

HALACHA V'HALICHA... By Rav Chaim Schabes

Rashi brings from the Midrash that the nations make fun of us because of the *chukim* that we do, since these have no logical reason behind them. Rav Laib Gurvitz ZT"l asked that there is a seeming contradiction in the *pasuk* in Vaeschanan: **כִּי הִיא חֲכָמְתְּכֶם וּבִינְתְּכֶם לְעֵינֵי הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁמְעוּן אֶת הַחֻקִּים הָאֵלֶּה**, that the nations attribute our wisdom and understanding precisely to the practice of *chukim* which do not follow any human logic! The answer is, that initially, they mock at us because of these practices, but after they see the result of those who follows those seemingly foolish practices, how B'nai Yisrael become elevated morally and spiritually, they must admit that there is wisdom behind them. One is not allowed to follow the ways of the idol worshipers; some Rishonim learn this from the *pasuk* of **וְלֹא תִלְכוּ בַחֻקֹת הַגּוֹי** (Rambam SH"m Lo Sa'ase 30 and Chinuch 262), while others count it as two *lavin* because of **לֹא תִלְכוּ בַחֻקֹתֵיהֶם** (B'bag, Yeraim 313). Shulchan Aruch (YD 178) writes that one is not allowed to wear clothing that is specifically worn by the *goyim*, and Ram" a explains that that is referring to clothing that they use for the intention of *pritzus* (immorality), like wearing red clothing. The Shach says that it is not the way of *tzni'us* to wear red clothing, and brings from the Maharik that black is a color of humility. Wearing specific clothing that is just an arbitrary custom, without any special reason, may fall under the category of *darchai haEmori* and may have to do with their idol worshiping. However, if it has a benefit, for example, all doctors should wear white clothing for identification, it is fine (Ra"ma). One who finished eating and left over some pieces of bread on the table may not bring a loaf of bread to the table because that was the custom of the idol worshipers (YD 178:3). If a loaf was left on the table, though, some say that one does not need to remove it (Shach 5), while others hold that one should remove it (Magen Avraham 180:2), but on Shabbos everyone agrees that it is not necessary (MB 5). There were places that had a custom to set a table with food the night after a Bris Milah, and that falls into this prohibition, because idol worshipers also had this practice (Ra"ma ibid). Shach (6) says that to make a *se'uda* the night before the Bris Milah is permitted, as a *minhag*, but it is not considered a *se'udas mitzvah* (MB 551:62). There are many more practices that fall into this category. The Chinuch (262) holds that it is prohibited to go to circuses and theaters because of **בַחֻקֹתֵיהֶם לֹא תִלְכוּ**, and Rav Yaakov Kamenetzky ZT"l said that this refers also to our circuses (B'mchitzas Rabainu pg. 96). One is not allowed to slaughter and spill the blood into a pit, because this was done for *avodah zarah* (YD 12:1). Many who fast on *erev* Rosh Hashanah are careful to eat before *alos hashachar*, to avoid the practice of the *goyim* to fast on the eve of their holiday (Ram" a OC 581:2). One should not specifically request a white rooster for *kaparos*, but if he is given a white one, it is fine (MB 605:4). There are those who say that walking without one's head covered is **חֻקֹת הַגּוֹיִם** (Bach and Taz OC 8:3, and MB 2:11); even those who argue, agree that doing a *mitzvah* with the head uncovered is **חֻקֹת הַגּוֹיִם** (N'ta Sorek OC 2), and Chasam Sofer (CM 191) writes that to *daven* with the head uncovered is **חֻקֹת הַגּוֹיִם**. To play musical instruments in *shul* during *davening* is prohibited because of **בַחֻקֹתֵיהֶם** (Maharam Shik YD 165, Melamed L'hoel OC 16). The *bimah* must be in the middle of the *shul*, not in the front, bec. of **בַחֻקֹתֵיהֶם** (Divrai Malkiel 5:234, Lvushai Mordechai OC 2:86). A *sh'liach tzibur* should not wear a black robe (Mirkeves Hamishne, Hakdamah). Some prohibit making a *chupah* in *shul* bec. of this reason (Yehuda Yaale OC 38). Flowers in a *bais hakevaros* (Minchas Elazar 4:61, Minchas Yitzchak 1:31) and *ava'ilim* wearing black (Gesher Hachayim 1:161) are also considered **חֻקֹת הַגּוֹיִם**.

