



OD YOSEF HAI NEWSLETTER

ROSH YESHIVAH AND COMMUNITY RABBI
DAYAN ABRAHAM DAVID SHLI"TA

OD YOSEF HAI
50 FINCHLEY LANE, NW41DJ
TEL: 020 8203 5701

Thoughts on Parashat BALAK Year 24 by Dayan Abraham David

Lo hebet aven be Yaacov ve lo Ra-ah Amal B'Yisrael Hashem Elokav Imo vu Teruat Melech bo. Rashi (21) brings the midrash, that Hashem does not scrutinise the sins of Yaacov (the children of Yaacov) and even when Yisrael go against his laws G-d is always with them and his glory of Kingship (Teruat HaMelech) always stays with them. The only reason for this Rashi seems to give in Pasuk 23 Ki Lo Nachash B'Yaacov ve lo Kesem B'Yisrael that since they do not have soothsayers and magicians among them that is why they are fit for a beracha but this does not cover why Hashem overlooks their sins. We know of the words of Rabbi Chanina in Baba Kama (50a) that anyone who says G-d forgoes sins is forfeiting his life. So how do we reconcile these words of Bilaam which were said through nevuah.

Maybe we could explain with the words that follow 'Hashem Elokav Imo' that G-d is always with him, that even when a Jew sins, the sin does not imbed itself into his being for G-d is in the back of his mind, he thinks of Hashem straight after and it remains superficial, done in a moment of weakness but inside we remain wholesome and spiritual. A Jew will sigh with regret immediately after the

'averah' for he has thoughts of G-d with him, a step towards Teshuba. 'Ve teruat Melech Bo' we could explain refers to the tekeot and teruot of Rosh Hashana which penetrates the heart of the Jew with fear and awakening. These tekiot have an effect on him even if he sins and gives in to his yetzer Harah during the year, he has some thoughts of fear and feelings of guilt which do not allow him to enjoy the sin too much. For these reasons effects of the sin are not imbedded and do not affect his inner being. He is like a chicken even though it wallows in the dust when it stands up it is able to shake it all off. That is why Hashem does not scrutinise our sins and awaits for us to shake it off. 'lo Hebet aven b'Yaacov ve lo ra-ah amal B'Yisrael'. The reason being Hashem Elokav imo ve teruat Melech bo'. There is no forgoing of the sins, our sins are not deeply embedded and thoughts of Hashem are always near us, so we can do teshuba easily, G-d is not far from us even when we sin.

TORAH GEMS

At the end of the Parasha, we are told about the corruption of some of the Bnei Yisrael who consorted with the daughters of Moab. The daughter of Moab were able to entice them to the extent of their doing the abomination of avoda zara idolatary in its most disgusting form with Bal Peor. Hashem becomes angry with the Jewish people and commands Moshe

Rabenu to judge the guilty in public to take away the anger of G-d, for when there is judgement here in our world then G-d holds back his punishment from above. Moshe commands the judges and the executors of the law to kill those who have done idolatry and they did, the anger of Hashem abated. But this was stopped when Zimri ben Salu a prince from the tribe of Shimoen brought the midianite woman Kozbi bat tzur and confronted Moshe and then a plague began. It was Pinchas who took the initiative and went after Zimmri and Kozbi and killed them and the plague stopped but not before 24 thousand had been killed.

We should try to understand how people of that great generation came to do such abominations. The midrash Rabah explains in detail how the B'not Moab managed to entice the Bnei Yisrael who were really on a high level of kedusha into such an abomination. They set up stalls in the desert with the finest articles of the land for sale. They placed oldish women outside the shops to welcome the Israelites into the shops promising them the best bargains, but inside the shops were young attractive women, they used this strategy so that the Israelites who were full of modesty would not shy away from entering shops served by the young non-Jewish women. The older women would give a price for the article he wished to buy, the younger woman who would sit on the side would reduce it and would even add presents to the purchase, telling him of the admiration and affection they had for the Israelites, who were somewhat related to them through Terach and Lot. Of course this would make him feel welcome and obligated. A permitted animal was brought and offered to him so he could make a proper shechitah and a kosher meal was prepared for him.

They sat down to the feast and wine was brought out for the celebration. The Midrash adds that at that time in our history the Rabbis had as yet not forbidden non-Jewish wine and it was permitted, so they drank and eventually were enticed by the daughters of Moab into the worst abominations and the Avodah Zarah of Pe-or. It is interesting to note the comment of the Midrash that non-Jewish wine was not forbidden by the Rabbis as yet. We know that a decree was made against the drinking of non-Jewish wine even when there was no fear that the wine was used for the service of idolatry, so we should not drink wine with the nations and be enticed into relationships and marriage with them. It would seem from the Midrash that had there been such a decree from the Rabbis it would have prevented the Israelites from sinning with the Bnot Moab then. It would seem that even though the Israelites were aware that it was forbidden to have relationships with the Moabites as with the other nations, this would not stop them but a decree from the Rabbi's would, how come? Yes, the decree from our Rabbis would have prevented them from entering a situation where they would not have been able to extricate themselves from the trap. The wisdom of the decrees from our Rabbis has saved us time and again from transgressing and trampling upon the laws of the Torah. From the above Midrash we also see how a person could slide downhill in stages one leniency leading to another until he is trapped to the worst sins. Today we need to build fortresses for protecting our homes and children for those who destroy our morality not only alleged to draw us from the outside to entice us but

penetrate our homes and lives through gadgets of immorality to entice us from kedusha.

