



Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Chukas Balak 5786

1 – Topic – The difference of shita between Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Chukas Balak we're catching up this week to (ארצנו הקדושה), halevai we should catch up, the Krias HaTorah is catching up to Eretz Yisrael. Let me share with you a Malbim in Parshas Chukas on (פרק יט פסוק ב) in his section Torah Or and he says something very yesodistic. He writes (כבר ביארתי במקום אחר). He said this is a yesod that he wrote about elsewhere, I don't know where the elsewhere is, I imagine somebody will send me the mareh makom, but it's a very wonderful topic.

The topic is the difference of shita between Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel. And the way the Malbim puts it is the following: He says the shita of Beis Shammai was that to be poresh from olam hazeh is the best thing, to stay away from the pleasures and the physical needs of olam hazeh. Beis Hillel's shita was to be lekadesh olam hazeh is better, to take the gashmiyus Hakadosh Baruch Hu gave us in this world, and to use it, to enjoy it in a manner of kedusha. Probably the best example of this is the machlokes Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel regarding Korban Olah.

Beis Shammai says (יפזר ממנו לעולה יותר משלמים). He says better to spend your money on a Korban Olah than a Korban Shlamim. While Beis Hillel says that avoda shlamim adif. Beis Hillel says that the avoda of a Korban Shlamim is of greater significance.

Why? Because the avoda of a shlamim you're taking the ability to enjoy olam hazeh and giving it kedusha. And that's a higher madreiga, whereas the Korban Olah is staying away from hano'as olam hazeh, staying away from it totally, and mimeila that is a greater kedusha. This machlokes is in Chagiga (דף ו עמוד א). There are other examples brought by the Malbim.

The Malbim says that Beis Shammai's shita was if you find mane yafe, a good piece of food during the week, you should put it away for Shabbos. That's the mida of Shammai mentioned in the beginning of the second perek in Beitzah. Beis Hillel said no, the midas Beis Hillel was (ברוך ה' יום יום). Whatever Hakadosh Baruch Hu gives you on any given day, use it. (ברוך ה' יום יום). You have a good piece of meat during the week, eat it, and when Shabbos will come you'll be metapeil in getting the best you could for Shabbos.

A similar machlokes in the beginning of Masechtas Sukkah. Beis Shammai says if you are rosho verubo basukkah that's not good enough, you have to be kulo basukkah. And again we're talking now al pi machshava, the idea being that Beis Shammai wants the person to be (כולו פורש מעולם) totally into the Sukkah. Beis Hillel it's enough to have rosho verubo basukkah, part of him could be remaining with the idea, the gashmiyustika idea of olam hazeh. So we have three

machlokos in Ola v'Shlamim, the mane yafe l'Shabbos, and the rosho verubo basukkah. Of course there are many more that fit once you have a rule.

In Chagiga daf yud beis, Beis Shammai says man nivra techila, shamayim nivru techila. The main part of olam hazeh is the shamayim, the less gashmiyustik part of creation. And Beis Hillel says Eretz nivra techila. The purpose of olam hazeh is to be mekadesh aretz, to take the physical parts of the aretz and to use it.

An amazing machlokes between Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel in Masechta Shabbos. Beis Shammai shita is that there's a mitzvah shevisas keilim, that on Shabbos not only you and your beheima are not allowed to do melacha, your keilim have to rest. So the Gemara asks if your keilim have to rest, how are your candles burning on Shabbos, how is your pot of cholent on the stove on Shabbos. Beis Shammai shita is you have to be mafkir it, it can't belong to you. Mafkir keilim, and his meat, and his neiros. Amazing thing. Beis Shammai holds that it shouldn't be yours. The gashmius of olam hazeh shouldn't be yours even on Shabbos kodesh. Beis Hillel of course disagrees, they hold there's no din of shevisas keilim.

It's interesting, a bochur called me and he asked if he's allowed to charge his shaver over Shabbos. He has a date motzei Shabbos. Could he put it to charge erev Shabbos and it'll charge over Shabbos? I told him it's muttar. He said someone told him there are some rabbonim who are machmir. I told him of course there are some rabbonim who are machmir. That is Beis Shammai. Beis Shammai's l'shitaso of shevisas keilim. But Beis Hillel is meikel, they hold there's no din of shevisas keilim.

And so too, Beis Hillel says you dance lifnei hakallah, kallah na'ah v'chasudah in (כתובות דף יז). You praise the kallah. And Beis Shammai says kallah k'mo she-hi. What are you so worried about? You're worried about the beauty of the kallah? kallah k'mo she-hi. It's the accomplishments of the kallah that really counts. So this is an interesting yesod in the machlokes Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel. I don't think we can easily apply it to every machlokes, but certainly to many of the machlokesen. So this is a nice idea on to itself.

I'm just thinking in (בבא מציעא מג), there's a machlokes about shlichas yad b'pikadon. Beis Shammai shita is that if you think, if you have machshava to use someone's pikadon, that's enough. Tosafos says it means dibbur, but you don't have to physically touch a thing. If in your mind, you're thinking of using someone's pikadon, you're already a sholeiach yad, you're ready for the consequences. Beis Hillel say (עד ששלה בו יד). Beis Hillel say until you actually do it. Okay. So this is a nice yesod and even for itself, it's a beautiful yesod.

There's a more famous yesod in the machlokes Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel and they fit together beautifully. Let me explain. There's a better known yesod and Rav Zevin in his Le'or Ha'halacha talks about it ba'arichus, beautiful arichus. A machlokes Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel. But his yesod is as follows: Beis Shammai go according to be-koach, according to potential. You look at potential. Beis Hillel say you go basar be-po'el, you go basar what's actually taking place.

And for example, the most famous application, Beis Shammai says you light eight candles on the first day of Chanukah. The first day of Chanukah has potential of eight days of Chanukah coming

your way. That's Beis Shammai shita. Beis Hillel says no, you do one the first day, two the second day. You go by be-po'el. In other words, Beis Shammai says a person really has to look at his potential. He has to live based on the potential that he could have.

Similarly, Beis Shammai say Rosh Chodesh Shevat is Rosh Hashanah l'ilanos. The potential already for the new growth of the coming year is already there on Rosh Chodesh. Beis Hillel say you wait even Tu B'Shevat, the peiros are not there, but they're at least more there so to speak, be-po'el.

It's a great vort for when you make a siyum on Shisha Sidrei Mishna. The last Mishna of the Siyum is usually shai olamos but if you wanted to talk about something more halachadik, the last machlokes in Shas are Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel. Beis Shammai shita is that when you pull a fish, you go fishing, you pull a fish out of the water, and it's still in the net or it's still on the hook and it's thrashing about, it's already mekabbel tumas ochlin. The Bartenura says chashuv k'meis. Even though the fish is still alive, but be-koach it's dead. It's pulled out by a fisherman in a net, they already have a din ochel and mekabbel tumas ochlin. Beis Hillel say m'she-yamusu. Only when they die. That's the last machlokes in Uktzin. What's the machlokes? Beis Shammai looks at things be-koach, you have to look at their potential. The fish once it's pulled out, it's an ochel, potential is to be a food. Beis Hillel says you look at the be-po'el. We don't expect people to see more than the be-po'el. It's beautiful.

Every Yid has the be-koach, has the potential of being makdish all of his ma'asim, being makdish the idea, the dream of a Yid living. As a person who is makdish everything he does, who it has to be a person's dream, a person has to dream of ideals. Even though bepoyel, it's like Beis Hillel says, bepoyel we're not holding by being makdish everything. Halevai that we could take olam hazeh and use it for kedushah rather than being poreish from olam hazeh. So there's no question that in the bepoyeldika world it's not that way. In the bekoyach, Hashem wanted to create the world Kavayochel with (מדת הדין). There have to be ideals that a person aspires to. But bepoyel, Beis Hillel says halacha lemaiseh is the bepoyel, is what a person is really capable of doing.

Now I want to mention this because it's very important. We live in a world where we can't live in a world of perfection. The problem is there are people who take mediocrity and they make a shittah out of it. It's a shittah that way. They don't dream of a world of gadlus or perfection. A person stands shemoneh esrei, we know in our world it's hard to have kavanah the whole shemoneh esrei. But a person has no right to give up on the ideal, on the ideal that a person has. To say that mediocrity is the best thing, it ends up people make fun of people who are more kadosh, who aspire to greater kedushah, who have dreams of greater kedushah, instead of looking up to it.

Beis Shammai says bekoyach you have to recognize. They say to pasken that way. Beis Hillel certainly agree we have to recognize the bekoyach of a person, the potential of a person. In the halacha lemaisedika world ba'avoneinu we're not holding there, sadly we're not holding there. But the recognition is healthy recognition that has to exist, of how we really should aspire to, we really should dream of moments where we could be on a darga yoser gevoya, on a higher darga. So this is the message of Beis Shammai, Beis Hillel, a yesod'dika machloikes in shas that we live and we learn the shas, we live Beis Shammai, Beis Hillel, and to understand these two ideas, these two thoughts.

2 – Topic – A Noda BiYehuda

One additional thought in the last moments. Miriam's petirah, the be'er stops, and then bizchus Moshe and Aharon it starts again. So why did it stop? Why didn't it go straight from petiras Miriam with a smooth transfer of power so to speak? The be'er should never have stopped bizchus Miriam, and then bizchus Moshe and Aharon.

The Noda BiYehuda in his drashos, the Ahavas Tzion, drush vav. It's an arichus for a different time. But yesod hadvorum he says, is that Klal Yisrael only has the zechus when a gadol is niftar, only has the zechus of that gadol to the degree that they're meargeish what they're missing. The gemara says (זרח השמש ובא השמש). The gemara in Kiddushin ayin beis says (עד שלא שקעה שמשו של (צדיק זה זרח שמשו של צדיק אחר משמת רבי עקיבא). That when a tzaddik dies, a tzaddik replaces him. (נולד רבי משמת רבי יהודה נולד רב יהודה משמת רב אשי (נולד רבי משמת רבי נולד רב יהודה נולד רבא משמת רבא נולד רב אשי). So the Noda BiYehuda asks, so what's the ra'ash gadol? What's the terrible thing a tzaddik dies? Every time a tzaddik dies there's (זרח שמשו של זה), there's somebody waiting to memalei mekomo.

The answer zugt the Noda BiYehuda is, (נולד שמשו של זה) to the degree that a person realizes the aveilus of the niftar. To the degree that Klal Yisrael recognizes it, so then the next tzaddik can take over and have the koach to do what that tzaddik would have done. Miriam's petirah, to the degree that it was recognized, Hakadosh Baruch Hu stopped the be'er so that it should be recognized. Once it's recognized, then we can move on.

With that thought, I'm wishing everybody an absolutely wonderful Shabbos Kodesh, a meaningful Shabbos, as we head to shiva asar b'tammuz. We prepare ourselves to understand the bekoyach of Klal Yisrael, what we're missing. Im yirtzeh Hashem that's the idea of the three weeks. Im yirtzeh Hashem the joy of the vacation season, the pleasure of the vacation season should be combined with the extra time and ability that people have to be able to have sedarim kevuyom, to be learning properly, to be davening properly, bezras Hashem. We look forward to a three weeks that should be a time of zchus for the geula for all of Klal Yisrael. A gut Shabbos to one and all.

Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Balak 5785

1 – Topic – A Thought on the Parsha

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Balak. The summer months are well underway. A time where many of us have the ability to spend more time learning. We're not doing homework with the little ones and have somewhat less responsibility as far as the children are concerned, and b'ezras Hashem can increase our limud haTorah.

A yedid reminded me of a unique thing that we find in Parshas Balak. A unique posuk. It's more of a question of just knowing that something exists more than any dvar Torah. There was a Rebbi in the mesivta in my days, who was a lomzher. He had a hard time pronouncing a lamed. So a bachur once went over to him and asked if he could please read him the posuk, 22:37 of this week's parsha (ויאמר בלק אל-בלעם, הלא שלח שלחתי אליך לקרא לך--למה לא-הלכת, אלי; האמנם, לא אוכל כבדך). The

posuk has 13 straight words with a lamed. Of course, the rebbe saw the posuk, understood it, and the boy got thrown out of yeshiva, at least temporarily. Kach heim hadevarim. But anyway, the idea that such a posuk exists in this parsha is interesting.

There's another nekudah here in the parsha. It relates to something I mentioned to you in the past, and that is that the word shin lamed ches for sending, appears sometimes without a dagesh and sometimes with a dagesh in the lamed, depending on the binyan, how the word is conjugated. And as I've mentioned, I'm sure those of you who've heard this it's the type of thing you remember, is that shin lamed ches without a dagesh in the lamed, is a softer sending. It's when you send someone and he's going to come back. He's going somewhere and he's going to return. Shin lamed ches with a dagesh is a one-way trip, when you send things in one direction. That's called binyan kaved, a stronger sending. Whereas with a soft lamed it's called binyan kal, a lighter sending.

There are many words like that. Lamed mem daled, lamad is to learn when there's no dagesh in the mem. When there is a dagesh in the mem, lamad is a binyan kaved. It's something that's a more difficult thing and that is teaching, where you're learning plus teaching. Now this, as I mentioned, is a Rashi in Parshas Noach, when Noach sends away the yonah, Rashi says this rule. It's a Rashi in Parshas Shemos, by the meyardos, Rashi says that the shorsh yud lamed daled can mean to give birth, that's binyan kal. It can mean to help others give birth, that's binyan kaved with a dagesh in the lamed, etc. And this is a sort of old klal to our chaverim. If you don't remember it, pretend you do, because you should. It's something that I mentioned in the past. Every parsha, I believe, every parsha in the Torah has a word with shin lamed ches and is an example of this.

I mention it here in Balak because in the beginning of Balak there are many psukim that mention the messengers that were sent. The posuk I just mentioned, for example, (וַיֹּאמֶר בָּלָק אֶל-בְּלָעָם, הֲלֹא (שְׁלֹחַ שְׁלֹחֹתִי אֵלֶיךָ)). These are messengers, so of course they're without a lamed. If you start from in the beginning of the parsha, and the messengers are constantly without a dagesh in the lamed. This is until 22:40. (וַיִּזְבַּח בָּלָק, בָּקָר וְצֹאֵן). Balak brings karbanos. (וַיִּשְׁלַח לְבָלָעָם), and he sent the meat of the karbanos to Bilam, and there of course it's a one way trip. When you send somebody something to eat, you don't expect to get it in return. And (וַיִּשְׁלַח לְבָלָעָם) has a dagesh in the lamed, and it's just another thing, as I was mavir sedra, that I noticed, an old friend, an old klal that we have mentioned in the past.

2 – Topic – The Brachos of Bilam

I'd like to talk about the middle set of the brachos of Bilam. Chazal say in Maseches Sanhedrin that from the brachos of Bilam, you can see a little of what he had in mind in a negative way to Klal Yisroel. So there are two parts of the middle that I would like to discuss. One is 23:21. (לֹא-הִבִּיט אֶן בְּיַעֲקֹב, וְלֹא-רָאָה עֲמָל בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל), Amal, Rashi says here means an aveirah. (לֹא-הִבִּיט אֶן בְּיַעֲקֹב), Hashem didn't see the sins of Yaakov. (וְלֹא-רָאָה עֲמָל בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל). Now if it means that Klal Yisroel are tzaddikim, so of course G-d didn't see any of the aveiros of Klal Yisroel. However, Rashi says not that way. Rashi says on (כִּשְׁהוּ עוֹבְרִין עַל דְּבָרָיו אֵינוּ מְדַקְדָּק אַחֲרֵיהֶם לְהַתְּבוּנָה), (לֹא-הִבִּיט). That Hakadosh Baruch Hu, kaviyachol, doesn't look at the aveiros. He doesn't notice the aveiros. So (לֹא-הִבִּיט) means when Klal Yisroel does do aveiros, Hashem doesn't notice the aveiros that Klal Yisroel does. That's what Bilam said.

It's a pela. Just two psukim earlier, Bilam said, (לֹא אִישׁ קֵל וְיִכְנֹב), G-d is not like a person, He doesn't do things that are not true. So if G-d doesn't do things that are not true, so what does it mean (לֹא-הִבִּיט אֶנּוֹן בְּיַעֲקֹב)? Hashem didn't look at the aveiros of Yaakov. Halo davar hu, it definitely needs a biur. Lechora it's a falseness.

The answer is a klal gadol in the life of a person, in the life of a married man, (לֹא-הִבִּיט אֶנּוֹן בְּיַעֲקֹב), that's a middah a husband and wife should have about each other. You don't have to notice all of the failings of each other. And what is the idea? How is that not sheker?

And the answer is that there's a certain emes. The emes is that when people are committed to each other, in their lives, they have commitments to each other, and they're loyal and faithful one to the other, and then they make mistakes, they do things that are wrong. It has to be seen in context. It's not like you meet someone the first time and he says, I'll be there at four o'clock. He doesn't show up. You don't know the man from ever, and he doesn't show up. He's not there when he's supposed to be there. Of course it is normal to have taanos on him.

However, when you have somebody who's committed to you your whole life, who does things, who shares a life with you, and then the person doesn't show up at four o'clock, so big deal, how does that affect the relationship? It has nothing to do with the relationship. People make mistakes, people do things that they should not be doing. (לֹא-הִבִּיט אֶנּוֹן בְּיַעֲקֹב), farkert, Bilam is saying that it's emes. (לֹא אִישׁ קֵל וְיִכְנֹב), Hashem doesn't do things that are sheker. And since he doesn't do sheker, (לֹא-הִבִּיט אֶנּוֹן בְּיַעֲקֹב). Therefore he doesn't notice the sins of Yaakov.

Now m'toch birchosav shel Bilam harasha nikar mah kavanoso, his kavanah was to be m'katreg al Klal Yisroel. However, that Klal Yisroel does do aveiros and G-d is ignoring them. However, the amitas hadvarim is, that that's a proper middah. That's the middah a person has to have. The happiness of a home depends on having this middah. (לֹא-הִבִּיט אֶנּוֹן בְּיַעֲקֹב), it's a middah of bracha, it's a middah of hatzlacha, it's a middah where a person can just have a happy life if he just stops noticing everything.

You have to know, sometimes people complain that when they learn, they forget. Forgetting is a painful thing for somebody who learns. He forgets things. And it's indeed a painful thing that a person forgets things. However, if you're blessed with the middah of forgetting, use it the right way. When a friend does something that he shouldn't be doing to you, he shouldn't do it. So forget it. Don't remember it. He comes to apologize, say, what? I don't remember that. You try to say that, ah, the middah of forgetting, I use it for the right thing. So the Ribono shel Olam won't have taanos when it's used, chas v'shalom, for something that's incorrect. So this is a yesodos' dika posuk in the life of a yid, (לֹא-הִבִּיט אֶנּוֹן בְּיַעֲקֹב), should be halachta b'drachav, you should do like the Ribono shel Olam. Don't notice everything that someone does that's incorrect.

Later, in the same set of brachos, the posuk says, and apparently Bilam sees this as significant enough to mention, (לֹא יִשְׁכַּב עַד-יֵאָכֵל טָרֶף). What does it mean (לֹא יִשְׁכַּב עַד-יֵאָכֵל טָרֶף) in posuk chaf daled? It means, says Rashi, amazing. Rashi says this means (קוֹרָא אֶת שְׁמֵעַל מִטָּהוּ). Krias Shema al hamitah has a remez in the posuk? Wow. Rashi says, when you go to sleep, (כָּל מִזִּיק הִבָּא לְטָרְפוֹ). So b'lailah when Klal Yisroel goes to sleep, they don't go to sleep (עַד-יֵאָכֵל טָרֶף), until they destroy those who are out to destroy them. And what is that? Rashi says, to say Krias Shema.

The person who is (קורא את שמע על מטותו) before he goes to sleep, and in that way, he's mekabel ol malchus shamayim. It's not just the Krias Shema, it's the kabbalas ol malchus shamayim that goes with it, and he's mevatel all of the mazikin.

People say, they don't see these mazikin. Who are these mazikin? I never met them. And the answer is, the mazikin are there. I've noticed in yeshiva over the years, as a mechanech, there are some people who can't get up in the morning. And a bachur says he's in pain, he can't get up in the morning, he oversleeps davening, he oversleeps seder. In the beginning, I used to think he has to work on getting up in the morning. He has to work, find some trick on how to get up in the morning.

There was a wise woman who had an advice column, who wrote, the best way to make sure you get up in the morning is to drink half a gallon of water before you go to sleep. And it works. But I discovered later that it's not true. People don't have a hard time getting up. Some people have sleep disorders, rachmana litzlan. But when a young man says, I can't get up in the morning, correct him. You can't get to sleep at night. At night, when it's time to go to sleep, you drey around, you shmues, you do things, and before you know it, half hour passes, an hour passes. You're wasting major amounts of time at night. And you figure, what's the difference? I finished learning for the day, I finished davening for the day. The answer is a very big difference. The difference is that if you go to sleep late, you're going to have a hard time getting up. And you're going to have a hard time concentrating in the next day.

So the yeitzer hara shtells, you want to know who the mazikin are? You want to know who are these mazikin? I can show them to you. You come to a camp by day and the whole camp is davening. I'll walk you into the bunks, you'll see the mazikim. They knocked out a handful of boys. They're still sleeping in bed. Why are they sleeping in bed? Some of them don't care about getting up for davening, but most of them do. Why are they sleeping in bed? Because of the mazikim, because they weren't mekabel ol malchus shamayim before they went to sleep.

Kabbalas ol malchus shamayim means you go to sleep the way you're supposed to go to sleep. You go to sleep the way a ben Torah, the way a frum yid goes to sleep. You go to sleep in a way that's going to make you have hatzlacha in the coming day. And that is the (לא ישכב עד-יאכל טרף). That is this middah, this idea that a person before he goes to sleep, yochal teref, that he has to destroy the mazikin that are around him. A person before he goes to sleep should be sure to say Krias Shema. The Mishnah Berurah says it's tov to say the whole three parshiyos of Krias Shema. That way if chas v'shalom you ever forget to daven Maariv, at least you won't miss the mitzvas aseih of Krias Shema. And besides, the Mishnah Berurah says it's a shmira for the ramach eivarim for a person to say the three parshiyos of Krias Shema. And that's the ikkur, to say the three parshiyos, say hamapil, and go to sleep and you'll be able, I"Y Hashem, to wake up in the morning in a proper way.

Someone told me that there was someone who once came to Rav Shach with his little three year old boy, and he showed Rav Shach the heilige neshama that this boy has. What does the boy do when he plays around? He has Tzitzis and he wraps the Tzitzis around his arm like tefillin. That is what he liked to do for playing, he would pretend that he was putting on tefillin. So he showed Rav Shach, look at my little Yankele that this is what he does for play.

Rav Shach turned to the father and he said Reb Yid, you have to start Davening with a Minyan. He understood that if a boy sees a father putting on tefillin, it could only happen if the father puts on tefillin because he is Davening at home. In an ideal world a child should never see you putting on tefillin until he gets old enough to come to Shul with you. When you put on tefillin you put it on in a beis medrash. We don't have the minhag in America to put on at home and go to shul that way. And mimeila, it is all part of this hisbonenus that we need the understanding. Bilam hated klal yisrael, he knew their weaknesses, he knew about the mazikim at bed time.

Tonight, fight off the mazikim. When it is time to go to sleep don't drey around. Don't look at the paper, don't look at your emails. Go to sleep, have a good night's sleep and wake up refreshed in the morning on time to make it to davening the way it's supposed to be, which is before davening with enough time. If there's an eight o'clock minyan, it means you're supposed to come five or ten to eight so you can put on your talis and tefillin before the start of the minyan. IY"H we shall bli neder. And with that, I want to wish everybody an absolutely wonderful and heilige Shabbos kodesh!

Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Balak 5784

1 – Topic – The Chronology of the Parsha

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Balak. In Parshas Behaloscha I had pointed out the chronology of the Chumash. It is something that not many people realize but from when Klal Yisrael came to Har Sinai in Parshas Yisro until Chamishi of Behaloscha, they are all in one place, at Sinai for almost a year and so much of the Torah is said there.

What I would like to point out this week, is that the last Posuk of last week's Parsha, Parshas Chukas which talks about as is found in 22:1 (וַיִּחַנוּ בְּעַרְבוֹת מוֹאָב), which talks about Klal Yisrael arriving at (עַרְבוֹת מוֹאָב) and of course the whole Parshas Balak takes place by (עַרְבוֹת מוֹאָב) in the area of Moav, that is the final stop of Klal Yisrael. From the last Posuk of Chukas until the end of Zos Hab'racha is again Klal Yisrael all in one place. In Zos Hab'racha it says Devarim 34:1 (וַיַּעַל וַיִּמָּת נָשָׁם מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד-יְהוָה, (34:5. It says there in 34:5 (מֹשֶׁה מַעֲרִיבֵת מוֹאָב, אֶל-הַר נָבוֹ, רֹאשׁ הַפָּסְגָה, אֲשֶׁר עַל-פְּנֵי יְרֵחוֹ בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹאָב). So that, really all of this took place in one stop. So that, until Chamishi of Behaloscha is one stop, then all the way until the story of the Meraglim is all in that same time span until Tisha B'av of the second year, and then from the last Posuk of Chukas until the end is all again in one stop in (עַרְבוֹת מוֹאָב). The whole 39 years in between, is sort of swallowed up in the second part of Chukas and in the story of Korach. It is a Shaila when Korach took place, but it is all swallowed up there, and there is an important lesson here. The important lesson is to know that Torah, Neviim and Kesuvim is not a history book. It is not there to tell the history of the Jewish people. As a matter of fact, for most of the 40 years in the Midbar Klal Yisrael were learning B'hasmada, were doing Ratzon Hashem, it was a Dor Dai'a. If you learn Chumash without noticing, you would think that they are a bunch of troublemakers because it goes from one problem to another. The answer is no. Most of what took place is not recorded. What we can learn from is recorded.

Point # 2 about these Pesukim. The Posuk keeps on saying that it was B'erez Moav, B'arvos Moav. When Moshe Rabbeinu died (וַיָּמָת שָׁם מֹשֶׁה עֶבֶד-יְיָ, בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹאב). An important point. Klal Yisrael did not conquer the land of Moav. Klal Yisrael went around Moav. They didn't conquer Moav. The Posuk says that they were commanded not to conquer the land of Edom and they were Mesoveiv. It is interesting that the Posuk doesn't say clearly about Moav.

2 – Topic – A Machshava idea of Bilam

It is not entirely as it seems. First of all, the Ramban in Posuk Lamed Aleph in Parshas Balak says (כי בלעם לא היה נביא, אלו היה נביא איך יצטרך לגלוי העיניים בראיית המלאך). If he would have been a Navi he would have seen the Malach the Ramban says. He wasn't a Navi. He was given one opportunity with one set of Nevuos here.

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to contradict our Rashi and it is a very big problem between these two Rashis. Rashi by us says that he had a Nevua, somehow akin to Moshe Rabbeinu, and Rashi in Ki Sisa, the Radak and Ramban say that he was not a true Navi. Tzorech Iyun Gadol!

There are two possible answers. One answer appears in Baalei Machshava. They say the following. They say, HKB”H gave this (וגלוי עינים), this little bit of revelation to Bilam. That is the way the Ribbono Shel Olam starts with every Navi. It depends what you do with it. Moshe Rabbeinu also started with a lower level of Nevua. But he rose, he grew, he built himself up and Mimeila he became Moshe. So the Umos Ha’olam shouldn’t say (אלו היינו גביאים), we don’t have the opportunity. Hashem gave the same opportunity that he gave to Moshe Rabbeinu. Moshe Rabbeinu also started with a small amount of Shru’yas Hashechina and from that he built himself up and he grew. That is the lesson really of Bilam. He had the opportunity and what did he use it for? Gornish! He wanted to make money from Balak. That is a Navi? This is a Teretz from the Sifrei Hamachshava.

There is another technical answer and that comes from a Rashi in Iyov 4:12. Rashi in Iyov says (לפי שאין רוח הקודש נגלה על נביאי עובדי כוכבים בפרהסיא). That when Rashi said earlier in Ki Sisa that there is no Nevua – Shruyas Hashechina for the Umos Ha’olam, that is (בפרהסיא). That is openly. It says in Beraishis 20:3 (ויבא אלרים אל-אבימלך, בחלום הלילה). Avimelech secretly had Nevua. Lavan had Nevua. Zagat Rashi, that the same thing is true about Bilam, (נופל וגלוי עינים). That it was done in an Ofen Tzina, not in an Ofen Galui. Therefore, it is not a Stira the two Rashis. Rashi says in Ki Sisa he didn’t have Nevua, that the only Nevua he had was (נופל וגלוי עינים), whatever that means exactly, some type of falling and having an opening of Shechina. It is not a Stira. Because it is a level of Nevua.

Combining the two answers we can understand that everything begins. When HKB”H is giving a person a tease, a little bit of Ruchnios, gives someone a good Seder, a Geshmakeit in something that he hears or something that he learned. What does he do? I know people who heard a wonderful Dvar Torah from a Sefer and they went out and bought it and that year they looked every Shabbos at that Sefer. This is because they had a little (גלוי עינים), a little eye opening, and they made it into something very real. They built on it. They continued with it. Many people they shrug it off. A Geshmake Vort and they go on with life.

Seizing opportunities. The lesson of the difference between Bilam and Moshe, is a lesson of taking your opportunities, taking the opening. Everything in this world is Hester, HKB”H is hidden in this world. Everything is hidden. You take the moment of (גלוי עינים), when HKB”H gives you a little bit, a little bit of a peak, a little bit of a glance into Ruchnios and you seize on it, then you can build yourself up to the height of a Ruchnios that is a Geshmak that HKB”H shines on you but you have to be able to open the door and let it in.

And so, a technical idea, the chronology of the Parsha. A Machshava idea of Bilam Hakoseim, how Bilam lost opportunities. With these two thoughts I want to wish everybody an absolutely wonderful and extraordinary Shabbos Kodesh, a meaningful Shabbos Kodesh for one and all!

Parshas Chukas 5784

Most derashos on Parshas Chukas focus either on Parah Adumah or some of the other parts of the parshah which contain more pesukim. However, there is a short and quite unknown piece in the parshah, (כא, יז-כ), אז ישיר ישראל וגו', which is actually one of the shiros in the Torah, so let us focus on these pesukim, first al derech hapshat, and then we can delve into the deeper ideas contained within this shirah.

What is this shirah about? What exactly is Klal Yisrael praising? It appears from Rashi that they were praising the be'er, the water they had in the midbar. As we all know, it was the Be'ero Shel Miriam, because in Miriam's zechus water flowed the entire time they were in the midbar. When Miriam passed away the be'er ceased to operate, and it later continued in the zechus of Moshe. (This was the event in which Moshe struck the stone, rather than speaking to it, for the water to begin to flow again.)

The previous pasuk before the shirah (כא, טז) states: ומשם בארה and there was a wellspring of water, היא הבאר אשר אמר ה' למשה אסף את העם ואתנה להם מים, the pasuk refers to Moshe providing water for the people through this be'er. The pesukim then continue with the shirah, אז ישיר ישראל את השירה, הזאת עלי באר ענו לה. So clearly, the simple understanding is that they were singing shirah for the be'er.

There is an obvious question here. If the be'er had already provided them with water for forty years, why is it that only now were they saying shirah? Rashi asks the question but does not really provide an answer, only referring to dersashos. But really there was a basic concept that led to this shirah. Let's explain.

Years ago, in the mid 90's, I had surgery on my leg. I had a rod put into my leg and for a while I couldn't walk, using crutches for six months. But slowly Baruch Hashem I healed and as you know I dance around wherever I go. Once I was back on my feet, I spoke in shul about appreciating the ability to walk. One of our mispallelim mentioned to me afterward that you can't really tell people to appreciate walking. One who is accustomed to walking since he is a small child, and continues walking his whole life, takes it for granted. I was in danger of losing the ability to walk altogether so of course I appreciated it. But everyone else, as they say in Yiddish, "Men vert tzugevoint," you get used to it. We don't appreciate things when we have them all the time.

So too here in our parshah. The generation that grew up in the midbar with flowing water from the be'er didn't appreciate it as something miraculous. We too, when it rains and we have free water flowing all around, we don't appreciate it, it's part of nature. Therefore, only when the be'er had ceased to operate and they were without water, and then it resumed to flow again, did they truly appreciate the miracle of the be'er and they sang shirah.

The pasuk (טו, טז) says Klal Yisrael referred to the bread that fell from heaven as mann. What kind of name is mann? The pasuk explains because they didn't know what it was, כי לא ידעו מה הוא. Asks Rav Chaim Shmuelevitz zatzal, why would they call its name for such a reason? He explains because when the mann first fell they were in amazement of the miracle. Therefore, they kept the

name to serve as a reminder that this is something miraculous, to retain the appreciation for what they had.

Chazal tell us that just as the be'er ceased to operate when Miriam passed away but eventually resumed in the zechus of Moshe, [so too the mann stopped falling when Aharon passed away but resumed in the zechus of Moshe\[A1\]](#) . Why then did Klal Yisrael only say shirah for the be'er but not for the mann? The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh explains that since there was no break in the falling of the mann they didn't appreciate it as much. Only the be'er which stopped flowing causing them to lack water, did they appreciate when it resumed flowing.

Of course, the lesson we need to learn from this is to appreciate all Hakadosh Baruch Hu's gifts to us, and not to take them for granted because we get used to having them. There is nothing people get accustomed to more than marriage. Marriage is a gift from Hakadosh Baruch Hu. In the beginning, when two people come together, there is an excitement, a uniqueness, the feeling of something special. But people take it for granted; spouses take each other for granted; it no longer has the proper appreciation. A person should always continue to appreciate his marriage. He should always feel as if it is new. When I forgot my first anniversary, I told my wife "Shanah rishonah never ends," and that has been my excuse ever since. A person should take the time to appreciate all the good that he has and that he takes for granted.

Let's move on now to a deeper understanding of the shirah from the Netziv in He'emek Davar. The Netziv explains that for forty years in the midbar Moshe Rabbeinu had taught Klal Yisrael the basic knowledge and ideas of Torah. A well of standing water may be the mashal for the basic knowledge of Torah. But a be'er is a wellspring, with new energy and water coming forth from the ground. At this time, at the end of the forty years, Moshe opened before them the world of pilpul, of chiddushei Torah, a fountain of new knowledge, of chiddush. With the return of the well's operation, the Be'er of Miriam had now become the Be'er of Moshe. Moshe was telling Klal Yisrael that all the Torah shel ba'al peh that he had taught them for the past thirty-nine years can all be found in the Torah through the derashos and the power of pilpul. The Gemara says that Hashem gave Moshe the power of piplul as a gift, and he in turn gave it over to Klal Yisrael. This is the deeper meaning of the be'er, a fountain of chiddush in Torah that was opened before Klal Yisrael, a gift upon which they said shirah.

