of justice minister in the last government, had pushed for a commission of inquiry into the tragedy at Mount Meron.

Benjamin Netanyahu, who was prime minister at the time, had promised a thorough investigation, but his cabinet, which included ultra-Orthodox ministers, never took formal action.

Some Israelis have questioned whether the former government and the police were reluctant to limit the crowd size at the site because of pressure from influential ultra-Orthodox religious leaders and politicians.

Powerful ultra-Orthodox lawmakers and lobbyists have been accused of intervening to ensure that there were no limits on crowd size at the event, despite health and safety rules and coronavirus regulations.

The government was warned more than a decade ago that overcrowding and poor planning at Lag B'Omer events on Mount Meron could end in disaster, in a scathing report by then-state comptroller Micha Lindenstrauss.

Gantz said last week the move to open an inquiry had the support of Bennett and other senior cabinet members. The prime minister is himself religiously observant but his broad coalition does not include any ultra-Orthodox parties. Police have already launched a probe and the State Comptroller's Office has announced its own investigation, though it cannot bring criminal charges.

"It is a moral debt to the families, and no less, an important step meant to prevent such tragic events in the future," said Gantz last week.

The panel, he said, would have "extensive powers giving it the possibility to get a broad and reliable picture of the facts and events that led to the tragedy, in all aspects, to identify failures and recommend lessons for the future."

ISRAEL SEES HIGHEST COVID DAILY INFECTIONS IN TWO MONTHS AS DELTA VARIANT SPREADS (Ha'aretz 6/22/21)

The highest daily coronavirus infection rate in two months was registered in Israel on Monday, with 125 people testing positive after local outbreaks of the

delta variant had been reported across the country.

The director-general of the Health Ministry, Chezy Levy, told Israeli television that about 70 per cent of the new infections were with the Delta variant. He also noted that half of those infected were children, and that a third of those infected had been vaccinated.

The delta variant was first discovered in India and is considered highly contagious.

As recently as mid-June, new daily infections in Israel were only registering in the single digits. A requirement to wear masks was lifted nationwide last week.

There are 434 active coronavirus cases in Israel; 258 patients are in serious condition, according to Health Ministry data released Monday. The number of fatalities in Israel is 6,428. More than 5.5 million Israelis have received their first coronavirus vaccination, and 5.1 million have received their second dose.

Israel is facing several local COVID outbreaks, as the army reported that two inoculated soldiers tested positive for coronavirus on Tuesday, with further cases across the country also confirmed on Monday.

In two schools, nine staff members contracted COVID-19 even though they are vaccinated against the coronavirus.

Due to the uptick in coronavirus cases, the town of Binyamina-Givat Ada in central Israel has been declared a "yellow" zone, with a moderate coronavirus infection rate, on the so-called traffic light system developed by the Health Ministry.

This is the first local authority to be defined as such since May, when all cities and zones in Israel were declared green.

On Monday afternoon, after a situation assessment on the new outbreak, Defense Minister Benny Gantz ordered the Israel Defense Forces, Home Front Command and defense establishment to prepare to renew its coronavirus testing efforts, and not to close the contact tracing department as originally planned.

Israel's coronavirus czar Nachman Ash ordered the IDF Home Front Command on Monday to prepare to reopen testing centers across the country.

Also on Monday, Health Minister Nitzan Horowitz announced that Israel will issue large fines for Israelis who travel to barred countries. The new regulations are due to go into effect in the coming days.

While "the situation in Israel is different from the rest of the world," Horowitz said, "[We] have to do whatever is necessary to contain the spread of strains."

168 COVID-19 CARRIERS ENTERED ISRAEL IN LAST MONTH ALONE (Arutz-7 6/21/21)

Following the news of at least two new outbreaks of coronavirus in Israel in the last few weeks, it is now being reported that around 170 people confirmed to have coronavirus entered the country in the last month alone.

According to Kan Reshet Bet, around 100 of the 170 confirmed cases were people who had been vaccinated against Covid-19. 66 had not been vaccinated, and the remainder had immunity passes. The vast majority of the new arrivals entered Israel via Ben Gurion airport.

