



Adapted from the sefer חמין במוצאי שבת and חדוותא דזעיר אנפין collections of maamarim given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Seuda Shlishis and Melave Malka

חדוותא דזעיר אנפין מאמר י"ג - Seudah Shlishis Parshas Shelach

In this week's *Parshah*, after Bilam agrees to travel with the elders of Midyan, the *pasuk* (במדבר כ"ב:כ"ב) tells us;

וַיַּחַר אֵף אֱלֹקִים כִּי הוֹלֵךְ הוּא וַיִּתְּצֵב מַלְאָךְ ה' בְּדֶרֶךְ לְשָׁטָן לוֹ וְהוּא רֹכֵב עַל אֲתוֹנוֹ וְשָׁנִי נִעְרָיו עִמּוֹ. – Hashem's wrath flared because he was going, and a *malach* of Hashem stationed himself on the road to thwart him, and he was riding on his she-donkey, and his two servants were with him.

The question addressed by many *Mefarshim* is, why was Hashem angry that Bilam was going? Didn't Hashem tell him (במדבר כ"ב:כ) – קוּם לֵךְ אִתָּם – Arise and go with them?

I would like to relate an answer to this question that I heard from my Rosh Yeshivah, Rav Baruch Shimon Schneerson zt"l. He heard the *peirush* from his father-in-law the *Gaon* of Tchebin zt"l in the name of Rav Shlomo Kluger zt"l.

Chazal tell us that despite his great wealth, Bilam was a miser who tried to avoid spending money even for his own benefit. Therefore, he would never ride on his donkey, for he was afraid that the extra weight would wear out the donkey, forcing him to purchase a new one. Hashem got angry because הוֹלֵךְ הוּא - Bilam was always a *holech* - a walker, yet in this case, he was in such a hurry that he rode the donkey. His desire to curse *Am Yisrael* was so intense that it overcame his stinginess.



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Aside from providing us with a wonderful explanation of the *pasuk*, Rav Shlomo Kluger's *peirush* contains an important lesson for each and every one of us.

If we take an honest look at ourselves, we will find that we are sometimes quite lazy when it comes to Torah and *Avodas Hashem*. Even when we do learn and fulfill *mitzvos*, it is with very little energy and enthusiasm. We treat Torah and *mitzvos* as if they were simply daily chores that must be done.

People often excuse their halfhearted *avodah* by explaining that the burdens of life have worn them out, so they are too tired and distracted to approach *mitzvos* with enthusiasm. This is often quite true. The need to earn a living and deal with life's everchanging challenges can be both physically and emotionally exhausting. However, they should also realize that when it comes to certain things that they really care about, all of those excuses disappear and they can run to the event with the enthusiasm of a youngster.

This is something we must take care to avoid. If we approach Torah and *mitzvos* lackadaisically and throw ourselves into other areas with strength and enthusiasm, we could *chas v'shalom*, be emulating Bilam's behavior. Then, we too run the risk of arousing Hashem's anger *chas v'shalom*.

Every Jew should devote some time to noticing which type of activities inspire him to run with all his strength, and which activities he approaches as burdens that are too heavy for him to lift. We must aspire to be consistent. If we find that, despite our burdens and distractions, physical pleasures or foolish amusements inspire us to speed, energy, and enthusiasm, we have no excuse to be lazy when it comes to serving Hashem.

If we take this to heart, we can learn to harness the energy we have discovered to help us fulfill Torah and *mitzvos*.

ונזכה בעזה"י לעובדו יתב"ש בחיות והתלהבות, בלב ונפש חפצה כל הימים אכ"ר



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