In Ohr Gedalyahu (p. 144) Rav Schorr zatzal brings that the words be'er is mentioned forty-eight times in the Torah, corresponding to the מ"ח דברים שהתורה נקנית בהם, the forty-eight ways to acquire Torah. We see the be'er is connected to the kinyan of Torah. There were also forty-eight Nevi'im, a nevuah is the ultimate revelation of new Torah to Klal Yisrael. There were also forty-eight cities of the Levi'im who were the teachers of Torah, (דברים לג, י).

The be'er, the מ"ח kinyanim of Torah, the Torah itself, is something to be appreciated. A person shouldn't just sit and learn Torah. You can sit back and hear a speech, or you can focus and listen to what is being said, sometimes ask a kasha on it, sometimes be mechadesh or add something to it. Don't just listen to me speak, find somewhere else in the Torah where this idea of not taking things for granted applies.

For forty years Moshe Rabbeinu was itching to reveal to Klal Yisrael that they have a power of chiddush. But Hashem said to wait, because the basics of Torah has to be the Halachah L'Moshe M'Sinai. But now Moshe Rabbeinu told them the power of the be'er, that you can have an original thought in Torah shel ba'al peh.

Avraham, Yitzchok, and Yaakov were all involved with be'eros. Avraham dug be'eros, and when the Pillishtim filled them, Yitzchak dug them again. Yaakov rolled the large stone off the be'er. That's the be'er of Torah, from which Yaakov rolled off the blockage stuffing the heart that prevents a person from being able to learn properly.

There are those who sit back and hear the Torah and there are those who sit forward and are focused, thinking, challenging. It's incredible, when I give a shiur in yeshivah and the bachurim catch me on something I said wrong, which happens about once a year, it's exciting. Imagine a law professor arguing points of logic in a class with the students; it would be a challenge. But Torah is that way, others have the ability to be mechadesh as well. That is the Be'er Shel Moshe in this week's parshah.

So, if you're as fortunate as I am to have a bar mitzvah parshah as parshas chukas, you would notice that there is a shirah in this parshah. A shirah which represents the great be'er, אין מים אלא, תורה, the be'er that Hashem told Moshe ואסף את העם ואתנה להם מים, gather the people to give them the power of chiddush, of growth and renewal, in Torah. What a beautiful thing for Klal Yisrael to say shirah about. And so, for a change, this Parshas Chukas when by Krias haTorah you hear אז ישיר ישראל, not אז ישיר משה, realize that it's your song. עלי באר, go up to the wellspring, ענו לה, say your piece, say your part in the learning of Torah, in the chiddush of Torah. If you do that, when you have an hour to learn the hour will become an hour and a half. You'll be into it. You won't be able to let go. That's part of the mesikus of Torah.

With that I would like to wish everyone an absolutely wonderful Shabbos, a meaningful Shabbos, a Shabbos of זאת חוקת התורה, of being koneh Torah. Good Shabbos to one and all.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas - Balak 5783

1 – Topic – Preparing to go to Eretz Yisrael and leaving behind Chutz L'aretz

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Chukas – Balak catching up so to speak to Eretz Yisrael. Speaking of Eretz Yisrael, I was in Eretz Yisrael at the beginning of the week and I would like to share with you a brief thought. In the Aderes Eliyahu, the GR"A in Parshas Eikev 8:1, the Gaon writes (ולביאת הארץ צריך ג' דברים) that to come to Eretz Yisrael you need three things. 1) The first thing you need is that you have to prepare yourself to leave Chutz L'aretz. (א' הכנה לצאת מח"ל). 2) You have to know the road which you are traveling. (ב' הדרך אשר ילך). 3) You have to come to Eretz Yisrael. (ג' הביאה לא"י). So you have leaving, traveling and coming.

It is not really so. All you need is 2 and 3. You need a road to go and you need to arrive in Eretz Yisrael. If you have a road to go Mimeila you are leaving Chutz L'aretz. What does it mean # 1 that you need a Hachana La'tzeis L'chutz L'aretz?

The GR”A here is Megaleh to us a Sod. He is telling us the secret of being Matzlaich in a trip to Eretz Yisrael. There are some who come to Eretz Yisrael and they never left Chutz L’aretz, they are taking Chutz L’aretz along with them. Do me a favor, leave it behind. You want to be able to come and be Nichnas L’eretz Yisrael, then you need # 1 Hachana Latzeis Chutz L’aretz. You got to understand that you are leaving Chutz L’aretz and you are going out of Chutz L’aretz.

I came to Ohr Sameach this week and I met somebody who I met for the first time last summer. Yoel from Norway. He had just come and I met him with his father and they had a Shabbos Seuda together with us. I asked his father to please tell us what brought him and his son here. He said essentially that he wants his son to know something about Judaism. Therefore, he came with him there. A wonderful young man.

Yoel was in the Mechina, the beginners program and made his first Siyum this week on Maseches Megillah and he is moving up to the Beis Medrash program. A one year jumping up to the regular Beis Medrash program. It is just absolutely incredible. Incredible what the Ruach of Eretz Yisrael could do. Why did he go to Eretz Yisrael? To know something about Judaism. We think we know all that there is to know about Yiddishkeit. We have much to learn. If we left Chutz L’aretz to go to Eretz Yisrael to know more about Yiddishkeit then we would do very well.

It is said that Rav Hutner once observed a Beis Medrash of Bochurim learning on Shavuos. He admired them. He commented to somebody, their faces are towards Har Sinai just like by Mattan Torah. I am just not sure if their backs are to the rest of the world. You need two things. You have to face Har Sinai and you have to have your back towards the rest of the world.

Yaakov when he left Lavan’s house he said, as is found in Rashi to Beraishis 32:5 (עם לְבָן גִּרְתִּי) (ולא למדתי ממצעו הרעים), that he kept (or at least learned about) all 613 Mitzvos. (ולא למדתי ממצעו הרעים), that he kept every single Mitzvah, what do you have to add (ולא למדתי ממצעו הרעים)? You see from here that for some people it is not a contradiction. You can do everything good and still have yourself totally in Chutz L’aretz, totally in Beis Lavan. Get involved in the pleasures and the overindulgences of Chutz L’aretz.

When we go into a Sukkah we say a beautiful Tefillah. It says (ובזכות צאתי מביתי החוצה ודרך מצותיך) (ארוצה). We ask for a Zechus for the fact that we go out of the house. Really the Ikkur is the Zechus that we go into the Sukkah and not so much that we go out of the house. No! Some people go into the Sukkah without leaving their normal homes. They don’t leave it at all. They are sitting in their homes just now there is Schach on top of them.

It is the same thing with going to Eretz Yisrael. What a waste. People go to Eretz Yisrael and they bring Chutz L’aretz with them. They bring everything with them. They were once Bnei Torah and now they are working people. They go to Eretz Yisrael, you would think they would come to Eretz Yisrael that you should dress like Bnei Torah, you should talk and walk like Bnei Torah. Your interests should be in jeeping? That is why you go to Eretz Yisrael to go jeeping? Imagine, someone comes into a Beis Medrash and he is sitting in the Beis Medrash and what is he doing in the Beis Medrash? He has the ingredients and he is making himself some fancy desert sitting in

middle of the Beis Medrash. Nothing Treif, it is a Kosher desert. In middle of the Beis Medrash? That is what you do, you go jeeping in middle of the Ribbono Shel Olam's Eretz Yisrael? Rachmana Litzlon! It is not what Eretz Yisrael is for.

2 – Topic – The Chida's message about Tumah

In Parshas Chukas we learn of course about the Parah Aduma. There is an incredible Chida in Nachal Kiddumim on Koheles Perek Zayin. The Chida says Si'ba, the reason, She'ainenu B'madreigas Hatorah, that we are not on the same Madreiga of Torah is because Ain Lanu Parah Adumah, it is because we are Tamei. Tamei is not just a ritual Tumah, something that is a side Halacha. It affects the person. A person who is Tamei is not the same as a person who is Tahor. His heart is not opened the same way for Limud Hatorah. He says that that is why the Posuk in Tehillim 12:7 says (אֲמָרוֹת יִרְנָה, אֲמָרוֹת טְהוֹרוֹת). (אֲמָרוֹת יִרְנָה) when are the Imros Hashem fully Imros Hashem? It is when they are Tehoros. When people are saying it in a Tahor'dika Oifen. That is what it says in the Chida. We have to realize, that Inyanei Tumah are not just a side Halacha of Tumah, they are B'etzem Devarim that are Tamei because they are Tamei.

The Rambam writes in the end of Hilchos Mikvaos 11:12 that (הַטְבִּילָה תְּלוּי בַּכוּוֹנָת הַלֵּב). Tovelung to become Tahor is Talui in the Kavana of the heart. (וּלְפִיכֵךְ אָמְרוּ חַכְמֵי טָבֵל וְלֹא הוֹחֵזֵק כְּאִילוּ לֹא). (טָבֵל). You have to be thinking when you are Tovelung. That means becoming Tahor is more than just a ritual thing. It is something which has to do with the person himself. Which has to do with the person who is Tovelung and he is doing it for a reason to be an Ish Tahor.

Now we understand why Ezra was Misakein that even though today we are not Tahor and we can't eat Terumah and we can't Challah even if we are Kohanim, we can't go in the Beis Hamikdash. So if you are a Baal Keri and you have a certain type of Tumah, why go to the Mikvah, you are Tamei Meis anyway so it is not going to help you for other things?

The answer is because Tumah is something that affects the person. Tumah is something that is B'etzem. It is a Shod that people are not careful in Tevillas Ezra. Many people are careful, more people should be. To be careful to Tovel Tevillas Ezra. When someone is a Baal Keri to go to the Mikvah.

Rav Pam did not go to the Mikvah necessarily on Erev Shabbos. He didn't have a Minhag to go. He was a Litvishe. But Tevillas Ezra he told me he was always Zahir in.

It is very similar, there was a Chashuve Yid who had the Zechus of driving Rav Moshe to Shul every morning. His son was learning in Torah Vodaath and somebody asked his son does Rav Moshe go to the Mikvah before Shacharis? It is a funny thing, he goes Sundays and he doesn't go Fridays. He couldn't understand why. This is because Onah of a Talmid Chochom is Erev Shabbos to Erev Shabbos so Tevillas Ezra came up to him on Sunday. That is the important idea that we need to understand.

3 – Topic – A beautiful Maharal at the end of Parshas Chukas

I want to mention to you the last Rashi in Chukas. He brings there the Medrash about Sichon Melech Og who picked up a mountain to throw it on Klal Yisrael and a worm made a hole in the mountain and it fell over his head and became like a necklace and he wanted to pull it off and his teeth grew long and it got stuck in the mountain and he couldn't pull it off. An incredible Medrash. It is a Gemara in Berachos Nun Daled and Rashi alludes to it and tells you to look it up in the last Rashi in the Parsha 21:35 (וַיִּכְּ אוֹתוֹ).

I mention it because of the Maharal. There is a long Maharal on that last Rashi. That one Maharal is probably as long as all of the Maharals on the whole Parshas Chukas or nearly as long. I told you many times that there is a Machlokes Maharsha and Maharal. The Maharal Teitches Aggadata Gemaras B'derech Mashul and not literally. Maharsha says Ain Medrash Yotzei Midei Peshuto generally. There are some exceptions but generally. But the Maharal he Teitches it B'derech Remez.

There is a beautiful Maharal at the end of the Parsha and if you want to see it in the Gur Aryeh which just shows you the She'efes HaMaharal that I have mentioned on other occasions.

And so, three thoughts. 1) Preparing to go to Eretz Yisrael and leaving behind Chutz L'aretz. When you go into a Shul you have to leave behind Chutz L'aretz. I wish people would use the lockers and leave their phones and especially their smartphones behind. 2) The Chida's message about Tumah. Tumah Biz'man Haze is also M'akeiv a person's understanding of Torah. 3) This last Nekudah of the beautiful Maharal at the end of the Parsha. With that I want to wish everyone an absolutely wonderful Shabbos Kodesh!

Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Chukas 5782

1 – Topic – A Thought on Parah Adumah

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Chukas. I would like today to suggest a possible explanation in Rashi back in Parshas Beshalach 15:25 on the Posuk (נָשָׂם שָׁם לוֹ חֶק וּמִשְׁפָּט) that (בְּמֵרָה נָתַן לָהֶם) (מִקְצַת פְּרִשְׁיּוֹת שֶׁל תּוֹרָה שִׁיתַּעֲסֻקוּ בָהֶם, שֶׁבֶת וּפְרָה אֲדוּמָה וְדִינִין) and the question is what Parah Adumah is doing in Parshas Beshalach at Marah and there are numerous questions.

Let's turn to Parshas Chukas which of course begins with the Parah Adumah. When was the very first Parah Adumah brought and who were the very first people made Tahor with the Parah Adumah? As a Levi I am proud to say that Leviim were the first and let me explain.

The Gemara says in Gittin on 60a (second to bottom line) (שְׁמִנָּה פְּרִשְׁיּוֹת נֹאמְרוּ בְּיוֹם שֶׁהוּקָם בּוֹ הַמִּשְׁכָּן). There are eight Parshios told to the Jewish people on the day that the Mishkan was put up, meaning Rosh Chodesh Nissan, and one of them is the Parsha of Parah Adumah. Rashi there (Daf Samech Amud Beis) says (לְפִי שְׁבוּעַת הַמַּחֲרַת נִשְׂרָפָה הַפָּרָה). Rashi says that these eight Parshios were on Rosh Chodesh Nissan and on Beis Nissan the first Parah Adumah was burned (וְקוֹדֵם לָכֵן לֹא יָכְלוּ לַעֲשׂוֹתָהּ). Rashi says that the Parah could not have been earlier (דְּבַעֲיָנָא וְהָיָה אֵל נִכַּח פְּנֵי אֵהָל מוֹעֵד), because you

have to be able to Shpritz and face towards the Ohel Moed and there was no Ohel Moed until the Mishkan was put up.

As an aside, I don't know why they could not do it in the previous days, in the days when Moshe Rabbeinu set up the Ohel Moed, but there must be a reason. Coming back to our discussion.

Here we are talking about what Rashi said and there is a similar Rashi in Parshas Naso 7:1 (וראש) (חדש ניסן היה, בשני נשרפה הפרה). On the second day of Nissan the Parah was burned. When were the first people made Tahor with it? (בשלישי) On the third day of Nissan. Rashi says (הזו הזיה ראשונה) was the first time that there were people made Tahor with the Parah Adumah and that is in being Metaheir Sheivet Levi. So that is the timeline of the Parah Adumah. Rosh Chodesh Nissan they were taught, Beis Nissan they actually went through the process of burning the Parah Adumah, and on Gimmel Nissan the first people were made Tahor in preparation for the Avodah in the Mishkan.

The question is if on Rosh Chodesh Nissan they were taught the Parah Adumah what in the world happened in Marah which occurred in Nissan a year earlier. What is going on? So I would imagine the following might be the answer. The Parah Adumah is a Parah, a calf. A Parah Adumah you will find because you will find a red cow. HKB"Y will make it there. However, why would the owner of the cow not work with the Parah? As it says in 19:2 (אֲשֶׁר לֹא-עֲלָה עָלֶיהָ, עַל). Why would he never put a yoke on it, it is an animal? It may well be that it is true that the Parsha of Parah Adumah and all the details were said on Rosh Chodesh Nissan. It is not a contradiction that at Marah they had to be told that there are coming attractions. You are going to get a Mitzvah of Parah Adumah, to whoever in Klal Yisrael has the Zechus that he has a cow and its hairs are all red, he should make sure to treat it with the proper Kedusha that when the time comes you will have a Parah Adumah.

2 – Topic - A Thought about Mei Miriva

The second major event in the Parsha is the Mei Miriva and Meforshim discuss the idea of what Moshe Rabbeinu's Aveira was exactly, as it is very difficult to put your finger on it and different Meforshim have different explanations. I am not going into what the Aveira was but the whole Musag, the whole idea that there is a major difference if a stone gives water whether you talk to it or whether you hit it, Mei Nafka Mina? Is one really a bigger miracle than the other? You hit a rock, you talk to a rock, same miracle. It is just as miraculous. Therefore, it needs some sort of explanation what is the difference.

In the Pachad Yitzchok on Pesach, Maimar Mem (page Kuf Yud Ches), he has an explanation with a Biur Klali, with a general rule. He says the following. There are two types of Nissim, two types of miracles. Sometimes a miracle takes place because at that moment the result of the miracle is needed. For example, Rav Chanina Ben Dosa miraculously said (Taanis 25a) (מי שאמר לשמן וידלוק) (הוא יאמר לחומץ וידלוק). He said, that G-d can make that vinegar could burn just like oil could burn. It was a miracle for what was needed at that moment.

There are other types of miracles. There are some miracles that are in an Ofen Klali, that they are statements for the Briya Kula. For example, Makkas Bechoros which was not just the death of

members of the enemy nation, no. It was a Havchana, it was a time that B'ni Bechori Yisrael, G-d calls the Jewish people His Bechor, and there was a clear separation forever, a clarity that Klal Yisrael and the nations of the world are different. That clarity came out with Makkas Bechoros. It was a Davar Klali, it was a miracle in a way of Hivdalti Eschem Li. It created the idea of a Havdala, of a separating of Klal Yisrael from the nations of the world.

Krias Yam Suf was also a miracle B'ofen Klali, it was a statement. All the waters of the world split. It was a statement of the individual status of Klal Yisrael. So we find Pinchas Ben Yair that the Gemara in Chulin 7a brings that he split water, but it is not Krias Yam Suf. That is a Neis in the first type, Nissim L'tzorech Ha'rega, but on a much higher level are the miracles that HKB"H performed through Moshe Rabbeinu which were Nissim Ha'poalim B'briya Kula. The miracle of the water coming from the stone by speaking should have been a miracle B'ofen Ha'poalim B'briya Kula, should have been a Mussar that in the Briya there is a Koach Haddibur, there is a Koach of listening to the words of the Navi and having that influence and being Poel through that. There is a certain Koach, there is a certain influence that would have happened in the world. Moshe Rabbeinu hit the rock. There are things that happened because of Dibbur Hashem and things that happened because of Gevuras Hashem. This should have happened because of Dibbur Hashem. It would have been Poel in the Koach of G-d's word to influence the Jewish people. Instead it was Poel in a lesser way. In the power of the Gevura, in the hitting to influence. It is not the same. It was a major difference between the two and that major difference between the way HKB"H said it should be done and the way that it actually took place, that major difference is the failing of the Mai Miriva, whatever it is that happened there.

3 – Topic – A Thought on the Siyum of Masechta Yevamos of the Daf Yomi

I would like to pause and comment about the fact that Daf Yomi is finishing Masheches Yevamos. Jews all over, hundreds, thousands of Jews are finishing a very difficult study of Mascheta Yevamos to which Jews have been devoted with I guess different levels of success and Mesiras Nefesh. It is not easy to make a Siyum on Yevamos.

My birthday just passed and I am a bit philosophical. If you will allow me a thought as an outsider, I am not learning Daf Yomi, as someone observing that which is taking place. When I was born just a decade or so after the Holocaust, the Yiddishe Velt, the Am Yisroel was in tatters, was destroyed. Baranovich didn't exist. Rav Elchonon went to the gas chambers. Telz didn't exist. Mir didn't exist. Salbodka didn't exist. There was nothing. Krakow and Bobove Chassidus was gone. The Yidden in Vilna were no more. Yidden in every one of the Jewish cities in Warsaw, Alexander Chassidim, Gerrer Chassidim was gone. Everything was gone.

My father went back to his hometown and turned around and left, there was nothing there. There was nothing Jewish there. All the places that were Jewish places were gone. Klal Yisrael is here. It is incredible. Here we are from the day I was born until today, and Klal Yisrael has rebuilt itself. It is incredible. I walk past the Yeshiva schoolyard, I see Yiddishe Kinder, children with their Tzitzis flying, with their Yarmulkas and they are Shomer Torah U'mitzvos as a Pashtus. They go and sit and learn for hours every day. Here we have working people devoted to learning Yevamos. It is a miracle, it is an incredible thing. The whole Yiddishe Folk whatever existed 100 years ago no longer existed. There was nothing there. Nothing from before still existed afterwards. There

You have to stop and pause for a minute. Some learned Yevamos like someone who sees something without his glasses, without a good focus. Some learned Yevamos with a better focus. Some made it through every Blatt. Some struggled through many Blatt. But Yidden are Huruvung on Yevamos.

May HKB”H give us the strength we should be able to be Sovel. We have problems in America today, I don’t know what is going to be. But one thing I know, Klal Yisrael will continue. The Nitzchios of Klal Yisrael, the Nitzchios of Lomdei Torah will continue. What will happen to those around us? They become lost, they are lost and they don’t come back. The Habsburg empire who ever heard of it? The Ottoman empire who ever heard of it? Today’s generation doesn’t know that they ever existed. There were Czars and they are gone forever. Klal Yisrael pushes on. May we be Zoche to appreciate the wonderful opportunities that HKB”H gives us and the Beracha that Klal Yisrael has. (כי לא תשכח מפי נרעו). We should be Zoche to have children, grandchildren and great grandchildren learning Torah B’simcha Rabba. Let’s celebrate with the Tefillah (כי לא תשכח מפי נרעו). (והעֶרְב נָא ר' אֶלְהֵינוּ אֶת דְּבָרֵי תוֹרָתְךָ בְּפִינוּ וּבְפִיּוֹת עַמְּךָ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל) Mazal Tov to all the Mesayemim of Masechtas Yevamos. May you continue with your strength be part of this beautiful rebirth of Klal Yisrael. A Guttan Shabbos one and all!

1 - Topic - A Vort on Bil'am from the Ohr Gedalyahu

19

In the Ohr Gedalyahu (page 147) there is an extraordinary piece based on the writings of Rav Yehoshua Leib Diskin on the concept of Nevuah. How Nevuah works. Anybody who studies Navi should learn the piece. I would like to quote one segment of that extraordinary Shtickel Torah.

What is the Hava Amina that Bil'am had that he would somehow be able to curse Klal Yisrael. Bil'am knew the score, Bil'am knew that we are the Am Hashem, Bil'am knew that it was a time of Rachamei Shamayim. What in the world was Bil'am thinking?

The Klal that is used there to explain this is a Klal that is really a Klal in life. The Klal in life is that most things in life are not black or white. Most things in life depend. Depend on how they are received, depend on how they are used, depend on how they are taken advantage of. Most things in life depend on the recipient.

For example, we know that Chol Hachalomos Holchin Acher Ha'peh. We are told about the interpretation of dreams which are of course related to Nevuah. Chalom Echad Mei'Shishim B'nevuah depends on the interpretation. However you understand that exactly, but it means that there is no absolute value to Chalomos, it depends. Everything depends.

The example here would be the Beracha of Bil'am, Ma Tovv Ohalecha Yaakov. How beautiful are your tents Yaakov (Klal Yisrael). It is a Beracha. But it depends as there will be Jews who will say Ma Tovv Ohalecha Yaakov and say why am I going to the Beis Medrash at night. Jewish homes are an attraction, they are a place to serve HKB"H. So you see that the blessing of Ma Tovv Ohalecha Yaakov depends on the recipient. It depends on what someone takes from that Beracha.

It could also be twisted, it could be turned. Since Bil'am was the Poser Chalomos, just like somebody who has dreams, we say dreams go according to the Pison, the one giving the words of Beracha could see it one way, another way and many places in between.

So this was Bil'am's idea. Bil'am's thought was that he was going to give Klal Yisrael a Beracha, but the Beracha through his prism, through his vision, through his eyeglasses. Therefore, it will depend on the recipient. It is not only true in that case, it is true until today. When we say Ma Tovv Ohalecha Yaakov, we take pride in a Jewish home. There are many who will take that and use it improperly and stay home and not go out to the Beis Medrash at night. That is a mistake. That is, those are the two sides of every Beracha that anybody has in this world.

The Gemara in Megillah says on Daf Yud Daled (Amud Beis) that Yoshiyahu Hamelech went to Chuldah to ask for an interpretation of something that had happened. Chuldah Haneviah. Chuldah was a Neviah. The Gemara asks why didn't he go to Yirmiya and the answer is that Nashim Rachmanios Heim. The question is what do you mean that Nashim Rachmanios Heim? A Nevuah is a Nevuah. Says Reb Yehoshua Leib Diskin, it is this idea. The same words can come in many different ways to people. What did HKB"H do? He gave Bil'am the ability to get Nevuah B'aspaklaria Hami'ira, like Moshe Rabbeinu, with absolute clarity. The Nevuah could not be interpreted in two ways.

But the message of Reb Yehoshua Leib is that in life there are moments that are opportunities. There are moments that are opportunities for growth, there are moments that could be a Beracha,

that could be a person's biggest Beracha. Or they could be a Klala. Or they could be anything in between. It is all in what you make of it.

With this very unique summer upon us, it is very much that way. It is a summer for the Tinokos Shel Beis Rabbon, for the youngsters, for the elementary school children, Mesivta children, many who have been out of a schedule, out of sorts, out of a sense of security and continuity for so many months.

What are we doing this summer? What are we doing to make it work for them? A person could say Shalom Alai Nasfshi, things are better, they are easier. It could be a Klala. It could be a time where the regimen, the routine, does not resume. Where people are busy on vacation, after a March, April, May and June of no schedule. Chas V'shalom. We need to get back to the schedule.

The Beracha of the break in the seriousness of the Matzav of the situation here on the east coast, is that if used properly there could be a regular schedule for youngsters and for everybody in the morning. People who are learning the Daf get back to the Daf. People with Sedorim that never missed a Seder, a Minyan or learning, get back to that routine. There is a fact that things are lighter and easier in our area a Beracha or G-d forbid a Klala? It depends on how it is received.

This year, July and August are not months to let up, they are months to buckle down. They are months to buckle down not in a strictness, but in a sense of responsibility, of Achrayos. That is Rabbi Yehoshua Leib Diskin's explanation of Bilam's idea.

2 - Topic - The unique person Bil'am Harasha from Rav Ahron Leib Shteinman.

Let's move on to another Machshava regarding this very unique person Bilam Harasha. Reb Ahron Leib Shteinman asks a Kasha. Rashi tells us that HKB"H didn't want the Umos Ha'olam, the nations of the world to have a complaint. That look at this, Nevuah comes to the Jewish people and the nations of the world do not have Nevuah. So therefore, HKB"H chose one of them to be a prophet as well and that was Bil'am.

The Kasha is the Umos Ha'olam can complain. Ribbono Shel Olam, you chose one of us to be a prophet, to be a Navi? To be a Navi with a clarity of Aspaklaria Hami'ira, a clear Nevua? Why did you choose Bil'am? Bil'am is a Rasha. Bil'am was a Rasha in so many different ways. Many aspects of his life where he was a pervert. He was a person who was not to be respected. He was a person who had Nevuah and was only interested in gold and silver. Ribbono Shel Olam, a Rasha like this is the one chosen to be a Navi?

The answer again is a Klal Gadol in the way HKB"H runs our world. Zeh L'umas Zeh Asa Elokim. HKB"H creates a world where the potential for positive, Tzidkus, the potential for greatness, is mirrored on the flipside with a potential for a person to pervert his job in this world. A person who is wealthier, who is brighter, who is more influential, has a greater potential to achieve, and he also has a greater potential to destroy. Just like in one direction there are great possibilities, so too in the direction of destruction there are unfortunate possibilities.

Zeh L'umas Zeh Asa Elokim. Therefore, it is inherent in creating an opportunity for someone to be great that he has a potential to fall also in an extraordinary way. Zeh L'umas Zeh, if someone has extraordinary Kochos, extraordinary potential for greatness, he also has extraordinary potential to fall, to do things that are improper.

The Tiferes Yisrael at the end of Kiddushin writes, how Moshe Rabbeinu achieved greatness and he personally had the Nisyonos, the challenges, to fall in an extraordinary way. We don't meet Moshe Rabbeinu until he is 80 years old. Who knows how many challenges he went through until he reached his great level of Kedusha. That is something that we have to see going forward as well. Every moment of Nisayon, every moment of opportunity, as great as the opportunity is in front of you, so great is also the opportunity for failure.

And the reverse. When a person feels that HKB"H is giving him a great Nisayon, a great challenge, he should know that success makes it a moment where he can achieve a greater and greater level, something that will stick with him for the rest of his life.

Once again, this message of Bil'am is a message for these times that are so uncertain. They are times which we all understand are of great Nisayon. They are times where people have become Rachmana Litzlan addicted to different things that take place when a person is locked up at home all alone and searches for pleasures that he shouldn't have. When someone touches on that type of a challenge, it is a moment for a potential of great failure. But it is also a moment of potential for great achievement. For turning it around and making it wonderful. And so, as we face what is in our lifetime the most uncertain period ahead of us, we take energy, we take strength from the belief, that wherever there is a potential for failure there is a potential for greatness. We are going to make it a time of greatness. These are two thoughts regarding Bil'am.

3 - Topic - My favorite Vertel on Parshas Balak.

My favorite Vertel regarding Parshas Balak comes from the great Oheiv Yisrael. The Oheiv Yisrael was a lover of the Jewish people, and he said every Parsha has a message of Ahavas Yisrael. Someone asked him, what about Parshas Balak? There is barely a mention of any Jew in the entire Parsha from the beginning to end. Where do you see Ahavas Yisrael?

He said easily. In Balak. It is an abbreviation for V'ahavta L'rei'acha Kamocha. It is a Remez in the name Balak. Someone said Rebbe, V'ahavta starts with a Vav. Balak is a Beis or Veis. Kamocha starts with a Caf and Balak is spelled with a Kuf.

The Rebbe replied, when it comes to Ahavas Yisrael we don't ask Kashas, we just move forward. Let us move forward in a meaningful way. Have a meaningful summer. A summer of greatness, a summer of achievement for you, for me, for all of us and certainly for those of us courageous enough to make this incredibly long trip out to New Hampshire. For what reason?

To be Mechaneich Yaldei Yisrael. To help young men be part of a system, be part of a schedule, be part of a place that is devoted to Ahavas Hashem to Ahavas Yisrael. Being Ovdei Hashem. IY"H we should be Zoche to come to a regular Yeshiva Zman with great Hatzlacha. A Gutten and meaningful Shabbos to all!

1 - Topic - A New Havana in the Cheit Mei Miriva from the Netziv.

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Chukas an extraordinary Parsha with many Mitzvos and the Petira of both Aharon Hakohen and Miriam. I would like to share with you today a new Havana in the Cheit Mei Miriva. As you know, Rishonim bring many Peshatim in what Moshe Rabbeinu did wrong in the Maiseh Mei Miriva and the basic Pshat that the Velt knows is the Pshat of Rashi. Rashi says that Moshe Rabbeinu struck the stone instead of speaking to the stone. It seems at face value to be a very elementary mistake and the Onesh of the Cheit is not very understood.

The Netziv says a Gevaldige Pshat here in the Hameik Davar (on page Reish Lamed). He ties it in to what he calls a Hakdama in an Ikkur Gadol B'tefilla, of a big rule when it comes to Davening and he says the following Klal Gadol. We will get back to Mei Miriva after we understand this Klal.

Zagt the Netziv (אפילו בזמן שרוצה הקב"ה תפילה גורמת). Even when HKB"H plans to give you something, Tefilla expedites that it will take place. Kach Nitveh B'briya. This is what HKB"H put into the world. He put into the Teva of the Briya that even if you are supposed to get something and Hashem wants to give it to you, there are times that it will only come your way if you Daven. The Raya is a beautiful Raya from Eliyahu Hanavi.

When Eliyahu Hanavi declared a drought on the ten Shevatim, the drought continued for a while and then the Ribbono Shel Olam came and said to him (הראה אל אחאב ואתנה מטר). Genukt, the drought is over. I am going to make it rain. You go to Achav and do whatever you can to help give Mussar to Klal Yisrael because the Ribbono Shel Olam said I had enough, no more drought. Eliyahu goes to Har Hacarmel and does what he does at Har Hacarmel to show that the Aish came from Shamayim and then at the end he Davens and rain comes. The question is why does he have to Daven as HKB"H said that it is time to give rain?

Zagt the Netziv, there are two types of Davening. Bish'as Tzara, when in Shamayim we have no Zechusim, that is one type of Davening. Davening can turn it around. There is a second type of Davening and that is when the Ribbono Shel Olam is ready to give to you, but HKB"H says come pick it up, come here and ask for it, I am ready. Tefilla then makes it happen.

Zagt the Netziv, in a case when the Ribbono Shel Olam is ready to give, there is no difference between the Tefilla of the Gadol Hador and the Tefilla of an ordinary person. When Hashem is ready to give it, all you have to do is come pick it up. Bish'as Tzarah, then you need the Tefilla of an Adam Gadol to be Mehapeich.

The Yesod is that Hashem put into the Briya that Davening makes things happen. Zagt the Netziv, look what I wrote in Beraishis in 2:5. So I looked. (וְכָל עֵשֶׂת הַשָּׂדֶה) the things that grow in the field are referred to as (עֵשֶׂת הַשָּׂדֶה). Literally, it means the things that grow in the field. But (עֵשֶׂת) also means Davening. (אֵין שִׁיחָה אֵלָּא תַפִּלָּה) it says in Maseches Avoda Zorah 7b (9 lines from the bottom). A field is Parnasa. What grows in a field is called (עֵשֶׂת הַשָּׂדֶה). It comes because of Tefilla. It comes because of Davening. Kach Nitveh HKB"H. Hashem put it that way into the Briya.

He says more. Davening is called Avodah. Korbanos are called Avodah. Working in a field is called Avodah. Making Parnasa happen comes through Avodah. B'derech Hateva working in a field, but Min Hashamayim if you put in your Davening and your Kavanos you can make it come, you can make it happen. That is why it is called Avodah. The same exact thing.

Elsewhere I remember the Netziv says that even when Klal Yisrael behaved in Eretz Yisrael there were Bamos. How can it be that a king like Chizkiya can make everybody do Teshuva but he couldn't get rid of the Bamos? Zagt the Netziv, because that is Avodah. A Segula for Parnasa he couldn't get the people to stop.

At any rate, this is the Yesod Gadol. The Yesod Gadol is that Tefilla is Po'el Parnasa, it brings Beracha. When you deserve it, you will find out someday that all you have to do is ask for it. You have Tzar that you don't have a Shidduch, you have Tzar that you don't have Parnasa, you have Tzar that you don't have something else that you want, why didn't you ask? Just ask. That is Tefilla. Ad Kan the Yesod of the Netziv.

