

Pardes Yehuda

← Weekly Torah Journal By Yehuda Z. Klitnick →

Parshas Matos Massei 5780

Year 11, #399

פרשת מטות מסעי תש"פ

Be'ezras Hashem we have reached another milestone in Harbatzas Torah as we enter our 11th year of Pardes Yehuda in English. Parshas Matos Massei 5770 was our inaugural issue. A thank you and hakaras hatov to R' Shimon Shlome Weinberg who was the force behind it, and to the many thousands of reader's and still growing, as well as all those who have given their precious time to review and edit May Hashem grant to all health to continue enjoying the Pardes Yehuda family. By the same token, Mizmor Lesodah to Hashem as we near the completion of 12 years of Pardes Yehuda In Yiddish. We will soon complete our first year of Pardes Yehuda in Hebrew. Hashem should grant me with many more healthy years to continue on and on, Amein.

Trust only in Hashem

תן הנה היה לבני ישראל בדבר בלעם למסר מעל בה' על דבר פעור ותתי המנפה בערת ה': (לא טו)

They were the same ones who were involved with the children of Israel on Balaam's advice to betray the Lord over the incident of Peor, resulting in a plague among the congregation of the Lord. (31:16) This rebuke came after Hashem commanded Moshe; *נלם נקמת בני ישראל מאת המדינים: "אהר תאסף אל-עמדי: Take revenge for the children of Israel against the Midianites; afterwards you will be gathered to your people."* The question is, what is the connection of Bilaam's advice to Klal Yisrael disobeying Hashem? The *Meshech Chochmoh* points to the Gemara Baba Kamma 50a that says: אמר ר' חנינא כל האומר הקב"ה ותן הוא יותרו חייו שנאמר (דברים לב, ד) הצור תמים פעלו כי כל דרכיו משפט אל אמונה ואין Rabbi Chanina says: Anyone who states that Hashem overlooks, is forgiving-ותן- of transgressions, his life will be relinquished-ותרו-, as it is stated: "The Rock, His work is perfect, for all His ways are justice" (Devorim 32:4). In other words, Hashem does not waive heavenly justice. Of course after Teshuva, everything is forgiven. One who says that Hashem overlooks one's sins, his life will be forfeited. Hashem requires of us to fully adhere to His commands. Why would Klal Yisrael have a thought that Hashem overlooks one's sins? The answer is: we find that that Bilaam expressed exactly this sentiment when he said *לא הביט און בניעלב ולא ראה עמל בישראל* Hashem does not look at evil in Yaakov, and has seen no perversity in Israel (Bamidbar 23:21). Bilaam added a proof to this by saying (next verse) *קל מוציאם ממצרים כהועפת ראם לו:* Hashem redeemed the Bnei Yisroel from Egypt even though they sinned, and having lowered themselves to the 49th level of impurity through idol worship. In spite of this He took them out of Egypt, indicating that he overlooked their sins. These evil words had an impact on Klal Yisrael, and inspired the evil thought in them. As a result of this the Bnei Yisroel dared to sin with the daughters of Midyon, harbouring the false belief that Hashem would overlook their sins. This is the intention of our verse. This is the connection of our

Posuk to Bilaam. He was the stumbling block for the Bnei Yisroel, בדבר בלעם, by virtue of Bilaam's words, "לא הביט און בניעלב." The *Meshech Chochmoh* adds that this concept is to be found in the Midrash Rabbah Devorim 1:2. On the verse in Mishlei 28:23, *מוכיח אדם אחרי תן ימצא: "ממחליק לשון; "* The meaning in the posuk is: He who admonishes man after Me, will find more favor than he who speaks with flattery. However the Midrash says that *מוכיח" "* refers to Moshe. Even though he reprimanded the Bnei Yisroel in harsh terms, nevertheless, afterwards he found favour in the eyes of those who took his words to heart. "ממחליק לשון" refers to Bilom who used sweet words to entice the Bnei Yisroel to sin, saying that they may pursue their lusts and no retribution would follow. This is a powerful lesson in all generations: Do good deeds and don't harbor the false belief of the fools who say that Hashem would overlook their sins. Whoever, believes this falsehood, is considered being from the students of Bilaam. Let's look in Pirkei Avos what Chazal teach us about Bilaam: *מה בין תלמידיו של אברהם אבינו (פרק ה יט) לתלמידיו של בלעם הרשע. תלמידיו של אברהם אבינו, אוכלין בעולם הזה ונוחלין בעולם הבא, שנאמר (משלי ח), להנהיל אהבי יש, ואצרתיהם אמלא. אבל תלמידיו של בלעם הרשע יורשין גיהנם ויורדין לבאר שחת, שנאמר (תהלים נה), ואתה אלהים תורידם לבאר שחת, אנשי דמים What is the difference between the students of Avraham, our father, and the students of Bilaam, the wicked? The students of Avraham, our father, enjoy this world, and inherit the world to come, as it is said: "I will endow those who love me with substance, I will fill their treasuries" (Mishlei 8:21). But the students of Bilaam, the wicked, inherit gehinnom, and descend into the nethermost pit, as it is said: "For you, Hashem, will bring them down to the nethermost pit those murderous and treacherous men; they shall not live out half their days; but I trust in You" (Tehilim 55:24). ואני אבטח בך. I trust only in Hashem. (Yehuda Z. Klitnick)*