During the period in question around 239,000 people entered the country. Around 60% of them had been vaccinated, and around 25% had not. Most of the confirmed coronavirus cases came from Russia – 31 people – followed by the United Arab Emirates with 24 confirmed cases. 12 cases arrived from the United States, and 10 from France.

Speaking on Kan Reshet Bet this morning, the director-general of the Health Ministry, Prof. Hezi Levy, said: "We are using all the methods at our disposal to enforce regulations, including electronic means of enforcement, which may yet be used on a broad scale."

Asked to comment on reports that the two recent outbreaks in Israel concerned the so-called Indian variant of the coronavirus, Levy said, "The Indian mutation is more contagious [than others seen in Israel so far]. We are also seeing it come up more in children. I am happy to say, however, that

after a person receives both vaccine doses, the virus no longer has any resistance against the vaccine.”

The Health Ministry is now advising for all minors between the ages of 12 and 15 to be vaccinated against coronavirus, due to fears that the Indian variant may be spreading. This advice is being issued despite the fact that data from the United States related to a possible link between myocarditis and the coronavirus vaccine in children has yet to be received. Two and a half million children (under the age of 18) have already received a coronavirus vaccine in the United States.

“In all likelihood, we will be calling for all children to be vaccinated, given the levels of contagion we are now seeing,” Levy said, “as we know that the vaccine works. In addition, we are reconsidering the matter of face masks in enclosed spaces, especially in places where many children are gathered, and particularly in areas where cases have already been detected among children.”

Pressed on whether the government should have been doing more to prevent the entry of coronavirus carriers into the country, Levy responded: “We have been saying the whole time that coronavirus is still around. One of the ways it enters the country is via people returning from abroad. This is a worrying situation but we are dealing with it. We are also looking at ways to regulate entry into the country, especially from countries with a high contagion rate, and people returning to Israel from such countries must quarantine themselves at home, regardless of whether or not they have been vaccinated.”

EFFORT UNDERWAY TO OUTLAW LEHAVA AS JEWISH TERROR GROUP (JPost 6/22/21)

Chairman of the Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee MK Ram Ben Barak of Yesh Atid as well as Public Security Minister Omer Bar Lev of Labor are seeking to outlaw the Jewish supremacist organization Lehava as a terror group.

On Monday, Ben Barak sent a letter to Defense Minister Benny Gantz and Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit calling on them to utilize the terms of 2016 legislation to ban the extremist organization.

Bar Lev met with Mandelblit on Monday to detail the request and advance the process of outlawing the group.

In addition, Ben Barak is seeking to dismantle the nonprofit organization Foundation for the Rescue of the Jewish People, which is Lehava's fundraising arm.

In his letter to Gantz, Ben Barak detailed various recent incidents in which Lehava activists have allegedly been involved in planning and carrying out violent attacks against Israeli Arabs, particularly during the recent inter-communal violence during the war with Hamas in Gaza in May.

Ben Barak noted that on May 14, during the conflict with Hamas, Police Commissioner Kobi Shabtai gave a briefing in which he accused far-right MK Itamar Ben-Gvir and Lehava of playing a central role in the outbreak of violence between Jews and Arabs.

“It began with the demonstration of Lehava at Damascus Gate [of the Old City of Jerusalem], continued with the provocation in the [east Jerusalem neighborhood of] Sheikh Jarrah, and now he [Ben-Gvir] goes around with Lehava activists in cities,” said Shabtai at the time, and was quoted by Ben Barak in his letter to Gantz.

The MK also noted that a number of Arab mayors claimed in a letter to the chairman of the Center for Local Authorities that Lehava activists had been present in the mixed Jewish-Arab city of Lod during the riots there in May.

And he pointed to media reports that Lehava activists planned to attack Arabs in the Afula area with petrol bombs.

“These incidents which took place last month represent proof that the Lehava organization is currently a dangerous organization,” wrote Ben Barak.

“I, therefore, call on you to use your authority as defense minister to advance a speedy and determined process which will result in the declaration of Lehava as a terror group and the outlawing of the organization.”