Zagt the Netziv, what was the Aveira of the Mei Miriva, you hit the stone, you talk to the stone, ok. No! The Ribbono Shel Olam said Klal Yisrael lived B'derech Neis. The first time that water had to come from the stone, Moshe hit the stone and the water came. No more. Klal Yisrael is going into Eretz Yisrael the Ananei Hakavod are no more. Klal Yisrael has to learn that they are going into a world of Teva. In this world Davening is Po'el. They may think that Davening is only Po'el B'derech Neis. No! Davening is Po'el B'derech Teva.

Moshe Rabbeinu, it is a new Tekufa in Klal Yisrael. Talk to the stone. What do you mean talk to the stone? Daven that the water should come from the stone and then it will come. Moshe Rabbeinu made a mistake. He didn't teach Klal Yisrael. There was a P'gam in his Avodah as the Rebbi of Klal Yisrael and for that reason he lost his Shtella so to speak as the Rebbi of Klal Yisrael. What a beautiful Pshat in the Cheit Mei Miriva. Not a new Cheit, not a new explanation, but a Pshat in Rashi about the difference between talking to the stone and hitting the stone.

2 - Topic - A thought from Rav Matisyahu Salomon on how to deal with feeling stressed out and overwhelmed.

Let's move on to a second thought on the Parshas in 21:4 & 21:5. The Posuk that Klal Yisrael in the Midbar after Aharon's Histalkus and the terrible experience of the Ananei Hakavod going away, they came to a point of (וַתִּקְצַר נַפְשׁ-הָעָם, בְּדֶרֶךְ). There is an extraordinary Rashi that I want to speak out. Rashi says what does it mean (וַתִּקְצַר נַפְשׁ)? There is a certain time when people are overwhelmed and it is called (תִּקְצַר נַפְשׁ). What does that mean? Klal Yisrael was overwhelmed. (קָצַר רוּחַ)? (וְנִפְשָׁנוּ) which is a Posuk in Va'era 6:9. What is (קָצַר רוּחַ)? (וְנִפְשָׁנוּ) What does it mean?

Rashi has an unusual Arichus and says a Pshat that given the limited time I have, I will go straight to the Po'el Yotzei. This is a Yesod that I saw B'sheim Rav Matisyahu Salomon who should be Gezunt in the journal Kol Torah volume Samech. This is from 2004 I believe but an extraordinary Pshat. Halacha L'mayseh, very often people are overwhelmed, people are stressed out, people

come to a situation which is very hard and it causes them pain. There are two possible reasons for that.

L'mashal, if someone takes a heavy burden, a heavy package and can't carry it. Er Ken Nisht. Why can't he? It may be that the package is just too heavy and he undertook too much. It is too Shver for him and he has to put it down. Sometimes it is not because the package is too heavy, it is because he is not holding it right, it is because he is not walking right. He doesn't have the right equipment for moving it. Sometimes the Chisaron is in the package, it is too big. Sometimes the Chisaron is in the carrier. You are just not doing it right.

When you feel overwhelmed and stressed. Take a good look. Sometimes it is Gadol, it is too big. But sometimes it is (תקצר נפש) Tiktzar Nafsho. The Chisaron is in you. You are too short, you are too incomplete. Fix yourself and you will see that you will get fixed. There are times that you are challenged and you think that you just can't. Tiktzar Nafsho. There are times that you are just unrealistic in the way that you approach something, you have to step back and see is it too hard.

The language Rashi uses in describing the Middah of Tiktzar Nafsho. An incredible Lashon. He says (וכל דבר הקשה על אדם נופל בו לשון קצור נפש, כאדם שהטורה בא עליו). Someone who finds himself overwhelmed (ואין דעתו רחבה לקבל אותו הדבר). The Chisaron is in his own mind. His mind is not open to it. (ואין לו מקום בתוך לבו לגור שם אותו הצער). His heart is not prepared for the challenge, for the difficulty. Sometimes you have to look inward, don't look at others to fix it. Look at yourself. Get the right equipment for the challenge. What is the equipment? Zagat Rav Matisyahu, Moshe Rabbeinu made a (נחש נחשית), he taught the people as it says in Rashi to 21:8 (וכי נחש ממית או מחיה, אלא בזמן ישראל מסתכלין כלפי מעלה). When life gets overwhelming and you are stressed, be Mistakeil Klapei Mai'la. Put G-d into the equation.

If you are stuck in a traffic jam and you have to be somewhere and who knows what will happen if you are not there, stop for a moment and take a deep breath and think about the Ribbono Shel Olam. HKB"H is there and he is taking care of you. How it will work, where it will work, when it will work, we will see. Stop for a moment in the many different traffic jams of life and be Mistakeil Klapei Mai'la. You will see the Tiktzar Nafsho will become a Rachov Nefesh. The Katzor Leiv will become a wider heart. R'uin Hadevarim Mimi'she'amram, Rav Mattisyahu who understands a Ben Torah, who understands Yungerlight. Understand that sometimes you have to stop and broaden your heart, open your horizons and put the Ribbono Shel Olam into the equation. Gevaldig! With this I want to wish everyone an absolutely wonderful Shabbos Kodesh!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Balak 5778

1 - Topic - A thought regarding Bilam and how Rav Wolbe defines "A Mentch".

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Balak. Also the first Shabbos out in the mountains for many of us on our so called vacation. Perhaps we can find something in the Parsha which has a connection to our experience here in the United States in the summer months.

Rav Moshe used to very often say regarding the Posuk that is found in 24:5 (מֵה-טֹב אֶהְיֶיךָ, יַעֲקֹב;) certainly the best known of all of the words of the Parsha. The Gemara says in Maseches Sanhedrin in Perek Cheilek on 105b (10 lines from the bottom) (א"ר יוחנן מברכתו של) (אותו רשע אתה למד מה היה בלבו ביקש לומר). From the blessing that the Rasha gave it is noticeable what his Kavana was to curse.

The Gemara says the following. That when he said (מֵה-טֹב אֶהְיֶיךָ, יַעֲקֹב) how beautiful are your homes Klal Yisrael, what he really meant deep inside was Klal Yisrael look how beautiful your homes are. Stay home, don't go to Batei Kinisiyos and Batei Midrashos. Be home in the evenings.

Rav Moshe used to say very often speaking at an affair for the benefit of his Yeshiva, that HKB"H therefore, was Mehapeich the Klala to Beracha and Boruch Hashem in Klal Yisrael today we have many Yeshivos, many Mosdos, many Batei Medrashim. The point of the Klala was stay home at night. The house is comfortable, it is warm, it is a Yiddishe Shtub. The message is no, that is a Klala. The Beracha is that a Yiddishe Shtub is of course a blessing, but the Beracha is that you know when to pick yourself up from your home and head to the Batei Medrashim which is the place that you belong.

Therefore, in the summer months when you don't have the Achrayos of doing homework with the children, you should really be headed primarily at night to the Beis Medrash. You should go directly from work to the Beis Medrash. Why do you need to be home? You need a place to sleep. Looking through the mail doesn't take so long. That is the message of Rav Moshe from this Parsha.

An interesting thing about the Parsha is that when you read the Chumash without Rishonim, without Torah She'baal Peh, Bilam doesn't sound like such a bad fellow. It is something that I believe that I have pointed out in previous years. He keeps on saying that I am only going to do what the Ribbono Shel Olam tells me to do and I will only bless what I am supposed to bless and curse what I am supposed to curse and then he wasn't going to go and then the Ribbono Shel Olam lets him go. Read the Chumash and you will see that he smells good. Torah She'baal Peh of course tells us what was really going on inside of him.

I would like to share with you a thought regarding this idea. In Alei Shor, Cheilek Bais, page Chaf Aleph there is a Maimar where Rav Wolbe looks to define Adam, a Mentch. Gadlus Ha'adam, the ability of a person, what exactly it is about a human being that makes him Adam, that makes him stand out. Atem K'ruim Adam. A special level of Adam that we say about Frum Yidden. In Yiddish we say "A Mentch." Vas iz a Mentch?

Says Rav Wolbe, the place to learn it from is from Yechezkel. Why the Navi Yechezkel? He is called (בֶּן-אָדָם). Constantly throughout the entire Sefer Yechezkel starting from Perek Beis and on, Yechezkel is referred to as (בֶּן-אָדָם). The only Navi with that title. Why? Rashi in the beginning of Perel Beis of Yechezkel gives us two Peshatim. One is that (בֶּן-אָדָם) is referring to Gadlus that you are a human being and you were able to walk among Angels when you saw the Maisch Merkava. The other is that it is a title of Shiflus (it denotes a lower level). As if to say, don't think that you are a Malach that you were among Angels. You are a Ben Adam, you are an ordinary creature. You are a creature made out of Adama (earth). The point being that a Ben Adam can be a title of Gadlus or a title of Shiflus. How so?

Rav Wolbe explains as follows. He says that within a human being there are two conflicting parts. There is the Cheilek Min Ho'adama, the part made from earth, the part that includes the Taivos Haguf, the desires that we have. Then there is a part of the human being that is Gadlus Ha'adam which is the Hasagos Haruach, the fact that a person can dream of being on a higher level. Each one of us lives with both. There are moments when we are inspired for greatness and there are moments that we feel a Shiflus of a person.

An Adam is a person who can connect the two together, who can connect his Taivos and his Hasagos to be one person who tries to raise his expectations of Ruchniyos and at the same time control his Taivos Haguf.

The Gemara says in Chullin 89a (20 lines from the top), (**אמר להם הקדוש ברוך הוא לישראל חושקני**) (**בכם**) I love the Jewish people. (**שאפילו בשעה שאני משפיע לכם גדולה**), even at a time that I give you greatness, (**אתם ממעטין עצמכם לפני**), you realize that you are at a low level before me. (**נתתי גדולה**) I gave Avraham greatness, (**אמר לפני ואנכי עפר ואפר**) he said what am I. (**למשה ואהרן**) I gave greatness to Moshe and Aaron, (**אמר ונחנו מה**). I gave greatness to Dovid, (**ואנכי תולעת ולא**). So that when a Yid has his Gadlus whether the greatest Jews, Avraham, Yitzchok, Yaakov, Moshe, Aharon and Dovid or any Jew. At the same time that we are Mashpia Gadlus we don't let it get to our heads. We realize that we have to control our Taivos Haguf.

The Gemara goes on (**אבל עובדי כוכבים אינן כן נתתי גדולה לנמרוד**), Nimrod had the ability to have greatness. (**לסנחריב אמר מי בכל אלהי הארצות**). (**לפרעה אמר מי ר**). (**אמר הבה נבנה לנו עיר**). The Gemara says that the Midda of a Yid is that when the Gadlus of his Seichel , the Gadlus of his Ruach, the inspiration that he gets to be bigger and better. When that comes, he doesn't let it make him feel that in his physical Taivos are something that he has to take and live with the Taivos and live with the Gadlus.

No! We control our Taivos at the same time that we have the Gadlus. We control the desires at the same time as our Gadlus. That is Adam. The Shiflus Ha'adam and Gadlus Ha'adam together.

How can Moshe Rabbeinu be so great and still be an Anav? Because he realized that a human being is two parts, Ruach the Cheilek that is G-d and our Taivos Haguf. That is the energy that a human being has, that is the ability that a person has.

Bilam lived two lives. He lived the life of a Navi and then when he came home at night he lived the life of a Baal Taiva. Whether with his donkey or his other Taivos Haguf. The two parts didn't mesh, they didn't combine. Atem K'ruim Adam, Klal Yisrael is called Adam. This is because at the same time that we have inspiration for greatness, we try to control our Taivos Haguf, we control it.

We eat, but we eat Kosher. We have desires but we do them in a Kosher way. It is the combination that makes greatness. The point is this. You read about Bilam and you read in the Torah She'bichsav about his greatness and it is true. He was given a great level of Nevuah. You recognize HKB"H, but you have to know there is Penimios. On the inside if you are out of control, you are a nobody. You have to be able to control on the inside. Atem K'ruim Adam.

We have moments of inspiration, moments where we want to accomplish. I had mentioned to a group of young men that one summer which is 9 weeks and I took Maseches Nazir which is 9 Perakim and I decided to do a Perek a week. I see that some of the young men were inspired by it to do exactly the same thing. It is a level, it is a Darga. But you can only do it if you control the desires that a person has. It comes a night which is a time to come to the Beis medrash, head out to the Bais Medrash. Don't sit in the easy chair with the daily newspaper. Throw away the paper. If your wife is not home for the summer cancel the subscription. You don't need it. Make your way to the Bais Medrash.

This is the idea, the message of the Torah She'bichsav of Bilam and the Torah She'baal Peh of Bilam both of them together. The message is very appropriate as we come to the summer months.

2 - Topic - Some Halachos to be aware of during the summer.

When you come to the summer months and you go out to the country, you have to remind yourself of Hilchos Techumim and Hilchos Eiruv. I spent two hours yesterday going around the Eiruv in Camp Bnos. Two hours. Now I grant you that most bungalow colonies are not as big as Camp Bnos or as Camp Agudah I hope to do another two hours. But people who go around and just look at the string and make sure it is up are not doing an adequate job. You have to check the Lechi.

What happens to the Lechi is that sometimes it doesn't reach the ground. Sometimes the top of the piece of wood rots from the rain and the weather, and the nail that is holding the string pulls out and it gets pulled to the side and the string is not over the Lechi. Go around and make sure that things are still the way that it has to be.

Techumin we don't think about while we are in the city. But a 10 to 15 minute walk out of your camp or bungalow colony may take you Chutz L'techum. Be aware of Hilchos Techumim. The moral of the story is that if you stay in the Bais Medrash you won't have Techumim issues.

At any rate, as we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Balak, the three weeks are upon us. Shiva Asar B'tamuz is this Shabbos. We don't Prava sadness, but seriousness that we can. Good Shabbos! May it be a summer of growth of inspiration and meaning for all of us not a summer G-d forbid of changing into country people. People who are not connected to Batei Medrashim. Make it a summer of Aliyah. May it be a summer of growth for one and all. A Gutten Shabbos!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas 5777

1 - Topic - The benefit of toiling in Torah as opposed to being given clear Piskei Halacha

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Chukas. And boy have I got an absolutely wonderful set of Machshavos for you today. The first one comes from the Satmar Rav in Divrei Yoel in Parshas Vayeishev. There, he is dealing with a question that many people ask. Nothing to do with Parshas Chukas. He asks a Kasha, why is it that the Dinei Hatorah, the Shulchan Aruch and certainly the Gemara are written like a rule book. It is written in a way that you have to figure out what the

Halacha is and it is written in a way that we should argue what the Gemara means. Why is it written this way?

He brings a Yerushalmi in Sanhedrin, Amar Rabbi Yochanan, Ilu Haya Nitna Hatorah Chaticha Lo Haya B'regel Amida. If the Torah had been given as a piece, we couldn't stand. What does that mean?

Zagt the Pnei Moshe, in Sanhedrin Perek Daled Halacha Beis, that if the Torah had been given Piskei Halacha, a clear Psak Halacha without Machshavos in two directions, Lo Kiyum Hatorah Mai'olam, the Torah would not last. The Torah needs to be Darshuned Mem Tes Panim in one direction and Mem Tes Panim in the other direction. The idea of Eilu V'eilu Divrei Elokim Chaim is so that the Torah should have a Kiyum. It is a mystery.

Today everyone writes Likut Seforim and they try to be very clear in what the Halacha is. As a matter of fact, one young man asked me that he saw a Likut Sefer on the Halachos of Muktzeh and it is clearer to him than the Shulchan Aruch is. What is going on?

The answer is that there is a reason for the fact that the Torah was given in a way that everyone could try to understand it and to be Yorek L'yonka. The question is why is it that way? This is a common question. The Satmar Rav in Divrei Yoel uses the Klei Yakar in the beginning of Chukas to explain.

The Klei Yakar is dealing with the idea that the Parah Adumah is Metamei Tehorim and Metaheir Temaim. That is the nature. Everything in the world is stronger when it is contrasted by something that is the opposite. Everything in the world is strengthened by things that are the reverse. Let me explain what that means.

Colors; Black is more visible when it is on a white background. The contrast makes the black visible. Black ink on black is nothing you don't see anything. The contrast makes it strong. The same thing is true when someone wants to build up his muscles. You build up muscles by lifting something that is too heavy, the opposite. The fact that it is something that you can't lift is what creates in the person the muscles, the strength to be able to do it.

If you want to strike with a hammer very hard, you lift up in order to bang down. The nature of the world is such that opposites, contrast, make things appreciated, makes them visible, make them noticeable, make them stronger. Opposites make things noticeable. He explains that this is true in many Dinai Hatorah. A fruit, a food, is not Mekabeil Tumah unless it is Muchshar Mekabeil Tumah which means that it becomes wet. Water is Metaheir, a Mikvah is Metaheir things. Here when it comes into contact with water it first is able to become Tamei. The contrast, the opposite, is what makes it happen.

The Gemara says in Maseches Gittin 43a (11 lines from the bottom) (**אין אדם עומד על דברי תורה**) (**אלא אם כן נכשל בהן**) a person understands Torah when he makes mistakes. It is that way. When you ponder something, when you make an error in understanding it, when you do a mistake in Halacha and you see you made a mistake, then you remember the Halacha, you understand the Halacha, then everything goes in a smooth and straight way. Why does it go that way? The contrast, that is

the nature of Olam Hazeh. When you make a mistake in something then you understand it better. When something confuses you and you understand it then you remember it. When you understand it right away then you don't remember it as well. That is the nature of the Briya.

The Gemara says regarding another Posuk in this week's Parsha. 21:14 (אֶת-נָהֵב בְּסוּפָהּ). The Gemara in Maseches Kiddushin 30b (8 lines from the top) Darshuns that even a father and a son or a Rebbe and a Talmid who are learning Torah together (אמר רבי חייא בר אבא אפי' האב ובנו הרב ותלמידו) (שעוסקין בתורה בשער אחד נעשים אויבים זה את זה ואינם זרים משם עד שנעשים) they become enemies. (אויבים זה את זה) and at the end they become friends, they love each other. The Biur Hadavar is that in learning it is the argument, it is the fact that you say to someone what are you talking about, you don't know what you are saying, your Sevara is wrong. That is what makes the Emes of Torah come through. Amito Shel Torah is not when it is served on a platter, when it is given to you in a Kitzur Hilchos Muktzeh booklet, it is when you are Zoche to be Yored L'omko Shel Davar. When you understand it with depth, you get into arguments about it, you see two ways of looking at something, that is when you have a Kinyan in Divrei Torah. That is the way Divrei Torah are.

The Divrei Yoel in Vayeishev page 210 and 211 says that that gives understanding to the Mishna in Avos 5:17 (כל מחלוקת שהיא לשם שמיים, סופה להתקיים; ושאניה לשם שמיים, אין סופה להתקיים). Anytime you have an argument L'sheim Shamayim then the truth has a Kiyum, then Emes has a Kiyum. What a beautiful thought. Some other day I will tell you that that is the secret of marriage, how opposites make each side grow. One beautiful Machshava from a Chassidishe Sefer, the Divrei Yoel.

2 - Topic - The Metzios of spiritual things are based on when the Torah is Kovei'a it

The second Machshava is from Rav Schwab in Sefer Mayan Beis Hashoeva (page # 240 and 241 on 19:2 (the second piece)). I had asked many times how the Mishkan was built if the Parah Adumah was not ready yet. Everyone was Tamei, all of the Keilim of the Bais Hamikdash were Tamei. A Temi'ya, an imponderable. In this week's Parsha Rav Schwab says an incredible answer. He says just the opposite. B'davka the Parah Adumah was made on the second day of Nissan and the Mishkan was finished on the first day of Nissan. To teach a lesson. It is not the Tumah that is Metamei, it is the Gezairas Hakasuv that it is Metamei. When the Torah says that it is Metamei that is when it is Metamei, not before. Everything comes because the Torah says so.

He points out that in Behaloscha when Aharon and Miriam un-expectantly got Nevuah, they were screaming Mayim Mayim that they were Tamei and that they had to go to the Mikvah. Yet Moshe Rabbeinu killed a Mitzri, he buried him, he was Tamei because a Goy is Metamei B'maga and he went up to Har Sinai before there was a Parah Adumah. He was Tamei Meis, how did he go up to Har Sinai?

The answer is says Rav Schwab, the Torah wants to teach us that until the Torah is Koveia that something is Tamei it is not Tamei. Until the Torah is Koveia that something is Metamteim Es Haleiv it is not Metamteim Es Haleiv. All of the Metzios of the spiritual things are based on Divrei Torah.

Zagt Rav Schwab, that is why in Marah they were commanded in Parah Adumah. Why in Marah were they commanded in Parah Adumah? Rachmana Litzlon! Before Har Sinai? The Parah

Adumah was not going to take place until a year later. The answer is that the Torah wanted to teach us this. Learn Hilchos Parah Adumah beforehand, learn Hilchos Tumah beforehand. Understand that there is a concept of Tumah. When? When the Torah is Kovei'a it. The Metzios of Tumah begins when the Torah is Kovei'a Parah Adumah. Before that there is no Tumah. Kach Heim Hadevarim.

If you are Medayeik in Rav Schwab's words you will notice that he says that the people from before did not need Zerikah from the Parah Adumah with the exception of us Leviim. Look in Rav Schwab and you will understand what he is saying.

Until next time I wish everybody a wonderful meaningful summer, a Gevaldige relaxation being able to learn Torah up in the country is great. In your bungalow colony start a Mishmar and make it be Matzliach. Kol Tuv.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas 5776

1. Let me begin first with the first words of the Parsha. In the beginning of the Parsha we have an expression which we find in only one other place in the Chamisha Chumshei Torah. That is the expression that can be found in 19:2 (זאת הקת התורה, אֲשֶׁר-צָנָה יִרְנָר). The words (זאת הקת התורה, אֲשֶׁר-) we will find soon in Parshas Mattos 31:21 as well. So it is found twice, once here and once there. There it is talking about Kashering Keilim. Taking Keilim that were from a Treife kitchen, from Midyon and Kashering it. Here we are talking about Taharah, going into a Mikvah and becoming Tahor.

What is the similarity? Rav Shamshon Refael Hirsch says in his Pirush here on the Chumash, that they are very similar. Just like you know that when you have Treifos in your Keilim you would never want to have from that Keili, a Yid would certainly not want to have any connection to it, of Treifos in his food, never. So a person wants to get rid of it. The same thing is true about Ruchniyos as well. When there is Tumah, when there is something Tamei involved, a person has got to try to get rid of it. (זאת הקת התורה, אֲשֶׁר-צָנָה יִרְנָר) in this week's Parsha it refers to getting rid of Tumah. We have to think of it just like something that is physically dangerous. Well Treifos is dangerous spiritually but it is a physical thing, the same thing is the way you should think about Tumah, something which is actually very dangerous and a person has to go to the Mikvah even though he doesn't taste it and he doesn't see it.

We have a similar idea in Parshas Ki Seitzei. In Parshas Ki Seitzei 22:8 we are told to build a (מַעֲקֶה) Ma'keh. To build a wall against a high roof (כִּי-יִפֹּל הַנֶּפֶל מִמֶּנּוּ). Because of the danger of (יִפֹּל) somebody will fall if you don't have a (מַעֲקֶה). Immediately thereafter we have the Mitzvah of (כִּלְאִים). That a person should not plant seeds in the same place that he plants a vineyard. (כִּן-תִּקְדֹּשׁ, הַמְלָאָה הַזֶּרַע אֲשֶׁר תִּזְרַע). It says the word (כִּן) because maybe a danger will happen and the seeds that grow will become Treif. The same exact Lashon one after the other. Why? Because just like you know that if you have a roof it is very dangerous to leave a roof where G-d forbid a person could fall, the same thing with Kilayim that you have to think about it as something very dangerous even though it is not something that you can see.

If you look at Parshas Ki Seitzei it says many Mitzvos, there is a separate Parsha separation between every Mitzvah. Except right after Shlishi where it has the Mitzvah of (מַעֲקָה) and then the Mitzvah Kilayim of the Kerem (פֶּן-תִּקְדַּשׁ, הַמְּלָאָה הַנִּזְרָעָה אֲשֶׁר תִּזְרַע). One follows the other to tell you compare them. That is the lesson that Rav Shamshon Refael Hirsch is making here in the Parsha, compare them and be afraid of Tumah.

Now why did I start by saying that there is some L'mayseh in it as today we don't have Parah Adumah? Still the right thing is that when a person is Tamei, when a man has a Tumah of Baal Keri, he should be careful to go to the Mikvah preferably before Davening the next day, certainly before putting on Tefillin the next day. In our world it has become something that Chassidim do, they go to the Mikvah. In the Yeshiva world it is not adequately something that we are careful about. We should be afraid of Tumah. We should be afraid of it. It is something that inhibits our growth in Ruchniyos and a person should be Zahir in it. Gedolei Yisroel even in the Litvishe world, Rav Moshe, Rav Pam they were very careful being Tovel Tevilas Ezra and it is something which a person should try to do. Be Mekabeil it with a Bli Neder, but be Mekabeil it.

2. I said that my first Vort will be on the beginning of the Parsha but it really wasn't. The Vort that I told you now was on (זאת חקת התורה) which is the second Posuk in the Parsha. Let me tell you a Vort on the first Posuk in the Parsha. That is 19:1 (וַיְדַבֵּר יְרֵךְ, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן לֵאמֹר). We find in the Toras Kohanim that there are 13 places in the Torah where it says (וַיְדַבֵּר) or (וַיֹּאמֶר) - (אֶל-מֹשֶׁה) (וַיֹּאמֶר). Three are in this week's Parsha. The first Posuk, which is 19:1, 20:12, 20:23. Says the Toras Kohanim there are also 13 Mi'utim to tell you that Aharon did not actually receive these Nevuos from the Ribbono Shel Olam. Aharon heard it from Moshe Rabbeinu. But Meshum Kevodo, the Mitzvos were given to Moshe and Aharon in these 13 places as if to say Moshe tell it directly to Aharon, he should receive it directly. So 13 Nevuos but in the 13 they weren't really said to Aharon from Hashem.

I had a Kasha on this. When Rashi counts the 48 Neviim that said Nevuah Shehutzricha L'doros, Aharon is one of the Neviim. So if Aharon is one of the Neviim then what is going on because he didn't actually receive the Nevuah as the Toras Kohanim says that he only heard it from Moshe. This is a Kasha.

In the Haksav V'hakabala (Harav Yaakov Tzvi Mecklenburg 1785 - 1865) at the beginning of this week's Parsha he has another Kasha. He says 13 places, there are 18 places where it says that Hashem spoke to Moshe and Aharon. Three are in this week's Parsha 19:1, 20:12, 20:23. The others are Shemos 6:13, 7:8, 9:8, 12:1, 12:43. Vayikra 11:1, 13:1, 13:33 (Ed. Note - I couldn't find this reference), 15:1. Bamidbar 2:1, 4:1, 4:17, 12:4, 14:26, 16:20. So there are 18. What in the world is going on, the Medrash says that there are 13?

Says the Haksav V'hakabala that if you look at the 18 places you see that 13 of them are Mitzvos. Mitzvos were really said to Moshe. (זאת חקת התורה) it is a Mitzvah and it was really said to Moshe. Aharon is mentioned because of his Kavod. The 5 other places are places that Hashem spoke to Moshe and Aharon was not that they should go turn around and tell it to Klal Yisrael, it was a message to them. For example, by the Makkah of Shechin it says that Hashem said to Moshe and Aharon in Shemos 9:8 (קָחוּ לָכֶם מְלֵא חֲפָיִכֶם, פִּיחַ כִּבְשֹׁן; וַיִּזְרְקוּ מֹשֶׁה הַשְּׂמִימָה, לְעֵינֵי פְרֹעֹה). Throw ashes to the sky and it will become Shechin. Or, in the end of Parshas Behaloscha 12:4 (וַיֹּאמֶר יְרֵךְ פְּתָאם,)

(אֵל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֵל-אַהֲרֹן). Hashem came to Moshe and Aharon and said a Nevuah. Or in Parshas Va'era, 6:13 (וַיִּדְבֹר יְרֹד, אֵל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֵל-אַהֲרֹן, וַיֹּצִיאוֹם אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאֵל-פַּרְעֹה מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם). When they were told to go to King Pharoh etc. Five of the places it was not said to say over to Klal Yisrael. So it comes out beautiful says the Ksav V'hakabalah, 13 Miutim are for the Mitzvos which were only to Moshe Rabbeinu, but there were five times that the Nevuah did go to Aharon and they were not Mitzvos that were told over to Klal Yisrael. So Aharon was a Navi because those Pesukim are in the Torah, there is something from which to learn. A beautiful Teretz on what would otherwise be a difficult Kasha. This was all Bichvodo Shel Aharon because after all Aharon Hakohen passes away in this week's Parsha so we speak Bichvodo.

3. As you know, we have the Mei Meriva, there is no water for the people as it says in 20:2 (וְלֹא-יִלְמָה הַבְּאֵרִים) (הָיָה מַיִם, לַעֲדָה). They come and they complain to Moshe and Aharon as it says in 20:4 (אֶת-קֹהֶל יְרֹד, אֵל-הַמִּדְבָּר הַזֶּה, לָמוּת שָׁם, אֲנַחְנוּ וּבְעִיֲרֵינוּ). Why did you bring us here that we should die, us and our animals.

The Kasha is, us and our animals? When people are dying from thirst they are worried that their animals will die? It doesn't make sense. Why are they mentioning that their animals will die of thirst. When a person is dying from thirst it is silly to care about whether the animals are dying from thirst.

In the Sefer Kehillas Yitzchok he brings from Rav Yisrael Salanter, beautiful. He brings a Maisch from the Medrash Rabbah which is also in Maseches Tamid but it is a little longer in the Medrash. A beautiful story.

Alexander the great conquered a city which was a city of honest people and a place of great integrity. He watched as the king was judging when two people came to him for a court case. Alexander is watching. One person said I bought a house from him and when I was renovating I found a treasure in the wall, it is his because I bought a house and I didn't buy a treasure. The other man said it is his. I sold him the house with everything in it. Do you hear this court case? Each person is saying that the treasure should go to the other person. You probably know that the king ruled that this one had a son and this one had a daughter and they should get married and share the treasure. Wonderful!

Alexander the great was astounded by what was taking place. He said to this king, do you know what would happen in Greece if these two people would come in front of the king, the king would have them both killed and take the treasure for himself. That is what he said. That part is in the Gemara.

The Medrash goes on. This king said to Alexander, in your country does the sun rise in the morning? He said yes. He said how can it be that when there is no honesty the sun rises? He said in your country does rain come down? Alexander said of course. The king was astounded, how can it be that you are dishonest and rain comes down? The king thought for a minute and said do you have animals in your country? He said certainly. He said it must be that the sun comes up and the rain comes down because of the animals because you don't deserve it. The Medrash goes on to say this is the meaning of the Posuk in Tehillim 36:7 (אֲדָם וּבְהֵמָה תוֹשִׁיעַ יְרֹד). Sometimes Hashem helps people because of the Zechus of the animals.

Rav Yisrael Salanter brings this Medrash. He says now we understand the Posuk here. They were coming to complain to Moshe. They say Moshe Rabbeinu there is no water. Maybe you will say it is because of our Aveiros there is no water and we have no right to complain. They said there is no water (אֲנַחְנוּ וּבְעִירָנוּ) our animals are going to die too. Obviously the reason there is no water is because (הִבָּאֵתָם אֶת-קֹהֶל יִרְדָּו, אֶל-הַמִּדְבָּר הַזֶּה). We are in a place where B'etzem there is no water and it is not because of our sins. Therefore, they had a Taina and they had a Tevia. What a beautiful UpTeitch of the Posuk. But more importantly, the lesson of how to be honest and integrity how important it is. The king said the sun comes up in your country? Rain comes down in your country? How could it be if you are not honest? It must be in the Zechus of the animals. What a Mussar. A Gevaldige Mussar. I wish everyone an absolutely wonderful Shabbos, a meaningful Shabbos, a Shabbos of Kedusha V'tahara.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas (Shabbos Rosh Chodesh) 5774

1. Let me start with the beginning of the Parsha. The beginning of the Parsha of course is the Aifer of the Parah Adumah. I bet you didn't know how long the ashes of the Parah Aduma lasted? Most people assume that the ashes of the Parah Adumah lasted until the Churban Bais Hamikdash. That I think is the assumption of most people. In fact it is not so. The Mishna L'melech in Hilchos Aveil 1:3 brings from what he calls a Mekor Kadmon that the Aifer Parah actually lasted until the time of Rava and Abaya, until the time of the Amoraim. There was still Aifer Parah, there were people who despite there not being a Bais Hamikdash continued to be careful to remain Tahor.

This Mishna L'melech is often quoted. I was in a Bais Medrash in Williamsburg last night and between the Chupa and the Seuda of a wedding I went to learn. There I pulled out a Sefer on the Parsha that quoted the Mishna L'melech and someone had written in by hand that this Mishna L'melech is actually a Rosh in Chullin Perek Kol Habasar Siman 4 and in fact it is there that the Rosh says that until the time of the Amoraim there was Eifer Parah Adumah. It is a historical fact.

With this the Maharitz Chiyus in Maseches Chagigah Daf 25 answers the Kasha of the Bach. The Bach asks a Gevaldige Kasha on a totally different topic. We all have heard of the idea of Mitzvah L'taheir B'regel (Ed. Note: Maseches Rosh Hashono 16b (חייב אדם לטהר את עצמו ברגל)). It is a Mitzvah to go to the Mikva and become Tahor before a Yom Tov. The question is does that apply only in the time that we had Aifer Parah Adumah and therefore, we can truly become Tahor in time for the Yom Tov. What about Biz'man Hazeh when we don't have Aifer Parah, even if we go the Mikva on Erev Yom Tov we are still not Tahor. What is the Din?

There is a contradiction in the Tur as the Bach asks. First the Tur in Hilchos Yom Hakkipurim Siman Taf Reish Vav brings from Rav Sadya Gaon that when one goes to the Mikva on Erev Yom Kippur he should make a Beracha on the Tevila. Even though today no man has ever made a Beracha on Tevila unless he is a Ger. Nevertheless, Rav Sadya Gaon holds that on Erev Yom Kippur you should make a Beracha. The Tur himself after bringing Rav Sadya Gaon rejects it. He says that Chayuv Adam L'taheir Atzmo B'regel is only when Aifer Parah exists and not Bizman Hazeh. Here we have a Machlokes between Rav Sadya Gaon and the Tur. The Tur says nowadays there is no Mitzvah of L'taheir Atzmo B'regel. Freikt the Bach, just a few Simanim earlier in

Freikt the Bach what is the Tur saying. The Tur is saying we have days that we eat B'tahaira anyway? What do you mean that we eat B'tahaira anyway, Chayuv Adam L'taheir Atzmo B'regel doesn't apply when we don't have a Parah Adumah? The answer says the Maharitz Chiyus is that Bizman Hazeh indeed there is no Mitzvah of Chayuv Adam L'taheir Atzmo B'regel because we don't have Parah Adumah according to the Tur. However, the Yerushalmi is talking about the time of Rav which indeed was after the Churban but even though it was after the Churban it was before Rava and Abaya, it was Rav Chiya and Rav. At that time the Eifer Parah still existed. This is my first thought on the Parsha, a Yedia, something that people are totally not aware of that the Aifer Parah Adumah lasted until that time. As a matter of fact if you take a look at the Mishna L'melech he says that with this we can explain many Gemaras where Tannaim and Amoraim were careful in Tahara.

