

# PARSHAS CHUKAS-BALAK

CHASSIDIC INSIGHTS, HIGHLIGHTS AND HAPPENINGS

פרשת חקת-בלק

June 29, 2023 / ל' תמוז תשפ"ג



**Yahrzeit of Hakodosh Reb Moshe Rokeach Hy"ד – Son of Reb – Aharon Rokeach Zt"l – אהרן רוקעאך ז"ל (Yesterday)**

Reb Moshe was the bechor – eldest son born to Maran Reb Aharon Rokeach of Belz zt"l. Reb Moshe married HaRabbanis Mrs. Faiga, the daughter of Reb Pinchas Avraham Shulem Rottenberg zt" – a great, great-granddaughter of the Sar Shalom of Belz zt"l.

Reb Moshe'le was 38 when he perished Al Kiddush Hashem in Premyshlan. On a Friday, the Nazis ym"s and Ukrainians ym"s grabbed Reb Moshe from the street and thrust him alive into the burning flames of the Premyshlan Shul.

When his holy father Maran Reb Aharon heard of his tragic Petira (death), he said: **"Blessed is Hashem that I sacrificed a**



"משה איש האלקים" – Reb Moshe Rokeach hy"ד – son of Maran, Reb Aharon Rokeach zt"l

## ***Korben for him!"***

Reb Moshe'le was buried the following Sunday in the city of Premyshlan, ה' ינקום, דמם מהרה לעינינו (Reb Moshele's wife and five children all perished in the war hy"d.)

To understand what a lofty neshama Reb Moshe'le possessed, his parents, Maran Reb Aharon and Rebbetzin Chaya Devora, bore children who passed away young. When Rebbetzin Chaya Devorah asked her revered father-in-law, the Frierdiger Rav zt"l, "So many people come to you for tefillos and blessings, and your son, Reb Aharon, you can't help?"

The Frierdiger Rav answered: *"What should I do that my son wants to bring down such holy neshamas that can't tolerate עולם הזה – this world?"*

Reb Moshe'le was raised in such a holy home. He had a sharp mind and exceptional middos, and he exceeded the expectations of his parents and Melamdin.

When The Frierdiger Rav, was in Munkach during WWI, he learned daily with his grandson Reb Moshe'le.

Reb Moshe'le had a weak deposition and was sickly, yet he used all his strength to learn endless hours. The Frierdiger Rav, expressed, "Moshe'le has my nature. *He can sit in one place and learn for hours!"*

Reb Moshe'les strong relationship with his grandfather was reflected in how he

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**Yahrzeit of HaKodosh Reb Moshe Rokeach Hy" d - son of Reb Aharon Rokeach zt"l - תמוז-ט' (Yesterday)**  
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lived in Halacha and minhagim. He once purchased a new pair of shoes and wanted to wear them for the first time on Shabbos - לכבוד שבת קודש - The Friediger Rav told him that wearing new shoes the first time on Shabbos is inappropriate. Since the first time wearing shoes presses on the feet and is uncomfortable. Therefore, it's not an עונג שבת "Wear them first on Friday, and then on Shabbos," advised his grandfather.

Reb Moshe'le was renowned for his sharp mind. When he sat by his father, Maran Reb Aharon's tish, it appeared as if he was napping while his father was saying 'Torah.' But when the chassidim reviewed the Divrei Torah, Reb Moshe'le repeated each word and explained what his father said.

Reb Moshe'le conducted his life beyond worldly realms. Everyone used to marvel at his levels of Kedusha in Torah, Avodah, and Gemillas Chassadim. He was known as "משה איש האלקים", as R' Avraham Dov Ringel z"l eloquently described Reb Moshe'le:

He was a real tzaddik, like his father! רבי! משה'לע איז געווען אן אמתער צדיק א שטיק טאטע

**EVERYONE LOVES A GOOD STORY,  
ESPECIALLY A CHASSIDISHE STORY...**

ונכרתה הנפש ההוא מישראל... (חקת יטיג)  
*That person shall be cut off from the Yidden...*

A Yid came to the Yismach Yisroel of Alexander zt"l lamenting his plight. A competitor opened a store across from him, and many of his customers started shopping with his competitor, causing him to lose business.