Lehava head Ben-Zion “Bentzi” Gopstein said in response that “The world is upside down when those who sit in a government with the Islamic Movement [the Ra'am party] are trying to outlaw Lehava.”

ISRAEL SUCCESSFULLY TESTS AIRBORNE LASER INTERCEPTION OF DRONES (Ha'aretz 6/21/21)

The defense establishment recently completed the first test of an airborne laser system, which successfully destroyed several drones, in what Defense Minister Benny Gantz hailed a major “technological breakthrough.”

As part of the tests, the laser intercepted several unmanned aerial vehicles flying at various altitudes and at varying ranges. The system was developed by Elbit Systems, and the tests were done in coordination with the air force and the Defense Ministry's Weapons Development and Technology Infrastructure Administration (MAFAT in Hebrew).

The idea of using lasers as a way of intercepting rockets was first investigated in the 1990s, but Israel stopped pursuing the idea by 2000. Following the second Lebanon War, efforts to develop a system for intercepting short- and mid-range rockets and missiles were resumed in 2006, leading to the development of the Iron Dome system a few years later. Two years ago, a breakthrough enabled Israel to resume developing a laser-based system which would be much cheaper than Iron Dome. This time, however, Israel used electrical lasers, instead of the chemical ones used in previous tests.

The project involves an airborne laser, developed by Elbit, as well as a ground-based laser developed by Rafael Advanced Weapons Systems. The laser system, if and when it becomes operational, will complement the systems used for missile interception, including Iron Dome, David's Sling (formerly known as Magic Wand) for mid-range targets and Arrow 3 for long ranged ones.

Defense Minister Benny Gantz congratulated Elbit and the defense establishment for the technological breakthrough. “You are bringing us closer to another important goal of our multi-level defense capabilities, which is to achieve protection at lower costs. The laser system will add defensive capabilities at larger ranges and against diverse targets, while greatly saving on the cost of interception and protection of this country. I'm sure our defense industries will succeed in this important venture and I'll personally be involved with the entire system in order to promote it.”

The Defense Ministry said that “a plane carrying a laser system had destroyed drones in different scenarios, and at different ranges and altitudes. The ability to destroy aerial threats from the air, including drones, is an innovative capability with the potential to create a strategic change in Israel's aerial defensive abilities.”

“Israel is one of the first countries in the world that has managed to incorporate laser technology into an airborne system and demonstrate interception in an operational scenario. Interception using a high-power airborne laser system has many advantages, including a cost of several dollars per interception, the ability to intercept threats emanating from very long ranges, while operating at great altitudes with no weather-related restrictions, thereby providing a protective envelope over wide areas,” the ministry added.

The head of R&D at MAFAT, Brig. Gen. Yaniv Rotem, told journalists on Monday that they had managed to intercept several drones at a range of over one kilometer. “This is a groundbreaking technological achievement, a critical step for further development. To my knowledge, we're among the only ones to do so. We're only at the first stage. We've reached a significant and critical milestone, and happily, we succeeded.”

Rotem added that the completion of the prototype will take between three to four years, and that he hoped by then that the first system could be deployed for the defense of communities close to the Gaza border. He added that the system is completely automated: “It's a very advanced optical system, with monitoring and artificial intelligence capabilities. As soon as a target moves into an area of interest, the system locks onto it. This system will be mounted

on transport planes. Later, as we minimize its dimensions, it could be mounted on other platforms as well."

Rotem added that the system was not being designed to counter incendiary balloons launched by Palestinian militants from the Gaza Strip. "We plan to have the system intercept various types of drones, mortar shells and rockets." He noted that the goal is for the system to have the ability to intercept targets at ranges of hundreds of kilometers within a decade, and with ranges of tens of kilometers even sooner.

The defense establishment estimates that hundreds of millions of additional shekels will be required for completion of the two laser systems: one airborne and one ground-based.

ISRAELI-SWEDISH WAVE POWER GENERATOR SELECTED FOR ACCELERATORS IN SPAIN, UK (Israel Hayom 6/18/21)

Israeli-Swedish wave energy production company Eco Wave Power has been selected for accelerator programs in Spain (Rising UP in Spain) and the UK (Cleantech Bootcamp 2021), the company announced Thursday.