The Netziv says an absolutely beautiful Pshat in his Hameik Davar. The Netziv says in 20:5 that as Klal Yisrael was getting ready to enter Eretz Yisrael HKB"H wanted to prepare Jews who grew up in the Midbar for the culture shock of suddenly being in a land where things work Al Pi Teva, where things are not provided to you miraculously but you have to put effort into getting them. Here, the Ribbono Shel Olam therefore, didn't have water ready for them, they were in Kadeish, they could go around and try to find water, try to purchase water. The Teva of going out to get water is something the Ribbono Shel Olam wanted to get Klal Yisrael accustomed to. Klal Yisrael didn't understand this so they said we understand that when we get to a place that runs Al Pi Teva that we are going to have to get our own water but now we are still in the Midbar (לֹא מְקוֹם זֵרַע, וּתְאֵנָה וְגִבְרִין וְרַמְמוֹן). This is not a place where things grow (לְשִׂתוֹת) even though we were in Kadeish that is not the place. Now suddenly the way they talk makes so much more sense.

Actually, this concept of the Netziv that it was a preparation is something that he already wrote about in Parshas Beshalach. Because in Parshas Beshalach we find the same thing. After Klal Yisrael crosses the Midbar there is no water to drink 15:23 (כִּי מָרִים הֵם) the water is bitter. There, he says the same thing. At that point they thought they were going into Eretz Yisrael, then had they not sinned, and the Ribbono Shel Olam wanted to prepare Klal Yisrael for a life of Teva. But there he adds a point. Because what happens there in Parshas Beshalach 15:23 - 15:25. Klal Yisrael doesn't have water to drink and what do they do (וַיִּצְעַק אֶל-יְרֹנָה). Klal Yisrael calls out to the Ribbono Shel Olam. (וַיִּזְכֹּר יְרֹנָה עֵץ, וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶל-הַמַּיִם, וַיִּמָּתְקוּ הַמַּיִם) there the Netziv says in a world of Teva what do you do. What do you do in a world of Teva in order to be able to have water to drink? You know what you do? (וַיִּצְעַק אֶל-יְרֹנָה) Davening is part of the HKB"H's world of Teva. Therefore, the Netziv in both places explains the mysterious idea that the Ribbono Shel Olam left them somewhere without water which is very difficult to understand. With this understanding we have an insight.

3. Let me move to my third lesson of the Parsha. At the end of the Parsha we have the episode of the Milchemes Sichon and Og, we have the battle, the killing of Sichon and Og. We know that Moshe Rabbeinu himself did this as Rashi brings. Moshe was 10 Amos, he jumped 10 Amos, with a stick of 10 Amos, whatever that Aggadeta means precisely, but it was Moshe Rabbeinu personally who killed Sichon. This needs an explanation. Against Amaleik Moshe Rabbeinu did not go personally to do battle. Against Midyon Moshe Rabbeinu did not go personally to do battle. So why here did Moshe Rabbeinu go to do battle to kill Sichon personally? There are other things that need an explanation. That is that Sichon and Og seems to be a major event. In the beginning of Sefer Devarim Moshe Rabbeinu sits down to teach Klal Yisrael and the time is described as it says in 1:4 (אֶחָדִי הִפְתּוּ, אֶת סִיחֹן מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי, אֲשֶׁר יוֹשֵׁב, בְּחֶשְׁבֹּן--וְנָאֵת, עוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן, אֲשֶׁר-יוֹשֵׁב בְּעֶשְׂתָּרֶת,) (בְּאֶרְצֵי). It's time lined to the killing of Sichon and Og. Why? So much has happened.

In addition, in the Hallel Hagadol, Hallel Hagadol is (הוֹדוּ לִירֵנָה כִּי-טוֹב: כִּי לַעֲוִלָם חֶסֶד) that can be found in Tehillim 136. The Hallel that we say on Rosh Chodesh is called Hallel Mitzra'i, the Hallel of Yetzias Mitzrayim. Hallel Hagadol are the 26 (כִּי לַעֲוִלָם חֶסֶד) Ki L'olam Chasdo that we say on Shabbos. In those 26 there is a separate one for Sichon (כִּי לַעֲוִלָם חֶסֶד) and Og (לְסִיחֹן, מֶלֶךְ הָאֱמֹרִי: כִּי לַעֲוִלָם חֶסֶד). The other 31 kings that were killed in conquering Eretz Yisrael are given short shrift. We talk about HKB"H destroying the Melachim in a general way. Sichon and Og get their own billing. Why?

In order to answer this I would like to review a Vort that we said on Parshas Noach 5774. At that time we had a Kasha. The difficulty was that HKB"H promises there won't be a Mabul ever again. We had a Kasha. What is HKB"H's promise? We understand that if the Ribbono Shel Olam brings a Mabul that that is what the world needed. The world needed the Mabul. Of course it came because of people's Aveiros but at that point that is what is best for the world. HKB"H does that which is best for the Briya. So now the Ribbono Shel Olam says I will never bring a Mabul again. I don't understand. If the Mabul is not proper for the Briya, if the people don't deserve a Mabul, of course HKB"H will not bring a Mabul. If a Mabul is what is best for the Briya so who wants this promise of HKB"H that I won't bring a Mabul. Why are you promising you won't bring a Mabul, if the Mabul is what is best for the Briya then by all means it should happen.

It is similar to a doctor that tells a sick man I promise you I won't amputate your leg. What kind of promise is that? If his leg doesn't need amputation of course he won't amputate his leg. If to save his life an amputation is necessary so why are you making a promise? The same thing here. What does it mean that HKB"H says I won't bring a Mabul. We answered then in the name of an Adom Gadol (a Talmid of Rav Yitchok Hutner) that HKB"H said before the Mabul all human beings lived on a level L'mayla Min Hateva, they had power to affect nature. The actions they did could improve nature or can be Mazik or Mashchis. The actions of human beings destroyed the nature of the world, even animals misbehaved because of the Hashpa'a the influence of sinners. After the Mabul Hashem said no more. Human beings will no longer have the power to be Mashchis, to destroy the nature around them. They will be Tachas Hateva and no longer will it be possible for the world to come to a state that will require a Mabul. So that, before the Mabul, human beings had an extraordinary ability which they lost afterwards.

We know that Sichon and Og survived the Mabul. The Gemara in Sotah says that Sichon hung on to the Taiva and survived the Mabul (Ed. Note: I could not find the source. Please email me if you can find it - There is a Tosafos in Niddah 61a (זה עוג שפלט מדור המבול)). The Pirkei D'rabbi Elazar says the same thing about Og. So Sichon and Og survived the Mabul. They were the only two human beings in the entire world that were not descendants of Noach. They were the only two human beings in the entire world that still had the power of Hashchasa of the Briya. The power to destroy the Briya. For that, Moshe Rabbeinu was necessary. Moshe Rabbeinu came and with the Koach Hatorah which is L'mayla Min Habriya. Lo Nitna Torah Ela L'ochlai Hamon. Moshe Rabbeinu was able to kill Sichon and Og and it is a major event in world history. Now for the first time there was no human being in the world who had the power of Hashchasa in the entire world. (כי לעולם הסדו), the power of Hashchasa of destruction was now gone.

The lesson of course is that Moshe Rabbeinu and what he represents is the power of L'mayla Min Hateva, the Tzad Hakedusha. Although the power to influence all of nature is gone, the ability to withstand the Teva around us, the ability to withstand the Shmutzadik world around us. B'Teva someone who would grow up today, with all kinds of sick ideas, with all kinds of strange distractions, we have the ability if we connect to Limud Hatorah. We have the ability to live above that, to live L'mayla Min Hateva. To destroy the Kochos Hashchasa in the world around us. It is our job. That is the death of Sichon and Og.

I refer you to the Ohr Gedalyahu at the beginning of Sefer Devarim (pg. 173) where he makes the point that destroying Sichon and Og was the key to entering Eretz Yisrael. You want to go into Eretz Yisrael that world Hashchasa has to be gone. With that, a person who is a Lomed Torah could live L'mayla Min Hateva on the Tzad Hakedusha.

With these three thoughts I bid everyone an absolutely wonderful Shabbos. If you are going up to the country please I beg you don't get dragged down by others in your bungalow colony, in your Sevisa. If you dress as a Ben Torah, dress as a Ben Torah there too. Don't let the influence of the people around you drag you to a lower level. If people are sitting and speaking Lashon Hora walk away and don't be ashamed. Don't be ashamed to walk away. There are bungalow colonies where there is a sense of pride in the learning, in the Davening, be part of that. It is a big Shas Nisayon, be Omed the Nisayon. A Gutten Shabbos to one and all.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Balak 5774

1. Of course, this week's Parsha is all about Bilam and therefore, our discussion today will center on Bilam. We will talk about Bilam as a person, Bilam's thinking, and Bilam's speaking. First the person Bilam. I think that you will be very surprised to hear that there are three Gedolei Harishonim that are in agreement that Bilam had really not been a Navi. The conventional thinking in the Mashmaos of Rashi is that Bilam was a Navi. He went around as a Navi and that is why Balak hired him. We find in Yehoshua 13:22 on the Posuk (וְאֶת-בִּלְעָם בֶּן-בְּעוֹר, הַקּוֹסֵם) Bilam Ben B'or the magician that the Radak comments (להודיע כי לא נביא היה אלא קוסם ונבואתו הייתה לשעה). He says that Bilam was not a Navi, he developed his career through magic, convincing people of things and it was only at this time that he was given Nevua for this one episode and that is the extent of it. This is a Chiddush to many people. But the Ramban is not alone in this.

The Rambam in Hilchos Yesodai Hatorah beginning of Perek 7 explains that in order for the Shechina to be Shore' on somebody, a person needs to be a Gibor, an Ashir etc. but it means a Gibor B'midosav. A person has to be a Somaich B'chelko. The Rambam says (ואין הנבואה חלה אלא) (על חכם גדול בחכמה גבור במדותיו ולא יהא יצרו מתגבר עליו בדבר בעולם). Now, the fact that Bilam got Nevua during this episode we understand, but to say that Bilam had been a Navi all along and that is how he developed his career so to speak, is very difficult to understand.

The Ramban in 22:31 makes the case that Bilam was not truly a Navi. On the Posuk (וַיִּגַּל יְרֵךְ, אֶת-) the Ramban says that that is not the language that is appropriate for a Navi. Therefore, the Ramban has as is the Mashmaos of the Rambam and B'feirush in the Radak, they all say that Bilam had not really been a Navi all along. In Maseches Nedarim 38, Rav Yaakov Emden in his Hagoas makes a similar Diyuk from the Rosh to say that Bilam's career was not at all a career of Nevua. Therefore, we have this Chidush from many that Bilam was not truly a Navi.

The question is the following. The Posuk in Devarim 34:10 says (וְלֹא-קָם נָבִיא עוֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל, כְּמֹשֶׁה) and Chazal Darshun B'umos Haolam Kom, that among the nations of the world somebody was like Moshe. Rashi says in Bamidbar 22:5 (ואם תאמר מפני מה השרה הקב"ה שכינתו על גוי רשע, כדי שלא יהא) (פתחון פה לאומות לומר אלו היו לנו נביאים חזרנו למוטב ואם תאמר מפני מה השרה הקב"ה שכינתו על גוי רשע, כדי שלא יהא פתחון פה לאומות לומר אלו היו לנו נביאים חזרנו למוטב) the nations shouldn't say that we didn't have a Navi like Moshe and that is why we didn't follow in HKB"H's ways. For that, Bilam was set up as a Navi K'moshe. Bishlomo if you learn that Bilam was truly a Navi, ok, then the Rashi makes sense (the Gemara I believe is in Maseches Sotah). However, if you are going to learn like the Radak, the Ramban, the Mashmaos of the Rambam, and the Yaaveitz says that it is a Shitta of the Rosh, then it is a Pele. What does it help having a onetime episode with Bilam to answer the Taanos of the Umos Haolam that we didn't have a Navi like Moshe. It is a strong Kasha.

The Ksav Sofer in Parshas Zos Habracha says an absolutely beautiful Teretz. He starts by saying does anybody really think that Bilam was like Moshe Rabbeinu. He says that Bilam was like Moshe at his beginning of being a Navi. Moshe started with a small Mattana from HKB"H, a small amount of special Hashpa'a. It is what you make of it. Bilam got that same gift, he got that gift, that Pesach, that opening. He was Mechavein and was able to understand the hours that certain things happen in heaven so he was able to predict things for people. Moshe Rabbeinu for the first 80 years of his life had no Nevua. Moshe Rabbeinu had an opening, a Pesach to the Ribbono Shel

Olam. Bilam got the same Pesach. It is what you make of it. Moshe Rabbeinu made of it a Moshe Rabbeinu. Bilam made of it nothing, a magic business. There is a tremendous Mussar here. The Mussar is that when you ignore an opportunity, if you ignore a Pesach, when you are ignoring the ability to do something more and you push it aside, you are responsible for the outcome. You are responsible for what you miss. There are many opportunities in life. Things like Mishmar, things that are opportunities that can turn your life in a certain direction. Who knows where it will lead. That is the lesson of Bilam as brought by the Ksav Sofer.

2. Let's move on to Bilam's thinking. Bilam's thinking is the most incredible point in this whole Parsha. As a matter of fact it would be a comedy routine if someone were to act it out. The most incredible point is when Bilam is riding his donkey and the donkey misbehaves, Bilam whacks him and the donkey starts to talk. What is most amazing is that Bilam is not Nispoel. Here you have a donkey speaking, something that required a special moment in Maasei Beraishis (as brought in Pirkei Avos in the 5th Perek), a special moment of creation for it to happen and Bilam is not Nispoel and he says as can be found in 22:29 (כִּי הִתְעַלְלָה בִּי), it talks back. Amazing, how does he talk back to the donkey. Why doesn't he say hey what is going on here?

Rav Schwab (in his Sefer on Chumash Mayan Bais Hashoeva page # 355) says that this is an important lesson of Mussar. A person can come to opportunities of Hispailus in serving HKB"H. If he hardens his heart and doesn't let himself feel then that is what is going to happen. He is going to become a person with a hardened heart, he is going to become a person who doesn't have a Hispailus in the things that happen around him.

Look at Lavan, amazing. Lavan, has Yaakov his son in law and Yaakov says to him you tell me what type of sheep are mine as can be found in Beraishis 30 (נֶקְדִּים) which means spotted sheep. (עֲקָדִים) means they are spotted only in their four legs and Lavan agrees 31:8 (אִם-כֹּה יֹאמַר, נֶקְדִּים יִהְיֶה (שְׂכָרְךָ--וְיִלְדוּ כָל-הַצֹּאן, עֲקָדִים). Whatever Yaakov says, happens. Lavan should have been wowed, that is incredible. What does Lavan say? 31:43 (וַיַּעַן לָבָן וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-יַעֲקֹב, הִכְנוֹת בְּנֹתַי וְהַבְנִים בְּנֵי וְהַצֹּאן צֹאנִי, וְכָל אֲשֶׁר-אַתָּה רָאָה, לִי-הוּא) everything you see is mine. He is not Nispoel. There is a lesson here. The lesson is people see opportunities that come a person's way, if a person hardens his heart says Rav Schwab the Onesh from heaven is that your heart remains hard. You have that Leiv Ha'even.

Rav Schwab elsewhere in Peshas Shelach in the beginning of Perek 14 (on page # 324) says V'yitachein Shesh'nei Anashim Yistaklu Al Davar Echad (it is possible for two people to see the same thing), V'haechad Yir'e Oros Dik'dusha V'hasheini Yir'e Eitzim V'avanim (one sees the beautiful light of holiness and the other one see stones and wood), he sees things that have no meaning to him. If you harden your heart your heart will be hard. That itself is the Onesh to the person. A person has to be able to be Nispoel.

(Back to page # 355 bottom paragraph on the left) Says Rav Schwab, the Rambam says that the path to Ahavas Hashem and Yir'as Hashem is and the Rambam is in Perek Bais Halacha Bais of Hilchos Yesodei Hatorah (וְהַיֵּאֱחָד הוּא הַדֶּרֶךְ לְאַהֲבָתוֹ וְיִרְאָתוֹ). What is the path to love and fear of Hashem? (בְּשִׁעָה שִׁיתְבוֹנֵן הָאָדָם בְּמַעֲשָׂיו וּבִרְאוּיוֹ הַנִּפְלְאִים הַגְּדוֹלִים) when someone sees Hashem's amazing creation, his actions (וְיִרְאָה מִהֶן חֲכָמָתוֹ שֶׁאֵין לָהּ עֶרֶךְ וְלֹא קֵץ) he sees the great wisdom in every small piece of the universe (מִיד הוּא אוֹהֵב וּמִשְׂבַּח וּמִפְאָר וּמִתְאוּהָ תְּאוּהָ גְדוֹלָה לִידַע הַשֵּׁם הַגְּדוֹל) immediately he

has a love, a praise, and a desire to know Hashem. Does it happen (מיד) to us? We harden our hearts. We are hardened to many things. The punishment is that we stay with a hard heart. Hard to things that happen in the world and the punishment is that we stay with a hard heart. It is painful not to feel where a person should feel.

I remember going once during the Aseres Yimai Teshuvah to Tashlich. We went to the bay. My wife, I and small children were there and we were saying Tashlich. The children were busy throwing bread to the fish. There was an old Yiddishe Babba there who was saying Tashlich, she was weeping, she was crying. I could hear her saying the words of Tashlich. She had no idea what she was saying, but she knew that she was talking to HKB"H about Klal Yisrael. She had real tears. It hurt. Where are my tears? Where are they? Rav Schwab quotes Rav Yeruchum (on page # 366) and says Al Ma She'ain Bochim B'tisha B'av (that which we don't weep on Tisha B'av), V'chol Zeh Totzaa Mimah Shena'aseh Haleiv L'leiv Even, (it is a Totzaa (outcome) from the fact that our hearts don't want to be moved, we don't want to be changed).

In Eretz Yisrael it is a great time of danger now. The events which transpired have moved us. But looking ahead it is a time of great Sakana on many fronts. Imminent Sakanas, long term Sakanas, we don't appreciate having Eretz Yisrael. We don't have the joy that Jews had 60 years ago, 70 years ago when Eretz Yisrael first became accessible to Yidden. We don't have the joy of almost 50 years ago when the Kosel became accessible. A Lev Ha'even has descended upon us. Our Shemoneh Esrei should be a tearful Shemoneh Esrei. G-d forbid there should be another war and there should be other soldiers that die, Chas V'shalom.

3. That leaves me to a third topic, the voice of Bilam. Bilam tried to use the Kol. The Kol is Kol Yaakov, it is our tool. Weapons, tanks, machine guns, those are weapons of Eisav. Our weapons are the weapons of Kol, of voice. Bilam came and tried to use Kol against Klal Yisrael. At the end HKB"H said let Klal Yisrael take the sword and kill Bilam. Today in Eretz Yisrael we are forced into a position where Yidden have to use the Yadaim Yedai Eisav to defend themselves. We are forced into a position where we need the Hishtadlus of an army, the Hishtadlus of tanks, the Hishtadlus of airplanes. Are we so hardened as to forget Hakol Hol Yaakov. Tehillim 127:1 (אם-יִרְוּר לֹא-יִשְׁמָר-עִיר, שָׁנָא נִשְׁקָד שׁוֹמֵר) Im Hashem Lo Yishmar Ir Shav Shakat Shomer. We know it, we need to feel it.

As the summer comes, a time of increased Laytzanus, flippant behavior, inappropriate behavior, let's try to have a Leiv Basar. That little Leiv Basar that we have seen over the last two and a half weeks as we were concerned for the plight of the three young Shevuim. Try to keep the Leiv Habasar. Let's try to have it within us. At least when we Daven Shemoneh Esrei, to feel.

4. Let me end with a question on the Parsha. The Morah Nevuchim in Cheilek Gimmel Perek 17 says the source for the Issur Tzar Baalei Chaim is this week's Parsha. In this week's Parsha 22:32 the Malach asks Bilam (עַל-מָה הִכִּיתָ אֶת-אַתְנָדְךָ, זֶה שְׁלוֹשׁ רְגָלִים) why are you hitting your donkey three times. Says the Rambam, that is the source for the Issur of Tzar Baalei Chaim and as you may know, Rishonim scour the Torah and there are different Shittos to what the source of the Issur of Tzar Baalei Chaim is.

The question we have is that this seems to be an inadequate source because after all there is an Issur of Tzar Baalei Chaim but if you are riding a donkey and he starts taking you in the direction and he starts banging you against the wall you are entitled to hit the donkey and that is not an Issur of Tzar Baalei Chaim. Bilam didn't see the Malach. Based on what he knew, what Bilam did was correct. How can that be a source for Tzar Baalei Chaim? I mentioned this question to a few people. One person suggested that he should have been Melameid Zechus on the donkey. I don't recall a source for being Melameid Zechus on donkeys. Perhaps. The Kasha is still a Tzoreich Iyun and maybe someone has a better Teretz than that.

With that I want to wish everyone a wonderful summer. For those of you in bungalow colonies, it is likely the first Shabbos you are going to be there. Are Shabbosos going to be times that people learn and come to Davening on time and that the Davening is appropriately quiet? This week will set the tone for the weeks to come. Make it a good one. A Gutten Shabbos to all!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas 5773

1. This week I have some really wonderful thoughts to share with you. The first has to do with the Cheit Mei Miriva, with the Cheit of Moshe Rabbeinu which involved his hitting the stone and bringing forth water. Rashi's Shittah which is the best known of the different opinions brought in 20:12 on the word (לְהַקְדִּישָׁנִי) is (שֶׁאֵילּוּ דִּבְרָתָם אֶל הַסֶּלַע וְהוֹצִיא הַיְיָ מִקּוֹדֶשׁ לַעֲבֹדָה וְאוֹמְרִים מֶה סֶלַע זֶה) (that the sin of Moshe Rabbeinu was that he had been commanded to speak to the stone and it would give forth water and erroneously he thought that he had been commanded to hit the stone and by hitting the stone and bringing forth the water that somehow diminished the Aveira. The Ramban in Posuk 8 wonders whether Rashi's Pshat makes any sense at all. The Ramban says that there is no difference in the level of miracle whether one hits a stone and it gives water or whether one speaks to a stone and it gives water. The miracle is a miracle which is identical. What is the difference? Stones don't give water if you talk to them they don't give water if you hit them. Why was one greater than the other?

I would like to offer you a few answers for the Ramban's Kasha. The Kasha of why it would have been a greater miracle to speak to the stone rather than to hit the stone.

In the Ayeles Hashachar (page # 139), Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman says the following Yesod. He says that Mofsim (amazing acts) don't by themselves convince people of Kiddush Hashem because it is the nature of the Yeitzer Hora to bring Teirutzim (to say possible answers). The Rambam says Maiolam Lahem Yahaminu B'koach Hamofsim. Klal Yisrael's Emunah in Hashem is not because of Kriyas Yam Suf, not because of the miracles of Mitzrayim. Our Emunah comes from Har Sinai, it is from Gilui Hashem. Mofsim themselves do not produce Emunah. However, a Mofes that comes from the Koach of a Mitzvah, that Koach of the Mitzvah is Matmia the Yeitzer Hora and gives Kedusha. The Neshamah takes note of a Mofes (an amazing thing that happens) as part of a Mitzvah. Someone Davens for something and feels the Gilui Shechina that he was answered, that lifts him up, because when it is part of a Mitzvah it influences the person.

So Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman's rule is that a Mofes influences the Neshama only when it is part of a Mitzvah. Therefore, had Moshe Rabbeinu done what HKB"H commanded him speaking to

the stone, that would have influenced Klal Yisrael in a great way. It would have been a Mofes that had been part of the Mitzvah (what he had been commanded). Since he pulled off a Mofes but it was not what had been commanded, that did not have the Hashpa'a on Klal Yisrael.

I want to point out that last week I mentioned to you from Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman that a Segulah has no power unless the Segulah is connected to a Mitzvah. He is saying a similar idea this week. That a Mofes doesn't influence a person unless it is connected to a Mitzvah.

Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman has a Sefer entitled Yimalai Pi Tehilasecha. There in the second volume page (Taf Reish Mem Vav) he offers a totally different Teretz to the Ramban's Kasha as to what is the difference in the miracle if Moshe Rabbeinu had spoken to the stone or hit the stone. There he offers a more technical Teretz. He says that Kishuf (magic) exists in the world and when Moshe Rabbeinu caused water to come from the stone, maybe that is because he is a great magician. Says Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman, magic as it appears in Chazal whether in Tanach or Gemara is always influenced by an act (by a Maiseh) that is done. Magic doesn't work with Dibbur (speech) alone. Speech is a spiritual thing and therefore, magicians had to do acts in order to bring about magic. Therefore, had Moshe Rabbeinu spoken to the stone it would have been clear that this is not through the Koach Hakishuf. Since Moshe Rabbeinu hit the stone it left place for doubters and skeptics to say it was a magic trick and Moshe Rabbeinu was a great sorcerer. Therefore, it caused a (Yerida) lesser Kiddush Hashem when the water came from hitting as opposed to when it came from speaking. These are two Teirutzim of Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman to the Ramban's Kasha.

I will add that in Taima Dikra, Rav Chaim Kanievsky offers a third Teretz which is very typical of his style. He brings a Medrash. When Moshe Rabbeinu was to speak to the stone what was he to say to it? Rav Chaim Kanievsky brings a Medrash that he would have said a Dvar Torah to the stone and with that Klal Yisrael would have learned that sustenance comes from Divrei Torah. Sustenance comes from learning Torah as opposed to from the Hishtadlus of hitting the stone. That was the failing of Moshe in not bringing about the water through Divrei Torah. So 3 Teirutzim from Gedolei Hadar Rav Aharon Leib Shteinman's 2 Teirutzim and Rav Chaim Kanievsky's one.

2. Let us move on to a different thought. At the end of the Parsha barely noticed because Parshas Chukas has as the most famous part of it being the Parah Adumah of course and the Mei Miriva. Hardly noticed is that the last 15 Pesukim in the Parsha are the story of the war against Sichon and against Og. The fact that Klal Yisrael conquered these two kingdoms and vanquished these two kings. The battle against Sichon and Og is mentioned in Hallel Hagadol. Hallel Hagadol is the Hallel of 26 lines which we say on Shabbos before Baruch She'amar (Nussach Sfard). The Hallel that has (כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ). It is interesting. There we say (Tehillim 136:17) (לְמַפְּאֵה, מְלָכִים גְּדֹלִים: כִּי לְעוֹלָם) & (וַיִּהְיֶה, מְלָכִים אֲדִירִים: כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ) and 136:18 (כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ) and 136:19 (וַיִּלְעֹג, מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן: כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ) & 136:20 (לְסִיחֹן, מֶלֶךְ הָעַמָּרִי: כִּי לְעוֹלָם חֲסָדוֹ). Sichon and Og are mentioned specifically even though there were 31 kings that were vanquished by Yehoshua and even though Moshe Rabbeinu also vanquished Midyan but Sichon and Og the battles of this week's Parsha are mentioned specifically and that needs an explanation.

Also in the beginning of Parshas Devarim we read as it says in 1:5 (הואיל משה, באר את-התורה הזאת) (לאמר). Moshe Rabbeinu explained Mishna Torah, when? 1:4 (אשר, את סיוח מלך האמרי, אשר). After he vanquished Sichon and Og then he explained Mishna Torah to Klal Yisrael. What is going on? What is that? Why is Sichon and Og mentioned specifically? It should have said Acharei Hakoso Es Midyan, after he destroyed Midyan then of course Moshe Rabbeinu knew that he would not live any longer. So it should say (הואיל משה, באר את-התורה הזאת לאמר) Acharei Hakoso Es Midyan. Yet it specifically mentioned Sichon and Og. It needs an explanation.

Also it is also interesting to note that Moshe Rabbeinu personally killed Og as Rashi brings on the Posuk 21:35 (ויכו אותו ואת בניו ואת כל עמו עד בלתי השאיר לו שריד וירשו את ארצו) (משה הרגו). That is something that didn't happen in the other battles. Therefore we need some sort of explanation as to what is so special about the conquering of Sichon and Og.

People say Kol Hascholos Kashos, when you start something it is hard. We wonder, to us it looks like a beginning of a Zman is easy. The beginning of a Machzor of Daf Yomi, you start Berachos it is easy. Haschalos are Kashos? Haschalos are easy. The answer is it depends what you are starting. If you are starting something you want to do and you like to do then it is easy. But if you are looking to change your nature, and you are looking to improve, if you are looking to do things differently than Kol Haschalos Kashos, change is difficult. Change does not come easy.

Klal Yisrael here had gone through 40 years in the Midbar. This generation hadn't sinned. This generation sat and learned for 39 years. Now a change was taking place. Suddenly they had to become warriors and they had to go do battles. They had to go fight the war that HKB"H had commanded them to do. Kol Haschalos Kashos, it is very hard to change. It is very hard to change from what you are doing. Change comes with difficulty. A person has to celebrate the first step of successful change. When a person is not Matzliach in Davening with Minyan, in getting up in the morning and then he does it, he has to celebrate the Haschala, he has to remember the Haschala. That will give him Chizuk to move forward. The battles of Sichon and Og were the first battles this generation. (כי לעולם תסדו). Therefore, it had a very special meaning. So one thought regarding Mei Miriva and one regarding Sichon and Og.

3. The third thought is something related to contemporary news. As you may know, this week something unprecedented happened. The Kosel was declared off bounds to Orthodox Jews. It was declared off bounds so that the women of the wall could go and have their prayer services there. What a Busha, what a shame! What a Kitrug on Klal Yisrael that the Kosel is declared off bounds on a Rosh Chodesh. Unfortunately, we suffer from a lack of appreciation of the Kosel in general. It is something that we need to be Mechazeik. We go there and it becomes a place of Shmuzzing, a place of joking, even a place of laughing and dancing. It is a remnant of the Churban Bais Hamikdash.

I would like to share with you a thought that I had regarding visiting the Kosel Hamaravi. To explain this I would like to be Makdim (I would like to preface) with a thought regarding human nature. We have often noted that it is difficult for a human being L'kabeil Maros. It is difficult for a human being in general and Jews specifically to accept and to listen to things that other people command a person to do. It is not easy. Not in relation to other people and not in relation to

Hashem. It is hard to just take orders and do something. The way to succeed in that is that HKB"H created in the human being a capacity for love, a capacity to connect to others. If someone bosses you around and says do this and that it is very hard to get yourself to want to do it. However, when a human being has love for another person, when a human being feels connected to another person, when a human being feels a special relationship for that person. When the person says do something that makes it easy to do what the person wants. When there is Ahavah then it is easy to follow the other person's wishes.

So too in our relationship with Hashem. The Bais Hamikdash is called the Cheder Hamittos, the place of intimate love. It is a place of His'achdus with HKB"H, a place where Keruvim hugged each other. The Bais Hamikdash is a place of Ahavah. For us, we have the Kosel Hamaravi. It is a remnant of the Bais Hamikdash. It is a place to feel the Ahavah of Hashem with tears in our eyes the longing for HKB"H. The Remez to the Kosel is a Posuk in Shir Hashirim, the song of love. That is because the Kosel is supposed to remind us of our longing for HKB"H our desire to get back, to connect ourselves once again the whole Klal Yisrael, a Hiskarvus to HKB"H. That is what a visit to the Kosel is supposed to evoke. A desire to feel close to Hashem. When a person feels close to the Ribbono Shel Olam it is not difficult to listen to his command and to do his Mitzvos. Perhaps when we visit, we can try to have that feeling. When you look at the Kosel, look at the Kosel as the Luz bone of the Bais Hamikdash. We are taught that every human being has a Luz bone which is a tiny bone from which he will once again get up at Techias Hamaisim, from which his body will be reconstructed. The Kosel Hamaravi look at it as the Luz bone of the Bais Hamikdash. The remnant from which Binyan Habayis Hashlishis will come. Look at it with longing with an Ahavas Hashem and visiting the Kosel will not be a place of levity, it will not be a place for Shmuzzing. Let us honor the Kosel. If we don't give honor to the Kosel how can you expect a secular government to give honor to the Kosel?

4. I would like to end with a great Kasha. This Kasha is Rav Chaim Kanievsky's Kasha. What an imagination. Listen to this Kasha. We have in this week's Parsha the Halacha of Cherev Harei Hu K'chalal as is found in 19:16 (וְכָל אֶשֶׁר-יִגַע עַל-פְּנֵי הַשָּׂדֶה, בְּחַלְלֵל-חֶרֶב אוֹ בְּמֶת, אוֹ-בְעֶצֶם אָדָם, אוֹ בְּקֶבֶר--יִטְמָא, (שְׂרָעַת יָמִים)). This is a Halacha which is a metal utensil that touches a dead body gets the Din of the dead body itself. Rashi holds that this only refers to a metal utensil such as a sword. The Rambam and Tosafos say that this applies to all metal Keilim. A metal Keili which comes in contact with a Meis is itself like a Meis, it is Tamei for 7 days. Not only that but if a human being were to touch this metal utensil, he too would have the Tumah of touching the Meis and would be Tamei for 7 days. Freigt Rav Chaim Kanievsky in Taima Dikra, how is it ever possible to Tovel (to put into a Mikva) this metal utensil. You have to wait until the 7th day. This metal utensil doesn't need Parah Adumah to become Tahor only (מִי נִדָּה) (Toveled in a Mikva). But when you Tovel it in a Mikva the person Tovelng it touches this utensil and then he himself becomes Tamei for 7 days. Ok he is Tamei for 7 days. Once he is Tamei for 7 days and he touches the utensil the utensil now gets a fresh Tumah for 7 days and you can't Tovel it that day. So when you grab onto the Keili in order to Tovel it the Keili is Mitamei you for 7 days, you are in turn Mitamei the Keili for a new 7 days and this should go on forever. How is one ever Tovel a metal Keili which is under the rule of Cherev Harei Hu K'chalal? Tzorech Iyun. Have a wonderful Shabbos Kodesh.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Balak 5773

This week I would like to share with you a few thoughts. I will begin with something which I think is a new idea and you may not believe me on this and I can't prove it to you but I will make the following suggestion. How many people do we have in Tanach (or do we have in Torah Bichlal) named Bilam. I assume your answer would be 1 and that would seem to be the logical answer that there is only 1 Bilam. It seems to me in fact that there are 2 Bilam's. Not actually 2 Bilam's mentioned in Tanach, but 2 Bilam's mentioned in Chazal and I will explain.

