

LampLighter

11 Tammuz
Chukat-Balak

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LIVING WITH THE TIMES

This week we read two Torah portions, Chukat and Balak. Balak, the king of Moab, hired Bilaam, a gentile prophet, to curse the Jewish people. Mystical texts state that there is an inherent connection between Bilaam and Amalek – an enemy nation of the Children of Israel mentioned earlier in the Torah.

An allusion to this is seen when writing their names in Hebrew. The first two letters of Bilaam (bet-lamed) combined with the first two letters of Amalek (ayin-mem) spell Bilaam. Furthermore when the remaining two letters of Bilaam (ayin-mem) are combined with the remaining two letters of Amalek (lamed-kof) the product spells Amalek.

Amalek's basic ability to confront the Jews is explained to have been derived from his lineal relationship with them. Amalek was the descendant of Esau. "I too am the great-grandchild of Abraham and Isaac," Amalek claimed. "I have the same right to voice my opinion in matters of Torah and holiness!"

The argument that was propounded by Bilaam was similar. Bilaam was a descendant of Laban who insisted to Jacob that, "the daughters are my daughters" - that the Matriarchs through whom the Jewish people would be established were his kin. With these words Laban claimed the right to have a say in Jewish affairs. Bilaam, a member of the same family, continued his forefather's argument and demanded that his opinion be given weight when it came to Torah and Mitzvot.

From this we learn an important lesson that is valid in every generation: If someone comes along and makes an assertion that is contrary to Torah, it doesn't matter if he is the grandchild of Abraham and Isaac, or if the Matriarchs of the Jewish people are on his family tree. We are forbidden to heed his word.

"We have none but our Father in heaven upon Whom to rely!" we must respond to his argument. As Jews, there is only one yardstick by which we measure all things: the Torah. Nothing else, not even the most prestigious lineage may enter the equation. The holy Torah is our sole criterion.

By definition, if a statement or directive is in accordance with the Torah it is good. If not, it doesn't matter who is saying it. If a Bilaam or an Amalek's words run contrary to the Torah they do not concern us in the least.

The best advice to a Jew who seeks to free himself from an Amalek or a Bilaam is 'yira' (fear and awe) and 'ahava' (love) of G-d, in that order. The Hebrew words themselves reveal this deep interconnection much in the same way as Bilam and Amalek. Combining the first two letters of 'yira' (yud-resh) with the first two letters of 'ahava' (alef-hei) spells yira; and combining the remaining two letters of 'yira' (alef - hei) with the remaining two letters of 'ahava' (bet-hei) spells 'ahava'.

When a Jew possesses fear of G-d and love of G-d, there is nothing to be afraid of. Amalek and Bilaam will never succeed in defeating him.

(Based on the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe)

On One Foot

Rabbi Yisrael Rice

The following is the solution for those who want to learn the entire Torah while standing on one foot (Only after receiving the go-ahead from your doctor!).

There is a famous story of a non-Jew who was interested in converting to Judaism. He came to the great Sage Hillel and said, "Teach me the entire Torah while I am standing on one foot."

Hillel said "Sure. That which you do not like, do not do to others. This is the entire Torah, the rest is commentary. Now go and study."

So, here we have the whole Torah. It sounds simple, straightforward and uncomplicated. Perhaps, though, it's a little too simple. Certainly, if one demands the whole Torah on one foot, it must be put forth in a most concise fashion. But still, how is this, the whole Torah? And how do these short few words include also the parts of the Torah that are between a person and G-d?

The Torah defines the role of a Jew - to conduct his life in a way that transforms this physical world into a Divine abode. When this process takes place it evokes an immense level of joy in G-d. We have been given this role because we have the capacity to succeed. The Torah tells us of our true spiritual potential - to produce this Divine level of delight.

When we look at the Torah we most often think about G-d's directives and laws. However, the Torah is really about revealing the potential of every Jew.

Innate joy - nachas - is inspired by someone about whom we care. There is a great difference between a flower given to us by a guest and one offered by a true friend. The flower, of course, is the same. It is the context of the relationship that endows the act with its unique vitality. It is the connection of love that brings significance to the gift.