The Spanish program will run over six to eight months, whereas the UK program will run for a duration of 4 weeks with program partners including the British Embassy in Israel, and corporates such as Shell, Octopus Energy, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, National Grid, and the Clean Growth Fund among others. Both programs aim to facilitate business opportunities through custom-made investor networks, entry to major national and international events, business development and legal support, as well as local marketing and communication.

Spain and the UK are two of the largest potential markets for companies within the renewable energy sector. Eco Wave Power's wave energy technology has already received positive attention in Spain and the UK for its pioneering technology based on a number of Letters of Intent signed with the largest ports in these countries. Since 2020, Eco Wave Power has signed letters of support with the Port of Bilbao, Port of Valencia, Port of Barcelona, and Port of Las Palmas.

Spain has 8,000 km (4,970 miles) of coastline and set an ambitious target of 74% renewables by 2030, while the UK has over 12,500 km (7,767 miles) of coastline and a target of reaching net-zero by 2050.

Eco Wave Power CEO Inna Braverman said, "Spain and The UK are strategic markets for the expansion of Eco Wave Power's operations, and having our company participate in Rising UP in Spain and in the Global Tech Connect UK Cleantech Bootcamp 2021 will enable us to further develop the projects we have in our pipeline in these markets, as well as, to secure additional projects."

HOW DO THE TERRORISTS IN GAZA GET THE HELIUM GAS FOR THEIR INCENDIARY BALLOONS? (Dr. Colin L. Leci, Arutz-7 6/16/21)

The resurgence of the use of incendiary balloons from Gaza has highlighted the failure of the security apparatus in stopping helium from getting into Gaza. Insufficient public pressure has been applied to this governmental failure and the powers in authority have only been attempting to stop these balloons, when they should be proactive and stop the supply of helium.

Too many political and military commentators are totally out of their depth and do not know how helium is obtained.

Latest available production statistics show that in 2017 helium production was led by the USA (55%), Qatar (32%), Algeria (6%), Russia (2%), Poland (1%) and Australia (3%). But in 2017 Qatar had closed two of its helium production plants producing about 20% of the world's total) operated by RasGas (70% owned by Qatar Petroleum and the rest by Exxon Mobile) because of an economic boycott, due to its supporting terrorism, by Arab States, and Saudi Arabia closed its border preventing exports. It is not known if these plants have restarted.

Helium has a variety of commercial uses. According to 2014 statistics, by far the largest is in cryogenic applications (32%), where it cools the superconducting magnets in MRI scanners and NMR spectroscopy. The next largest application is for inert pressurizing and purging in the production of

semiconductors from silicon and germanium for use in computer chips (18%) followed by use as a shielding gas in arc welding (13%). Minor uses are in leak detection (4%), and deep sea diving breathing gas (2%) and other uses such as inflating car air bags on impact and rocketry in cooling liquid oxygen fuel.

MRI scanners have a liquid helium capacity in the order of 1700 liters that is equivalent to 1590 kg, whilst a 45 cm diameter balloon hold 2.83g of gaseous helium. The loss of liquid helium in an MRI scanner is dependent upon the type and manufacturer. A Phillips MRI has a loss of 1% per month, Toshiba about 4.3% per month, and a Siemens of 3 to 6% per month. The monthly liquid top up ranges between 15.9 to 95.4 kg.

In Gaza there are between 5 to 6 MRI units according to a paper published in Journal of Radiation Research and Applied Science (2018), there are 2 at the Al-Shifa Hospital and 3 at the European Gaza Hospital, with another one added there in April 2018. Thus the total monthly supply of liquid helium to Gaza should not exceed (if the MRI units are in operation) between 95 to 572 kg, equivalent to filling between over 33,000 to 200,000 balloons per month!