There is Gemara in Maseches Sotah 11a (17 lines from the bottom) which is well known. It says א"ר חייא בר אבא א"ר סימאי שלשה היו באותה עצה בלעם ואיוב ויתרו בלעם שיעץ נהרג איוב ששתק נידון ביסורין (יתרו שברה זכו מבני בניו שישבו בלשכת הגזית שנאמר ומשפחות סופרים יושבי יעבץ תרעתים שמעתים סוכתים המה (הקנים הבאים מחמת אבי בית רכב וכתוב ובני קיני חתן משה וגו) that when Pharaoh began to oppress Klal Yisrael in Mitzrayim there were 3 people whom Pharaoh consulted to seek counsel. He asked them if it is a good idea to oppress Klal Yisrael. They were Bilam, Yisro, and Iyov. Yisro who protested was Zoche to have Moshe Rabbeinu as a son in law, Iyov who was silent suffered the pains of Iyov, and Bilam who said do it was killed.

Was this Bilam the same Bilam as the Bilam in this week's Parsha? I believe that most people would say yes of course it is the same Bilam. That is the way that we have always understood. I have 3 difficulties with understanding that it is the same Bilam.

The obvious difficulty is that Bilam was not a Mitzri. What is he doing in Mitzrayim? All right that difficulty we can do away with. After all Yisro was also not a Mitzri. A more serious question is that the punishment to Bilam is that Bilam who gave an Eitza was killed (בלעם שיעץ נהרג). When was he killed? The killing of Bilam at the hands of Pinchas in Parshas Mattos 31:8 (ואת-מלכי מדין (הקרו על-חלליהם, את-אוי ואת-רקם ואת-צור ואת-חור ואת-רב-ע-המשח, מלכי מדין; ואת בלעם בן-בעור, הקרו בקרב) takes place 126 years after Pharaoh conferred with his advisors as to whether to oppress Klal Yisrael and that is because Pharaoh oppressed Klal Yisrael for 86 years before they left Mitzrayim and there was almost 40 years until the story of Balak and Bilam so that is 125 or 126 years later that this week's Parsha takes place. That does not seem to be a proper punishment for a Rasha. (בלעם שיעץ 126 later! How old was he at the time that he gave the Eitza to Pharaoh. It would seem as his total age was 150. That is a long life.

More seriously, the Gemara in Maseches Sanhedrin 106b (3 lines from the top) says B'feirush (א"ל) שהוא מינא לר' חנינא מי שמיע לך בלעם בר כמה הוה א"ל מיכתב לא כתיב אלא מדכתיב אנשי דמים ומרמה לא יחצו ימיהם בר תלתין ותלת שנין או בר תלתין וארבע א"ל שפיר קאמרת לדידי חזי לי פנקסיה דבלעם והוה כתיב ביה בר (תלתין ותלת שנין בלעם חגירא כד קטיל יתיה פנחס ליססא). That the Bilam that was killed by Pinchas in Parshas Mattos was 33 years old. He was born after Yetzias Mitzrayim. It seems to be proof positive that the Bilam in Sotah 11 cannot be the same Bilam as in this week's Parsha. Surprise! If anyone can answer these Rayas particularly the last Raya, I would love to hear it.

While I am telling you things that are hard to believe let me give you somebody else. Someone else with an unusual name and it seems to me that there are 2 of them. I am referring to now Unkelos Hager. Unkelos is not a common name and certainly it is not a common name among Jews. We have 2 stories about Unkelos. Although our Rabbeim in Yeshiva taught them as being

the same individual, it seems to me to be 2 people named Unkelos that were Geirim. One the Gemara in Maseches Avoda Zora 11a (top line) tells us (אונקלוס בר קלונימוס איגייר שדר קיסר גונדא) דרומאי אבתריה משכינהו בקראי איגיור הדר שדר גונדא דרומאי [אחרינא] אבתריה אמר להו לא תימרו ליה ולא מידי כי הוו שקלו ואזלו אמר להו אימא לכו מילתא בעלמא ניפיורא נקט נורא קמי פיפיורא לדוכסא דוכסא להגמונא להגמונא לקומא קומא מי נקט נורא מקמי אינשי אמרי ליה לא אמר להו הקב"ה נקט נורא קמי ישראל דכתיב וה' הולך לפניו יומם וגו' איגיור [כולהו] הדר שדר גונדא אחרינא אבתריה אמר להו לא תשתעו מידי בהדיה כי נקטי ליה ואזלי חזא מזוזתא [דמנחא אפתחא] אותיב ידיה עלה ואמר להו מאי האי אמרו ליה אימא לן את אמר להו מנהגו של עולם מלך בשר ודם יושב מבפנים ועבדיו משמרים אותו מבחוץ ואילו הקב"ה עבדיו מבפנים והוא משמרן מבחוץ שנאמר ה' ישמר about Unkelos Bar Kelonimus who was Migayeir. The Caesar sent soldiers to seize him and as the Gemara relates, Unkelos kissed the Mezuzah. The soldiers asked about the Mezuzah and as a result of their inquiry in his response they too were Migayeir. An incredible story about Unkelos. That story took place as the Gemara relates it during the lifetime of Rabban Gamliel Hazakein.

There is another Gemara that is also well known in Maseches Gittin 56b (5 lines from the bottom). The Gemara says (אונקלוס בר קלוניקוס בר אחתיה דטיטוס הוה בעי לאיגיורי) that there was another person named Unkelos who was a nephew of Titus and he wanted to be Migayeir. The Gemara relates this story. Hold on a second. That Unkelos was a generation later than Titus. Titus as you know destroyed the Bais Hamikdash. Rabban Gamliel Hazakein lived a couple of generations before the destruction of the Bais Hamikdash. It would seem that there were 2 people named Unkelos. I know people won't believe this but that is the way it seems to me.

Another unusual name with 2 people with the same name. Amasloi. Who was Amasloi you will ask me? Well when I was in Pirchei they would ask a riddle. What was the name of the mother of Avraham Avinu? A few of us lucky enough to know the answer would get a free soda or perhaps in those days it was a free ices (freeze pop). The Gemara in Maseches Bava Basra 91a (8 lines from the bottom) says (ואמר רב חנן בר רבא אמר רב אמיה דאברהם אמתלאי בת כרנבו אמיה דהמן אמתלאי בת) (עורבתי וסימניך טמא טמא טהור טהור) that Avraham Avinu's mother was Amasloi Bas Karnivo. That is a Gemara you can't argue with it. Guess what? Haman Harasha also had a mother. Her name was Amasloi Bas Orvasi. Now you may disagree with my first 2 offerings with the 2 Bilam's and the 2 Unkelos. But 2 Amasloi. It says so in the Gemara in Maseches Bava Basra 91a. The Gemara gives a Siman that Avraham Avinu's mother was Amasloi the daughter of Karnivo. Karnivo sounds like a name given to sheep which is a Kosher Min. Haman's mother was Amasloi Bas Orvasi. An Oreiv is a name of a raven which is a not kosher bird. (טמא טמא) Haman's mother was Amasloi Bas Orvasi.

Here I have for you 3 offerings of people with double names and as I said the third you can't disagree with but the first 2 you could, but you would have to answer my questions.

This all comes to mind because this summer I was being driven in Eretz Yisrael and we passed Rechov Elifaz and the driver mentioned to me isn't it strange that they would name a city in Eretz Yisrael after Elifaz a son of Eisav Harasha the father of Amaleik? Wow! I said to him no there are 2 people named Elifaz.

Were there 2 people named Elifaz? It appears so. We know that Elifaz was the father of Amaleik son of Eisav. Elifaz was also one of the 7 Nivai Umos Ha'olam. There are 7 people who said Nevua who were not Jewish. 4 of them in total were friends of Iyov and are mentioned in Sefer

Iyov. Elifaz is the most prominent among them. So it appears that there was Elifaz the Navi who was a great man and the street is presumably named after him and not Elifaz the father of Amaleik. Given today's political climate, they may soon pass a law that the Elifaz must be the Elifaz the father of Amaleik.

With this one I would like to tell you there is some disagreement among the Rishonim as to whether Elifaz father of Amaleik son of Eisav was in fact a Rasha or perhaps the same Elifaz as in Sefer Iyov. If anyone has any more double names to offer me I would be happy to take you up on it and would love to hear about it.

I will tell you the name of a city which is a country. It seems that there are 2 places called Tzorfas. Tzorfas is France. We have at the end of the book of Ovadya 1:20 where it says (וְגֵלַת הַחֵל-הַזֶּה לְבָנִי) (יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר-בְּנֻעָנִים, עַד-צָרְפַּת, וְגֵלַת יְרוּשָׁלַם, אֲשֶׁר בְּסֻפְרָד--יְרֵשׁוּ, אֶת עָרֵי הַנֶּגֶב) that the Galus will reach Ad Tzorfas and Rashi says this is the Malchus that is France. France is called Tzorfas. I believe this is in Modern Hebrew as well. However, in Melachim I 17:9 it says that Eliyahu Hanavi is told (קוֹם לֶךְ צָרְפָתָהּ אֲשֶׁר לְצִידוֹן, וַיִּשְׁבֶּתָּ שָׁם). Did Eliyahu Hanavi go to France? It says (קוֹם לֶךְ צָרְפָתָהּ אֲשֶׁר לְצִידוֹן, וַיִּשְׁבֶּתָּ שָׁם). Apparently a part of Eretz Yisrael is a place called Tzorfas. Wow! That is interesting. 2 places named Tzorfas. So I have a bundle of two's for you and I would love you to answer for it. If I get an hours worth then maybe someday we can make a Navi Shiur out of it.

2. Let's move on to a more traditional Vort on the Parsha. We have in this week's Parsha, Balak and Bilam bringing Korbanos. Can a Goy offer a Korban? The answer is yes. Goyim are permitted to offer Korbanos, a Korban Olah and it does have the Din of a Korban.

The Rama in Hilchos Tzedaka says that we are allowed to be Mikabeil money for a Beis Hakneses from a non Jew. This is mentioned in Yoreh Dai'a 254:2 and also in Orach Chaim 154:11. That we can take from Goyim Tzedaka for a Shul (Beis Hakneses) for the oil and lights of a Beis Hakneses because Goyim offered Korbanos and a Shul has Dinim similar to a Mikdash M'at. However, says the Rama not a Yehudi Mishumad. A Jew who doesn't believe in the Ribbono Shel Olam the Magen Avraham says Hu Hadin if it is a Michaleil Shabbos is not eligible to donate to a Beis Hakneses. He is not eligible to give oil (lights) of the Beis Hakneses. Thus we have an unusual Halacha. A riddle! Where do you have something that a Goy is allowed to do and a non Frum Yid is prohibited from doing? That is donating to a Beis Hakneses.

What is interesting is that there is a Machlokes as it appears from the Magen Avraham there in 154 and according to the explanation of the Machatzis Hashekel, the Magen Avraham is saying that there is a dispute if the prohibition from taking money from non Frum Jews for Tzorchei Beis Hakneses is limited to them bringing oil or Seforim for the Shul which would be similar to a Korban or even taking money from them. It is interesting that the Tchebiner Rav (Rabbi **Dov Berish Weidenfeld** (1881-1965)) in Dovev Meisharim Cheilek 3 Teshuva 95 says that this depends on the degree to which a Shul today is a Mikdash M'at. If a Shul today is called a small Bais Hamikdash only B'lashon Mashul (it is an expression of honor) and we call it a Mikdash. If that is the case then it is enough to say well in the Mikdash you can't bring a Korban so then in a Shul he should not bring offerings of oil for the lighting of the Shul or let him not write Seforim for the use of the Shul. However says the Tchebiner Rav it is possible that the reference to a Beis Hakneses as a Mikdash M'at has full meaning, full understanding.

As a matter of fact, the Yirai'im (one of the Rishonim) writes that people who behave disrespectfully in a Shul are Over on the Issur D'oraisa of Yir'as Hamikdash (Viyiraisam Elokecha). Although the Chumash is talking about a Beis Hamikdash it applies as well to a Shul because a Shul is a Mikdash M'at. We know that in the Shul we refer to the various parts of the Shul in expressions that are reminiscent of the Bais Hamikdash. We call the Bimah in the middle a Shulchan because of the Shulchan in the Bais Hamikdash. Most Shuls have a Menorah because there was a Menorah in the Bais Hamikdash. The place where the Sefer Torah is kept we call an Aron because there was an Aron in the Bais Hamikdash. The velvet hanging in front of the Aron we call a Paroches because there was a Paroches in the Bais Hamikdash. Traditionally, the Paroches or the Aron Kodesh itself was decorated by an image of the Luchos that Moshe Rabbeinu brought down from Har Sinai. Today in our world of increased sophistication regarding decorations, most Shuls don't have the Luchos there anymore. However, the Luchos were there for a reason because the Aron in the Bais Hamikdash held the Luchos. Therefore, the Luchos were used to decorate the Aron. A Shul has a Ner Tamid. There is an Ezras Nashim for the Azara. These are all references which point out similarities between a Shul and the Bais Hamikdash. Says the Dovev Meisharim, the question, the Machlokes that the Magen Avraham is bringing as to whether one may accept even cash for use in a Beis Hakneses from a non Frum Yid, that Machlokes depends on how strongly we adhere to the similarity, the idea of the Mishkan.

This week I have only gotten in 2 ideas in my 15 minutes and I think there is what to think about. Certainly I would appreciate if someone could show me that it is the same Bilam to answer my questions I would be very much obliged. If you can't, please contact all elementary and high school Rabbeim and inform them that they have been teaching it what appears to be incorrectly.

With that, I wish everyone an absolutely wonderful Shabbos. As summer begins, I beg you once again those of you who are in the city to put in the extra time. Chap Arein extra Sedorim and extra learning. If during the time that your family is away you use that extra time for learning then when your family is here and you have family obligations that take you away then you have a Din of an Ones. You are somebody who had a Machshava to Learn V'nenas Nosen Lo Schar K'ilu Asa. But if even when they are not here you are not learning what does that say??

Have a wonderful and meaningful summer. A Good Shabbos to all!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas 5772

In the beginning of the Parsha we read in 19:4 (וְלָקַח אֶלְעָזָר הַכֹּהֵן, מִדָּמָה--בְּאֶצְבָּעוֹ). The Kohen in dealing with the Parah Adumah takes from the blood with his finger. There is a Drasha and I am not sure of the source of the Drasha but it is brought in the Rambam. The Rambam in Hilchas Parah Adumah 4:4 brings (קִיבֵל דָּמָה בְּכָלִי פִסּוּלָה שְׁנֹאמַר וְלָקַח אֶלְעָזָר הַכֹּהֵן מִדָּמָה בְּאֶצְבָּעוֹ מִצּוּתָהּ יָד וְלֹא (מִצּוּת כָּלִי). Someone who caught the blood of the Parah Adumah in a utensil which is the way that it is normally done when a person brings any other Korban, Posul. Here it would Pasul the blood of the Parah Adumah. As it says in the Posuk that I just quoted (וְלָקַח אֶלְעָזָר הַכֹּהֵן מִדָּמָה בְּאֶצְבָּעוֹ מִצּוּתָהּ (מִצּוּת יָד וְלֹא מִצּוּת כָּלִי). The Mitzvah is to catch the blood with the hand and not with a Kli. So that is something we learn out from this Posuk.

In the Sefer Haksav V'hakabbalah (Rabbi Yaakov Tzvi Mecklenburg 1785-1865 on page # 268) he brings a nice technical Vort that as you will see will be connected to something that we discussed earlier in the year and we end up with something absolutely incredible. Let's start with the technicality. Here is the Kasha. An Etzba is a finger. Does a person catch blood with his finger? (ולקח אלעזר הכהן מדמה באצבעו), I would understand that a person would take some of the blood with his finger. Normally people don't catch things in their finger.

Because of this difficulty he writes that the word Etzba in Hebrew actually refers to a part of the body that is used to grab things with. The Torah uses the word Etzba to refer to the part of the body which one uses to hold onto things or grab things. Normally the finger is used for that. But it is not just the finger. It is the finger and the palm right under the finger. The palm and the fingers together are used to hold onto things. Therefore, he writes that technically the word Etzba can refer not just to the finger but to the part of the palm directly under the finger that is also used for grabbing. So that the word Kaf which means palm is used for a reference to the palm excluding the fingers. But when one is referring to the fingers and the palm together the word Etzba is appropriate. With that he says (ולקח אלעזר הכהן מדמה באצבעו) refers to the hand, to the palm with the fingers. The way you would hold the Kli in your hand you cup your hand in a way that the fingers and the palm together would hold the liquid. Again it is a technical answer but it is a Chiddush that the word Etzba refers not to the finger alone but to the palm under the finger as well.

Earlier in the year we mentioned a Kasha of the Chasam Sofer in regard to the Haggada Shel Pesach. In the Haggada we read what is actually a Braissa that (מנין אתה אומר שלקו המצרים במצרים) (עשר מכות ועל הים לקו המשיים מכות). We are taught that in Mitzrayim there were 10 Makkos and at Yam Suf there 5 times as many Makkos. So that if there were 10 in Mitzrayim there were 50 at the Yam Suf. We learn this from the fact that in Mitzrayim it says (אצבעו אלרים הוא) Etzba Elokim Hu. We refer to the miracles of Mitzrayim as the finger and on the Yam it says (היד הגדלה). It says that HKB"H caused the Makkos with the Yad. The Yad is 5 times the Etzba. Therefore, if in Mitzrayim it was the equivalent of an Etzba or 1 then in the Yam it was equivalent to a Yad or 5 times as much. This is what it says in the Haggada.

The Chasam Sofer in a Teshuva asks that it is not so. A finger is not a 5th of the hand. A finger is a 5th of 5 fingers. There is also the palm. The finger is about a 10th of a hand. So that if the Makkos of Mitzrayim were an Etzba or a finger and on the Yam it was a Yad it should be more than 5 times as much. This is a Gevaldige Kasha.

According to the Ksav V'hakabbala this will be answered because he is saying that it is a reference to the finger down including the palm and indeed the Etzba is a 5th of the hand. So this would answer this Kasha in a very nice way. What makes this even more striking is when we compare this Teretz to the words of the Chasam Sofer. The Chasam Sofer in the Teshuva writes that perhaps the word Yad as in Yado Hachazaka on the Yam Suf refers only to the fingers as the word Yad refers only to the fingers as in Netillas Yadaim which according to many Rishonim is the obligation to wash your hands until the knuckles. It is a Machlokes the Rif and the Rosh whether the palm is included and we hold that it is just the fingers meaning to say that Yad refers to the finger alone. Of course this would answer the Chasam Sofer's Kasha because the Yad is the 5 fingers. It turns out that we have an incredible set of opposites. The Chasam Sofer although he writes it B'derech

Efsher writes that the word Yad may refer to the finger alone. The Ksav V'hakabbalah writes that even though even the word Etzba may refer to the finger and all the way down to the wrist. Two opposite understandings of a word in the Torah. As I said this is a technical issue but something that when taken together with the Chasam Sofer actually is a beautiful Vort.

19:2 (זאת תקת התורה) Many of the Rishonim including the Klei Yakar, Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh and later Rav Moshe and Rav Yaakov in this week's Parsha say that (זאת תקת התורה) Zos Chukas Hatorah is to tell us that really all Mitzvos of the Torah have some aspect of Chok to them. We keep the Mitzvos as if they are a Chok even when we can really understand a reason. We keep it because it is Hashem's will.

The Rambam writes regarding the Mitzvos that are Sheaino Sichlios, as he writes regarding the Mitzvos of Kashrus for example. A person should say I really would want to eat Treif, I want to eat Chazair, however, HKB"H was Gozeir on me not to eat it. The idea here being that we keep the all Mitzvos as if it was a Chok. Even when we have a peek a little bit of an understanding into the meaning of the Mitzvah.

I would refer you if you have the time to an important and beautiful note in the Michtav M'elياهو Cheilek 4 page # 355 footnote # 4 which has a beautiful explanation of how this applies and stretched to certain areas of scientific issues. It is a Divrei Chazal on the Gemara and it is a footnote worth seeing.

I also want to tell you that the Aruch Hashulchan in Hilchos Cholov Akum writes that what we are saying now is true about the Rabbanans as well. Even though in the Rabbanans the Rabbanan gave us open reasons for the Takana D'rabbanan such as not drinking Cholov Akum because of the fear that other non-Kosher milk was mixed in. The Aruch Hashulchan writes that you should know for every Drabbanan (there is a Tam Komus) there is a hidden reason, a reason that is not revealed and therefore, the reason that is revealed appears not to apply don't be quick to ignore a Takanna Drabbanan. So this is a technical Vort on Hashgachik insights into the beginning of the Parsha.

Turning to the end of the Parsha we have a Milchamah where Klal Yisrael goes and does battle with Og Melech Habashan. Here HKB"H tells Moshe as it says in 21:34 (אֶל-תִּירָא אוֹתוֹ--כִּי בְיָדְךָ נִתְּתִי אֹתוֹ). Do not fear him because I am going to put him into your hands. Rashi says (אֶל-תִּירָא אוֹתוֹ) שהיה משה ירא להלחם, שמא תעמוד לו זכותו של אברהם, שנאמר (בראשית יד, יג) ויבא הפליט, הוא עוג, שפלט מן הרפאים (שהכו כדרלעומר וחביריו בעשתרות קרנים, שנאמר (דברים ג, יא) כי רק עוג מלך הבשן נשאר מיתר הרפאים why would I think that Moshe would be afraid? The answer he says is because many many years earlier, generations earlier Og had gone to tell Avraham Avinu that Lot had been captured and as a result he had a Zechus. The fear was that maybe that Zechus would stand against Moshe Rabbeinu. So Hashem had to say (אֶל-תִּירָא אוֹתוֹ--כִּי בְיָדְךָ נִתְּתִי אֹתוֹ). This appears to be an absolute Pele. This is because the reason why Og did that is as Rashi tells us in Parshas Lech Lecha 14:13 (וַיֵּבֶא [מדרשו] לפי פשוטו זה עוג שפלט מן המלחמה, והוא שכתוב (דברים ג יא) כי רק עוג נשאר מיתר הרפאים, **הפליט** וזהו נשאר שלא הרגוהו אמרפל וחביריו כשהכו את הרפאים בעשתרות קרנים, תנחומא (חקת כה). ומדרש בראשית רבה (מב ח) זה עוג שפלט מדור המבול, וזהו מיתר הרפאים שנאמר (ו ד) הנפלים היו בארץ וגו' ומתכוין שיהרג אברהם וישא (את שרה). Og was hoping that Avraham would be killed and then he would marry Sarah. This does not seem to be an act worthy of reward. Specifically because we know that when it comes to non-Jews they do not get Schar for a Mitzvah Shelo Mushlam. It says this regarding Tzedakah in

Maseches Bava Basra 10b (18 lines from the bottom) (נענה רבי יהושע ואמר צדקה תרומם גוי אלו) (ישראל דכתיב ומי כעמך ישראל גוי אחד וחסד לאומים חטאת כל צדקה וחסד שאומות עובדי כוכבים עושין חטא הוא להן שאין עושין אלא כדי שתמשך מלכותן שנאמר להן מלכא מלכי ישפר עליך וחטיך בצדקה פרוק ועויתך במיתן עניין הן תהוי ארכא לשלותיך וגו' נענה רבן גמליאל ואמר צדקה תרומם גוי אלו ישראל דכתיב ומי כעמך ישראל [וגו'] וחסד לאומים חטאת כל צדקה וחסד שעכו"ם עושין חטא הוא להן שאין עושין אלא להתייהר בו וכל המתיהר נופל בגיהנם שנאמר זד יהיר ליך שמו עושה בעברת זדון ואין עברה אלא גיהנם שנאמר יום עברה היום (ההוא). Therefore, why would Og get Schar?

Rav Moshe in the Darash Moshe (Cheilek Aleph page # 127 on 21:34) writes an incredible thing. He writes that when someone does something good even though he is going to get punished for it as in the case of Og because he did it not just for an ulterior reason but for a bad reason. For him it was an Aveira to tell Avraham to do things that Avraham should get killed so that he could take Sarah. Nevertheless the Tzad Tov brings Schar.

I remember that the Nesivos in his Hakdamah to Megillas Esther says that because Haman was the Keili through which HKB"H brought a Kiddush Hashem, the miracle of Purim, Haman had a Zechus. In that Zechus Haman's great grandchildren were Megayeir and taught Torah in Bnei Brak. Because every Zechus, every good thing that a person does deserves a reward. This is an incredible Limud that even in such a case, even in such an unusual circumstance a person who is a Keili for something good happening does get reward. I would guess that the reverse is true as well as Rav Moshe points out that a person has to be very careful even when he is doing things Lishmah to try as much as he can not to cause pain to others. Chalila that itself can bring about a retribution.

The first question of the week is: In 20:16 it says (וישלח מלאך, ויצאנו) (ממצרים). Moshe Rabbeinu relates when we were in Egypt we cried out to Hashem and He listened to our prayers, and he sent an angel who took us out of Egypt. We say at the Seder (לא על ידי מלאך, (ולא על ידי שרף, ולא על ידי שלים, אלא הקדוש ברוך הוא בכבודו ובעצמו). That HKB"H took us out himself. Why does Moshe Rabbeinu say (וישלח מלאך, ויצאנו ממצרים)?

This is a difficult Kasha and I was going to leave it at that. Then I had a thought. HKB"H did send a Malach to take us out of Egypt. The Malach's name was Moshe Rabbeinu. Moshe Rabbeinu was HKB"H agent to take us out. Moshe Rabbeinu wasn't going to say HKB"H sent me. He wasn't going to speak in a haughty way. So he said (וישלח מלאך) that Hashem sent his messenger. Really it was him himself. If you are going to wonder could it be that a human being is called a Malach?

I would like to share with you a Vort that Rav Schwab says in his Mayan Beis Hashoeva pg # 347 on Posuk 20:16. At a Bris the Minhag is that the Mohel says that Eliyahu Malach Habris Amod Al Yimini L'samcheini. Eliyahu the angel of the Bris stand on my right side and help me. The Kasha Rav Schwab asks is that we know that it is Assur to Daven to a Malach for help. How could the Mohel Daven to a Malach?

Rav Schwab answers that it is Assur to ask a Malach to help you but you are allowed to ask a human being to help you. Since Eliyahu never died Amod Al Yimini L'samcheini. This was an appropriate request. We see then that the word Malach does apply to a human being (to Eliyahu). So perhaps here as well the Malach referred to is a reference to Moshe Rabbeinu and that would answer this question.

The second question of the week is: This question is on Rashi in Shemos 15:25 (שם שם לו) במרה which tells us that the Mitzvah of Parah Adumah was already commanded in Marah. It is known that there is some question as to the source of this Rashi as the Gemara doesn't mention Parah Adumah. Rashi says it and the Ramban brings it in the name of Rashi which indicates that it is not a mistake. Rashi holds that Parah Adumah was commanded in Marah. That would seem to contradict a Rashi in our Parsha. Rashi in 19:22 says (פרה אדמה) משל לבן שפחה שטינף פלטין של מלך. אמרו תבא אמו ותקנה הצואה, כך תבא פרה: פרה אדמה) (ותכפר על העגל) that the Parah Adumah is a Kapparah to the sin of the Eigel. What is going on? The Mitzvah of Parah Adumah was commanded in Marah which is prior to the Cheit Ha'eigel. These two Rashi's appear to be a contradiction.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Balak 5772

Let's begin by sharing a Yesodosdika Ramban with you regarding Bilam. The Ramban himself refers to an error that people have with the understanding the level (Darga) on which Bilam was. As the Ramban says in 24:1 there is a Chazal that can easily be misunderstood. Chazal say on the Posuk that is found in Devarim 34:10 (וְלֹא-קָם נָבִיא עוֹד בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל, כְּמֹשֶׁה) that for Klal Yisrael there was never another Navi like Moshe Rabbeinu, however, for the Umos Haolam there was (אבל באומות) (העולם קם, ואיזה זה בלעם). Chazal somehow compare Bilam to Moshe Rabbeinu in Nevua and they add that the reason for this was that the nations of the world should not say that had we had a Navi we would have also been Mikabeil the Torah as Klal Yisrael did from Moshe Rabbeinu.

Based on this many understand that Bilam somehow had a career as a Navi, he had been a Navi for many years. Says the Ramban, it is not true. Bilam was a magician who came with magic (כי) (בפעמים הראשונים היה מנחש ורוצה לקלל אותם בנחש), he had the ability to perform Kishuf and the Gemara says (Ed note. There is a long discussion on this topic on Daf Zayin Amud Aleph of Maseches Berachos) he knew to be Mechavein to the hour that HKB"H gets angry and at that time to curse. Now this does not make him a Navi. There is a Gemara in Maseches Berachos that says that there was an Amora who knew Michavein Es Hasha'a that he wanted to know when HKB"H gets angry Kavayochel. Bilam was not a Navi previously and it was only here that he became a Navi Bichvodon Shel Yisrael, these few times.

As a matter of fact the Ramban mentions this throughout the Parsha whenever it says Vayakar Elokim L'bilam, that HKB"H appeared to Bilam, the Ramban says Bichvodon Shel Yisrael (לכבוד) like in 23:4 for example. So that Bilam was not an ongoing Navi. Here in this episode he was Zoche to Nevua for a first and only time. He was Zoche a few times to Nevua but these times that he was Zoche to Nevua (וַתְּהִי עֲלָיו, רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים) as it says in 24:2 were the only times in his life that he was Zoche. He himself said as it says in 24:4 (אֲשֶׁר מָחֻזָּה שְׁקִי יִחְזָה, נִפְל וְגִלְדִּי) נָאֻם--שָׁמַע, אֶמְרִי-קֹל: עֵינַיִם). He says as a Chiddush that he was Zoche here to Nevua. So that Bilam was Zoche to Nevua only in this Parsha. These are the words of the Ramban.

The question you may ask is if so how does that answer the Taina (complaint) of the Umos Haolam. How does that answer their complaint that Klal Yisrael has Moshe Rabbienu and if they would have had a Navi they would have also become greater? The answer to that seems to be that Bilam

got Nevua, had he made something positive out of it then he may have been a Navi for a very long time. Moshe Rabbeinu was given Nevua the first time at the Sneh as it says in Shemos 3:3 (וַיֹּאמֶר (מִשְׁחָה--אֶסְרֶה-נָּא וְאֶרְאֶה, אֶת-הַמֶּרְאֶה הַגָּדֹל הַזֶּה: מִדּוּעַ, לֹא-יָבֵעַר הַסִּנָּה place at this thing. It was an opportunity. When a person has an opportunity he has to seize that opportunity and do something with it. Moshe Rabbeinu had the opportunity and he made himself into a Moshe Rabbeinu. Bilam had the opportunity and he made nothing out of it. It could be that that is why the Parsha ends with the Eitzza of Bilam to entrap Klal Yisrael with the Znus. That is to say look what Bilam did with his opportunity.

Rav Pam used to say that just as the Gemara says that Hillel is Michayeiv Es Ho'aniyim, some people whose actions obligate others, so too every human being has a time be it an hour in his life that is Michayeiv him forever. When he has an opportunity that touches greatness. He has to seize and build on it and grow from it and not let it fall. The difference between Moshe and Bilam, they both had the opportunity. The difference is that Moshe took the opportunity to become Moshe Rabbeinu and Bilam did not. This is the Yesod of the Ramban which can be found in 24:1. Although as I said it is a theme that he mentions briefly throughout the Parsha.

There is something else in the Parsha which is a great Limud which I would like to point out to you. As you undoubtedly noted right before the Aliyah of Revii, right before the Aliyah of Chamishi, right before the Aliyah of Shishi, and right before the Aliyah of Shevii we have a break right after Bilam makes a statement that I can only do that which HKB"H tells me. As it says in 24:13 (לֹא אוּכַל לַעֲבֹר אֶת-פִּי יְרֹר, לַעֲשׂוֹת טוֹבָה אוֹ רָעָה מִלְּבִי: אֲשֶׁר-יִדְבֵּר יְרֹר, אֹתוֹ אֲדַבֵּר). This is the theme that Bilam complains.

In the Sefer Haksav V'hakabala (Rabbi Yaakov Tzvi Mecklenburg 1785-1865) on page # 292 on 24:13 he brings from the GRA who explains this idea this theme that keeps on taking place. Bilam was a Baal Gaiva (a haughty person) as it says in the Mishna of Avos he was the opposite of a Ruach Nimucha. Bilam's Gaiva was brought down in this Parsha. As he has to slowly admit to Balak that there is nothing he can do on his own. If you look at the 4 statements that he makes at the end of each of those Aliyos that I mentioned, you see a progression. Zugt the GRA, at the end of the Shlishi Aliyah it says in 22:38 (הַדָּבָר, אֲשֶׁר יֵשִׁים אֱלֹקִים בְּפִי--אֹתוֹ אֲדַבֵּר). He is forced to admit to Balak that he can't say anything on his own. His words have no power, it is only based on Ratzon Hashem. Bilam later complains and says ok you can't curse them if Hashem doesn't let so don't curse them, but don't bless them either. Why are you giving them a Beracha? So at the end of the Aliyah of Revii is the second step, Bilam says to Balak you are complaining as it says in 23:12 (וַיֵּעַן בִּלְעָם, וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-בָּלָק: הֲלֹא, דִּבַּרְתִּי)? Not only as I said earlier that I can't curse on my own without the Ribbono Shel Olam's Ratzon but I can't even speak on my own without HKB"H Ratzon. Whatever Hashem says I must say. (אֲשֶׁר יֵשִׁים יְרֹר בְּפִי--אֹתוֹ אֲשַׁמֵּר, לְדַבֵּר). He is slowly admitting that he can't say things on his own and he can't even be silent on his own. But that is not enough.

At the end of the Chamishi Aliyah he says as is found in 23:26 (וַיֵּעַן בִּלְעָם, וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-בָּלָק: הֲלֹא, דִּבַּרְתִּי) (אֲלִיךָ לֵאמֹר, כֹּל אֲשֶׁר-יִדְבֵּר יְרֹר, אֹתוֹ אֲעֲשֶׂה). Not only am I forced to say that which HKB"H says but I am also compelled to do the act according to the way that HKB"H tells me to act. Finally at the end of the Shevii Aliya is the final step of humility when Balak gets good and angry and chases him away and says in 24:13 (אִם-יִתֵּן-לִי בָלָק מְלֹא בִיתוֹ, כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב--לֹא אוּכַל לַעֲבֹר אֶת-פִּי יְרֹר, לַעֲשׂוֹת טוֹבָה אוֹ)

(רָעָה מִלְּבִי: אֲשֶׁר-יִדְבֹּר יְרֹנֶר, אִתּוֹ אֲדַבֵּר). There is nothing that I can do on my own. This is a slow progression from the attitude that if it is up to me the realization that everything is the Koach Hashem. Here too it is a lesson for every person. When things are going well and a person is successful every human being has the feeling of Kochi V'osem Yadi, that I can do anything. As life goes on a person slowly realizes that HKB"H controls and there is very little that we do truly on our own. This progression is a progression of a realization that Halevai we should realize it and appreciate it. These are two very general themes in the Parsha. The idea of the Koach of Bilam who Bilam was and his Gaiva which is brought down in the Parsha.