The Torah reveals that we indeed have this unique relationship with G-d. Every Jew has an inborn connection to G-d and G-d guides us to act according to His will. He cares for us greatly which enables us to give Him great nachas through our actions. The Torah then explains His purpose for creating the world and our role in fulfilling this purpose.

When looking at another individual we must uncover and appreciate the person's full potential. "That which you do not like," refers to when one uncovers flaws in another. Although we all have our shortcomings, we hope that others will focus on our positive qualities, not on that which we lack. Therefore Hillel exhorted, "Do not do this to others." That is, do not judge others in a manner in which you would not like to be judged.

The depth of the Torah uncovers our potential for good, showing how we can change the world and give G-d nachas. If this is so, why dwell on something as insignificant as human weakness?

This is the whole Torah - appreciating the positive potential of each element, organism and person, and yourself.



Post-Op Popsicle

By *Lieba Rudolph*

When our daughter Nell was five years old, a door slammed on her toe and nearly sliced the tip of it off. We were in the country for the weekend with Rabbi Yisroel and Blumi Rosenfeld. The children had been playing upstairs. The adults were enjoying a relaxing Shabbat lunch when, one by one, each of the children marched down with the news that Nell had hurt her toe.

At first, we weren't concerned, knowing how children love to report even the slightest mishap. But when my husband and Rabbi Rosenfeld saw her sock soaked red with blood, it was clear that she had to get to a hospital. The fact that it was Shabbat did not change anything - this was an emergency and Jewish law permits the violation of Shabbat in such cases.

An ambulance took us to the local hospital, where the doctor informed us that the surgery required to repair the toe was beyond his expertise. A second ambulance then took us to Children's Hospital in Pittsburgh, where a resident performed the delicate task of resewing the tip of her toe, sixty per cent of which had been severed. To protect the toe while it healed, he put a cast on her foot which she would wear for four weeks. The next day we called Dr. Mark Sperling, Chairman of Paediatrics at Children's, who put us in touch with Dr. Morey Moreland.

Because of the delicate nature of the injury (and the not-so-delicate nature of our impatient patient) when the four weeks had passed and it was

time to remove the cast, Dr. Moreland wanted to do so under anaesthesia. This could best be done in a hospital, he explained, with Nell being treated as an outpatient. When we agreed, he told us he wanted to schedule the surgery for 11 a.m. the next day. But when he told us not to feed her anything after 10:30 p.m. that night, we became concerned about the timing. Nell had come down with a nasty flu - the kind that "plenty of liquids" helps - and we didn't want to make her any unhappier than we had to.

Dr. Moreland felt that, despite the flu, the cast should be removed right away so that he could perform any necessary surgery while she was already "under." He was fairly optimistic that the skin had reattached and that additional surgery would not be required, but he did not want to wait any longer to see.

Nervous but hopeful, my husband and I followed the doctor's instructions. We arrived at the hospital promptly at 10 a.m. to fill out the paperwork. By 2 p.m. they still hadn't called us for surgery. Nellie still hadn't had anything to eat or drink, and she still had a fever (Meanwhile, neither my husband nor I shared her endurance and we took turns sneaking away for some sustenance).

When her name was finally called just after 2:30 p.m., the nurses took us to their desk and told us what the sequence of events would be. Nell would be anesthetized in the operating room, the cast would be removed, any necessary procedures would be performed and she would then be taken to the "post-op" room to recuperate. She would be quite thirsty, they said, so they would give her a popsicle. We questioned whether or not it was kosher and the nurses assured us that other parents of patients had made similar inquiries and that the popsicles were fine. Not having seen this product's kosher

symbol ourselves, we were a bit uncomfortable, but we told ourselves that it was probably, in fact, fine. And besides, we rationalized, even if the frosty treat wasn't up to our "standards" of kashrut, these were extenuating circumstances. After all, Nell was just five years old and she had the flu. If a popsicle would make her happy after almost a day in the hospital without anything to eat or drink how bad could it be? We kissed our little girl good-bye and waited with our Psalms in hand to be called once again.