STORIES OF TZADDIKIM

“Everything is foreseen, yet free will is given. The world is judged with goodness, and all is according to the majority of deeds.”

The middle phrase in this Mishna (“The world is judged with goodness”) can also be translated as “the world is judged for the sake of good”. If Hashem has to punish a person, He does so for the person’s own good and benefit.

There was once a great Chassidic rabbi whose gabai would always find fault with the rabbi’s students. He would constantly complain to the rabbi that some of the students would keep their shops open late Friday afternoon, or that some were guilty of tale bearing, or not have strict enough kosher food. The rabbi was angry at the gabai and hold him off for his constant criticism. One of the students who overheard the conversation between the rabbi and the gabai asked the rabbi “why do you object to him giving his criticisms? After all, do you not also criticize us?”

The rabbi replied “the difference between me and the gabai is the same as the difference between a home owner and his cat. Both the home owner and the cat strongly try to rid the house of mice. The difference however is that the owner is happy when there are no mice to catch but the cat is happy when there are mice to catch. Similarly I am happy when there is no longer any sin amongst my students, my gabai however seems to be happy when he can catch my students sinning.”

Hashem judges the world for the sake of goodness, He is happy when there is no sin amongst His people. We

should not seek out the failings of others.

Shabbat Shalom

HALACHOT

Taanit Shiva Asar Be Tammuz NIDCHA

Fast of Tammuz

– Sunday 21st July 2019

1. Both men and women are obliged to complete the fast. But women who are pregnant or feeding do not have to. An ill person or someone who is old and feeble does not have to fast. Someone who is permitted NOT to fast does not need to eat in small quantities like on Yom Kippur.
2. A Chattan and Kallah in the seven days of sheva berachot do not need to fast.
3. If there is a brit milah on the day the minhag is to make the seuda at night.
4. The purpose of the fast is to awaken us to *Teshuva* to avoid the *Tzarot* which the bad deeds of our forefathers and our deeds invoke.
5. On *Shiva Asar Be Tammuz*, five tragedies happened to our people:
 - i) The first set of luchot were broken by Moshe when he descended the mountain and saw the people rejoicing with the golden calf.
 - ii) The *Korban Tamid* was stopped sometime before the destruction of the First Temple
 - iii) The walls of the City of Jerusalem were breached before the destruction of the Second Temple.
 - iv) Apostomos the Greek Rasha burnt the Sefer Torah and
 - v) Placed an idol in the Temple.

6. One is not allowed to wash his mouth on a *Taanit Tsibbur*, as this one is.
7. There are some who keep the Minhag of the Zekenim and do not have a haircut or shave for the 3 weeks starting from the fast of Tammuz even though, according to the Shulchan Aruch, we only refrain from this on the week of Tisha B'Av
8. We refrain from musical entertainment during the three weeks as suggested by the Magen Avraham and accepted by other Poskim. This restriction would apply to the playing of musical instruments and even listening to musical tapes, according to our Poskim. But those who have a Minhag to play musical instruments for a Brit Mila or other mitzvot may do so. However, this Heter would not apply to the night before the Mila (Brit Yitzhak or 'Agdil Yas') as it is not considered a Seudat Mitzva. We refrain from music even in teaching classes.
9. We also refrain from saying Shehechyanu on a fruit or new clothes during these days. But if a pregnant woman needs to eat such a fruit, she should make Shehechyanu for it.
10. We make Shehechyanu for a Pidyon or Brit according to our custom.

**We have a regular Youth
Minyan organised by
Jordan Moses followed by a
kiddush**

**Regular Nightly Shiurim in the
Beit Hamidrash Programme not
to be missed**

**Sunday to Thursday
From 20:00 to 21:10**

**For full details see the notice
on the Shul Board**

**If you wish to sponsor a
Kiddush**

**Please contact
Nathaniel Bendayan 07825
871749**

**For Seuda Shlishit
or to rent the**

**Nancy Reuben Hall
for a Simcha**

**Please contact
Yanky David 07725 408724**

SHABBAT TIMES

Shabbat commences	8:52 pm
Shabbat terminates	10:14 pm
Mincha Erev Shabbat	7:15 pm
Followed by Kabbalat Shabbat	
Shacharit	8:30 am
Shiur	7:25 pm
Mincha on Shabbat followed by Seuda Shlishit	
Followed by Arbit	8:25 pm
Shacharit Weekdays	6:50am
Shacharit Sundays	7:00am
Mincha followed by Arbit	7:30pm

TAANIT TIMES

Shiva Asar Be Tamuz (Nidchah)

Sunday 21st July 2019

Fast commences 3:56am

Terminates 9:59pm

Sunday	7:00 am
Mincha	8:30 pm
Followed by Arbit	