

A LESSON FROM THE PARASHA

CHAZAL SAY THAT NO OTHER NAVI WILL EVER match the level of Moshe. Though this is true for Jews, the non-Jews were granted Bilam. He lived with a level of connection to Hashem and prophecy that rivaled Moshe's. In Aish HaTorah, Rav Noach Weinberg often related this Chazal.

Why did Hashem give this gift to the *goyim*? The *medrash* brings down a would-be interaction between Hashem and the *goyim* at the End of Days. The *goyim* will say, "You gave the Jews Moshe, but gave us no prophet. Had you given us a prophet, we too would have been great." But how was Bilam the answer to this complaint? He was a tremendously wicked person, as further described in the Talmud. To answer this, Rav Noach gave another piece of wisdom, which is applicable to every Jew.

The condition of Bilam's existence as a prophet for the *goyim* was that he must not become a Jew. The Torah does not relate Bilam's whole life story, but we get select moments. Bilam listens to Hashem, but only to do exactly what Hashem says, to the "t." As his desire to do wickedness waxes, Bilam presses Hashem to do more. Hashem tries to save Bilam from himself. This culminates in

Another successful Bechina with Rabbi Moshe Heinemann

the *malach HaRachamim* (angel of mercy) intervening to stop Bilam (Rashi 23:23).

The *malach* implores Bilam to change his ways, as if to say, "It's not in **your** best interest to try cursing the Jews." Bilam persists.


But we must also appreciate the difficulty of his predicament. The person Hashem sent to be Moshe's "equal" was aware of the supernal, transcendental nature of Hashem. He knew Hashem loved him, wanted everything for his good, and was only interested in his living a fulfilling life. Yet this person could not join Am Yisroel. He had to actively and constantly refuse this connection. This difficult condition led to Bilam becoming wicked. Yet with all this, Rav Noach would emphasize that we're still better off knowing the truth and not fulfilling it rather than being ignorant.

So why did Bilam become evil? We don't do everything we know, and we're not wicked!?

Rav Noach would then quote *Pirkei Avos*. When a person's wisdom outweighs his actions, his wisdom does not last. When a person's actions outweigh his wisdom, his wisdom will last. We have to actively forge



RABBI
ARYEH
FRIDONOFF

the relationship with Hashem, or our wisdom is worthless. If we try to fool Hashem by fighting what we know, that is the path Bilam. These are the times that we think we can best Hashem by doing something else. Maybe it's working extra hard to make more money. Maybe it's making excuses for not learning. Whatever it is, the times that we actively lie to ourselves and pretend that we're tricking Hashem, we are making ourselves closer to the concept of Bilam. When we put into action what we know, when our actions outweigh our wisdom, that pushes us to do more, and brings us closer to the ultimate purpose of our creation. 

THE RABBI WAS ASKED

ADAPTED BY RABBI DOVID TZVI MEISSNER
FROM *ME'AH SHE'ARIM*
BY RABBI YITZCHOK ZILBERSTEIN

One of the young men in a certain kollel would learn aloud when he wasn't with his study partner. This man was blessed with a loud, penetrating voice which would shatter the quieter environment of the rest of the room, disturbing the other young men who were (attempting) learning more quietly.

This man was very studious, not wasting a minute, and he felt that learning aloud was imperative for him to accomplish his highest quality learning. However, it did disturb the others who were learning.

Q Does the loud learner have the right to continue learning in this fashion since the study hall is a place meant for everyone's most conducive learning; or perhaps, since most of the people are disturbed by his learning, he, the minority, must learn more quietly?

A *Shulchan Aruch* (O.C. 101:2) rules that one should not raise his voice during

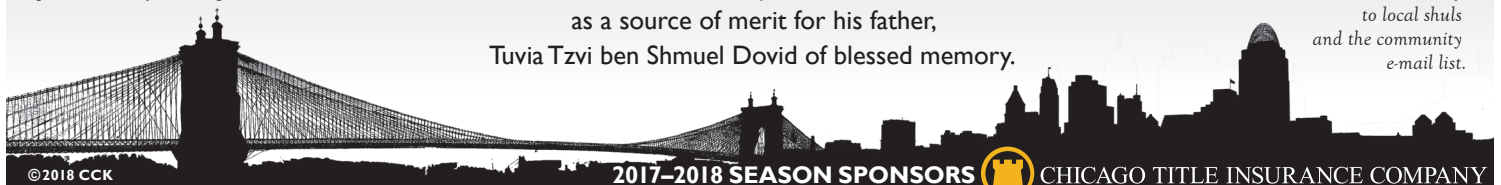
— CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE —>



Sponsorship & feedback:
parasha@cincynollel.org

Sponsored by
Alter Frydman
as a source of merit for his father,
Tuvia Tzvi ben Shmuel Dovid of blessed memory.

Cincinnati Torah
is distributed weekly
to local shuls
and the community
e-mail list.




A TIMELY HALACHA

CONTINUED

prayer (*Shemoneh Esrei*). If he can't concentrate while praying silently, he may raise his voice provided that he is praying alone. If, however, he is praying with the *tzibur*, this is forbidden, because he will disturb others. We see from here that one may not disturb others if he deviates from the norm.