Just after 5 p.m., the nurses called our name and told us that Nellie was awake in the post-op room. The re-sewn piece had taken and thank G-d she was doing fine, but before we went in to see her the nurses wanted to tell us something that had happened. When they offered her a popsicle, she asked to see the wrapper to see if it was kosher. Upon not seeing a symbol she recognized she asked the nurses if she could just have some water instead.

The nurses couldn't believe it. After nearly twenty hours with nothing to eat or drink, despite surgery and the flu, this little five-year-old didn't want to take any chances with her kashrus. The popsicle was not worth it.

My husband and I were also amazed. Sure we had pointed out various kosher symbols on food products in our home, and she had learned in school how important it is to be conscientious about eating kosher food, but her pure, unquestioning commitment, had to have come from somewhere deep within.

And that commitment has always been a lesson for me. As I've watched that little toe grow into a big toe, I am reminded to be grateful to G-d for everything, and to ask Him not only for physical health, but for spiritual health as well.

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P.O. Box 67, Balaclava Vic. 3183 AUSTRALIA
Phone (03) 9525 8190

Email: lamplighter_weekly@hotmail.com
Internet: www.lamplighterweekly.com

Editors: Shneur Wilhelm, Boruch Sholom Ajzenszmidt,
Menachem Mendel Khutoretsky

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INSIGHTS

LETTERS BY THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE



You're Never Alone

Adar 26, 5710 (1950)

Greetings and blessings,

In one of his letters, my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, writes: "Chassidic philosophy brought about a situation in which one is not alone." If that applied when "the tzaddik (righteous person) was living on this earth...in a physical place," (Zohar) certainly it applies to a much greater degree at present when "he is found" - even in this world of deed - "more than in his lifetime." How much more so does this apply with regard to a tzaddik who is also a Rebbe who is "an intermediary who binds" between G-d (Havayah) and the Jewish people!

The name used for G-d, Havayah, is not related to the limitations of nature, Heaven forbid. The intermediary possesses dimensions of both the entities between which he mediates. With regard to his chassidim and those bound to him at present, as previously - for a connection with a Rebbe is one of yechida (a deep unity) which is above the concept of time - the motif of bonding is even stronger now. For the chassidim tell their souls and their bodies that we have no other alternative at all. And then there will be no interruption in that bond, Heaven forbid. On the contrary, "The spirit will draw down the spirit." This will be manifest in spiritual matters and in material matters, in all forms of good. For just as above, so too below, i.e., with regard to a Rebbe: the nature (i.e., a tendency above nature) of the good is to do good.

10 Nissan, 5710 (1950)

I received your letter of 9 Nissan. In brief, an answer to what you wrote there can, in my opinion, be found in my preface to the pamphlet published after the passing of the [Previous] Rebbe and in this letter.

In reply to the question you raise - that when there is doubt about how to conduct oneself we are not now able to ask my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe - if you will stand firm in your connection with him, without paying attention to the lures of the yetzer hara (evil inclination), and send the question to the gravesite of my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, the Rebbe will find a way to answer you.

12 Nissan, 5710 (1950)

Greetings and blessings,

...My revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, dedicated his life for the benefit of the Jewish people as a whole and for every Jew as an individual in particular, and most particularly to those who bound themselves to him. He certainly conveys his influence to them at present as well.

Nevertheless, the influence he conveys at present - to a certain degree - is different from what it was previously. For at present, his soul is free from all the limitations and constraints of the body and can ascend to one peak after another. (This is the meaning of the term 'histalkus'.) Hence the influence that he grants - both the material and the spiritual influence - is also on a higher and more elevated plane.

As a natural consequence, this demands that a recipient (of the Rebbe's influence) adapt himself to that higher influence by elevating himself.

Throughout his life, my revered father-in-law, the Rebbe, taught us how to proceed forward not only on the level of thought, but also in actual fact. Even now, his lips are moving even in this world through his numerous teachings, discourses, talks, and letters. Through fulfilling his desire and will in actual practice we generate the mediums through which the elevated influence that he wishes to convey to us can be received. And in your holy work...

