



## KOLLEL UPDATES

### Winter Learning Program

Our first-ever Winter Learning Program was a great success. Over 100 people participated in the many shiurim on offer.

Guest Scholar, Rabbi Michael Gourarie, captivated the audience with 4 amazing presentations.

Shiurim from the Rosh HaKollel and the Kollel Rabbis were enthralling and of a high-quality.

Participants thoroughly enjoyed the program. We look forward to this becoming a fixed learning event on our calendar.

### Daf Yomi - New Mesechta

This Friday, the Kollel Menachem Daf Yomi shiur completed Mesechta Eiruvim.

We will begin **Pesachim** this Shabbos. It is a fascinating Mesechta making it an ideal time to join or re-join the shiur.

Shiurim take place in the Kollel Beis Medrash

Weekdays 6:00am, Sundays 7:45am and Shabbos between Mincha and Maariv with Rabbi Mottel Krasnjanski

An additional shiur Shabbos 8:30am is given by Rabbi Paltiel.

If you are interested in a night shiur please contact the Kollel.



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## Home-based Protection

Parsha Balak is a powerful parsha. So much so that *chaza"l* wished to include it in *krias shema*. Thankfully (especially for the early morning minyanim) they had *rachmonus* and in the interest of *tircha detzibura*, shelved the idea.

Nonetheless, one *posuk* from the *nevuos* of Bilam did make it into our siddur. The prevailing Jewish custom, dating from at least the first known siddur, is to open our *shachris* prayers with the verse *מה טוב אוהליך יעקב* – *How goodly are your tents Yaakov, your camps Yisroel*. This verse, like *modeh ani*, lays the foundation for our *avodah* in the day that lies ahead.

On this verse Rashi comments; he (Bilam) saw that their tent doors did not face one another, so that they would not be able to peer into one another's tents.

In introducing this particular prophesy, the Torah records that *Bilam lifted his eyes and saw Yisroel camped in their tribes and the spirit of Hashem was upon him*. Bilam lifted up his eyes to cast an evil eye upon Bnei Yisroel, to curse them and to destroy them. Yet something he saw made him unable to curse them. Instead, Bilam became the source of our greatest blessings.

What did he see? *וירא את ישראל שוכן לשבטיו* – he saw Yisroel camped in their tribes. Rashi explains that Bilam saw how the Jewish people camped in their tribes and they were not mixed. This alludes to the great Kedusha and Tznius of the Jewish people in preserving the sanctity of marital life and the purity of their offspring. Furthermore something about the camp testified that each tribe was *yiddische* tribe, a *sheivet yisroel*. What was that? The doors of their tents did not face one another.

*Mah tovu* is neither a *nevuos* nor a brocha. Bilam is declaring why he was unable to curse the Jewish people!

Bilam was a great prophet who was able to calculate the exact moment when Hashem becomes angry. Yet the Kedusha of the Jewish home was so powerful that it was able to protect the Jewish people from his curses. This protection did not just come in the merit of the major details such as the laws of family life. It came from the smallest and seemingly insignificant details of Tznius, such as the direction of their tent doors.

The *Shelah hakadosh* writes that Bilam was a *gilgul* (reincarnation) of Lavan. When chasing after Yaakov, Lavan declared *הבנות בנותי והבנים בני* – the daughters and sons of Yaakov do not belong to the *avos* and

*imahos* (Patriarchs and Matriarchs) they belonged to him – to Lavan.

The world today tries to claim our sons and daughters as its own. Like Bilam, contemporary culture and materialism seeks to 'curse us', to erode our unique sense of holiness and to allure our youth away from the Torah way of life. In the desert, Bilam was outside of our homes looking in. Today, Bilam is on the inside as well.

Hashem gave us a powerful weapon with which to protect our families, both physically and spiritually – the Kedusha of the Jewish home and the laws of modesty. As we see from the parsha, the protection is greatest when the mitzvah is observed to the fullest. Overlooking details whilst keeping the general idea is like buying a safety seat that meets the safety regulations in its general construction, but not in the smaller parts and mechanisms. Obviously the details *are* important.

When our tents are good, when our homes are a bastion of modesty, purity, Torah and Kedusha, our families are protected from the influence of the outside world. No matter what the turbulence on the streets outside, the home remains a source of positive values and inspiration.

How do we make our homes 'good'? Not just by keeping out negative influences to protect the Kedusha, but by actively filling them with טוב - goodness;

*טעמו וראו כי טוב ה'* – taste and you will see that Hashem is good.

*כי לקח טוב נתתי לכם* (the Torah) – for I have given you a good portion

– and He saw the light that it was good.