STORY OF THE WEEK (By Yehuda Z. Klitnick)

***** *The Baal Shem Tov traveled far to save a city* *****

Reb Avraham Yaakov of Sadigora, the Rizhiner Rebbe's son, once told this story. One Erev Shabbos the Baal Shem Tov unexpectedly showed up in a town. Many people approached the Tzaddik to invite him to be their guest. The Rebbe, however, declined all the invitations. He simply stated that he elected to remain alone in the shul after Friday night davening. This became the talk of the town as a wonder to the residents.

Davening began and the Baal Shem Tov ascended to great heights. He was in a distant sphere of spirituality and the whole town had his `orerous seeing him daven. No one left shul; all eyes were on the Rebbe. This went on for hours but the townspeople were alarmed alarm when they saw his fervent Tefilla and Tehillim continue into the long night. Their hearts sank realizing that something was surely the matter, and the Rebbe had seen something with his holy eyes and was pleading with Hashem to save the town from a decree. The congregants also began to pray to Hashem to save them.

After a few hours, the congregants went home to eat the Shabbos Seuda. In the morning, when the congregants came to Shul, they found the Baal Shem Tov relaxed and joyful. After davening he accepted one of the local's the invitation for the Shabbos meal. Naturally, all of the townspeople crowded into the house of the host to see the Holy Baal Shem Tov, and participate in his Seuda.

Suddenly, as they were sitting at the table, there was a loud knock on the door. The host went to open the door, and he was surprised to see a local peasant come around looking for a drink of vodka. The townspeople were about to send him away, but the Baal Shem Tov called out and asked that he be brought in. The Rebbe ordered a seat to be brought for the peasant, and provided him with a generous glass of vodka. The Rebbe asked him to tell out loud what he had seen in the mansion of the Poritz (wealthy Polish estate owner) the previous night. The peasant's tongue, loosened by the vodka, related that the Poritz, believing that he had been cheated in a business deal by a Jewish merchant, assembled his peasants and armed them with knives and hatchets telling them to be on the ready to avenge themselves on the Jews at his command. They would then all be able to liberate their stolen riches from the Jews. "The whole night we waited for the command," he continued, "but the Poritz had

closeted himself in his office with an unexpected visitor, an old friend that he had not seen for forty years! Finally, he emerged and told us all to go home, that 'the Jews were upright and honest people and nobody should dare lay a hand on them.' We all went home and that is the whole story!"

"This old friend," explained the Sadigerer Rebbe "had been dead for decades. The Baal Shem Tov had dragged him from the grave to influence his friend the Poritz." "I always wondered, though," the Rebbe asked, "why did the Baal Shem Tov have to travel all the way to that town for Shabbos to avert the tragedy? Could he not have remained in his hometown of Mezibuz? Now, however, I understand. The Baal Shem Tov said to himself, 'if I can succeed in saving the town, fine but if not, then I will perish together with them!'"

Mesiras Nefesh for Klal Yisrael

Rav Asher of Stoln, the son of the Bais Aharon of Karlin, lived his entire life to help Klal Yisroel. He did so until his last days in this world. Rav Asher traveled to the town of Triskovitz in Ukraine, to heal himself in its hot baths. Triskovitz is very close to the town of Drohobich. During his visit, he heard that a deadly plague had spread throughout Drohobich. Hundreds of people were dying from this plague. The Rebbe felt that he could save the town, and he immediately traveled to Drohobich. The Rabbi of Druhobich pleaded with Reb Asher not to come into the town because it would the plague was fatal. Reb Asher found a way to sneak into the town and as soon as he entered the town, he started to feel ill. Soon the sickness overcame him, and on Friday the 15th of Av, 1873, ט"ו אב תרל"ג Rav Asher left this world. The whole town closed its shops and everyone from children to the elders, came to pay their respects to the holy tzaddik. The Rebbe is buried in Drohobich. (The Rabbi of Drohobich, Rav Eliyahu Harshavsky relates this story in his sefer, Ezer Eliyahu, Parshas Devarim, page 197.) The same day that the Rebbe was niftar, a daughter was born to him. She was named Nechama Bas Tzion .א"ע The Bais Aharon said: The avenue to measure the greatness of a Tzaddik is with his Ahavas Yisrael, his willingness to sacrifice his life for another Yid.

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