Compressed helium gas for inflating balloons is available off the shelf in the USA. A container capable of providing 1558 liters to fill 100 balloons 28 cm inches in diameter cost \$399, whilst one for 580 balloons providing 8240 liters cost \$799. Similarly Amazon UK sells a gas bottle to fill 30, 23 cm balloons for 25 GBP and USA web sites one can purchase a container providing 250 liters for \$25.

Arab web sites sell containers providing 7.1 liter for 320 AED in both Abu Dubai and UAE.

Helium imported from the USA as a liquid is available in Israel from Israel Oxygen and Argon Works Ltd, a company acquired by Air Products & Chemicals Inc. in February 2020 (see Globes 12/2/20). However, a search on the internet has revealed that helium is readily available from Dubai and UAE, who could make it available to Jordan.

One of the Israeli TV channels showed a clip from Gaza recently of balloons being filled from what appeared to be a container providing about 250 liter helium in a disposable gas canister.

The question that needs urgently to be answered is how the helium gas containers/cylinders reach Gaza. Effectively the Gaza/Egypt border is sealed, the Gaza coast is effectively patrolled by the Israeli Navy and Air Force, and the Gaza/Israel boundary is hermetically sealed by a well patrolled fence.

Thus the only point of entry of the helium containers is through the respective crossing points at Keren Shalom and Erez that are supervised/controlled by Israel. The source could be Israeli companies, containers arriving in Ashdod and transferred to Gaza or shipments from Jordan via the Allenby Bridge crossing point.

Irrespective of the details supplied on the container manifest it is absolutely necessary to destuff all shipments into Gaza through the crossing points, search and inspect every shipment thoroughly at the Israeli manned crossing points.

We should not be concerned if the people of Gaza suffer inconvenience by this action – after all it is our homes, businesses and fields that are being destroyed. If one can buy off the shelf balloon kits comprising of disposable helium cylinders and the like together with balloons it is a possibility that the kits could also be sent through the post to a foreign country or sent direct to Gaza without being subject to inspection.

The fields of the communities adjacent to Gaza have been burning for far too long for this farcical situation to continue. It is incompetence that is responsible for the failure to stop helium entering Gaza and the people of Israel have been misled by the media and the respective spokespersons. The Israel Central Bureau of Statistics maintains records of all imported and exported products except that shipped in to and out of Gaza via the Israeli crossing points and COGAT either does not have or is unwilling to provide information – is this some kind of cover up? Are we back to the situation in the 1940's where Jews were restricted to respond to the efforts made to annihilate them?



The Greater Washington Community Kollel

SHABBOS DELIGHTS

TORAH MINUTE

IN MEMORY OF RABBI KALMAN WINTER ZT" L

Divergent Paths

Presented by Rabbi Moshe Sadwin, Kollel Adjunct

"He saw the Kenite and declaimed his parable and said, 'Strong is your dwelling, and set in a rock is your nest'" (24:21)

After failing in his attempt to curse the Jewish nation, the wicked Bilaam has a last prophecy where he foresees what will happen to the Jewish people and their surrounding nations. In his prophecy, he speaks about the Kenites, the family of Yisro, Moshe's father-in-law.

Bilaam, in fact, was very acquainted with Yisro. The Midrash tells us that Bilaam and Yisro were among the principal advisors to Pharaoh. Bilaam was actually the one who directed Pharaoh to enslave the Jewish people. Yisro, on the other hand, vociferously protested against the directive. Ultimately, Yisro fled Egypt, fearing Pharaoh's wrath for opposing the plan.

Bilaam sees how Yisro, his former colleague, has achieved prominence in the Jewish people. He prophesizes how Yisro's descendants will occupy seats in the great Sanhedrin (Jewish High Court) in the Beis Hamikdash. Yisro merited this distinction as a reward for his willingness to protest the plan to enslave the Jewish people. He was willing to give up his prestige in Egypt to make the correct and moral choice. He therefore earned true respect and great standing before Hashem.

Bilaam, on the other hand, was someone who looked for the easy way out. As he himself utters (Bamidbar 23:10), "May my soul die the death of the righteous." After living a life of immersion in depravity and hedonism, Bilaam wanted to *die* righteous, but was unable to live that way.

