



July 18, 1997

יג' תמוז תשנ"ז

Shabbat Parshat בלק

Volume XXII Issue 3

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Daniel Gottesman- B13
Mindy Mallin- Staff
Yael Forman- G19
Shira Tuchman- Staff
Shiri Alpert- Staff
Adam Lempel- B3
Joseph Kalinsky- Kolllel
Jack Levin- B3
Rochella Lindenbaum- Machon
Benyamin Gras- B12
Jessica Jacobs- G18
Hindi Silber- G15
Amy Stein- Staff
Jason Listhaus- B3
Daniel Edell- B11
Talia Rosenberg- G7

*Mazel Tov On Your
Bat Mitzvah
Dahlia Eisenberg G5*

Fast of 17 Tammuz
Tuesday July 22
Fast begins 3:33AM
Fast ends 8:00 PM

Latest morning Kriat Sh'ma:
8:26 AM
Latest Shacharit Amida:
9:40 AM
Earliest time for Mincha:
12:43PM

Friday night speaker
Rabbi Nati Helfgot
10:00 PM-Pargod
Hope to see you there!

Shabbat Times:
**Latest
Candlelighting:
7:13 PM
Kabbalat
Shabbat:
7:00 PM**

Midah of the Week - Humility

Iggeres Ha-Ramban

This letter, which defines the trait of *nyv* — humility — as the pivotal trait in the Torah personality, was written by the Ramban to his son, Nachman, some time after the Ramban's arrival in Eretz Yisrael, in the year 1267. The words of this Iggeres are inscribed in large letters on a wall of the renovated Synagogue which the Ramban established upon his arrival in Jerusalem, and which is regarded to this very day as one of the most sacred sites in the Old City.

*"Hear, my son, the instruction of your father; and do not forsake the Torah of your mother."*¹

Accustom yourself always to speak softly⁴ to every person,⁵ at all times. You will thereby be saved from anger, which is an evil trait,⁶ causing people to sin. And so did our Sages, of blessed memory, say?⁷ "All kinds of Gehenna will hold sway over one who becomes excited, as it says,⁸ 'Remove anger from your heart, and put away evil from your flesh.' Evil refers to Gehenna, as it says,⁹ 'Even the wicked, for the day of evil.'"¹⁰

And when you will be saved from anger, the trait of humility will enter your heart.¹¹ Humility is the finest of all excellent traits,¹² as it says,¹³ "In the wake of humility, comes fear of the L-rd."¹⁴

Through humility, the trait of fear [of G-d] will enter your heart. For you will consider whence you have come,¹⁵ and where it is that you are going,¹⁶ and that you are but a worm and maggot in your lifetime,¹⁷ how much more so after your death. And [you will consider] before whom it is that you are destined to render an account and a reckoning, before the¹⁸ King of¹⁹ Glory.²⁰ As it says, "Behold, the heavens and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee;²¹ surely not the heart of man."²² And it says,²³ "Do I not fill the heavens and the earth? says the L-rd."

When you will consider all this, you will fear your Creator, and you will guard yourself from sin. And when you will adhere to these traits,²⁴ you will rejoice with your lot.²⁵

When you will conduct yourself with the trait of humility, to be aslamed before each individual,²⁶ and to be afraid of [the Almighty]²⁷, and of sin, then will the Divine Spirit descend upon you,²⁸ with the radiance of its glory, and you will attain [eternal] life²⁹ in Olam Iba — the World to Come.³⁰

Now, my son, know and realize that he who feels superior in his own heart above other human beings, is rebelling against the dominion of Heaven. For he glorifies himself in the raiment of the Omnipresent,³¹ as it says,³² "The L-rd reigns; His raiment is exaltness."³³

Humble Yourself, and He Will Elevate You

In what regard shall the individual be haughty? If it should be in regard to wealth,³⁴ "The L-rd makes poor, and makes rich." If it should be in regard to honor, it belongs to G-d, as is written,³⁵ "Both riches and honor are from Thee." How can one exult in the honor of his Master? And if he should take glory in [his] wisdom, [it is written],³⁶ "He removes the speech of the trusty, and takes away the understanding of the aged."³⁷

Hence, all is equal before the Omnipresent, for in His wrath He casts down the haughty, and by His will, He raises up those who are bowed down.³⁸ Therefore, make yourself humble, and the Omnipresent will elevate you.

I will therefore explain to you how you shall conduct yourself with the trait of humility, to pursue it constantly.

All your words shall be uttered³⁹ softly.⁴⁰ Your head shall be bowed,⁴¹ your eyes shall gaze down towards the ground, while your heart shall be directed upwards.⁴² Do not gaze directly⁴³ into the face of an individual when you speak with him, and regard every man as greater than yourself.