The Rebbe wished him to have plentiful parnassah. The Yid, however, continued crying, so the Rebbe asked him, "Why are you crying?" The Yid replied, "I want the Rebbe to curse my competitor that he should die!"

The Rebbe was shocked and asked him, "How can you expect me to curse a Yid?" To which the Yid replied, "That person desecrates Shabbos publicly, eats chometz on Pesach..."

The Rebbe explained to him that every Yid's neshama is tied to the Shechina with 36 knots, and in the Torah, there are 36 transgressions whose fate is death. If a person sins on all 36 transgressions, his ties with the Shechina can be severed. "Your competitor didn't transgress on all 36 since he didn't make the קטורת or anointed himself with the שמן המשחה. If so, his ties aren't severed from Above, so how can I curse him?"

"I can only bless you that Hashem should send you ample parnassah." The Rebbe's bracha came to fruition, and the Yid was blessed with a bountiful livelihood.

וכל כלי פתוח אשר אין צמיד פתיל עליו טמא הוא (חקת יט:טו)  
*Anything that enters the tent and anything that is in the tent shall be contaminated...*

A Yid, a 'maskil' (enlightened and lowly person), once asked Reb Gershon Henoch of Radzin zt"l that Chazal say, "מי איכה מידי דלא רמיזא,"

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**Everyone loves a good story,  
especially a Chassidic story...**  
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באורייתא – is there then a minhag or mitzvah that we do which isn't written in the Torah?" The maskil continued, "Show me a place in the Torah that says that a Yid isn't allowed to walk around without a Yarmulka on his head?"

The tzaddik replied: "The pasuk says, "וכל בלי ופתוח" – every bare head "אשר אין צמיד פתיל עליו" – that doesn't carry a covering, a yarmulka, "טמא הוא" – such a person is impure!

המן הסלע הזה נוציא לכם מים... (חקת כזי)  
*Shall we bring forth water for you from this rock...*

Reb Yaakov of Lisa zt"l sat with a group of notable people from his town, amongst them a wealthy yet stingy person. The notable people requested that the wealthy person place wine on the table to drink a 'l'chaim.' However, the wealthy person refused. Reb Yaakov told the wealthy person, "If you bring wine to the table, a miracle will happen – even a bigger miracle than Moshe presented!"

Out of curiosity, the rich man handed a nice sum of money to purchase an expensive bottle of wine. Reb Yaakov of Lisa exclaimed: "This action alone is a great miracle! Moshe Rabbeinu extracted water from a stone for drinking, and I extracted from a stone wine to drink!"

ולא נתן סיחון את ישראל עבר בגבולו (חקת כא:כג)  
*And Sichon didn't let the Yidden pass through his border...*

The Mitteler Rav Maran Rebbe Yehoshua of Belz zt"l married off two children a week apart in Chernobyl, Russia. The first son, The Friediga Rav zt"l Maran Rebbe Yissachar Dov married the daughter of Reb Shaya Zisha zt"l, the son of Reb Aharon of Chernobyl zt"l, and the second son, Reb Leibish zt"l, married the daughter of Reb Menachem Nuchem of Loeb zt"l, also a son of Reb Aharon of Chernobyl.

Two days following the second wedding, the Mitteler Rav took a walk with his gabbaim. Suddenly, he told his gabbai, "Order a horse and wagon now because I want to leave immediately! I must leave Russia because the earth is trembling beneath my feet...it's dangerous for me to stay here – I must leave immediately!"

The gabbai was very surprised. It didn't make sense for the father of the chassan to leave in the middle of Sheva Brochos. But if the Rebbe commands, the gabbai obeys. The Mitteler Rav made the wagon driver hurry, saying, "I want to pass the border as soon as possible." After a few days of travel with a stopover at a Yiddish guest house for Shabbos, they safely passed the border between Russia and Galicia.

A few hours later, the Russian border patrol received an urgent message: "Be aware that the Belzer Rebbe is currently in Russia. When he attempts to pass the border, arrest him immediately!" (It seemed the the 'maskilim' – the Chassidic naysayers reported some slander to the Russian government about the Belzer Rebbe.)

Miraculously, the Mitteler Rav zt"l sensed that he was in danger and fled Russia in time.