A MITZVA A DAY

Positive Commandment 155: Making Shabbat holy

HaShem created the world in six days. Upon completing His creation, He declared the seventh day to be special. He proclaimed it holy, separating it from the rest of the week by not creating anything on that seventh day - the Shabbat. The Torah wants us to regard the Shabbat as being holy. Just as HaShem proclaimed it to be special, we are commanded to recite a special prayer when the Shabbat arrives - the Kiddush, and when it departs - the Havdalah. These prayers remind us of the holiness and uniqueness of Shabbat. This is learned out from the Torah's words "Remember the Shabbat to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8)

A WORD from the Director

This Shabbat, the 12th of Tammuz marks 82 years since the Previous Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak Schneersohn, was released from Soviet prison. Originally sentenced to death for heading a secret network of Talmud Torahs, mikvaot and synagogues throughout Russia, the Rebbe's victory over the Communist ideology was a triumph for Jews everywhere that continues to resonate till today.

With the clarity of vision that comes with hindsight, we can now see how the 12th of Tammuz was the first substantial blow delivered against the "Evil Empire" that eventually led to its downfall. In the struggle between Communism and Judaism, the faith of Israel would emerge triumphant. In the battle of decadence and corruption against justice and righteousness, truth and virtue would prevail.

Back in 1927 it seemed as if the Jewish religion was ready to be tossed onto the ash heap of history as a relic of the past. Communism, with its promise of social justice and equality for all mankind, was the wave of the future. Eighty-two years later, when most of the world regards it as a failed experiment, it is hard to imagine how massive a threat Communism once was. The present re-emergence of Torah-true Judaism throughout the former Soviet Union is nothing short of a miracle. Indeed, this is what the Rebbe fought for all along.

The 12th of Tammuz is a celebration of our faith in G-d, a holiday for everyone who believes in the Torah and its commandments. L'chaim, Jews, and may we merit to celebrate the ultimate triumph of good over evil with the coming of Moshiach immediately.

MOSHIACH MATTERS

The teachings of the Baal Shem Tov - the revelation of the Divine Intellect which the Baal Shem Tov and his disciples and their disciples bequeathed us - are very closely connected with the coming of Moshiach. Moshiach is quintessential light itself, and the teachings of Chasidism are the vessel for this great light.

(Likkutei Diburim, -Rabbi Yosef Y. Schneersohn)

J.I. Gutnick

It Happened Once...



During the time that the Holy Temple stood in Jerusalem there lived a poor farmer in the far northern Galilee. His house stood on a small rocky plot sparsely dotted with olive trees. Every day he went out to his little field and tilled in its soil, but despite his efforts, nothing seemed to grow.

One evening, after a hard and disappointing day's work he turned to his wife and said, "I have no luck here. I will travel to the south and work on a large farm. If G-d grants me success I will return and buy a larger field, an orchard, and even a flock of sheep. While I am gone our sons will tend our field here."

The man walked to the south where he found a job working on the estate of a rich man. His new employer was very pleased with his work, for he was competent and loyal. The farmer worked hard and found his employer to be a fair man. He stayed on for several years, all the time dreaming of the day he would come home and establish his own large farm.

It was nearing Rosh Hashanah and after three years of hard labour in someone else's fields, the man prepared for his triumphant return home. He approached his employer: "I have worked well for you these years and now I wish to go home. Please give me my wages so that I may return to my family."

But to his surprise, the rich man replied, "I'm sorry, but I have no money now and I can't pay you."

The labourer thought to himself, "How could it be possible that such a wealthy man not be able to pay me?" But he held his tongue and replied only, "Then, pay me in produce and I will be able to sell it."

But his employer answered, "I haven't any produce either."

"Then give me a field and I will sell it." But this suggestion received the same reply, "I do not have any fields to give you."

"Then I will take my pay in cattle."

"I'm sorry, but I have no cattle to give," answered the rich man.

"Then I will accept payment in blankets and pillows. Such items are very useful in the Galilee where it is cold."

But the rich man replied, "I have no bed linens either."

Finally the labourer ceased his requests and started off for home empty-handed, his heart heavy with disappointment. And yet, he couldn't feel anger against his employer, for through the years of his employment he had been treated well. He knew that his employer wasn't a swindler or an evil man. If he hadn't been able to pay him, there must be some reason. And with that generous thought he made the long journey home.