Our responsibility is to follow the path of Yisro and to strive to do what's ethical and proper in Hashem's eyes, and not to be led astray by the likes of Bilaam who find the seemingly easier way but who end up with nothing but jealousy.

Wishing you a Good Shabbos!

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TABLE TALK

Point to Ponder

Bilaam answered... *"If Balak would give me his house full of gold and silver, I cannot transgress the word of Hashem..." (22, 18)*

This shows us that he was greedy and coveted other people's money. He said, "He ought to give me all his silver and gold..." (Rashi)

Rav Yosi Ben Kisma said, "... He said to me, "Rebbi, please come live in our city... and I answered him, if you would give me all the money in the world, I would not move to a city that is lacking in Torah study. (Avos 6, 9)

Why does Bilaam's mention of money define him as one who desires money, while the statement of Rav Yossi Ben Kisma is an indication of his greatness?

Parsha Riddle

Hashem opened the mouth of the donkey and it said to Bilaam, "What have I done to you that you struck me these three times?" (22, 28)

When did Hashem open the mouth of a different animal?

Please see next week's issue for the answer.

Last week's riddle:

What was the most popular name at Aharon HaKohen's funeral?

Answer: Aharon

HATORAH V'HAMITZVAH

HALACHA INSIGHTS FROM THE PARSHA

The end of parashas Balak contains the account of Pinchas's vigilante execution of Zimri for consorting with a Midianite woman. Although such extrajudicial killings to punish and avenge religious sins are not tolerated in modern Western democracies, the general idea of private vigilante action to enforce religious norms is well established in traditional Jewish law.

The Talmud (Bava Kama 28a) states that if subsequent to his emancipation, a Jewish slave continues to consort with the Canaanite maidservant (permitted to him for the duration of his servitude) previously provided to him by his master, his (erstwhile) master is permitted to use violence, if necessary, to prevent him from doing so (since an emancipated slave is prohibited under Torah law from consorting with a maidservant). Halachic authorities extrapolate from this the general rule that anyone who has "authority" over someone else may use force to prevent him from sinning, and need not refer the matter to the (rabbinic) court (Terumas ha-Deshen #218, Rema CM 421:13). Some later authorities understand that this authorization for the private use of force is indeed limited to one who has some sort of "authority" over the sinner, while others apparently do not consider this condition strictly necessary (see Erech Shai ibid.).

Later halachic authorities also disagree over whether the authorization to use force is limited to the case of an active violation of a negative commandment, such as the example above, or the wearing of shaatnez (Meshoveiv Nesivos siman 3 s.k. 3), or whether it extends even to the case of a passive flouting of a positive commandment, such as the failure to build a sukkah (Nesivos ha-Mishpat ibid. s.k. 1).

Some authorities, however, limit the authorization for the private use of force to extraordinary individuals of sterling character and unimpeachable reputation, since otherwise:

The situation would be intolerable, and every worthless person would go and strike his fellow on some matter of reproof, "For there is no man so wholly righteous on earth, that he [always] does good and never sins (Koheles 7:20)." The Torah grants authority, and the stick and the whip, only to a judge or to an important individual whose words are worthy of being obeyed ... (Yam Shel Shlomo Bava Kama 3:9, Shut. Tzitz Eliezer 17:36:3)

PRESENTED BY
RABBI YITZHAK GROSSMAN, ROSH CHABURAH

KIDS KORNER

Who Am I?

#1 WHO AM I ?

1. Don't confuse my father and Gershom's mother.
2. Ruled
3. Unscrambled, I am "to curse."
4. I was a foreigner.

#2 WHO AM I ?

1. I was Bilaam's end.
2. Unscrambled, I am a "friend."
3. I guard the garden.
4. Zeroa Netuya / Outstretched arm.

Last Week's Answers

#1 Og, King of Bashan (I got buck teeth, I am not the king of Embarrassment, I was a refugee, I got stuck in the mountain.)

#2 Parah Adumah (Red Heifer) (I was unblemished, I can fix and defile, I clean up after my child, I am not a yoking matter.)

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a Virtual Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Yitzhak Grossman
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