Rav Elchanan in Kuntros Divrei Sofrim Siman 1 talks about the thing that Bilam did wrong. What did Bilam do wrong? If you read the Parsha without Rashi he is really a pretty good guy (אִם-יִתֵּן-). (לֹא אוּכַל לַעֲבֹר אֶת-פִּי יְרֹנֶר--לִי בָלָק מְלֹא בִיתוֹ, כָּסֶף וְזָהָב). Constantly he is saying that I can't do anything against Hashem. He seems to be pretty ok. If you learn the Parsha with Rashi the Torah Shebal Peh speaks for itself. Where did he go wrong?

Rav Elchanan in Kuntros Divrei Sofrim Siman 1 asks a different Kasha. He asks we know that the Bais Din of Sheim the son of Noach made certain types of Takanos. Asks Rav Elchonon what compelled people to listen to the Takanos of the Bais Din of Sheim. The Mitzvah of (לֹא תִסּוּר, מִן-) the Mitzvah to listen to Takanos that is brought down in Devarim 17:11 is part of the Torah and is not given to the Bnei Noach. Why would the Bnei Noach have to listen to anything outside of the Sheva Mitzvos Bnei Noach?

Rav Elchanan says an important Yesod. In front of HKB"H there are three things. 1) (אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי) meaning what HKB"H commanded in the Torah, 2) (אֲשֶׁר דִּבַּרְתִּי) meaning the things that come to us from the Neviim or through the Rabbanan, and 3) Asher Olso Al Libi which is paraphrasing a Posuk in Yirmiya that is found in 19:5. Yirmiya said that the Yidden of his generation did things (אֲשֶׁר לֹא-צִוִּיתִי וְלֹא דִבַּרְתִּי, וְלֹא עָלְתָה עַל-לִבִּי). That they did things that didn't fit into any one of these 3 categories. What are the 3 categories? 1) What was commanded in the Torah, 2) what the Neviim said and there is a third level, things that are Ratson Hashem. Besides the idea that we have to keep the Mitzvos there is a concept of keeping the Ratson Hashem. To do what HKB"H desires. That concept of doing the Ratson Hashem is something that Bilam failed in. Bilam said I am going to be a good boy and I am going to follow the laws and I will not do anything that Hashem doesn't say. But it was clear that the Ribbono Shel Olam didn't want Klal Yisrael to be cursed. It was clear that going with Balak and the Sarei Moav was not doing the Ratson Hashem. Bilam went by the letter of the law there was no Lifnei Mishuras Hadin by him, there was no Ratson Hashem by him, there was no Hiddur Mitzvah by him. If I have to do I will do. Sadly many people have that attitude that which I have to do you do. And more than you have to do if you are not Michuyav than I am not Michuyav. There is a concept of following the Ratson Hashem.

When Yaakov comes back from Lavan's house he says as is brought down by Rashi in Beraishis 32:5 (דָּבַר אַחֵר גִּרְתִּי בְּגִימַטְרִיא תְּרִי"ג, כְּלוּמַר עִם לְבֵן הָרָשָׁע גִּרְתִּי וְתְרִי"ג מִצְוֹת שְׁמַרְתִּי וְלֹא לְמַדְתִּי מִמַּעֲשֵׂיו הָרָעִים). I kept the technical laws, the Mitzvos Shamarti + I did not learn from his evil deeds. What is + he already kept the 613 Mitzvos what else is there? The Teretz is there is more. The Maisos and the Middos of a person the things that we know are the Ratson of Hashem whatever Hashem wants us to do.

Every day in Kriyas Shema we have two Parshios that we say. In the first Parsha we are Mikabeil Ol Malchus Shamayim, the yoke of heaven. In the second Parsha we are Mikabeil Ol Mitzvos of the Torah. The question is once we are Mikabeil one why do we need the other? The Ol Mitzvos Hatorah include everything that is already included in the Torah, Torah She'bicsav and Torah She'bal Peh. What is there that would be called Ol Malchus Shamayim that is not already included in the Ol Taryag Mitzvos. Or the reverse, when someone is Mekabeil Ol Malchus Shamayim what is there in Ol Hamitzvos? The answer would seem to be what we are saying. There is (ותרי"ג מצות) and there is (ולא למדתי ממעשיו הרעים). There is keeping the letter of the law and then there is the idea of Ol Malchus Shamayim of satisfying HKB"H, of keeping the Ratzon Hashem. To make things clear we accept each one separately. We keep the Taryag Mitzvos (Ol Mitzvos) but also to keep Ol Malchus Shamayim to do the Ratzon Hashem. Even after Ol Malchus Shamayim we know that the Taryag Mitzvos are unique, they have a special Chiyuv, they are not waived for any reason. Nevertheless we have to keep more than that to make the statement that there is Ol Malchus Shamayim and Ol Mitzvos. Ol Malchus Shamayim is more than Ol Mitzvos. Sometimes there are good excuses but the excuses are for when a person doesn't really want to do something. When a person wants, he gets up and does what he has to do and makes it to Minyan. He adds time to his Sedorim. That is all part of Ol Malchus Shamayim. These are 3 basic themes of the story of Bilam.

The question of the week is: at the beginning of the Parsha Bilam says in 22:18 (אם-יתן-לי בָּלֶק מָלֵא) (ביתו, כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב--לֹא אוֹכֵל, לַעֲבֹד אֶת-פִּי יְיָ). If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold I can't violate the Ratzon Hashem. Rashi says (למדנו שנפשו רחבה ומחמד ממון אחרים: מלא ביתו כסף וזהב). We learn from here that Bilam had a desire for other people's money. Why? Because he used this language of (אם-יתן-לי בָּלֶק מָלֵא ביתו, כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב).

In Pirkei Avos Perek 6:9 we find that Rav Yose Ben Kisma uses almost the exact Lashon. He says Im Ata Nosen Li Kol Kesef V'zahav V'avanim Tovos Umargolios She'baolam. If you will give me Kol Kesef V'zahav She'baolam Eini Dor Ela B'makom Torah. He too uses the Lashon of Im Yiten Li Kol Kesef V'zahav V'avanim Tovos. If that Lashon shows that Bilam was (ומחמד ממון אחרים) which is an inappropriate Lashon, Rav Yose Ben Kisma is using the language of Bilam, which is strange. Food for thought.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas 5771

Of course the Sod of the Parah Aduma has to do with the fact that it is somehow Metamei Tehorim Umitaheir Temai'im. The Parah Aduma has the unique ability to make a Tamei Meis be Tahor but at the same time a Tahor person who touches it becomes Tamei. This is a secret which Chazal say that even Shlomo Hamelech could not understand. He could not figure it out.

Naturally, when an Acharon comes and figures it out we are quite suspicious because if Shlomo Hamelech couldn't understand it and you are coming up with an explanation then obviously there is something wrong with your explanation.

The Klei Yakar in this week's Parsha explains Metamei Tehorim Umitaheir Temai'im in a way that explains the mystery of this unique idea regarding the Parah Aduma. The Klei Yakar writes that

there is something totally unique about the Parah Aduma, but it touches on one of the secrets of the Briya, something that is consistent in the nature of Hashem's world.

That in the words of the Klei Yakar is that in the world, things are moved by their opposites. ("שכל דבר אינו מתפעל כ"א מהפכו ולא ממה שהוא ממינו") Shekol Davar Aino Mispa'al Ki Im Mai'hafocho V'lo Mimah Shehu Mimino. Things are moved by their opposites and not by similarities. What does that mean? On a simple level we would say that opposites attract. What he is saying is that for example, the Yeitzer Horah does not look to deal primarily with Reshaim.

The Yeitzer Horah looks to mislead primarily Tzaddikim, so that the Yeitzer Hora works more on Klal Yisrael than the Umos Haolam and more on Tamidei Chachamim than on anyone else.

We too are that way, Ein Adam Omeid Al Dvar Halacha Ela Im Kain Nichshal Bo. A person who is Nichshal in an Aveira and realizes it will then be able to remember the Dvar Halacha. You might forget a Halacha, however, if you make a mistake and subsequently you correct your mistake, you will be stronger than if you hadn't made the mistake in the first place.

So too in many of the areas of nature, Shekol Davar Aino Mispa'al Ki Im Mai'hafocho V'lo Mimah Shehu Mimino. Things are moved to action from things that are the reverse of it rather than things that are similar in and of themselves.

The Klei Yakar refers to something that he says at the end of Parshas Shemos, that before something disappears it has its greatest strength. In other words, before a flame of a candle goes out, you will notice that it sparks up and it has a very bright light at the last minute. It is said that before the morning is the darkest part of the night. Somehow darkness is Misgabeir right before it disappears. Why, Shekol Davar Aino Mispa'al Ki Im Mai'hafocho V'lo Mimah Shehu Mimino Dafka. It is the nature of things to be moved by their opposites. If something is bent in one direction and you want to straighten it out you have to bend it in the opposite direction. That is a secret of the Teva Habriya.

The Parah Aduma is therefore Metamei Tehorim, when it touches something it becomes the opposite (Mispa'el). A Tahor becomes Tamei and a Tamei becomes Tahor. This is all part of the mystery of Shlomo Hamelech. It is not the way we would logically think the world would work. It is however the way the world does work.

A parent is often closest to a child who when growing up gave him a hard time, gave him Agmas Nefesh growing up rather than to a child that was easy. Shekol Davar Aino Mispa'al Ki Im Mai'hafocho V'lo Mimah Shehu Mimino.

What is interesting in Bain Adam L'chaveiro, perhaps in Bain Adam L'ishto, is that human beings, human nature, interaction with other human beings is the same way. If you are tough with someone that person may back down temporarily for a moment, but in fact the person really doesn't back down. The person is really distanced from you. In the long run, being soft to people is more successful than being tough. That is the nature of a person. If you insist on doing things a certain way and it is a debatable topic, things might be able to be done in a reverse way, the person listening will think maybe the other way. Or let us say for example that you have a child who slept

through Shacharis, if you say to him you always oversleep Shacharis, his reaction to the tough talk will be "I always" how can you say that? The fact that he did indeed sleep through Shacharis 10 days in a row isn't the point. He doesn't always do it. The tough talks evokes a reverse reaction.

This is a very important lesson from this Kli Yakar. Shekol Davar, everything, is Mispa'al, moved to action, Mai'hafocho V'lo Mimah Shehu Mimino., from its reverse not necessarily from which you would expect.

The lesson that I am taking out is from this Nikuda. That a person should be soft and not tough.

Later on in this week's Parsha we find the Cheit of Moshe. Moshe Rabbeinu at Mei Miriva does some sort of an Aveira. It is very hotly debated. What is the Aveira? Rishonim bring numerous Peshatim and reject them. Certainly Moshe Rabbeinu's sin is not something that is easily understood by people on our level.

The Cheit of Moshe Rabbeinu according to Rashi is that Moshe hit the stone. To this the Ramban says that he doesn't understand. What is the difference to a stone if you hit it or you talk to it? He also asks that Moshe Rabbeinu was told Kach Es Hamate, take the stick.

That should be understood to mean to take as hit the stone just as we found during the Makkos when Moshe Rabbeinu was told Kach Es Hamate, he did a physical act with the Mate. Therefore, this Rashi needs a Hesber.

I saw an incredible Vort from Rav Yonasan Eibishutz who explains as follows. He says the idea that Moshe Rabbeinu should have spoken before he hit has nothing to do with the rock itself. It has to do with Moshe Rabbeinu's own Middos as a Manhig Yisroel as a leader of Klal Yisrael. It is a rule in life, before you hit, speak. Before you are tough be soft. Before you do things with a tremendous push, do them with a gentle push. This is very much the lesson of the Mei Miriva according to this Pshat and therefore, there is no difference to the stone if you hit it or talk to it, however, to Moshe Rabbeinu the Manhig Yisroel should have understood to talk and only later to hit.

Again, a lesson, in life when you have choices, be soft and don't be tough. When you are tough you alienate the people close to you. When you are soft you might lose the battle but at the end of the day you will win the war. An important lesson in dealing with other people.

The summer months are upon us and it is a time of great Nisayon in many many areas. Vacation time should be a time of Aliya, no work, yet it is a time of Nisayon, of test.

I would like to mention two areas that are important. Number one, Shaylos that have to do with Yichud. This time of year people are in bungalow colonies living in close proximity one to the other. Errors in Hilchos Yichud take place. If someone in an attached bungalow is going shopping, it would be normal to say to the neighbor keep an eye on my children, my children may be sleeping, maybe they are going to sleep, maybe they are playing, please keep an eye on them.

Keep in mind that there is an Issur for a man to be Miyacheid with a girl over the age of 3 years old. So if there is a 4 year old girl sleeping in the bungalow and someone asks you to just step in and be there, and if the girl will cry you would pick up the girl, that is an Issur Yichud.

An Issur Yichud is an Issur onto itself, it is not because something may happen. Even if nothing will happen the Issur Yichud is an Issur. In the case of a girl who is a bit older it is an Issur D'oraisa, by somebody who has reached the age of Niddah. For a younger girl it is still an Issur P'nuya, which is still an Issur Yichud.

The reverse is also true. For a boy over 9 years old is an Issur Yichud for a woman and that Issur is an Issur D'oraisa. For a woman to be Miyacheid with a 9 year old. During the year, a married woman has the Heter of Bai'la B'ir. In the bungalow colonies there is no Heter of Bai'la B'ir because the husband is not in town. Certainly a single girl should not go babysitting for a 9 year old boy, even for 2 boys, because in the case of 2 boys even though 2 men and one woman is not an Issur Yichud, however, B'layla (by night) at the time people go to sleep an extra Shomer is required. These are things that I am bringing to your attention. Issurei Yichud which are more Noge'a in a bungalow colony setting.

One more point. Unfortunately not everyone goes dressed properly at this time of the year. Be careful, it is Assur to recite a Beracha or Dvar Torah facing a Tefach B'isha Erva, facing a woman who is not properly covered. This is even if the woman is a Tinuk Shenishba and it is no fault. I am not condemning any person. I am talking about what we the Bnei Torah have to know. That making a Beracha facing (even if you are not looking) either a married woman whose hair is uncovered. Many women wear snoods that leave the hair in the front uncovered. The most Kuladicka Shitta allows 2 fingerwidths to be uncovered. Actually, this Shitta is a bit less than 2 fingerwidths, more than that is considered to be uncovered. Making a Beracha facing that even if it is a relative, be it a wife or daughter, is Assur. So be careful.

Similarly when you are on the street, if you want to make a Shehakol on something, be careful if you are facing an Ervah even if you are not looking there is a problem making a Beracha, you can look to the side and make the Beracha that way.

If you are travelling in the trains it is certainly a problem this time of year. Rav Moshe writes in a Teshuva that Bishas Hadchak a person can rely on the Shittos Harishonim that doesn't require looking to the side and that allows looking down or looking away. That is certainly a Heter. You are better off looking in a Sefer on the train instead of anywhere else.

I heard an incredible story about Rabbi Avigdor Miller which I had never heard before. Somebody wanted to speak to him and Rabbi Miller told him that he didn't have any time. So the person said that I know that you go on a walk everyday so let me accompany you on the walk and I will discuss my issue with you then. Rabbi Miller replied fine, however, when I go for my walk I pick up rubber bands. The mailmen here in NY have their mail in bundles with rubber bands and they drop the rubber bands on the sidewalk. I don't want them to be wasted. So I pick up the rubber bands as I walk. You will have to help me. The young man said fine. So they went for their walk and as they were walking they picked up 4 or 5 rubber bands. When they got to Rabbi Miller's home at

the end of the walk this man thanked him and offered him the rubber bands. Rabbi Miller said I don't need rubber bands. The young man said I thought that you collect these rubber bands?

Rabbi Miller said I don't need rubber bands, however, it is July and you asked me to go for a walk. Am I going to take a young man for a walk down Coney Island Avenue? You know what is going on in the street? So I told you to look at the floor for rubber bands and this way I was sure that your eyes were trained on the floor and not all over the place. What an interesting story. What a Mussar Haskeil.

The first question of the week is: we are always taught that Tzaddikim B'misanan K'dolim Mai'B'chayehem, the Zechusim of a Tzaddik after death are greater than the Zechusim of his lifetime. He can be Poel, he can do more in death than when he was alive. Certainly we see that by Eliyahu Hanavi and his influence on Elisha. I have a problem with the Parsha, we are told that for 40 years in the Midbar the Zechus of Miriam kept the B'air flowing. Water kept flowing from the B'air Bizchus Miriam. As soon as Miriam dies in this week's Parsha, the B'air ceases to give water and it is necessary for Moshe Rabbeinu to have the incident with the Mei Miriva.

I don't understand, Tzaddikim B'misanan K'dolim Mai'B'chayehem. Why couldn't Miriam continue to be the Zechus for the B'air at that time? Tzorech Iyun Gadol M'od.

The second question of the week is: Klal Yisrael in the Midbar are carrying the bones of the Shevaim to be buried in Eretz Yisrael. Aharon and Miriam two of their three greatest leaders pass away. Why do they bury them in the Midbar? Why don't they carry their bones into Eretz Yisrael to bury them there as well?

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Balak 5771

I would like to begin with a Gemara in Maseches Berachos 12b (4th wide line) (אמר ר' אבהו בן זוטרת) (אמר רבי יהודה בר זבידא בקשו לקבוע פרשת בלק בקריאת שמע ומפני מה לא קבעוה משום טורח צבור). It is a Gemara that is not well known and it will probably come as a surprise even to Bnei Torah. The Gemara there says when the Seder Hatefila (Davening) was set up, the Anshei Knesses Hagedola desired to setup Parshas Balak as part of Kriyas Shema. That would make Davening quite a bit longer. So why didn't they do this? Because of Tircha D'tzibura of making the Davening quite a bit longer it was not setup as part of Davening.

Why did Chazal originally want to set this up as part of Kriyas Shema. I might add that the Satmar Rebbe (Divrei Yoel) suggests that the Kriyas Shema of the generation of the Midbar at least at the time of the story of Balak and on, was Parshas Balak because after all the paragraphs that are Kriyas Shema were not said until Sefer Devarim, until Moshe Rabbeinu's last month of his life. Why should Parshas Balak be said? This is something of a mystery.

The Pnei Yehoshua there in Berachos explains that it is based on a Nevua that we find in Sefer Micha 6:5 a Nevua that said please remember that Eitza which Balak had against you. (עמי, זכר-נא) (מה-יעץ בלק מלך מואב, ומה-ענה אתו, בלעם בן-בעור--מן-השטים, עד-הגלגל, למען, דעת צדקות ירור) Since the Posuk says (זכר-נא) it is a commandment that Klal Yisrael should recognize the Tzidkus of Hashem

of the way he treated Klal Yisrael with kindness. Since we find in Navi a command to remember the story of Balak, there is a fundamental idea that whatever the Navi said as a matter of practice actually was Halacha L'moshe Misinai and only put into words of Tanach through the Navi, therefore we would conclude that there is some sort of a Mitzvah, an Inyan, maybe someday they will publish some sort of Segulos and charge money for big Tzaddikim to say it someplace in Eretz Yisrael. There seems to be some Maila in remembering and to reading the Parsha of Balak. Therefore, there was a desire initially to set it up as Kriyas Shema.

It still needs an explanation. It explains a source for it in Tanach, however, it does not give a Hesber why Parshas Balak should be part of Kriyas Shema. (למען, נעת צדקות ירור) we should know the Tzidkus of Hashem which is one thing, but why is it important to reread this week's Parsha.

The Divrei Menachem says a beautiful thought. There is a Yesod that when a Beracha is given, that Beracha has power based on the Ahava, on the Kavanna, on the understanding of the person giving the Beracha. This is why a father gives his son a Beracha. A father is an ordinary Jew. Why not call in a Rosh Yeshiva to give the son the Beracha? Berachos have power based on the level of Ahava, on the love of the person giving the Beracha.

We find by Birchas Kohanim where the Kohanim give a Beracha to Klal Yisrael. They precede giving the Beracha by making a Beracha of Asher Kidishanu B'mitzvosav V'tzivanu L'voreich Es Amo Yisroel B'ahava. To Bentch Klal Yisrael with love. Love is a requirement of a Beracha to make the Beracha be Chal.

The Divrei Menachem says that the Berachos given by Bilam to Klal Yisrael were not given with Ahava, they were given Bal Korcho, he was stuck and he had to give the Berachos. Since they were not given B'ahava we read it for generations. We say (יַעֲקֹב מִשְׁכַּנְתִּידָּהּ יִשְׂרָאֵל מָה טָבוּ אֵהְיֶיהָ) Ma Tovv Oholecha Yaakov every morning. We say those words of the Torah with an Ahava for Klal Yisrael. Therefore, we give extra power to these Berachos which are Pesukim in the Torah and we are Mekayeim with that the words from Micha that were quoted above from 6:5. This is a thought which is sort of a Hakdama and is also an important idea that the Koach and Chiyuv of a Beracha depends on the love of the person giving the Beracha.

Let me share with you a couple of Diyukim in the language of the Parsha. Then we will come to a Yesodosdika idea.

This morning when we were reading the beginning of the Parsha until Sheini, I noticed something and I was reminded of something that Rav Moshe says in a Diyuk, a careful Diyuk in the words of the Parsha. We read that when Balak is speaking, Balak says in 22:5 (הֲנֵה עַם יֵצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם) that the nation Klal Yisrael has gone out of Mitzrayim. That makes a lot of sense. Then right before Sheini when Bilam relates to the Ribbono Shel Olam Balak's message, he says, 22:11 (הֲנֵה הָעַם הַיֵּצֵא (מִמִּצְרַיִם)). He says it is a nation that is going out of Mitzrayim which is in the present tense and not in the past tense as Balak had said it. Obviously if there is such a change there must be a reason for it.

Rav Moshe explains that Balak saw things on a simple level. (הֲנֵה עַם יֵצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם) it is history almost 40 years ago a nation left Egypt. Bilam, however, said things with the power of Nevua and his

understanding. So when he spoke to Hashem he had to say the truth. (הָעַם הַיֵּצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם), is going out of Mitzrayim. This is a people that doesn't just have the history of the past but it is constantly in that state of Yotzei Mitzrayim. Even 40 years later as Klal Yisrael is heading to Eretz Yisrael they still have the mentality of Yotzei Mitzrayim, of fleeing the Tumah of the land which they left.

There is a concept that we have that B'chol Yom Yihyu B'ainecha K'chadashos. That every day the giving of the Torah should be new. It should be new in the sense that when you have something new it has a freshness and a sense of liveliness to it, the feeling which inspires and motivates. That is our goal. B'chol Yom Yihyu B'ainecha K'chadashos. Klal Yisrael, Bilam correctly said, is an (הָעַם הַיֵּצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם). A nation that is going out of Mitzrayim.

We find a similar thing in the first Posuk of Chumash Shemos, (וְאֵלֶּה, שְׁמוֹת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, הַבָּאִים, מִצְרַיִם). These are the names of the Jews who were coming to Mitzrayim. They actually had come from Mitzrayim already but they were constantly in a state and mentality of strangers in the land of Mitzrayim. They didn't let the Hisyashvus, that it should start to feel old and be taken for granted that they belonged in Mitzrayim. They kept that mentality, that freshness, that newness. That was a big challenge that Klal Yisrael had, to always have a Hischadshus in their Avodas Hashem.

I would add that when it comes to Hakaros Hatov for thanking the Ribbono Shel Olam, it is that way as well. It is that way that we get used to the things we have. It would be nice if we always had a fresh appreciation of what Hashem has given us. Of all the goodness that we have. We get used to the good things we have and when things go wrong we complain about the things that caused us pain. It would be much healthier for us to constantly be reminded of the goodness that we have. Those are the Berachos we say in the morning, Hakadosh Baruch Hu is Zokeif Kefufim and Malbish Arumim. All the things that Hakadosh Baruch Hu gives us that we get used to. It should constantly be fresh, (הָעַם הַיֵּצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם) constantly fresh and appreciated.

We can add that it is that way with our friends as well. Many people have friends who have been kind to them in the past but years go by and maybe 10 or 20 years later that friend does something which offends a person. The friend who is offended then distances himself from his friend.

It is a thought and an attitude of what have you done for me lately. The Hakaras Hatov to be grateful for things that happened even many years ago is something that should have a Hischadshus. So this is the idea of (הָעַם הַיֵּצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם). A Hischadshus in Avodas Hashem of fleeing from Tumah. A Hischadshus and Hakaras Hatov to Hakadosh Baruch Hu. The idea of B'chol Yom Yihyu B'ainecha K'chadashos. It should always be something which is new.

Moving on to another idea in this week's Parsha. When Bilam wanted to curse Klal Yisrael it seems to be very important that Bilam had to see Klal Yisrael. Why didn't Balak just tell Bilam to curse the Jewish people from his home? He took him as it says in the Posuk **23:13** (וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו בָּלָק, לֵךְ-נָא) (אֲתִי אֶל-מְקוֹם אֲחֵר אֲשֶׁר תִּרְאֶנּוּ מִשָּׁם--אֶפְסָ קִצְהוּ תִרְאֶנּוּ, וְכִלּוֹ לֹא תִרְאֶנּוּ; וְקִבְנוּ-לִי, מִשָּׁם). This is when Bilam saw all of Klal Yisrael and couldn't curse he said (קִצְהוּ תִרְאֶנּוּ) look at a small portion of them and curse them. It seems that the looking at them was of extraordinary importance. Why so?

There are 2 Teirutzim, one a technical Teretz and one is a Hashkafa Teretz. To be Makdim there is a Tosafos in Maseches Berachos 7a. The Gemara there says (18 lines from the top) (**וְקָל זִעַם**) (**בְּכָל יוֹם וְכִמָּה זַעַמוּ רָגַע**). That Hakadosh Baruch Hu has Kaveyachol a moment of anger every day, and how long is that moment? The moment is very brief. Bilam's power was to be able to precisely calculate that moment of Hashem's anger and to curse at that time.

Tosafos asks a Kasha. (**וְאִם תֹּאמַר מָה הִיא יְכוֹל לִזְכֹּר בְּשַׁעַת רָגַע. יֵשׁ לֹמֵר כָּלָם.**). If the whole anger is a Rega, meaning the amount of time to say the word Rega, what can one say as a curse in that amount of time? It doesn't give you a whole lot of time to curse Klal Yisrael?

Tosafos says in his first answer says that Bilam could have say Kaleim, destroy them. The word Kaleim is about as long as the word Rega, and therefore, there is enough time to say it. L'fi Zeh, he had to be standing in front of Klal Yisrael. If he had been at home and said Kaleim it would not be clear who he is talking about. By going to Klal Yisrael and seeing them and saying Kaleim it is obvious that he was talking about them, and then the curse can be said in that instant. This is the technical Teretz.

There is a second Teretz which is a Hashkafik idea which is found in numerous places. The power of Bilam was in Ayin Hora, the bad eye. The way he looked at things with a bad eye. Therefore, he had to see Klal Yisrael in order to be able to have that Koach and power of seeing them and cursing them.

Ayin Hora to most people is just something of a supernatural nature. You have to see them and then cause destruction. In fact we find that the eye and the heart are connected. That what a person feels is connected to what he sees. A person can walk into a room with oily hair, ripped clothing, and an earring on one ear and a very strange expression on his face. If you and I saw him we would be repulsed. There are other human beings who would see him and think that he is cool. The eye is connected to the heart. What you see, what you appreciate, and what you like has to do with the heart. Even though technically what you see is a physical fact, you see something, however, the way you look at it, the way you see it, is something which affects your attitude. In order for Bilam to be able to have a Sinah (hatred) for Klal Yisrael and be able to curse them properly, he had to see them and be repulsed.

On the contrary when we see people who are Bnei Torah and we feel good about seeing them, it creates appositve atmosphere. That is the Koach Har'iya.

Rav Michel Lefkowitz who was just Niftar wrote in a Sefer about something he regretted that he had done in his life. What is the sin of such a Gadol of Yisrael? He wrote that when he was a Bochur the Chofetz Chaim came to the town in which he was Learning. All the Bochurim left the Yeshiva to see the Chofetz Chaim and he decided to stay and learn instead of going to see the Chofetz Chaim. He writes that later he regretted that. This is what he had to do Teshuva for, staying in the Beis Medrash and not going to see the Chofetz Chaim. The point is that seeing an Adom Gadol has an effect. Seeing something with your eyes, having a Ahavah, an appreciation, respect. The eyes are connected to the heart. Bamidbar **15:39** (**וְאַחֲרֵי לִבְכֶּכֶּם, וְאַחֲרֵי עֵינֵיכֶם**). The eyes

are connected to the heart. (Or as we say in Maariv) (וַיֵּרְאוּ עֵינֵינוּ וַיִּשְׂמַח לִבֵּנוּ), what we see has to do with the joy of our heart. Therefore, Bilam had to see them in order to be able to curse Klal Yisrael.

It is interesting. What happens later? Hashem says don't curse them, the Malach on the road says don't curse them, even the donkey admonishes Bilam, and he still goes forward. When does he stop? 24:2 (וַיַּעַז בִּלְעָם אֶת-עֵינָיו, וַיַּרְא אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל, שָׁכֵן, לִשְׂבָטָיו; וַתְּהִי עָלָיו, רוּחַ אֱלֹקִים). Bilam looked at Klal Yisrael and he saw the way Klal Yisrael camped, the Tzinus with which they camped. He saw something that was beautiful and he couldn't curse Klal Yisrael. It had been all based on seeing them with a bad eye. Here the beauty of the way Klal Yisrael lived was something that didn't allow for the curse to take place. Look at how beautiful and what a lesson in seeing things in a positive light.

The question of the week is: We read that Bilam sets out with the Sarei Balak. Subsequently we have the episode of the talking donkey where Bilam is stuck 22:24 (וַיִּגְדֵּר מִזְהָ, וַיִּגְדֵּר מִזְהָ) Gadeir Mizah and Gadeir Mizah in the narrow passage. The Malach stands in front of him and the entire episode happens. What confused me is where are the Sarei Balak that were accompanying him, he wasn't travelling alone, he was travelling with others? How did the others get past this narrow passageway? Was it that Bilam was first, was that the way an Adom Choshuv travelled? Perhaps the others went first and then Bilam was in middle and it is not a Kasha.

However, the Pesukim seem to indicate that Bilam went alone. The Pesukim during the episode of the donkey 22:22 (וְהוּא רֹכֵב עַל-אֲתוֹנוֹ, וּשְׁנֵי נַעֲרָיו עִמּוֹ) It seems to say that he was riding the donkey and 2 youths were with him. Meaning it seemed that there were not others there. Ok, perhaps they were not with him Mamush. When the episode ends the Malach tells Bilam that he can go on but he can't curse Klal Yisrael and it says 22:35 (וַיֵּלֶךְ בִּלְעָם, עִם-שָׂרֵי בָלָק) that he went with them. As if he was not going with them until now. I don't know, maybe somebody comments on the Mashmaos Haposuk that Bilam was alone at this time. Or maybe I was wrong and he wasn't alone. Just something I was thinking about in the Parsha.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas 5770

וְלָמָּה הֵעֲלִיתֵנוּ, מִמִּצְרַיִם, לְהָבִיא אֶתְנוּ, אֶל-הַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה: לֹא מָקוֹם זֶרַע, וְתַאֲנָה וְגִפְן וְרִמּוֹן, וּמִים אֵין, ה' 20:5 Why did you bring us up from Mitzrayim to this terrible place, it is not a place of planting, nor of figs, grapes, or pomegranates, and there is no water to drink. The idea that it is not a place of planting is brought in Shulchan Aruch in Hilchos Kisui Hadam Siman 28, where it says that earth of the desert is not acceptable to be used for Kisui Hadam because you need Afar Haraui Litzmoiach, earth from which things can grow and since in the Midbar things can't grow, it is not good earth.

We have a difficulty from Parshas Shelach 15:32 where we learned the story of the Mekoishesh Eitzim. וַיְהִי בְּנִי-יִשְׂרָאֵל, בַּמִּדְבָּר; וַיִּמְצְאוּ, אִישׁ מִקִּשְׁשׁ עֲצִים--בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיט לֵב. This is the story of the person who according to the Gemara in Masseches Bava Basra 119a2 (note 19 in the Artscroll Gemara) cut something that was growing from the ground on Shabbos which is the Issur of Toilesh and Koitzer. According to others he was Me'ameir, which is gathering things in the place that it grew. Either way, wood did grow in the Midbar. This would seem to contradict the Posuk here in Parshas

Chukas that says that the Midbar is not a Makoim Zera, meaning that things can't grow in the Midbar.

A second question. They complain that it is not a place of planting and that they do not have water. For the last 39 ½ years they had water however, now after Miriam's death they do not have water. However, the complaint that they can't plant anything is not something new, they had already lived like this in the Midbar for the last 39 ½ years. Why all of a sudden are they complaining now that it is not a place that things can grow?

A third question. It is not the nature of a person, who has never experienced something to complain about the lack of it, so since most of this generation had grown up in the Midbar why did they have this complaint about things not growing in the first place?

The Ohr Hachaim Hakadoish (page # 56 on 15:32) on the story of the Mekoishesh Eitzim in Parshas Shelach asks why did the Posuk say בְּמִדְבָּר יִשְׂרָאֵל, if throughout the whole Sefer Bamidbar the Yidden were in the Midbar? The Posuk is telling us that when Klal Yisrael was in the Midbar the Midbar was different. Normally nothing grew in the Midbar, however, when Klal Yisrael was in the Midbar the Be'eir Shel Miriam not only gave Klal Yisrael water to drink but also provided nutrients for the Midbar for things to grow like orchards and gardens. So the Posuk is really coming to answer our question. The Bnei Yisrael were in the Midbar and then there was a Mekoishesh Eitzim, because it was possible to find things growing in the Midbar at this time because of the Be'eir Shel Miriam. Mimeila all the questions are answered. This is why they were missing things that grew because Miriam had been Nifteres and there was no water to give nutrients to the earth in order that things should grow.