Meanwhile, his mechutan, Reb Aharon of Chernobyl, was disturbed by the Mitteler Rav's sudden leave during Sheva Brochas.

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**Everyone loves a good story,  
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But when he learned of the Mitteler Rav's great miracle, he exclaimed: "My Mechutan, the Belzer Rav, knows what he's doing. He foresaw what was happening and prevented the worse from happening!"

הם עם לבדד ישכון ובגוים לא יתחשב (בלק כג:ט)  
*It's a nation that will dwell in solitude and be reckoned amongst the nations.*

The Baal Shem Tov Hakodesh zt"l was once leaving the mikvah when a few non-Jews passed. He feared they should touch him when he heard one telling the other, "Watch out that this Yid shouldn't touch you, for he will make us impure!"

The Baal Shem Tov explained that this is what the pasuk alludes to: הם עם לבדד ישכון – when a Yid is enveloped in Kedusha – holiness, though he finds himself amongst other nations, he shouldn't worry because – ובגוים לא יתחשב – he isn't worthy in their eyes and they wouldn't want to befriend him.

ונאום הגבר שתום העין (בלק כד:ד)  
*The words of the man with the open eye.*

Rashi comments that Bilam was blind on one eye. Targum Unklas adds that with one eye he saw nevuah – prophecy.

How was Bilam able to boast that he's blind in one eye? And according to Targum it means 'someone who sees well,' so how can it be explained?

A story occurred during WWII with a Nazi

ym" who had one glass eye and you couldn't tell a difference between his real and fake eye. The accursed Nazi once challenged the Yidden that if someone can tell which eye is glass he will be rewarded with plentiful food. But if they're wrong, he will be killed.

Everyone was afraid to dare, but one Yid boldly stated: "That eye is the false one!" The Nazi paled and admitted that he was right. "But tell me, how did you notice which one was fake when not one person was able to tell the difference? The Yid was afraid to answer, but the Nazi promised that he wouldn't harm him.

The Yid replied, "I'll tell you the truth. Your fake eye doesn't gaze at us Yidden with the hatred that emits from your real eye – and that's how I knew right away which is the fake eye!"

The same is with Bilam. How was he able to boast that he was blind in one eye? ונאום הגבר שתום העין – I have one eye that doesn't see, that's closed – it doesn't have hatred against the Yidden – and thus, with that eye, Bilam was able to befriend the Yidden.

מה טובו אהליך יעקב (בלק כד:ה)  
*How good are the tents of Yaakov...*

Harav Hachossid R' Avraham Leib Bargofen z"l lived in Tel Aviv and used to rent out rooms for Chassidim who came to spend Yomim Tovim with Maran, Reb Aharon of Belz zt"l. He once asked Maran if he was allowed to take the money and if it was still considered Hachnosas Orchim. Maran answered: "Even if one takes money, he can still fulfill the mitzvah of Hachnosas Orchim. The main thing is how you treat your guest – do you shmooze with them, give them comfortable accommodations, etc."

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## פרשת חקת-בלק – THIS WEEK'S VORT

ויקחו אליך פרה אדומה... (חקת יט:ב)

*And they should take to you a completely red cow...*

Reb Moshe Hadershen zt"l says that the Mitzvah of Parah Aduma was to serve as a 'kaparah' – atonement for the חטא העגל. Since the sin of the 'egel' caused a weakness in Emunah, hence, the פרה אדומה – which is a "חוק" – a Mitzvah we obey because Hashem commanded us to without knowing the reason – this mitzvah strengthens our Emunah. It, therefore, serves as an atonement for the sin of the 'egel.'

כה אמר אחיך ישראל... (חקת כ:יד)

*Moshe sent emissaries from Kadesh to the king of Edom saying, "So said your brother, Yisrael..."*

R' Yonason Eibschitz zt"l explains that when a person is on a simple level, they know and remember their brother. Still, when a person is on a greater level and holds highly of himself, he forgets about his family. This is what Moshe told 'Edom.' Even though Klal Yisroel is currently on a high level, which is alluded to in the word "ישראל", they are still "אחיך" your brother, and we didn't forget about you.

ויאמר אליהם שמעו נא המורים... (חקת כ:י)

*Listen now, O rebels, shall we bring forth water for you...*

Rashi says: "המורים" means 'foolish people,' or it can mean 'they teach their Rebbes.'