If he is a wise or wealthy individual, you should give him respect.⁴⁴ And if he is poor, and you are wealthier than he,⁴⁵ or you are wiser than he, consider in your heart that you are more liable than he [for your transgressions], while he is more blameless than you, for if he sins, he is regarded as *nyw* — an unwitting transgressor, while you are regarded as *nyw* — a deliberate transgressor.⁴⁶

In all your words, deeds, and thoughts, at all times, regard yourself as though you are standing before the Omnipresent, be He blessed, with His Divine Presence above you,⁴⁷ for His glory fills the world.⁴⁸ Your words shall be [uttered] with fear and awe, like a servant before his master. Be ashamed before every man. If someone should call you, do not answer him with a loud voice, but rather calmly and softly, as one who stands before his teacher.⁴⁹

Take heed to study Torah always, so that you might be able to⁵⁰ fulfill it.⁵¹ When you rise from the sefer [and complete your daily studies], scrutinize that which you have studied for anything contained therein which you may be able to fulfill.⁵² Examine your deeds⁵³ each morning and evening,⁵⁴ so that in this way, you will be engaged in repentance all your days.⁵⁵

That You May Be Successful in All Your Endeavors

Remove all worldly matters from your heart during *tefillah*, and prepare your heart before the Omnipresent, be He blessed.⁵⁶ Purify your thoughts, and consider each word before you utter it with your mouth.⁵⁷ So shall you do all the days of your life of vanity,⁵⁸ in regard to every matter, and you will not sin. Your words, your deeds, and your thoughts, will thereby be righteous,⁵⁹ and your *tefillah* will be pure, clear, clean, and deliberate, and it will be acceptable before the Omnipresent. As is written,⁶⁰ *You will prepare their heart; you will cause Your ear to listen.*

Read this letter once each week,⁶¹ not less, in order to fulfill it, and to thereby always walk in the path of the Almighty.⁶² Be He blessed, so that you shall be successful in all your endeavors,⁶³ and you shall be worthy of attaining *Olam HaBa*, which is hidden for the righteous.⁶⁴

Each day that you shall read this letter, you will be answered from Heaven, in regard to anything which your heart shall desire to beseech, forever. Amen, selah.

TORAH THOUGHTS

“יפתח ה' את פי האתון ותאמר לבלעם מה עשית לך כי הכיתני זה שלש רגלים.”

“And Hashem opened the mouth of the donkey and she said to בלעם לבלעם I do to you that you have hit me three times.”

Rashi, quoting the Midrash comments: רמו לו, אתה מבקש לעקור אומה החוננת שלש רגלים בשנה

The monkey hinted to בלעם, that בלעם wanted to uproot the nation that celebrates the regalia during the year.

Why did the donkey hint to בלעם regarding the mitzvah of the regalia rather than any other of the 612 mitzvot?

Perhaps we can suggest the following answer. Many of the mitzvot which we observe become part of our “lifestyle”. I do not necessarily expend great energy nor thought to perform the mitzvah but rather it is done routinely and automatically. On the other hand the mitzvah of לרגל is one which is time consuming and cumbersome. It could involve many days of travel, great expense and at times even separation from family if a young child or the like is unable to make the journey. It was not a mitzvah which could be done on the spur of the moment or on “automatic pilot” but rather it required forethought, planning and commitment.

As בלעם was travelling to curse the Jewish people the אתון tried to warn בלעם. Do not use the excuse that you have been pressured by others to do this deed or that you are acting on impulse but rather you have deliberately set out to do harm to a nation. You have planned a scheme to uproot a nation whose plans and thought, are on how to serve Hashem. You will not be successful.

May we be זוכה to join the entire ישראל כלל in the mitzvah of עלייה לרגל במדורה בימנו

Rabbi Joel Cohn

STAFF CLOSEUP

A VETERAN RETURNS

Phyllis Hecht, last seen in Camp Morasha as Phyllis Witkin over a decade ago, has returned to head girls' sports staff. A Limudei Kodesh teacher during the rest of the year, Phyllis has finally realized her dream to return to Camp Morasha for a summer sure to be filled with fun for all. Phyllis's goals this summer are to combine her teaching and sports experience to teach the girls of Camp Morasha to enjoy their sports in a Torah environment and with proper Torah behavior.

Along with Phyllis come her two children, Ayelet and Oren, day campers, who already never want to leave Morasha, and her husband, Yossie, whom she met right here at Morasha. (We are not sure what number couple they are.)

bbyo

by Tova Mansdorf

On Wednesday, July 9, Morasha's Machon program participated in the annual Morasha-BBYO get-together. Morasha Kollel sent representatives for a portion of the day as well. The BBYO-Kallah program consists of Jewish children of all types: orthodox, reform, conservative and reconstructionist. The day focused on tolerance, acceptance, and education on both sides. Relationships that will hopefully last many years to come were formed between Morasha Machoniks and Kallah participants. The day included sessions, free time, dances performed by both Morasha and Kallah's Israeli Dance Troupe, singing and lots of ruach.

Thanks to Allison Steinlauf, Elly Kramer, Michael Elsant and Tani Renov, who worked with the Machon counselors and BBYO representatives, the day was a proven success.

Attention all staff: Perek in the Pavillion, Rabbi Dan Jacobson, Shabbos Afternoon 5:30 P.M.