21:18 - 19 וּמִתְנָה, נְחִילָאֵל; יט בָּאֵר חֲפְרוּהָ שְׂרִים, כְּרוּהָ נְדִיבֵי הָעָם, בְּחֻקָּהּ, בְּמִשְׁעָנֶתָם; וּמִמְדָּבָר, מִתְנָה יח **19** - Chazal interpret the word Matana to mean the Toirah. The Gemara in Eiruvim says that if a person behaves humbly like a Midbar that everyone treads upon, then he is Zoiche that Toirah is given to him as a gift. This idea that Toirah is given as a gift to someone who behaves with humility is one of the 48 things that you are Koine Toirah with.

In the Sefer Yikar Tiferes he explains that this is the way we begin Eloikai Nitzar at the end of Shemone Esrei when we say V'nafshi K'afar Lakoil Ti'ye. This is the concept of a person who treats his own honor and Nefesh as like the dust upon which everyone treads. We follow that with a Bakasha that P'sach Libi B'soirasecha that Hashem should open our hearts to Toirah.

There is a Teshuva in the Netziv's Maishiv Davar, that a Talmid Chochom was Niftar and he left in his will that his Chidushai Toirah that he learned while learning a Sugya can be published, however, his Teshuvos to people can't be published because he was not into the Sugya and he didn't trust himself that the Teshuvos were reliable to print. The children wanted to know if they were Mechuyav to follow the father's command of not publishing the Teshuvos or is the Toirah not his and he is not in control of the concepts he came up with.

The Netziv bases his answer on our Posuk of מִתְנָה, וּמִמְדָּבָר The Psak he gives is that Toirah can't belong to a person. Someone can choose where to disseminate his Chiddushim and who to teach

it to, that is his right. However, a person can't say he doesn't want anyone to have it, as that is not his right.

On the topic of the Parah Aduma we have to understand a little bit about Tumah. When Moshiach will come Bim'heira B'yamainu, we will once again be Noiheg Tumah and Taharah and everything will be divided between things that are Tamei and things that are Tahor. We will have to have a separate set of dishes for the days of Tumah and Taharah unless you want to use plastic. We will have to have a separate car for Tumah and Taharah.

At the end of Megillas Rus in 4:7 we learn ז וְזָאת לְפָנִים בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל עַל-הַגָּאֲלָה וְעַל-הַתְּמוּנָה, לְקַיֵּם כָּל-דִּבְרֵי, The custom was to do a Kinyan Chalipin which today we do with a handkerchief that is used when you sell your Chameitz or by the Kesubah and that exchange creates a Kinyan. The custom in those days was to use a Na'al as is used in the Posuk which some want to say means a shoe, however, others like the Even Ezer here and Rabbeinu Bachye in Parshas Shemos want to say it means a glove. If it meant a shoe it would have said Na'aloi Mei'al Ragloei so here it means a glove. The question is why was everyone wearing gloves? The Teretz is that in a world of Tumah and Taharah you want to wear gloves.

Let's say you have a friend who went to a Levaya, he is now an Av Hatumah. The Meis is an Avi Avois Hatumah and he became an Av Hatumah. If you shake his hand you become a Rishoin L'tumah. A person can't become a Sheini, however, as just illustrated; it can happen that a person becomes a Rishoin. For that reason it was common to wear gloves. If a person who was at a Levaya shakes your hand and you are wearing a glove then the glove becomes a Rishoin and the Tumah is not transmitted to the person wearing the glove. So it was a wise practice in those days to always wear a glove.

We read in the Haftorah to Parshas Zachar that Shmuel kills Agag. Shmuel 1 15:33 לֵאמֹר נִיֵּאמָר שְׁמוּאֵל--כִּפְאֵשׁ שִׁפְלָה נָשִׁים חֲרָבָה, בֶּן-תִּשְׁכַּל מְנָשִׁים אִמָּה; וַיִּשְׁפֹּף שְׁמוּאֵל אֶת-אֶגְגֵּי לִפְנֵי יְרֹד, בְּגִלְגָל If Shmuel was a Nazir how could he become Tamei by killing Agag? The answer may be the same that he wore perhaps 2 gloves and the outside glove became the Av Hatumah and the inside glove became the Rishoin L'tumah and the Tumah is not transmitted then to a human being as a Sheini.

The question of the week is: The Gemara in Gittin 60a on the bottom to 60b on the top says that the Parsha of Parah Adumah was taught to Klal Yisrael on the day that the Mishkan was set up, on Rosh Chodesh Nissan. אי נמי לכדרכי לוי דאמר רבי לוי שמנה פרשיות נאמרו ביום שהוקם בו המשכן. אלו הן פרשת כהנים ופרשת לויים ופרשת טמאים ופרשת שילוח טמאים ופרשת אחרי מות ופרשת שתויי יין ופרשת נרות They had been told about Parah Adumah at Marah. The first Parah Adumah ever was prepared on the second day of Nissan. Why was it not done earlier? One of the requirements as listed in the Posuk 19:4 is ד וְלִקַּח אֶלְעָזָר הַכֹּהֵן, מִדָּמָה--בְּאֶצְבָּעוֹ; וְהָיָה אֵל-נֹכַח פְּנֵי אֹהֶל-מוֹעֵד, מִדָּמָה--שָׁבַע שָׁבַע that there should be an Ohel Moed, so until there was a Mishkan there can be no Parah Adumah.

Moshe Rabbeinu served as Kohen Gadol the week before Rosh Chodesh Nissan. Moshe Rabbeinu should have been a Tamei Meis as there was no Parah Adumah at that time, so how was he able to be Meshameish as a Kohen Gadol especially if the obligation of the Parah Adumah had already been taught at Marah? You might argue that maybe Moshe Rabbeinu wore gloves all the time and

made sure not to become Tamei. However, we find that Moshe Rabbeinu was Oisek with Aroinoi Shel Yosef, he is credited with taking Yosef's coffin into the Midbar and we know that the Aroinoi Shel Yosef is Metamei because the whole Mitzvah of Pesach Sheini came about because of the people who were Tamei Meis from carrying the Aron of Yosef. So Moshe Rabbeinu should have been Tamei, so how could he have served as the Kohen Gadol during the Shivas Yimei Hamiluim?

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Balak 5770

22:22 וַיֵּסֶר אֶף אֱלֹקִים, כִּי-הוֹלֵךְ הוּא, וַיִּתְנַצֵּב מִלֶּאֱדָי יְקוֹק בְּדֶרֶךְ, לְשֹׁטֵן לוֹ; וְהוּא רֹכֵב עַל-אַתְנֹו, וְשָׁנִי נֶעְרִי **כב** Bilam goes with the Sarei Balak only after he gets permission to go and yet the Posuk says that the Ribboinoi Shel Oilam was upset with him because he went. It seems to be inconsistent as the Ribboinoi Shel Oilam gave him permission to go.

The GRA says there are two Hebrew words that are usually translated to mean "with". Imoi or Imcha which means with or with you (Ayin Mem). The other word is Es which is also used to mean with. There is a difference in meaning between the two. The word Im denotes a solid connection that has depth to it as we find in Tehillim **91:15** וַיִּקְרָאנִי, וַאֲעֲנֶהוּ--עִמּוֹ-אֲנֹכִי **טו** The word Imoi means that there is depth to the connection. Or as is found in Koheles **9:9** אִשָּׁה-אֲשֶׁר-אֶהְבֶּתָּ **ט** which refers to a relationship between a man and woman. Im, a man and his wife have a connection that has depth to it. Or as is found in Beraishis **33:1** וַיֵּשָׂא יַעֲקֹב עֵינָיו, וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה עֹשֹׂו בָּא, וְעִמּוֹ, אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת אִישׁ **א** This is regarding Eisav and his henchman, and the Posuk says Imoi which Chazal Darshen K'amoi they were like his people. As a matter of fact the word Im and Amoi are similar because Am denotes a deep relationship.

The word Es, Itcha, and Itchem, is used to denote a superficial relationship when things just happen to be together. For example as is found in Vayikra **19:23** וְכִי-תִבְאוּ אֶל-הָאֶרֶץ, וַיִּטְעַתֶּם כָּל-עֵץ מֵאֵכָל-- **כג** This is by the Parsha of Orlof and refers to the fruit Es Piryo which Chazal interpret as that which accompanies the fruit which is the peel of the fruit that is included in the Din of Orlof. The peel of the fruit is connected to the fruit; however, there is no depth to it. It is a very superficial connection as the peel just happens to be on it and around it, but it is in a very superficial way.

Once we know this Yesoid and we read the Pesukim it is really beautiful. Originally when Bilam requested permission to accompany the Sarei Balak, the Posuk says **22:12** וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים אֶל-בִּלְעָם, **יב** The Ribboinoi Shel Oilam says to Bilam Loi Seileich Imahem, do not accompany them, meaning do not have a relationship with them. Later when Bilam still wants to go the Ribboinoi Shel Oilam says in **22:20** וַיִּבֹּא אֱלֹקִים אֶל-בִּלְעָם, לֵילֶךְ, וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִם- **כ** I give you permission to go with them, however, it should be alongside them, to accompany them, but not to have a relationship with them and a partnership with them in the plans that they have. The Ribboinoi Shel Oilam said don't go Imahem go Itam. The next Posuk **22:21** then says, וַיִּחַבֵּשׁ אֶת-אַתְנֹו; וַיֵּלֶךְ, **כא** When Bilam went with them it was Im, he accompanied them with a connection and as one who has a deep relationship to them. Then comes the Posuk that we started with **22:22** וַיֵּסֶר אֶף אֱלֹקִים, כִּי-הוֹלֵךְ הוּא **כב** Then the Malach came and was ready to destroy Bilam

because of that which he done. This is a beautiful explanation of Im and Itam and the two different meanings.

The Hagaois Maimani in Hilchos Talmud Torah Perek Gimmel Ois Bais (3:2) adds a different Nikuda. He says the word Im is used when A accompanies B. You say A is Hoilech Im B when B (the second one mentioned) is the Ikkur because he is the one that is leading. He brings numerous examples of this idea. That Im implies that the second one is leading.

Here the Ribboinoi Shel Oilam said don't go Imam, this means don't let them lead you on the path that they want you to go, rather Leich Itam let them go on your path. However, we find that they led the way and Bilam followed them.

It is a beautiful explanation of the mistake that was made and the whole Vayichar Af and Derech Agav we gain this understanding of the difference in the Hebrew language of Im and Es (Itam) which seem to be synonymous but are used in different ways.

24:15 וַיֵּשֶׁא מִשְׁלֹ, וַיֹּאמֶר: נָאִם בְּלִעָם בְּנֹו כְעֵר, וְנָאִם הַגִּבֹּר שְׁתֵּם הָעֵין טו As we know, Bilam did really want to curse Klal Yisrael. He knew that he couldn't do something that the Ribboinoi Shel Oilam didn't want and each of the three times that he tried to curse Klal Yisrael a Beracha came out instead. This we understand.

However, the fourth Beracha that is found starting with the Posuk quoted above after Shevii, Bilam voluntarily blesses Klal Yisrael. Bilam is not prompted, no one asked him to say anything and Bilam just starts giving a Beracha to Klal Yisrael. It is a mystery as to why Bilam is doing this.

Now we will bring an explanation from the Chidah who doesn't come to answer this question. However, the Chidah explains the method of how Bilam worked and in that way can give us an insight that we can apply here.

As you know, Bilam was a Navi. A Navi is someone who knows the future and has prophecy. Yet what was Bilam's reputation? Balak says in **22:6** וַיֹּאמֶר בָּלָק, וְאֲשֶׁר תְּבָרֵךְ, וְאֲשֶׁר תָּאָר, כִּי יִדְעָתִי, אֵת אֲשֶׁר-תְּבָרֵךְ מְבָרֵךְ, וְאֲשֶׁר תָּאָר, יִאָּר those who you bless are blessed and those who you curse are cursed. In what way did Bilam have this power to bless people? What does this have to do with being a Navi? A Tzaddik is a person that can bless people; however, what is the Koiach of the blessing of Bilam?

The Posuk says וַיֹּאמֶר בָּלָק, וְאֲשֶׁר תְּבָרֵךְ, וְאֲשֶׁר תָּאָר, כִּי יִדְעָתִי, אֵת אֲשֶׁר-תְּבָרֵךְ מְבָרֵךְ, וְאֲשֶׁר תָּאָר, יִאָּר those who you bless are blessed and those who you curse are cursed. Mevoirach is past tense, meaning those that you bless are already blessed. It doesn't say that those that you bless will be blessed.

The Chidah says that Bilam had an elaborate scheme. His blessing was meaningless; however, as a prophet he knew the future. When people came to him for a blessing, he knew which people would be Matzliach in the future and he chose them to bless. So this means that אֲשֶׁר-תְּבָרֵךְ מְבָרֵךְ the people that he chose to bless were people who he knew were blessed. Of course he fooled everyone. They thought it was his blessing that created the Hatzlacha. He gained because people would come and pay him for his blessing. So he chose who to bless to gain this type of reputation. This is the method by which Bilam fooled people.

So Bilam really wanted to curse Klal Yisrael, however, the Ribboinoi Shel Oilam turned it into a Beracha. Bilam had no power to bless, however, he realized prophetically that Klal Yisrael would be blessed. Once he realized this and to keep his reputation going, he gave them a further Beracha. This is why he voluntarily offered the fourth Beracha, in order to keep his reputation.

A third thought on the Parsha which is Rebbe's thought. When you review the Parsha, when you are either being Mavir Sedrah or are listening during the Laining, try to be objective and make believe you have never heard of Bilam and read the words of Torah Shebich'sav. Then try to come up with an impression of what type of person Bilam was. Actually if you read the Torah Shebich'sav about Bilam he is a wonderful person. He does only the right thing. He is really a Tzaddik.

Balam sends messengers to him asking him to curse Klal Yisrael and he says **22:8** וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֵיהֶם, חָזְרוּ וְשִׁבוּ לִי לָיְלָה, וְהָשַׁבְתִּי אֲתֶכֶם דְּבָר, פֶּאֶשֶׁר יְדַבֵּר יְקֹנֶה אֵלַי; וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שְׁרֵי-מוֹאָב, עִם-בָּלָעַם וַיֵּקָם בָּלָעַם, בַּבֹּקֶר, יוֹם 22:13 וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-שְׁרֵי בָלָק, לְכוּ אֶל-אַרְצְכֶם: כִּי מָאֵן יְקֹנֶה, לְתַתִּי לְהִלָּךְ עִמָּכֶם וַיִּבְּא אֱלֹקִים אֶל-בָּלָעַם, לֵימֹר, לֹא אֶם-לִקְרָא לָךְ 22:20 וַיֵּקָם בָּלָעַם בַּבֹּקֶר, וַיַּחְבֹּשׁ אֶת-אַתָּנוֹ; וַיִּלָּךְ, עִם-שְׁרֵי מוֹאָב כֹּא 22:21 וַיֹּאמֶר לֵד 22:34 וְהָיָה כִּי יִדְעֵתִי, כִּי אֶתֶּה נֹצֵץ לִקְרָאתִי בְּדֶרֶךְ; וְעַתָּה אִם-רָע בְּעֵינַיִךְ, אָשׁוּבָה לִי וַיֹּאמֶר בָּלָעַם אֶל-בָּלָק, הִנֵּה- 22:38 בָּאֵתִי אֵלַי--עַתָּה, הִנֵּה אוֹכֵל דָּבָר מֵאֻמָּה: הַדְּבָר, אֲשֶׁר יֵשִׁים אֱלֹקִים בְּפִי--אֲתוֹ אֲדַבֵּר basically Bilam is using the same words as Yosef Hatzaddik said to Pharoh, that whatever Hashem puts into my mouth I will speak and then he proceeds to bless Klal Yisrael. From the Pesukim it appears that Bilam is a Tzaddik Gamur. Now of course Torah Shebich'sav without Torah She'bal Peh is meaningless and we follow the interpretation of Chazal and we know that it was not so.

Yet isn't it strange that the Torah should present Bilam in such a way and to teach us how his words were always the right words that portray Bilam as a Tzaddik? What is the lesson here?

Rav Elchanan in Koivetz Shiurim writes regarding a concept that we find in Shas of Al Yiftach Adam Pif L'satan. When a person speaks he has to be careful. When he says words that imply bad fortune, his words may have an effect. Or Kil'las Chochom Al Tinahi Hu Ba, words are real and can cause things to happen just like the Gemara says.

Rav Elchanan explains that it is really not that way for most people. Most people who say things don't automatically cause an effect. However, Rav Elchanan explains, a mouth is like a sharp blade. If you are careful like a Mohel or Shoichet is with his blade, by keeping it sharp, clean, and keeps it from rusting, then he has a blade which can cut. However, if one doesn't take care of his blade, it becomes rusty and dull and it doesn't cut.

So too with the mouth, lips, and tongue. The ability to speak and to affect the world through his speech. If his mouth is kept clean by speaking properly, than it has an effect in Oilam Hazeh. If he sullies his mouth by saying words of Sheker, Lashoin Horah, or being an unreliable person by

saying the wrong thing than his mouth doesn't have the effect that it should. This is what Rav Elchanan says.

Bilam knew this secret. His power was in his mouth and speech. Where did he get this power of speech? He knew the secret that no matter what bad Mach'shava or diabolical plan he might have, he kept his mouth clean. He said the right things.

An example of this is a business man who is crooked who is always scared that the FBI is listening to his phone conversations will always make certain not to say anything to incriminate himself. He will always say, I will do it in a legal way because I never do anything that is illegal. So too with Bilam, he kept his mouth pure. The blade remained a blade despite the fact that he was a Rasha. This is the lesson of the Parsha, because the Parsha tells us how Bilam kept his mouth clean. Therefore, he did have the power of speech.

The lesson of course is to us who don't have bad or diabolical Machshavas, that if want our mouth to have Koiach Hadibar and Koiach Hatefilla, to be able to have an effect, than we have to keep our mouth clean and keep it the right way.

The question of the week is: The Issur of לֹא תֹאָר, וְנִשְׁאַל בְּעֵמֶד, that is found in Shemos **22:27** which is the Issur of cursing, the Chinuch brings a Machloikes. Do curses really have an effect in this world or don't they? The Chinuch says that to him it is more logical that the spoken word does have an effect. However, according to the Shitta of the Rambam, it is all in a person's imagination and that a curse really doesn't do anything. The Chinuch humbly writes that he accepts the opinion of the Rambam that a Klala does nothing.

The problem with this is that this entire Parsha is based on that the curse that Bilam wanted to give Klal Yisrael could have an effect. As a matter of fact we read in the Haftora how thankful we must be that Hakadoish Baruch Hu didn't Kavayachil become angry on those days that Bilam wanted to curse Klal Yisrael and protected us from the curses of Bilam. So it seems to be telling us that there is such a thing as a curse. It is very difficult to understand how the Rambam would explain this. The Haftora reads and is from Michah **6:5-6** עֲמִי, וְזָכַר-נָא מֵה-יַעֲזֹב בְּלֶק מְלִךְ מוֹאָב, וּמֵה- ה' Remember what happened with Balak and Bilam that you should know the righteous acts of Hashem with how he protected us and how can I thank Hashem. This idea that a Klala has an effect seems to be a lesson of the Parsha. Yet the Rambam seems to hold it is not so.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas Balak 5769

At the beginning of Parshas Chukas in 19:1 - 2 the Posuk says וַיְבַרֵךְ יְרֹנָה, אֵל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן (לאמר). (זאת חקת התורה, אשר-צוה יְרֹנָה לאמר דבר אל-בני ישראל, ויקחו אליה פרה אדמה תמימה אשר אין-בה מום. The word Leimor is mentioned an extra time. The first Leimor is typical. Why is the second Leimor there? The Ksav Soifer explains something else about the beginning of the Parshah. Rashi in 19:22 in D"H Parah Aduma says (פרה אדמה: משל לבן שפחה שטינף פלטין של: מלך. אמרו תבא אמו ותקנה הצואה, כך תבא פרה ותכפר על העגל) the connection between Parah Aduma and the Eigel is that the Inyan of the Parah Aduma is that the same way a child's mother comes and

wipes away the filth so to let the cow come and atone for the Eigel. The connection between the Parah Aduma and the Eigel is vague as to exactly what it is. The Ksav Soifer gives us a nice connection. We have a Kabalah that the Choitim by the Eigel were the Eiruv Rav. They were the ones who wanted to make the Avoida Zarah. Klal Yisrael who had Kashas as to where Moshe Rabbeinu was since the time was up, just followed along. Klal Yisroel's history especially in Galus is always a challenge. The Goy asks questions and puts a Yid on the defensive and then he feels uncomfortable and is in Sakana. By the Parah Aduma, Rashi brings that idea when he says, in Posuk Bais, (לפי שהשטן ואומות העולם מונין את ישראל לומר מה המצוה הזאת ומה טעם יש: זאת חקת התורה, בה). Dafka here we say, (זאת חקת התורה), that there is no reason. This is supposed to be our Chizuk against our association with the Eiruv Rav to be strong in what is correct even without knowing the reason. That is the Kaparah. The second Leimor is Hashem telling Moshe to tell Klal Yisroel that Dafka here is where it is (זאת חקת התורה) without a reason.

In Perek 20:1 we have the death of Miriam. We learn from (וַתָּמָת שָׁם מִרְיָם, וַתִּקָּבֵר שָׁם), a Gizairas Shava, Sham Sham to Egla Arufa. That just like by Egla Arufa we find that it is Asur B'hana, so to we learn from here that the body of a Mais is Asur B'hana. That Limud is the subject of a Machloikes between the Mechaber and the GRA in Yoire Dai'a. They argue as to whether the Mais if it was a Goy is Asur or Mutar B'hana. The Mechaber writes that the Goy's body is also Asur B'hana, because Sham Sham applies to all Maisim. The GRA argues and Paskens like Toisafos that only the body of a Yid is subject to the Limud of Sham Sham and would be Asur B'hana. Toisafos brings a Raya from Navi.

After Dovid killed Golias, Shaul had promised that whoever kills Golias can marry his daughter. Shaul at this time became jealous of Dovid. So Shaul said to Dovid, you can marry her, however, you must bring 100 Orlois of Pilishtim. The Gemara in Kiddushin says that they are Royi to feed animals and are worth a Shava Peruta and with that you can be Mekadeish her. Shaul's Kavana was to put Dovid in Sakana by having him kill 100 Pelishtim. What did Dovid do? He brought 200 Orlois and was Mekadeish with that. The GRA learns B'sheim Toisafos from here that you see that a Mais of a Goy is Mutar B'hana.

The Mishne L'melech has a nice Teretz to this Raya. He says it is not a Raya at all and on the contrary it is a Raya Farkert. Why? Dovid killing the Pelishtim is not unusual. He had just killed Golias and he was a Gibor. He could have gone with others for the Pelishtim, he didn't even have to go himself. To kill 100 Pelishtim was not a big thing. So Farkert, Dafka Orlois of Pelishtim. Because, Orlois of Maisai Pelishtim is Assur B'hana. Here Dovid was really challenged. He had to injure 100 Pelishtim in a way to get the Orlois when they were still alive, and use it. That was Shaul's Kavana, to put Dovid in great Sakana.

This Shaila of whether a Mais is Muttar or Assur B'hana came as a Halacha L'maiseh to Rebbe. In 1995 Rebbe had surgery to replace a bone in his leg. At that time Rebbe was given a choice of putting in a metal rod in place of the bone or a cadaver bone as a replacement bone. Rav Pam was consulted because medically each way had benefits. The reason for this consultation was to discuss if this Machloikes between the Mechaber and the GRA should be Machria whether or not to use a cadaver bone. Rav Pam said there is a Teshuvah Igrois Moshe which is talking to medical students, and says for purposes of medicine, one can be Soimech on the GRA. Rav Pam said make the best medical decision and Rebbe used a cadaver bone at that time. That only lasted for about a year and

Rebbi had another surgery in 1996 where it was replaced and there is no longer a cadaver bone in Rebbi.

Rabbi Akiva Eiger asks, how is it Muttar for a Shoimer of a Mais to be paid. If the Mais is Assur B'hana and we learn from Pesachim Daf Chaf Bais that even secondary Hanaois are Assur by Isurai Hana'a. So how can a Shoimer be paid?

In the Moiadim Lizmanim Cheilek Gimmel, Siman (Ois) Raish Aleph. There are 2 different types of Issurai Hana in the Toirah. There are some Issurai Hana that the Toirah is Meracheik like Avoida Zora and Basar V'Chalav because they are Ma'us. Here even a secondary Hana'a would be Assur. There are other things that are Assur B'hana because of their great Kedusha like the Bais Hamikdash and Kodshim for example. People who worked in the Bais Hamikdash got paid, it is a Bifairush in a Mishnah. If it is Issurai Hana'a why should they get paid? The Teretz is, the Issur is only deriving benefit from the thing itself meaning the Guf of the Bais Hamikdash. Mimaila, a Mais is Assur why? Because the Guf is a container for the Neshama and it has a level of Kedusha, that is why it is Assur B'hana. Im Kain, you can get paid for being a Shoimer the same way people got paid for working in the Bais Hamikdash. Ulai, the Machloikes between the Mechaber and Gra maybe Talui in this. Maybe if you hold that the reason (וּתְמַת שָׁם מְרִיב) brings it to a higher level of Kedusha, then we only know it by Klal Yisroel and we have no reason to think that it applies to a Goy. Because we don't know to say that a Goy's Guf has Kedusha like a Yids Guf. On the other hand, the Mechaber might hold that a Guf without a Neshama is Assur B'hana because it is a Davar Ma'us and then it would include the Guf of a Goy in this Issur as well.

Both Miriam and Aharon die in Parshas Chukas and are buried. If at this time, Klal Yisroel was carrying the bodies of Yosef and the rest of the Shevatim for burial in Eretz Yisroel, and here it is already at the end of the 40 years, why didn't they take the bodies of Aharon and Miriam into Eretz Yisroel as well?

We know that Balak had a son Egloin. Egloin had a daughter or granddaughter Rus. Chazal tell us that the Schar for the Korbanois that Balak brought even though it was Sheloi Lishmah, he was Zoiche to have Rus come from him. The problem is Rashi in Perek 22:4 says (לֹא הָיָה: בַּעַת הַהוּא) Balak was actually from Midian. (רְאוּי לְמַלְכוּת. מִנְסִיכֵי מִדְיָן הָיָה, וְכִיּוֹן שִׁחַן מְנוּהוּ עֲלֵיהֶם לְצוּרֶךְ שְׁעָה) In Kiddushin in the 4th Perek it says that Goyim's Yichus go after the father. That would mean that Rus who came from Egloin who came from Balak was not a Moiavis but a Midyanis. If so, then the whole Lomdus that Dovid is Muttar Bikhal because of Moiavi V'loi Moiavis shouldn't start because she was actually a Midyanis?

Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Balak 5782

1 – Topic – A Thought on the Story of Bilam

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Balak. The story of Bilam in this week's Parsha seems like a very strange once upon a time, one time incident with a man named Bilam who was a very queer individual. Very strange, a mixture of good and bad mixed into the same person. As you read the Parsha you see him going back and forth, talking the talk as if he wants to do Hashem's will and

at the end of the Parsha his true desire comes out, which is to be Machshil, to make Klal Yisrael fall.

Yet somebody who is sensitive and reads the story of Bilam, sees in it an everyday story with every human being. When you read even just from the beginning until Sheini, and you see Bilam struggle, on the one hand he desperately wants to go with the people who promised him riches, on the other hand he repeatedly says that I can't do anything without HKB"H, I can't do anything that G-d doesn't tell me to do. We see in this the struggle of every person, of every Fum Yid, who struggles with different Yeitzer Hora's. Who struggles with being careful to get up every morning to say Krias Shema with the Zman Krias Shema as he knows he should. Or to get up from the table and go to the sink and wash Mayim Achronim as he knows he should. Or to shut off the computer at a time that he is wasting his time as he knows he should. On the one hand he is a Frum Yid and he knows to say to himself that I can't do anything as it says in 22:8 (כְּאֲשֶׁר יִדְבֹּר יְרֹנֶר אֵלַי), whatever Hashem tells me to do I will do, and on the other hand he has the Yeitzer Hora to go with Balak, to go with his laziness, or to go with the desire with his Taivos, the desires that he has. If you read the Parsha with sensitivity you see in the Parsha the story of every man.

In Leket Sichos Mussar, Rav Isaac Sher points out that HKB"H gave 10 opportunities to Bilam to stop. 10 times that He said don't go, don't do it, what are these people doing here, and every time Bilam found some excuse in what Hashem told him. He said this but He didn't say that, and it led him ultimately to his downfall. The story of every person. You have to hear the word of HKB"H, the Ratzon of HKB"H and be able to do it.

I would like to share with you the idea of the Mesilas Yesharim in the 10th Perek. The Perek of (מדת הנקיות). Now of course the Mesilas Yesharim talks about the fact that a person has to be a Zariz, he has the Middah of Zerizus, the Middah of Zehirus. Zehirus is the Middah to stay away from an Aveira. Zerizus is to do it promptly and quickly. He has another Middah called the (מדת הנקיות) cleanliness. What is cleanliness, what does it mean to be clean?

Mesilas Yesharim refers to (נקיי הדעת שבירושלים). What does it mean (נקיות)? The Mesilas Yesharim says (נקיות) of staying clean is the Avodah to keep our minds clean. Not to paint sin as something permissible. (כל מה שהוא חטא, אפילו שיהיה קל שבקלי החטאים, תכירוהו שהוא רע). Whatever is wrong even if it is not the most terrible Aveira, you can rely on the Kuladika Shittas with Zman Krias Shema, you can rely on those who say there is no Mayim Achronim Biz'man Hazeh. You can take a minute or two to avoid and relax and take a look at things perhaps that are Muttar but a waste of time. (נקיות) is to be honest with yourself and to be able to tell yourself that the Chataim that people paint as non-Chataim are (הוראת ההיתר מכסה על החטא). You hear the Mesilas Yesharim? (הוראת ההיתר) the excuses (מכסה על החטא) hides Aveiros. These are the Aveiros that are not Mefursomim, that are not known by everybody and that are not always warned about, but that a person has to take away excuses and recognize what they are.

In the Orchos Tzadikim in the Shaar Shlishi, the Orchos Tzadikim explains it a little more. Listen to his words. (השכל הוא הבושה, והבושה הוא השכל) Chazal have taught us, (אמרו חכמים). Meaning to say, that a person has to be able to be embarrassed from doing an Aveira and that takes Seichel, that takes intelligence. Because the gut feeling is to have excuses, to have reasons why this is not so terrible. (בושה הוא השכל). To be able to say that what I did was wrong that means to follow the

Seichel, the intelligence that a person has and not the emotions that make people give themselves excuses.

Bilam was not Misbayaish. Bilam had a donkey talking to him and he wasn't embarrassed that the donkey bested him in his argument. You would think he would be embarrassed and crawl up and roll into a hole somewhere and hide. Nothing doing. The Midah of (נקיות) is the Busha.

As Ezra says in 9:6 (אֶלֶּי בִשְׁתִּי וְנִכְלַמְתִּי--לְהִרִים אֵלָי פָּנִי, אֵלֶיךָ). HKB"Y I am ashamed. I recognize that there are things I do that are not right. We use this Lashon in Selichos, the idea of (בִּשְׁתִּי). We learn from Bilam that a person could have excuses and hold his head up high and continue on his way.

The Maharal also in Nesivas Olam has a section called Netziv Habusha. He says (סימן טוב באדם) (שהוא ביישן). It is a good sign about a person that he knows when to be embarrassed.

The point of the Mesilas Yesharim, the Orchos Tzaddikim, and the Maharal is the point of grabbing on to this Middah which is the opposite of western civilization, western culture, western morality which is to say that it is not bad, it is the way I am, it is good. You have to tolerate people and what they are doing is bad, we have to rephrase it as good.

Our Middah is the Middah of Busha. With that we understand why before we start Tachanun we begin by saying to HKB"Y (אֶלֶּרִינוּ וְאֶלֶּרִי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ צְדִיקִים אָנֹכֶנּוּ) (אֶשְׁמְנוּ), when we say (אֶשְׁמְנוּ) it is not so much the confession that we do Aveiros, it is more the recognition that we do things that are not right and that we have what to work on. We have to go forward. We have to hear HKB"Y's messages.

And so, the message of Bilam is the message of the (נקיי הדעת שבירושלים), the people who kept their minds clean from the filth of excuses that these things are not so bad. That these things are not so terrible. If I look at the internet it is not pornography, it is not so bad. Stop with the excuses and recognize what it is before Zehirus, before you start separating from it. First have that (נקיי הדעת) to recognize what it is.

When we begin Selichos, how to we start Selichos? Lecha Hashem Hatzedaka, V'lanu Boshes Panim. The idea of Busha is this Middah of (נקיות). Very much a message from the story of Bilam.

2 – Topic – A Thought from Rav Pam

Rav Pam was fond of saying the following. When Bilam was traveling and the Malach stands in his way (לְשָׁטֵן לוֹ) and the Malach is making trouble for him, Rashi says 22:22 (מִלֶּאךָ שֶׁל רַחֲמִים הִיָּה). It was a Malach of mercy. He wanted to stop him from sinning. Rav Pam would say that sometimes in your life you want to do something and something goes in your way and you think it is the Satan, (מִלֶּאךָ שֶׁל רַחֲמִים הִיָּה) is what is trying to hold you back.

Rav Pam recounted that during what he called the most difficult years of his life, after Rav Pam got Semicha in the 1930's there were no Kollelim then. After he got Semicha he looked for a Shtete, he looked for a job and it took him two years until he was offered in the same year a job

by Rav Shraga Feivel Mendlowitz in Torah Vodaath and from Rav Hutner, however, those two years after Semicha were difficult years. At one point he thought that for Parnasa he will need a job and he went and applied for a job as a translator in the court system.

Rav Pam was fluent in many languages. He told me once that he taught himself Spanish. He came from Lita, of course he spoke English fluently and he said I taught myself Spanish. He said to me I read Don Quixote in the original Spanish. He went to be a translator. There was a written test in a classroom and Rav Pam looked around at the other people applying for the job and he knew that he was better than all of them in the languages and he would do better than them on the test. Ultimately someone else got the job. Rav Pam told me that when he thought about it he realized that the proctor (the one who was walking around during the test), was actually helping this person. He cheated and got the job ahead of Rav Pam. So Rav Pam said to me I felt so enraged, I felt so angry at this person. He cheated. He helped someone else get the job. Rav Pam was laughing and he said (מלאך של רחמים היה). Imagine if I had taken that job. (מלאך של רחמים היה). At the time I was furious at him. I was indignant, it wasn't right. (מלאך של רחמים היה).