THOUGHTS ON THE HAFTARAH ... By Rabbi Yaakov Shapiro (*Michah 5:6-6:8*)

In this week's haftara Hashem, through the navi Michah, calls the Jewish people to a 'trial' to accuse them of ingratitude. The navi relates some of the wonderful good that Hashem did for His people, such as sending them Moshe, Aharon and Miriam to save them from Mitzrayim, and saving them from Bil'am. And what do the people do in return? They rebel against Hashem by sinning! The Abarbanel asks, with all of the great and wondrous miracles that Hashem had done for the Jewish people, such as the plagues in Egypt and the splitting of Yam Suf, why was the story of Bil'am chosen as an example of the great kindness shown to the Jewish people? He answers that if you look closely at each phrase that the navi uses, each one is actually a hint of the many great things that were bestowed upon the people starting with their miraculous exodus from Mitzrayim. For example, mentioning Moshe hints at the Manna that they ate throughout the years in the desert in his merit. Through Aharon's merit, the clouds protected them. Miriam was responsible for the water they drank. These and other miracles continued all through their 40 years in the desert and beyond! In fact, when Bil'am wanted to curse them, Hashem made sure that not only would he not succeed, but he also would be forced to publicize the demise of all the other nations that wanted to destroy the Jewish nation, putting fear in their hearts even as the Jews entered Eretz Yisrael. And because all that is needed for wise people to remember things they forgot is just a reminder, the Navi used this technique to jog their memory of these miracles, and once reminded they will continue to reminisce on all the other great things Hashem did for them. Perhaps there is another explanation. Rav Shmuel bar Rav Nachman comments (Yalkut 554) that this is one of three times that Hashem came with strong complaints to the Jewish people. Each time, the Goyim saw what was happening and were happy because they were sure that Hashem would destroy them! But each time, when Hashem sees their joy, He turns His words of wrath into words of comfort and good. This of course is similar to what happened to Bil'am when Hashem turned his curses into enduring blessings for His people.

PARSHA PEARLS: **אֲזַן יִשְׂרָאֵל**: The well had been with them for nearly 40 years, and not once did the Jews sing its praise, *until it was taken from them and then returned*. Rabbi S. Gold, a RA"m in Yeshivas RSRH, once commented how a multitude of people would likely rise to witness the dawn if they were told that the sun would rise in the west that morning, yet few do so to witness the sun rise in the east each day – though surely it is no less a miracle of Hashem! How unfortunate it is that we take the miracles which we encounter daily for granted, and fail to adequately offer thanks for them. We must not wait until they are taken from us before we recognize their worth. Proper gratitude should be expressed each and every day.

SHABBOS SCHEDULE - KNESSES YISRAEL

שבת

ערב שבת

מזריב	מנחה	סוּזק"ש	שחרית	שקיעה	מנחה	הדלק"ן
9:22	6:15/8:02	9:15	6:50/8:20	8:32	6:45/7:00/8:17	7:03/7:15/8:14

SHIV'A ASAR B'TAMMUZ Thursday, Shacharis 6:50, Mincha 8:00, Ma'ariv 9:00; fast begins 4:20AM, ends 9:20PM
SHACHARIS Sun 7:45, Mon-Fri 7:00; **MAARIV** Mon-Th 9:30; **MINCHA/MAARIV** Sun-Wed 8:18; next Fri 6:44/7:00/ 8:15 (candles 7:02/7:15/8:12)

KNESSES NEWS

MAZEL TOV! to Rabbi and Mrs. Shlomo and Liz Gluck on the Bar Mitzvah of their son Pinny.
MAZEL TOV! to Mr. Mrs. Asher Jacobs on the birth of a grandson.

COMMUNITY CORNER

WOMEN'S SUMMER LEARNING please contact Mrs. Chana Juravel, or e-mail to MachonLevVenfesh@yahoo.com for more info
MIKVAH OF NEW HEMPSTEAD, 109 Brick Church, is open on Shabbos/Yom Tov, please call 669-0861
MINCHA at Tefilla L'Moshe, Sun. 1:30; S-Th 15m<shki'a; **שבת** 1:30/5:00/נ' **הדלק"ן**; **MAARIV** M-Th 40m>shki'a/9:45
DAILY SHACHARIS at Kehillat New Hempstead 6:00; **SHACHARIS** at Tefilla L'Moshe Sun. 7:30/8:30; M-Fri 6:25/7:00/7:30
MINCHA at Zichron Yehuda (2 Kakiat Ln) Sun. 1:40; Su-Th 7:30; **שבת** 6:00; **MAARIV** daily at 9:15PM; **SHACHARIS** Mo-Fr. 6:40/7:45; Sun. 6:30/7:30/8:15
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FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS and any other inclusions to this publication please contact Moshe Orlian at: 364-0572, or morlian@verizon.net

ONGOING SHIURIM

Daf Yomi: 1 hour before Shacharis (R' Adler)/ 9:45PM (R' Becher) at Knesses Yisrael; 5:40AM at Zichron Yehuda (*chabura*)
Maseches Chullin (by R' Apter) daily 1 hour before Shacharis; **Ahavas Chesed** (by Rabbi Schabes) Tues. 9:10PM, at Knesses Yisrael
Hilchos Shabbos chabura, Shabbos, after the early minyan; **ארחות שבת** (by Rabbi Schabes) after the 2nd minyan; **פרקי אבות** 5:45PM
Navi Melachim for men, by Rabbi Shmuel Moeller, Sundays 8:30-9:15, at Tefilla L'Moshe
Minchas Chinuch Sun. 8:30PM by R' Bronspigel at Zichron Yehuda
Maseches Brachos, Shabbos morning, half hour before Shacharis, by R' Yehoshua Kohl at Kehillat New Hempstead
Maseches Pesachim, Sun. 9:15AM; **Basar B'Chalav**, Wed. 8:45PM, by Rabbi Saperstein, at Cong. Ohaiv Shalom, 18 Bridle
Ladies Shiurim: Shabbos 5PM, TBD