He returned home in time to spend Rosh Hashanah with his family. Autumn and winter passed and soon it was spring. The poor farmer resumed working in his small field. One day he looked up to see a caravan approaching. There were three donkeys all heavily laden with goods. As they neared, the man recognized his former employer as the driver who was leading the procession. It was his former employer. He ran to greet him. The wealthy landlord dismounted from the donkey.

"Everything that I have brought is for you," were his first words. The first donkey carried fresh fruits and raisins; the second, oil and wine; while the third carried cakes and sweets for the family.

The landlord then took out of his cloak a bag of gold coins which he gave to his former employee, now speechless with wonder.

"The food and drink which I give you are a gift, but the gold is what I owe you for your years of honest labour. Please, tell me the truth, what did you think when you asked for your wages and I said I couldn't pay you?"

The farmer replied, "I must admit that I couldn't understand it. Then I thought that maybe you had invested all your money in some merchandise and had no available cash."

"Then what did you think when you requested that I pay you in produce and I again said that I couldn't do that?"

"I thought that perhaps you had not yet tithed your fields."

"And what about when you asked for a field?"

"I thought that perhaps you had rented out your fields to a tenant farmer and that they were not yet available for your use."

"And what about when I refused to give you cattle?"

"I assumed that you had lent them out to someone."

"And when you finally asked for blankets and pillows?"

"I could only think that you had vowed to consecrate all your possessions to the Holy Temple and had nothing left to give me."

"All that you have said is true! I was so angered by my son's obstinacy that I vowed to give all my possessions to the Holy Temple instead of to him. But then I regretted my vow and asked the rabbis to annul it. As soon as this was done I came here to bring you your wages. The other things I bring as a token of my thanks. I bless you that G-d always judge you as favourably as you have judged me."

THOUGHTS THAT COUNT

This is the statute of the Torah which the L-rd has commanded (Num. 19:2)

The sin of the Golden Calf was due to a lack of faith. The mitzvah (commandment) of the red heifer is therefore a chukah, a commandment whose reason is not revealed to us, to "counteract" that sin - the only reason we observe it is our faith. (*Rabbi Yitzchak of Vorky*)

This is the statute of the Torah (Num. 19:2)

Rashi, the foremost Torah commentator, explains this passage to mean: "Such is My decree - you do not have permission to second-guess [the Torah]." The same word for permission appears in Ethics of the Fathers (3:15): "Everything is foreseen, yet permission [freedom of choice] is granted." Permission implies that something is possible. "You do not have permission" implies that second-guessing G-d is outside the realm of possibility. In truth, it is against the Jew's nature to question a Divine decree. If doubts do exist, they are only the product of the Evil Inclination. (*The Lubavitcher Rebbe*)

CHABAD HOUSE OF CAULFIELD LUBAVITCH

PARSHAS CHUKAT-BALAK 12 TAMMUZ • 4 JULY

FRIDAY NIGHT:	CANDLE LIGHTING:	4:54 PM
	MINCHA:	5:05 PM
	KABBOLAS SHABBOS:	5:35 PM
SHABBOS MORNING:	SHACHARIS:	10:00 AM
	MINCHA:	4:50 PM
	SHABBOS ENDS:	5:56 PM
WEEKDAYS:	SHACHARIS SUN - FRI:	9:15 AM
	MINCHA:	5:05 PM
	MAARIV:	6:00 PM
FAST OF 17 TAMMUZ:	FAST BEGINS:	6:11 AM
	MINCHA:	5:00 PM
	MAARIV:	5:50 PM

CANDLE LIGHTING: 3 JULY 2009



BEGINS	ENDS
4:54 MELBOURNE	5:56
4:57 ADELAIDE	5:57
4:47 BRISBANE	5:43
6:15 DARWIN	7:07
4:44 GOLD COAST	5:45
5:06 PERTH	6:04
4:39 SYDNEY	5:38
4:36 LAUNCESTON	5:41
4:57 AUCKLAND	5:58
4:44 WELLINGTON	5:49

Dedicated to the beloved, revered leader of World Jewry

The Lubavitcher Rebbe

זצוקללה"ה נבג"מ זי"ע

May he succeed in imploring the Almighty to redeem His people speedily in our days.