Stop in your life and think for a minute if maybe some of those who are preventing you from going on to doing "bigger and better" things in your life, preventing you from moving up the ladder. Maybe they are really giving you the time to focus on your Avodas Hashem, maybe not all your ambitions are really ambitions that you should have. Some you should and some you shouldn't. Think about it. (מלאך של רחמים היה).

The message for today is that the story of Bilam is a onetime story with a strange and weird individual who was a tremendous mixture of good and bad, of greatness and evil. No! It is an example of the inner struggles that many people have. Many people have to recognize the right and the wrong, recognize what is appropriate and what is not appropriate. To recognize and admit to oneself that certain things even though I am maybe stuck doing it, but to recognize what they are. To take away the excuses. (הוראת ההיתר מכסה על החטא). Hopefully we can learn from the story of Bilam to our own lives and IY"YH to be better, slowly and incrementally. But to recognize the truth of the work we still have ahead of us.

With that, I want to wish everybody an absolutely wonderful Shabbos Kodesh as we begin now the Bein Hametzarim, the weeks of introspection on what we are missing by not having the Beis Hamikdash and an appreciation of the Batei Kenisios and Batei Medrashos, the Mikdash M'at that we do have. A Gutten Shabbos to one and all!

Rabbi Reisman – Parshas Balak 5781

1 – Topic – A Thought for the Three Weeks.

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Balak, the 16th day of Tammuz Erev Shiva Asar B'tammuz. Let me therefore begin with a thought for the three weeks and Shiva Asar B'tammuz. It says in Zecharia and it would be wonderful to learn Perek Zayin and Perek Ches which are really beautiful. The whole Zecharia is really beautiful but let me tell you what happens in Perek Zayin and Perek Ches.

In the beginning of Perek Zayin we find Jews and Rashi says they are Tzaddikim from Bavel who send a message to Zecharia in Eretz Yisrael. The message is that they have a Shaila. The Shaila is as is found in 7:3 (הַאֲבִיבָה, בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַחֲמִישִׁי--הַנִּזְכָּר). Should I continue to weep on Tisha B'av and Rashi says that the Shaila was not just for Tisha B'av but the Shaila was for all of the Tannaisim. They were asking should we fast on all of these Tannaisim (הַנִּזְכָּר) should I separate from wine now that the Bayis Sheini is built? That was the Shaila that they sent from Bavel to Zecharia, should I continue to observe the Tannaisim.

In Perek Ches about 19 Pesukim in but finally Zecharia gets to the answer. He says to them (צֹם) (הַרְבִּיעִי וְצֹם הַחֲמִישִׁי וְצֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי וְצֹם הָעֲשִׂירִי) the fast of the 4th month Shiva Asar B'tammuz, the 5th month Tisha B'av, the 7th month Tzom Gedalya, the 10th month Asara B'teves (יְהִיָּה לְבֵית-יְהוּדָה) (לְשִׁשּׁוֹן וּלְשִׂמְחָה, וּלְמַעֲדִים, טוֹבִים) will be for you days of happiness and rejoicing and happy holiday. So that the Navi says no more fasting.

There are three difficulties (Kashas) with this Nevua:

1) Why is the Shaila being addressed to the Navi, this is a Shaila that should go to a Beis Din, it should go to the Sanhedrin. There were Gedolei Yisrael, the members of the Anshei K'neses Hagedola were then in Eretz Yisrael. Ezra, Nechemia, Mordechai, why is he asking the Navi?

2) The Bayis Sheini was still missing five major things, not just Chamisha Devarim but Chamisha Ikrim. There was no Gilui Shechina, Aron, Urim V'tumim, Ruach Hakodesh or Aish Min Hashamayim. So therefore, it would seem that the Bayis Sheini is not quite yet the day of rejoicing that it should be?

3) Even if it is, the Gemara says if you buy something for a dollar and sell it for a dollar are you a businessman, you are back where you were. I ask the same Kasha here. You had a Bayis Rishon and it was destroyed, you have a Bayis Sheini. I understand that you don't fast, as that is what they asked if they should fast. The Navi says hold on a second, don't fast? Guess what, there are going to be Yomim Tovim (לְשִׁשּׁוֹן וּלְשִׂמְחָה, וּלְמַעֲדִים, טוֹבִים) what is the grounds for (לְשִׁשּׁוֹן וּלְשִׂמְחָה, וּלְמַעֲדִים, טוֹבִים)?

The answer to this lies in a Yesod that has a Makom in a number of places. In Nach most prominently by Yechezkel Hanavi. Yechezkel Hanavi became a Navi shortly before the Churban and was a Navi during the Churban. By what merit?

Rav Tzaddok writes in his Pri Tzaddik on Sukkos that the Maila of Yechezkel that he became a Navi during the Churban was and his Lashon is incredible, as Jews went to Galus broken and bitter during the Churban Bayis, Yechezkel went B'simcha Rabbah. What do you mean that he went B'simcha Rabbah with great joy? Yechezkel with the Koach of Nevua understood that Klal Yisrael with the Churban were in a mode of "reset", of starting again. There was a reset button. They had Shlepped along not listening to Mussar, and in the Tzura of Avoda Zorah for so many years and bang with the destruction Yechezkel understood there would be a new rebirth, a new energy, a new beginning, a new start, starting clean, starting anew. That is what happened in Bavel. Yechezkel Hanavi understood that.

It is something similar to after the Holocaust. People came to America and everything was destroyed, people were broken, people were Marei Nefesh. There were a few special individuals, Gedolim who had Ruach Hakodesh, that understood that in America we are going to rebuild, there will be a rebirth and they built B'sasson Ub'simcha. That was what was special about Yechezkel Bish'as Hagalus.

Returning here. Is this a Shaila for a Beis Din? Of course the Beis Din would say there is still room for sadness. After all, we don't yet have a return to the real Bayis Rishon. Eretz Yisrael is still in the hands of our enemies, Jews didn't control the land in the Bayis Sheini. Most of the Jews didn't return. The 10 Shevatim disappeared. Most of the Yidden in Bavel didn't come back.

Halacha would say keep on fasting, but they went to the Navi. This is because the Neviim had taught them as Yechezkel did, that it is a time for new energy, a new beginning, a new start. Every end is a new beginning. Every divorce is an end but then there is a new beginning. Every time Rachmana Litzlon a relative dies it is an end, but then a person picks himself up and has a new beginning. The Koach Hanevua tells us the Tzom Harevii, the Tzom Hachamishi, the Tzom Hashevii and the Tzom Ha'asiri (יְהִיגָה לְבֵית-יְהוָה לְשָׁשׂוֹן וּלְשִׂמְחָה, וּלְמַעֲדִים, טוֹבִים), times of rebirth, of new energy and that is a reason to rejoice.

We are back now after the Churban Bayis Sheini, but the words of the Navi ring in our ears. It is a time to rebuild, to make things happen. As we come to a summer after a Covid period, a period that was just not normal, we should not be going back and saying okay we are back to where we were two summers ago. Most people will be doing that. Yechidim will say no, it is a time to start again, a time for a new energy, a time to make things happen in a better way.

2 – Topic – A Thought on Parshas Balak.

Let us turn to Parshas Balak and I will share with you an incredible GR"A on Parshas Balak which I would not understand except that Rav Issac Sher explains it in Leket Sichos Mussar. The GR"A says, we know that Bilam is compared to Moshe in Nevuah, but we find that Bilam is compared to Avraham Avinu in Pirkei Avos 5:19. There are Talmidov Shel Avraham Avinu (תלמידיו של) (עין רעה, ונפש רחבה, ורוח) and Talmidov Shel Bilam Harasha (אברהם--עין טובה, ונפש שפלה, ורוח נמוכה) (גבוהה). What is the comparison between Avraham and Bilam?

Says the GR"A in Aderes Eliyahu. Just like Avraham Avinu had 10 tests in which he succeeded, Bilam also had 10 tests. Where are the 10 tests? We have this one Parsha with the story of Bilam. Where are the 10 tests? Says Rav Issac Sher incredibly it is all in the Parsha, except as follows.

Avraham Avinu wanted to serve the Ribbono Shel Olam. He had 10 Nisyonos, 10 things that would pull him away from serving Hashem and he withstood them all. Bilam Harasha was a different type of Asara Nisyonos. Bilam had a hatred for Kedusha, a hatred for the Jewish people. He wanted to do damage to Klal Yisrael. Hashem sent him 10 opportunities, 10 messages to not go. The initial message of don't go, then Vayichar Af Hashem B'bilam, and then the incident with the donkey, then seeing a Malach, then three times when he wants to curse a Beracha comes into his mouth, then Balak screams at him. Balak says go home. Repeatedly there are Nisyonos. I

counted eight in my list that I just said. There is another one or two that Hashem put roadblocks to stop him. Nothing happened. He fell in all of them.

Rashi tells us that when the Malach stood in front of Bilam in 22:22 (מלאך של רחמים היה). These were the Nisyonos of Bilam. The Malach said don't go. If he had succeeded in listening to the Malach and not going, it would have been wonderful. He thinks the Malach is his enemy? (מלאך של רחמים היה). Sometimes Hashem sends us Nisyonos to stop us from learning and Davening and we have to withstand it and sometimes Hashem tries to save us from bad ideas and we have to accept it.

In Atara L'melech Rav Pam writes in his piece on Shidduchim that sometimes someone wants a Shidduch and something happens that ruins it. Somebody says Lashon Hora about the boy and the girl is not interested. Sometimes the girl is just not interested and the young man is upset.

Rav Pam says (מלאך של רחמים היה). If the Shidduch would have had to be, then it would have been bad so (מלאך של רחמים היה). HKB"H sometimes sends you a Malach (וְחָרְבוּ וְשָׁלוּכָה בְּיָדוֹ) and stops you from doing things. Do you know what is good and what is not good when clearly HKB"H is stopping something, then (מלאך של רחמים היה). So the Nisayon of Bilam is that sometimes when you have an idea and it is not such a good idea and HKB"H in his kindness stops you from doing it and puts roadblocks in your way from doing it, get the message.

So two wonderful ideas of Chizzuk. The idea of Zechariah Hanavi. The idea of starting again. Every end is a beginning. And the idea of the GR"A and the way Rav Issac Sher explains it beautifully, extraordinarily. Geshmak! Sometimes something is blocking you, stop a minute. Maybe it is not a good idea. Maybe this Malach is a (מלאך של רחמים). Don't be like Bilam. Accept what comes from Shamayim.

With that I want to wish everyone an absolutely meaningful Shabbos Kodesh and an absolutely meaningful upcoming fast on Shiva Asar B'tammuz. May HKB"H turn it into true (לְשִׁשּׁוֹן וְלִשְׁמִינָה, וְלִמְעֻדִים, טוֹבִים) for all of us. A Gutten Shabbos to one and all!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas 5777

1 - Topic - The benefit of toiling in Torah as opposed to being given clear Piskei Halacha

As we prepare for Shabbos Parshas Chukas. And boy have I got an absolutely wonderful set of Machshavos for you today. The first one comes from the Satmar Rav in Divrei Yoel in Parshas Vayeishev. There, he is dealing with a question that many people ask. Nothing to do with Parshas Chukas. He asks a Kasha, why is it that the Dinei Hatorah, the Shulchan Aruch and certainly the Gemara are written like a rule book. It is written in a way that you have to figure out what the Halacha is and it is written in a way that we should argue what the Gemara means. Why is it written this way?

He brings a Yerushalmi in Sanhedrin, Amar Rabbi Yochanan, Ilu Haya Nitna Hatorah Chaticha Lo Haya B'regel Amida. If the Torah had been given as a piece, we couldn't stand. What does that mean?

Zagt the Pnei Moshe, in Sanhedrin Perek Daled Halacha Beis, that if the Torah had been given Piskei Halacha, a clear Psak Halacha without Machshavos in two directions, Lo Kiyum Hatorah Mai'olam, the Torah would not last. The Torah needs to be Darshuned Mem Tes Panim in one direction and Mem Tes Panim in the other direction. The idea of Eilu V'eilu Divrei Elokim Chaim is so that the Torah should have a Kiyum. It is a mystery.

Today everyone writes Likut Seforim and they try to be very clear in what the Halacha is. As a matter of fact, one young man asked me that he saw a Likut Sefer on the Halachos of Muktzeh and it is clearer to him than the Shulchan Aruch is. What is going on?

The answer is that there is a reason for the fact that the Torah was given in a way that everyone could try to understand it and to be Yorek L'yonka. The question is why is it that way? This is a common question. The Satmar Rav in Divrei Yoel uses the Klei Yakar in the beginning of Chukas to explain.

The Klei Yakar is dealing with the idea that the Parah Adumah is Metamei Tehorim and Metaheir Temaim. That is the nature. Everything in the world is stronger when it is contrasted by something that is the opposite. Everything in the world is strengthened by things that are the reverse. Let me explain what that means.

Colors; Black is more visible when it is on a white background. The contrast makes the black visible. Black ink on black is nothing you don't see anything. The contrast makes it strong. The same thing is true when someone wants to build up his muscles. You build up muscles by lifting something that is too heavy, the opposite. The fact that it is something that you can't lift is what creates in the person the muscles, the strength to be able to do it.

If you want to strike with a hammer very hard, you lift up in order to bang down. The nature of the world is such that opposites, contrast, make things appreciated, makes them visible, make them noticeable, make them stronger. Opposites make things noticeable. He explains that this is true in many Dinai Hatorah. A fruit, a food, is not Mekabeil Tumah unless it is Muchshar Mekabeil Tumah which means that it becomes wet. Water is Metaheir, a Mikvah is Metaheir things. Here when it comes into contact with water it first is able to become Tamei. The contrast, the opposite, is what makes it happen.

The Gemara says in Maseches Gittin 43a (11 lines from the bottom) (**אין אדם עומד על דברי תורה**) (**אלא אם כן נכשל בהן**) a person understands Torah when he makes mistakes. It is that way. When you ponder something, when you make an error in understanding it, when you do a mistake in Halacha and you see you made a mistake, then you remember the Halacha, you understand the Halacha, then everything goes in a smooth and straight way. Why does it go that way? The contrast, that is the nature of Olam Hazeh. When you make a mistake in something then you understand it better. When something confuses you and you understand it then you remember it. When you understand it right away then you don't remember it as well. That is the nature of the Briya.

The Gemara says regarding another Posuk in this week's Parsha. 21:14 (אֶת-וְהָב בְּסוּפָהּ). The Gemara in Maseches Kiddushin 30b (8 lines from the top) Darshuns that even a father and a son or a Rabbi and a Talmid who are learning Torah together (אמר רבי חייא בר אבא אפי' האב ובנו הרב ותלמידו) (שעוסקין בתורה בשער אחד נעשים אויבים זה את זה ואינם זדים משם עד שנעשים) they become enemies. (אויבים זה את זה) and at the end they become friends, they love each other. The Biur Hadavar is that in learning it is the argument, it is the fact that you say to someone what are you talking about, you don't know what you are saying, your Sevara is wrong. That is what makes the Emes of Torah come through. Amito Shel Torah is not when it is served on a platter, when it is given to you in a Kitzur Hilchos Muktzeh booklet, it is when you are Zoche to be Yored L'omko Shel Davar. When you understand it with depth, you get into arguments about it, you see two ways of looking at something, that is when you have a Kinyan in Divrei Torah. That is the way Divrei Torah are.

The Divrei Yoel in Vayeishev page 210 and 211 says that that gives understanding to the Mishna in Avos 5:17 (כל מחלוקת שהיא לשם שמיים, סופה להתקיים; ושאינה לשם שמיים, אין סופה להתקיים). Anytime you have an argument L'sheim Shamayim then the truth has a Kiyum, then Emes has a Kiyum. What a beautiful thought. Some other day I will tell you that that is the secret of marriage, how opposites make each side grow. One beautiful Machshava from a Chassidishe Sefer, the Divrei Yoel.

2 - Topic - The Metzios of spiritual things are based on when the Torah is Kovei'a it

The second Machshava is from Rav Schwab in Sefer Mayan Beis Hashoeva (page # 240 and 241 on 19:2 (the second piece)). I had asked many times how the Mishkan was built if the Parah Adumah was not ready yet. Everyone was Tamei, all of the Keilim of the Bais Hamikdash were Tamei. A Temi'ya, an imponderable. In this week's Parsha Rav Schwab says an incredible answer. He says just the opposite. B'davka the Parah Adumah was made on the second day of Nissan and the Mishkan was finished on the first day of Nissan. To teach a lesson. It is not the Tumah that is Metamei, it is the Gezairas Hakasuv that it is Metamei. When the Torah says that it is Metamei that is when it is Metamei, not before. Everything comes because the Torah says so.

He points out that in Behaloscha when Aharon and Miriam un-expectantly got Nevuah, they were screaming Mayim Mayim that they were Tamei and that they had to go to the Mikvah. Yet Moshe Rabbeinu killed a Mitzri, he buried him, he was Tamei because a Goy is Metamei B'maga and he went up to Har Sinai before there was a Parah Adumah. He was Tamei Meis, how did he go up to Har Sinai?

The answer is says Rav Schwab, the Torah wants to teach us that until the Torah is Koveia that something is Tamei it is not Tamei. Until the Torah is Koveia that something is Metameim Es Haleiv it is not Metameim Es Haleiv. All of the Metzios of the spiritual things are based on Divrei Torah.

Zagt Rav Schwab, that is why in Marah they were commanded in Parah Adumah. Why in Marah were they commanded in Parah Adumah? Rachmana Litzlon! Before Har Sinai? The Parah Adumah was not going to take place until a year later. The answer is that the Torah wanted to teach us this. Learn Hilchos Parah Adumah beforehand, learn Hilchos Tumah beforehand. Understand that there is a concept of Tumah. When? When the Torah is Kovei'a it. The Metzios

of Tumah begins when the Torah is Kovei'a Parah Adumah. Before that there is no Tumah. Kach Heim Hadevarim.

If you are Medayeik in Rav Schwab's words you will notice that he says that the people from before did not need Zerikah from the Parah Adumah with the exception of us Leviim. Look in Rav Schwab and you will understand what he is saying.

Until next time I wish everybody a wonderful meaningful summer, a Gevaldige relaxation being able to learn Torah up in the country is great. In your bungalow colony start a Mishmar and make it be Matzliach. Kol Tuv.

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Balak 5776

1. The Shabbos we are preparing for is Shabbos Parshas Balak which is also Shiva Asar B'tammuz. Let me share with you a thought or two regarding the Parsha. There is an absolutely beautiful Vort from Rav Leibele Eiger, very few Vertlach of his have remained. There is a Sefer Toras Emes from Rav Leibele Eiger and there in Parshas Balak he has the following thought regarding the Galus of Klal Yisrael.

Rav Leibele points out that there are two types of Tzaros and Yeshuos which Klal Yisrael experiences. One type is the typical type, so to speak typical. That is that there is a Tzarah, a difficulty. Yidden get together and are Mispallel Klappei Maila. Yidden get together and hopefully do Teshuvah and the Yeshua comes. We find such a thing when Klal Yisrael is in Mitzrayim as is found in Shemos 2:23 (וַיֹּאנְחוּ בְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן-הָעֶבְרָה). They had a difficulty and HKB"H answered and Klal Yisrael was helped.

Similarly with Amaleik. Amaleik attacks, Moshe Aharon and Chur go to the top of the mountain, Klal Yisrael was Mistaklin Klappei Maila and a Yeshua comes. That is a so to speak typical experience of Tzar and Tzarah of Klal Yisrael in Tanach.

However, there is a second type of Tzarah and Yeshua. And that is K'ain Parshas Balak. That happens when the Tzar or Tzarah or threat comes and the Bnei Yisrael don't know anything about it. Klal Yisrael is totally oblivious to it and HKB"H helps Klal Yisrael without Klal Yisrael being aware of what has taken place. That is what happens in this week's Parsha. Klal Yisrael is traveling through the Midbar totally unaware of the Tzar or Tzarah and HKB"H is helping Klal Yisrael.

In the Haftarah we Lain from Michah. In 6:5 it says (עָמִי, זָכֹר-נָא מֵה-יָעִץ בָּלָק מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב, וּמֵה-עָנָה אֹתוֹ, (בִּלְעָם בֶּן-בְּעוֹר--מִן-הַשִּׁטִּים, עַד-הַגִּלְגָּל, לְמַעַן, דַּעַת צְדָקוֹת יִרְרָן (לְמַעַן, דַּעַת צְדָקוֹת יִרְרָן). Remember the story of Bilam and Balak (לְמַעַן, דַּעַת צְדָקוֹת יִרְרָן). So that you should know HKB"H's kindness.

The Gemara in Maseches Berachos Daf 7a (22 lines from the top) Darshuns (מֵאִי לְמַעַן דַּעַת צְדָקוֹת) (ה' א"ר אלעזר אמר להם הקב"ה לישראל דעו כמה צדקות עשיתי עמכם שלא כעסתי בימי בלעם הרשע). The point is a recognition that HKB"H's Chesed comes in more than one form. It comes when the Tzarah and the Yeshua are clear and obvious, and it comes when the Tzarah and the Yeshua are not known to Klal Yisrael.

Every person's life has that type of experience. Has an experience where the Tzar and Tzarah he is Mispalleil for and Mi Yodea, who knows how many time there are things that could threaten a person and HKB"H helps anyway without the person's Tefillah and without anything happening Mitzad the individual himself.

The Gemara says in Masseches Berachos 12b (22 lines from the bottom) that (אמר רב יהודה בר זבידא (בקשו לקבוע פרשת בלק בקריאת שמע ומפני מה לא קבעוה משום טורח צבור). Parshas Balak almost made it into Krias Shema but because of Tircha D'tzibura it is too long of a Parsha to say every day.

The Pnei Yehoshua in Masseches Berachos 12 says that the Hava Amina to place Parshas Balak into Krias Shema comes from this Posuk in Michah. It seems to be a command (זָכֹר-נָא) to remember. While it is not in Krias Shema, the Chida writes that still it is a Mitzvah to keep the commandment of the Navi and (זָכֹר-נָא), remember that which HKB"H does for us is not always known.

The Nikuda to add to all of this is an important lesson. We are asked to emulate the ways of Hashem as it says in Devarim 28:9 (וְהָלַכְתָּ, בְּדַרְכָּיו). Very often, most Ragil, the Tzaros and Yeshuos that come your way, when you are not the Baal Tzarah (G-d forbid) but the Yeshua, is when someone has a problem he comes to you for help. Someone has a difficulty and says that he needs your help to make a Chasunah, I need help to feed my family and you go and you help the person. That is one type of Tzarah and Yeshua. But you are capable of doing something else and that is doing the Yeshua when the person is totally unaware, totally oblivious to what is happening. In that type of a situation, you are emulating HKB"H of Parshas Balak. You are helping Klal Yisrael without them being aware that they are being helped. Quietly, secretly, you go to grocery and you pay the bill of someone who can't afford to pay his grocery bill. You go and you help somebody in a way that he is totally unaware of.

It happened to me in my years in the Kollel that it came time to prepare my tax returns at the end of the year and I looked through my checks from the year and I realized that I hadn't paid property taxes on my house the whole year. I asked someone to look into it. I was afraid that I would find myself subject to a seizure of my property. The person that I asked came back and said someone is paying your property taxes. Until today I don't know who did it. I would love to thank him. But someone did it without telling me, without anything. That is a Chessed M'ain the Chessed that we find HKB"H doing in Parshas Balak. Use your imagination, do Chessed in a wonderful way, in the best way possible. That is one lesson from Parshas Balak.

2. I would like to share with you a totally separate thought. Here in camp I am Zoche to be the go to person for many of the Shailos that the boys have. The most common Shaila that I have in camp has to do with food that is stored under a bed or water (drinks) that is stored under a bed. As many of you know, it says in Yor'e Dai'a not to store water under a bed because of Ruach Ra. Now what is the Din B'dieved if the food has been left under a bed? So there, the prevalent Minhag among Ashkenazim that Rabbi Akiva Eiger brings in Shulchan Aruch is that it is Muttar B'dieved. Sefardim who follow Rav Ovadia Yosef's Psak would hold that it is Assur and it should be thrown out B'dieved unless it is a Hefsed Meruba.

When we get up in the morning we wash Neigel Vasser as quickly as we can because if not there (potentially) is a Ruach Ra. What is this Ruach Ra? I can't define it precisely but I can explain. If you find that you don't have a Cheishek for learning, you don't have a Cheishek for Davening there is something called a Ruach Ra. A Ruach Ra has a negative spiritual impact on a person. If somebody finds that his Cheishek for Davening or his ability to have Kavana is inadequate, I would tell him try in the morning being more careful with washing Neigel Vasser. Not going Daled Amos without washing, wash quickly when you wake up, being careful with things that have to do with Ruach Ra. Ruach Ra make a person lack the feeling for Ruchniyos growth. That is what Ruach Ra is. This is something to work on as we come to this time of the year where the Kochos Hatumah are Lo Aleinu great. The three weeks, the nine days. It is the time to work on Taharah, it is time to work on things that Chazal consider to have to do with Taharas Haguf and a Taharas Haneshama.

3. I would like to end with a question. The question has to do with the end of the Parsha and maybe the beginning of next week's Parsha Parshas Pinchas where Pinchas is Zoche to the Kehuna not in the regular way. He is Zoche to Kehuna by earning it himself.

My question is this. The Kohanim of today are descendants of Aharon Hakohen and some are descendants of Pinchas. When you go to Duchan you make a Beracha Asher Kidishanu Bikdushaso Shel Aharon V'tzivanu L'vareich Es Yisrael B'ahavah. When the Kohanim ate Terumah and there were circumstances where they would eat Challah it says in Shulchan Aruch Yor'e Dai'a by Hilchos Challah that the Nussach of the Beracha would be Asher Kidishanu Bikdushaso Shel Aharon V'tzivanu Le'echal Terumah or Le'echal Chalah.

The question is there are some Kohanim who are descendants of Pinchas. Asher Kidishanu Bikdushaso Shel Aharon? That is not true. Some Kohanim have their Kehuna because they are descendants of Aharon, not so with Pinchas. Pinchas is a person who was Zoche to Kehunah on his own. Why do they say a Nussach of Asher Kidishanu Bikdushaso Shel Aharon? This is the question for now.

I will ask you a second question that seems to have to go hand in hand. A young man in Ohr Sameach asked me this question. He said if Pinchas had not been a descendant of Aharon Hakohen. If he had been a Yisrael and he did what he did would he also have been Zoche to the crown of Kehunah? To the Bris Kehunas Olam? That is a thinking person's question. If I remember I will share the answer with you in the coming week B'ezras Hashem.

In the meantime I wish everybody a good Shabbos, a meaningful fast for Shiva Asar B'tammuz. A Tannis Tzibbur is a day where people traditionally fasted and then they came together in the afternoon as the Gemara says to talk about Takanos Shel Tzibbur. How to improve the Tzibbur, how to improve the life, the Frumma life of Klal Yisrael. Make the Taanis which falls on a Sunday this year and many of you will not be going to work, make it a meaningful day, a day in which your Davening is longer, in which your learning is longer, more meaningful. This is what a Taanis is supposed to be about. A Gutten Shabbos and a Leichter Tannis to one and all!

Rabbi Reisman - Parshas Chukas/Balak 5769

At the beginning of Parshas Chukas in 19:1 - 2 the Posuk says (וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה, אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן (לְאמֹר). (זאת חקת התורה, אֲשֶׁר-צִוָּה יְהוָה לֵאמֹר דְּבַר אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְיִקְחוּ אֵלֶיךָ פָּרָה אֲדֻמָּה תְּמִימָה אֲשֶׁר אֵין-בָּהּ מוֹם, אֲשֶׁר לֹא-עֲלָה עָלֶיהָ, עַל) The word Leimor is mentioned an extra time. The first Leimor is typical. Why is the second Leimor there? The Ksav Soifer explains something else about the beginning of the Parshah. Rashi in 19:22 in D"H Parah Aduma says (פֶּרֶה אֲדֻמָּה) משל לבן שפחה שטינף פלטין של (מלך. אמרו תבא אמו ותקנה הצואה, כך תבא פרה ותכפר על העגל) the connection between Parah Aduma and the Eigel is that the Inyan of the Parah Aduma is that the same way a child's mother comes and wipes away the filth so to let the cow come and atone for the Eigel. The connection between the Parah Aduma and the Eigel is vague as to exactly what it is. The Ksav Soifer gives us a nice connection. We have a Kabalah that the Choitim by the Eigel were the Eiruv Rav. They were the ones who wanted to make the Avoida Zarah. Klal Yisrael who had Kashas as to where Moshe Rabbeinu was since the time was up, just followed along. Klal Yisroel's history especially in Galus is always a challenge. The Goy asks questions and puts a Yid on the defensive and then he feels uncomfortable and is in Sakana. By the Parah Aduma, Rashi brings that idea when he says, in Posuk Bais, (לפי שהשטן ואומות העולם מונין את ישראל לומר מה המצוה הזאת ומה טעם יש זאת חקת התורה), Dafka here we say, (זאת חקת התורה), that there is no reason. This is supposed to be our Chizuk against our association with the Eiruv Rav to be strong in what is correct even without knowing the reason. That is the Kaparah. The second Leimor is Hashem telling Moshe to tell Klal Yisroel that Dafka here is where it is (זאת חקת התורה) without a reason.

In Perek 20:1 we have the death of Miriam. We learn from (וַתָּמָת שָׁם מִרְיָם, וַתִּקָּבֶר שָׁם), a Gizairas Shava, Sham Sham to Eglar Arufa. That just like by Eglar Arufa we find that it is Asur B'hana, so to we learn from here that the body of a Mais is Asur B'hana. That Limud is the subject of a Machloikes between the Mechaber and the GRA in Yoire Dai'a. They argue as to whether the Mais if it was a Goy is Asur or Mutar B'hana. The Mechaber writes that the Goy's body is also Asur B'hana, because Sham Sham applies to all Maisim. The GRA argues and Paskens like Toisafos that only the body of a Yid is subject to the Limud of Sham Sham and would be Asur B'hana. Toisafos brings a Raya from Navi.

After Dovid killed Golias, Shaul had promised that whoever kills Golias can marry his daughter. Shaul at this time became jealous of Dovid. So Shaul said to Dovid, you can marry her, however, you must bring 100 Orlois of Pelishtim. The Gemara in Kiddushin says that they are Royi to feed animals and are worth a Shava Peruta and with that you can be Mekadeish her. Shaul's Kavana was to put Dovid in Sakana by having him kill 100 Pelishtim. What did Dovid do? He brought 200 Orlois and was Mekadeish with that. The GRA learns B'sheim Toisafos from here that you see that a Mais of a Goy is Mutar B'hana.

The Mishne L'melech has a nice Teretz to this Raya. He says it is not a Raya at all and on the contrary it is a Raya Farkert. Why? Dovid killing the Pelishtim is not unusual. He had just killed Golias and he was a Gibor. He could have gone with others for the Pelishtim, he didn't even have to go himself. To kill 100 Pelishtim was not a big thing. So Farkert, Dafka Orlois of Pelishtim. Because, Orlois of Maisai Pelishtim is Assur B'hana. Here Dovid was really challenged. He had to injure 100 Pelishtim in a way to get the Orlois when they were still alive, and use it. That was Shaul's Kavana, to put Dovid in great Sakana.

This Shaila of whether a Mais is Muttar or Assur B'hana came as a Halacha L'maiseh to Rabbi. In 1995 Rabbi had surgery to replace a bone in his leg. At that time Rabbi was given a choice of putting in a metal rod in place of the bone or a cadaver bone as a replacement bone. Rav Pam was consulted because medically each way had benefits. The reason for this consultation was to discuss if this Machloikes between the Mechaber and the GRA should be Machria whether or not to use a cadaver bone. Rav Pam said there is a Teshuvah Igrois Moshe which is talking to medical students, and says for purposes of medicine, one can be Soimech on the GRA. Rav Pam said make the best medical decision and Rabbi used a cadaver bone at that time. That only lasted for about a year and Rabbi had another surgery in 1996 where it was replaced and there is no longer a cadaver bone in Rabbi.

Rabbi Akiva Eiger asks, how is it Muttar for a Shoimer of a Mais to be paid. If the Mais is Assur B'hana and we learn from Pesachim Daf Chaf Bais that even secondary Hanaois are Assur by Isurai Hana'a. So how can a Shoimer be paid?

In the Moiadim Lizmanim Cheilek Gimmel, Siman (Ois) Raish Aleph. There are 2 different types of Issurai Hana in the Toirah. There are some Issurai Hana that the Toirah is Meracheik like Avoida Zora and Basar V'Chalav because they are Ma'us. Here even a secondary Hana'a would be Assur. There are other things that are Assur B'hana because of their great Kedusha like the Bais Hamikdash and Kodshim for example. People who worked in the Bais Hamikdash got paid, it is a Bifairush in a Mishnah. If it is Issurai Hana'a why should they get paid? The Teretz is, the Issur is only deriving benefit from the thing itself meaning the Guf of the Bais Hamikdash. Mimaila, a Mais is Assur why? Because the Guf is a container for the Neshama and it has a level of Kedusha, that is why it is Assur B'hana. Im Kain, you can get paid for being a Shoimer the same way people got paid for working in the Bais Hamikdash. Ulai, the Machloikes between the Mechaber and Gra maybe Talui in this. Maybe if you hold that the reason (וְהָיָה שֶׁמֶךְ מְרִיבִים) brings it to a higher level of Kedusha, then we only know it by Klal Yisroel and we have no reason to think that it applies to a Goy. Because we don't know to say that a Goy's Guf has Kedusha like a Yids Guf. On the other hand, the Mechaber might hold that a Guf without a Neshama is Assur B'hana because it is a Davar Ma'us and then it would include the Guf of a Goy in this Issur as well.

Both Miriam and Aharon die in Parshas Chukas and are buried. If at this time, Klal Yisroel was carrying the bodies of Yosef and the rest of the Shevatim for burial in Eretz Yisroel, and here it is already at the end of the 40 years, why didn't they take the bodies of Aharon and Miriam into Eretz Yisroel as well?

We know that Balak had a son Egloin. Egloin had a daughter or granddaughter Rus. Chazal tell us that the Schar for the Korbanois that Balak brought even though it was Sheloi Lishmah, he was Zoiche to have Rus come from him. The problem is Rashi in Perek 22:4 says (בַּעַת הַהוּא) לא היה Balak was actually from Midian. (ראוי למלכות. מנסיכי מדין היה, וכיון שמת סיחון מנהו עליהם לצורך שעה) In Kiddushin in the 4th Perek it says that Goyim's Yichus go after the father. That would mean that Rus who came from Egloin who came from Balak was not a Moiavis but a Midyanis. If so, then the whole Lomdus that Dovid is Muttar Bikhal because of Moiavi V'loi Moiavis shouldn't start because she was actually a Midyanis?