A certain rabbi countered that we cannot gather proof from this law because, according to the letter of the law, *Shemoneh Esrei* must be prayed silently, and the exception to the rule made for the one who couldn't concentrate was only made in a situation when no others would be disturbed. However, there is no rule stating that one must learn quietly in a study hall, so we can't prove that one doesn't have the right to study aloud, even if it disturbs others.


Rav Chaim Kanievsky relates that there was a student who would learn aloud at night, disturbing some of the neighbor's sleep. The Chazon Ish said that the neighbors do not have the right to withhold him from his practice.

Our scenario, however, may be different because the others in the room are attempting to learn as well, and the sound disturbs the learning. 

A PARASHA Q 4 U

RABBI DOVID SPETNER

Where in the parsha do we see that the popular saying, "Two's company, three's a crowd" does not apply to an important person?

Bring this question to the Shabbos table and see who knows the answer! 


At the Kollel

DAILY

WEEKLY



MORE




Twice a Week


 **Basar b'Chalav Chabura**
Rabbi Moshe Dovid Zeffren
Sunday and Monday, 8–9 PM




  **Sotah Daf-a-Week**
Rabbi Chaim Heinemann.....
Sunday and Wednesday, 9–9:45 PM


Plus...

  **Kollel Women's Learning**
• Wednesday nights at the Kollel (alternating weeks, speakers vary)
• Shabbos afternoon classes (speakers and locations vary)

   **Yarchei Kallahs and Seasonal Y'mei Iyyun**
featuring guest speakers and our famous five-star brunch

   **Saturday Night Learning (SNL)**
and light *Melave Malka* monthly in the winter (locations vary)

   **Sunday Brunch-n-Learn**
Rabbi Chaim Heinemann.....
twice a month (locations vary)

 **Boys' Learning Club**
Sundays, 9:45 AM or 8:15 PM

 *Homemade refreshments served*


KEY:  Beginners  Intermediate  Advanced  for men and women

Chavrusos are available for private and group learning—
speak to Rabbi Chaim Heinemann! weekdays noon–1 PM • Sun.–Thurs. 8–9:45 PM

DAVENING TIMES CAN BE FOUND AT CINCYKOLLEL.ORG/MINYAN-SCHEDULE/


GREAT ACTS OF ORDINARY PEOPLE

MR. WALLERSTEIN OWNED A PLASTIC BAG SUPPLY company in New York, where he supplied plastic bags to retail stores. His largest customer was Milton Petrie, the owner of Petrie stores, of which there were over a thousand stores. One day, Mr. Petrie invited Mr. Wallerstein to a dinner meeting together with Mrs. Wallerstein, the company secretary. As the meeting went on and Mr. Wallerstein discussed business strategy, he noted the setting sun and knew it was time to daven mincha. Excusing himself from the table and signaling to his

wife that he had to daven, he left the restaurant and walked to a nearby shul. Mr. Petrie could not contain his surprise when Mr. Wallerstein returned twenty-five minutes later. "Where could you have gone for so long in the middle of our business meeting?" "I know you are the chairman of a company worth millions of dollars, Mr. Petrie. But I had an appointment to speak with G-d, the Chairman of the world, which as a religious Jew I am obligated to keep." Mr. Petrie was moved by the religious ideals of Mr. Wallerstein and vowed, "You will always have my business! I have never met a Jew whose relationship with the Chairman of the world means so much." 

TIDBITS OF CINCINNATI JEWISH HISTORY


RABBI MOSHE TZVI CRYSTAL

On the 17th of Tamuz, 5585 (1825), the officers of the Bene Israel congregation drafted a letter to the community of Charleston, South Carolina, appealing for funds towards the construction of a building for their congregation. Established in the early 1700s, the Charleston community was then the largest in America, with 700 people. Approximately 5,000 Jews lived in the United States at the time. The Bene Israel congregation contended that the establishment of a synagogue would prevent intermarriage because it would keep Jews on the western frontier closer to their religion. The congregation also solicited and received donations from communities in New York City, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New Orleans, and even from as far away as Barbados. The building, located at Sixth and Broadway, was not completed until 1836. Interestingly, within one hundred years, the Jewish population of Cincinnati would become approximately 13 times bigger than that of Charleston. 

SOURCES: "CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA." GOLDRING/WOLDENBERG INSTITUTE OF SOUTHERN JEWISH LIFE. ACCESSED 27 JUNE, 2018 FROM [HTTP://WWW.ISJL.ORG/SOUTH-CAROLINA-CHARLESTON-ENCYCLOPEDIA.HTML](http://WWW.ISJL.ORG/SOUTH-CAROLINA-CHARLESTON-ENCYCLOPEDIA.HTML). JONAS, JOSEPH. LETTER TO THE ELDERS OF THE JEWISH CONGREGATION AT CHARLESTON. 3 JULY, 1825. AMERICAN JEWISH ARCHIVES. VITAL STATISTICS: JEWISH POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES, BY STATE. ACCESSED 27 JUNE, 2018 FROM JEWISHVIRTUALLIBRARY.ORG.

Cincinnati Community Kollel

2241 Losantiville Avenue, Cincinnati OH 45237 • 513-631-1118 • kollel@shul.net • cincykollel.org

Please remember the Kollel with a gift in your will, trust, retirement account, or life insurance policy. 

CREATE YOUR JEWISH
LEGACY