Mondays 8:40 PM, **Sefer Shoftim (new series)**, by Mrs. Aviva Orlian, at Levy, 29 Fessler, to resume July 13

Wednesdays 10:45-11:45AM, **Pareshas Hashavua**, by Mrs. Sussi Brecher, at Lazar, 2 Tracey Ct. (corner of South Gate)

MECHOCHMAS HAS'FORNO... By Rabbi Shmuel Burstein

The words of Bil'am's *nevu'a* that appear in this week's *paresha* are some of the most beautiful in all the Torah. Chazal tell us that it is better for Am Yisrael to receive words of criticism from Moshe than the sweet, beautiful blessings of Bil'am; but it is certain we can learn quite a bit about the relationship between Hashem and His people from the words that came out of the mouth of this gifted and very spiritual *rasha*. In the second *b'racha* we find the Nation of God compared to a "re'em", sometimes translated as a buffalo, or unicorn, a beast whose horns are its prized asset. S'forno understands this metaphor as teaching us the way in which Am Yisrael deals with its enemies: the Jewish People "pushes" away other nations as does the mighty "re'em". Rather than devouring them, as would have been the case had the *pasuk* compared us to a lion, who tears its prey, the intent was that we succeed over our enemies by pushing them out of the way (he quotes Tehillim 80:9 as a proof to this intention). S'forno cites the three choices given by Yehoshua to the nations of Canaan (brought by the Yerushalmi in Shevi'is). The intention, says the S'forno was to offer even these decadent, idolatrous and child-sacrificing nations the chance to leave peacefully, or do *teshuvah* and recognize Hashem. Ultimately, they were bent on warring with Am Yisrael. But it didn't have to be this way. This is yet another example of a common thread found throughout S'forno's *perush* on the Chumash. Hashem desperately wants the sinner to return to Him. He quotes Yechezkel's soaring language: **כי לא אהפך במות המת**, I do not desire the death of the wicked, but their return. Am Yisrael came into Eretz Yisrael as a "re'em" to offer the *goyim* the choice to leave, or do *teshuvah* and accepting the 7 *mitzvos* of Bnei Noach. But the intent was not to march in killing, as a lion. Only after they refused the other options did the Jewish people need to resort to war. But even so, after the war, we did not use the 7 nations for our own purposes of labor, or servitude. That, too, would have been like a lion, who devours after he tears, and kills. No; Am Yisrael was forbidden to have any economic benefit from nations which chose not to make peace with us. We are meant to be a lofty nation, bringing other nations and people to a true understanding of what the Creator expects of, and desires for, man.

ON LANGUAGE... By R' Moshe Orlian

The "curse" of **טובו אהליך יעקב** continues in the very next *passuk* with **ה' כְּאֵהֳלִים נָטַע ה'** (BaMidbar 24:6). In this latter *pasuk*, **כְּאֵהֳלִים** has a *chataf-patach* under the א rather than a *cholam* or *kamatz katan*. This is because, as Rashi points out, the word **אֵהֳלִים** in this *pasuk* is the plural of the word **אֵהֶל** ("a-HAL"), a kind of fragrant plant (translated as aloe), and is not from the word **אֹהֶל** ("O-hel"), which means tent. The word **אֵהֶלֶךְ** in the earlier *pasuk*, however, does have a *cholam* on the א and refers to tents. Interestingly, one of the other references to aloe cited by Rashi is **מֵר וְאֵהֳלוֹת** (Tehillim 45:9). Thus, we see that **אֵהֶל** is one of those words the plural of which can be both masculine and feminine, **אֵהֶלֶם** or **אֵהֶלוֹת**. Another example is the word **הַצֵּר**, courtyard, which can be either **הַצְרִים** or **הַצְרוֹת** in the plural form.

"A GIGANTIC LITTLE SECRET" ... By Rabbi Yosef Schwab

זאת חקת התורה - What is unique about the *mitzvah* of *parah adumah* that it is referred to as "the *chok*"; after all, there are other *chukim*, such as *sha'atez*, *eglah arufah*, et al? A *chok* by definition is a precept that defies rational explanation. Shlomo HaMelech, the wisest of all men, was able to comprehend all the *chukim*, except for *parah adumah*. Only Moshe Rabbeinu, who reached the highest level humanly possible, was able to understand the paradox of *parah adumah*, and that is its uniqueness.