As we start each day with *mah tovu*, let us stop and reflect on its message and take that extra step to ensure that our homes attest *mah tovu ohalecha Yaakov*; That they are filled and alive with the light of G-dliness, of Torah and of the *maor* of Torah – the teachings and ways of Chassidus, surrounded with the protective force of Kedusha and Tahara.

Through our efforts, may we merit the *mah tovu ohalecha* of the third Beis Hamikdash and the ultimate transformation of curse into blessing, with the imminent arrival of Moshiach Tzidkeinu.

~ Based in part on Likkutei Sichos volume 13



## Shiurim Schedule

### Hilchos Beis Habechirah

In accordance with the Rebbe's directive, the Kollel will be offering a series of shiurim and lectures, exploring the halachos and design of the Beis Hamikdash.

### Chassidus of the Churban

*Hidden Love and the Purpose of Concealment*

All women are invited to join a Chassidus shiur learning the text of a fascinating Chassidic Maamer.

The Maamer will be taught by Rabbi Johnson.

Thursdays 8:00-8:45pm

**June 27:** At the Herszberg's, 6 Goathlands Street

**July 4 & 11:** At the Gestetner's, 23 Denman Avenue

### Daily Siyumim & Hilchos Beis Habechirah Shiur

Daily siyumim will take place in the Shule after the 8:30pm Maariv minyan. Commencing Sunday night, Rosh Chodesh Av (July 7).

The Siyum will be followed by 15 minutes of learning Hilchos Beis Habechirah of the Rambam. Led by Rabbi Shlomo Barber

If you are able to make a siyum please contact Rabbi Sabbah.

To sponsor a siyum please contact Rabbi Johnson or email [kollel@yeshivahcentre.org](mailto:kollel@yeshivahcentre.org)

### Beis Hamikdash Evening

On Motzai Shabbos Chazon the Kollel will be hosting our annual community Beis Hamikdash evening for men and women.

Please reserve the date July 13th at 8:30pm. These visual presentations are of a very high quality. Stay tuned for details of topic and presenter.



**Q.** I've noticed that there are different minhogim of how the congregation responds to the Chazzan during Kaddish. When the Chazzan says שְׁמִיה דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא some communities respond אָמֵן whilst others say בְּרִיךְ הוּא. What's the reason for the difference?

**A:** In Kaddish we say the words וַיִּתְהַדָּר וַיִּתְעַלֶּה וַיִּתְהַלֵּל שְׁמִיה דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא ? לעילא מן כל ברכתא ושירתא

What do we say at this point of question? Five general opinions are found in the Poskim:

1. אָמֵן
2. בְּרִיךְ הוּא
3. בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְעִילָא
4. בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְעִילָא מִן כָּל בְּרִיתָא וְשִׁירָתָא...
5. Not to say anything.

The difference in custom is based on how one reads this line of Kaddish<sup>1</sup>.

If בְּרִיךְ הוּא is connected to the words that precede it, i.e. שְׁמִיה דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא, this would be the end of a phrase. Since this is the end of a phrase, a pause would then be necessary by saying אָמֵן. The continuation of Kaddish would mean that He is *higher than all blessings etc.*

If however בְּרִיךְ הוּא is rather connected to the words which follow it i.e. בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְעִילָא מִן כָּל בְּרִיתָא, then nothing should be said after בְּרִיךְ הוּא so as not to interrupt. The entire phrase would be a continuation meaning that the name of Hashem is *blessed higher than all blessings etc.*

The source of this argument is found in the Rishonim.

The Rambam in his Seder HaTefillos quotes Rav Saadya Gaon: *When the Chazzan says Yisborach the congregation responds אָמֵן. So too (should he respond אָמֵן) when he (the chazzan) says בְּרִיךְ הוּא and when he says אָמֵן.*

The Rambam clearly rules that we respond אָמֵן after the Chazzan says בְּרִיךְ הוּא

However the Or Zarua<sup>2</sup> as quoted in the Darkei Moshe<sup>3</sup> writes that one

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### Rabbi Osher Broh

should not interrupt at all between the words בְּרִיךְ הוּא and the continuation לעילא מן כל ברכתא ושירתא.

Rav Yosef Karo<sup>4</sup> in the שולחן ערוך rules like the Rambam, whereas the Ram"o (R' Moshe Isserles) in his glosses to the שולחן ערוך follows the Or Zarua that no interruption is made. (Note that he does not say that the congregations should respond בְּרִיךְ הוּא or anything else at this time).