Both explanations can mean the same. Is there a bigger fool than someone that wants to teach his Rebbe how to act...

ויאמר אליו אדום לא תעבור בי... (חקת כ: יח)

*And Edom said to him, "You shall not pass through me...lest I come against you with the sword!"*

Throughout the parsha, Edom spoke to the Yidden in a singular tense to teach us that the Yidden's main source of strength comes from when they are באחדות – together as one. And this is what Edom was afraid of.

זאת חקת התורה אשר צוה ה' לאמר... (חקת יט:א-ב)

*This is the decree of the Torah, which Hashem has commanded...*

The word "צוה" equals 101. "זאת חקת התורה"

This is the suggestion for one who wants to remember his learning "לאמראשר צוה ה'" – alluding to the fact that one should study 101 times, which guarantees he should remember what he learned. As the Gemara states, "אינו דומה שונה פרקו מאה פעמים לשונה פרקו מאה" – you can't compare one who learns something one-hundred times to one who learns it one hundred and one times!"

ושני נעריו עמו (בלק כב:כב)

*And his two young men were with him.*

Why does the Torah tell us that two men

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**This week's vort – פרשת חקת-בלק**  
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accompanied Balak? The Gemara says that no harm will befall when three people travel together. Therefore Bilam wasn't harmed by the Malach since they were three travelers together.

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ואך את הדבר הזה אשר אדבר אליך (בלק כב:כ)  
*But only the thing thing that I shall speak to you – that shall you do...*

Chazal says Hashem placed a hook on Bilam's mouth to prevent him from talking. But when Bilam wanted to withhold himself from bentshing the Yidden, Hashem placed a rod to force him to open his mouth and speak. It's known that the word "אך" refers to minimizing, and "את" – is to expand. This alludes in the pasuk ואך את הדבר הזה אשר אדבר אליך – sometimes are אך למעט – to talk less, and there are times את לרבות – to talk more.

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**פרקי אבות - פרק ה'**

שבעה מיני פורעניות באין לעולם (אבות ה:ח)  
*Seven types of punishments come to the world.*

Why does it have to use the term "באין – **come**" to this world? Punishment comes from one's own doing. Hashem put into the world's nature that when Yidden commits an aveira, chas v'shalom, the sin causes the punishment to 'come' on its own.

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ושאינו לשם שמים זו מחלוקת קרח וכל עדתו (אבות ה:יז)  
*If the fight isn't leshem shamayim then it's considered like the fight of Korach and his clan.*

Chazal say that the wife of ben Pelach saved him from Korach's fight. She told her husband that you won't become the Kohen Gadol, so what difference does it make for you to belong with Korach or Aharon HaKohen. Theoretically, she advised him something that is self understood. Just when people are in midst of fighting, the flame is on and they can't think rationally. But she did think rational, and the pasuk says on her: "חכמת נשים בנתה ביתה" – a woman's wisdom builds her home!"

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פרקי אבות - פרק ה'  
continued

עז פנים לגיהנום ובושת פנים לגן עדן (אבות ה:כ)  
*One who is brazen-faced goes to Gehenim,  
and one who is shamefaced, to Gan Eden.*

The son-in-law of the Chofetz Chaim was the Mashgiach of Yeshivas Radin. He once asked the Chofetz Chaim for advice on how to deal with a refined bocher who wasn't davening appropriately for a while – should we allow him to remain in Yeshiva or not?

The Chofetz Chaim answered, "It's not a big deal, don't worry, this bocher will grow up to be a Rav," and so it occurred.

The Mashgiach approached the Chofetz Chaim with another incident. A bocher who was dorming at the home of a widower where the facility and eating conditions were dire which caused the bocher to speak chutzpah to the widower. (Although the bocher was justified due to that specific circumstance.)

The Chofetz Chaim was upset about the bocher's actions and said to send home the bocher away from the Yeshiva.

When the son-in-law questioned the Chofetz Chaim to compare the two instances, why one was sent home and not the other, the Chofetz Chaim explained his actions. "There's a famous Mishna, "עז פנים" – someone who is an עז פנים doesn't stand a chance to do teshuva, but someone who is a "בושת פנים" will do teshuvah!"