The Magen Avraham, following the Ram"o that no interruption is made, writes that in order to remind the Chazzan that he should not pause between בְּרִיךְ הוּא and לעילא, the custom is that the congregation says the words בְּרִיךְ הוּא לעילא out loud.

The Taz (Turei Zahav) agrees with this on principle but says that there is a technical problem with saying בְּרִיךְ הוּא לעילא since it implies (ח"ו) that Hashem is Blessed only above - in heaven, and not down below. He therefore rules that one should also add the remainder of the phrase and say בְּרִיךְ הוּא לעילא מן כל ברכתא ושירתא<sup>5</sup>

So far we have a clear source in Poskim for the congregation to respond with:

- אָמֵן in order to separate between לעילא and בְּרִיךְ הוּא<sup>6</sup>
- **Saying nothing** – Not to separate between בְּרִיךְ הוּא and לעילא<sup>7</sup>
- **ברוך הוא לעילא** to remind the חזן not to separate between בְּרִיךְ הוּא and לעילא<sup>8</sup>
- **ברוך הוא לעילא מן כל ברכתא ושירתא** to remind the חזן not to separate between בְּרִיךְ הוּא and לעילא but without that Hashem is blessed only above.<sup>9</sup>

But what is the reason for the custom of responding only with the words בְּרִיךְ הוּא?

When saying only בְּרִיךְ הוּא one seems to be following neither the opinion, since he is not separating between אָמֵן and לעילא by responding בְּרִיךְ הוּא as required by the שולחן ערוך, but neither is he joining בְּרִיךְ הוּא with the continuation לעילא as the Ram"o rules.

The Mishna Berura writes that answering only בְּרִיךְ הוּא is the custom of our lands (Ashkenaz) as brought by the אלי' גליון שולחן in the name of the רבה ערוך. But what is the basis for it?

Two possible explanations are suggested.

ח' לקוטי מהרי"ח says that in truth this custom has no source at all. It developed because people were only saying בְּרִיךְ הוּא לעילא. Since this is problematic according to the Taz, it became shortened to just בְּרִיךְ הוּא.

סוֹפֵר suggests that this is a compromise between the views of the Rambam and the Or Zarua. One isn't saying אָמֵן which would be a full pause between בְּרִיךְ הוּא and לעילא but at the same time one is making somewhat of an affirmation to a previous statement by saying בְּרִיךְ הוּא with the Chazzan. Technically this is similar to saying אָמֵן which is the idea of affirmation.

Nowadays most Ashkezim will respond בְּרִיךְ הוּא following the custom as brought by the Mishna Berura and some Ashkenazim say בְּרִיךְ הוּא לעילא מן כל ברכתא ושירתא... following the opinion of the Taz.

Most Sefardim will respond אָמֵן following the ruling of the Rambam as brought by Rav Yosef Karo.

Those whose Nusach of davening is based on Kabbalah, Such as nusach Ha'Arizal will respond אָמֵן or at least they will not say בְּרִיךְ הוּא or anything else. The Ariza"l himself was extremely careful<sup>10</sup> to say אָמֵן in certain parts of קדיש and not to separate between דְּקוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא. He and many others hold that it is the Aramaic translation of הקדוש הקדוש and one dare not make a separation in the Name of Hashem.

It is interesting to note that the ערוך השולחן, who was and still is one of the most prominent of the Ashkenazi Poskim, writes that the Ashkenazi custom is to say only בְּרִיךְ הוּא. However he goes on to quote the opinion of the Rambam that one should answer אָמֵן, to which he adds וכן המנהג פשוט, and this is the plain custom.

Despite the differing customs of each community and nusach, our intentions are all the same, to declare Hashem's greatness and sanctify His Holy name.

<sup>1</sup> ערוך אדמו"ר הזקן סימן נ"ו סעיף ב' שולחן

<sup>2</sup> חלק א' סימן מ"ב

<sup>3</sup> סימן נ"ו

<sup>4</sup> סימן נ"ו סעיף ב' או"ח

<sup>5</sup> The מהרש"ה writes that this was also the intention of the מגן אברהם. He was only saying what part should be said out loud to remind the חזן the rest should be said quietly.

<sup>6</sup> ר' סעדי' גאון, רמב"ם, מחבר, סידור אדמו"ר הזקן

<sup>7</sup> רמ"א and אור זרוע Simple reading of

<sup>8</sup> מגן אברהם

<sup>9</sup> שולחן ערוך אדמו"ר הזקן סימן נ"ו סעיף ב' שולחן ערוך

<sup>10</sup> סף החיים או"ח נ"ו: כ"ט