

Sefer Bamidbar

THE RAHMANI FAMILY EDITION

FOR THE HATZLACHA, HEALTH, AND HAPPINESS
OF OUR FAMILY AND ALL KLAL YISROEL

פרשת בלק

WITH

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BASED ON HIS BOOKS, TAPES & WRITINGS OF TALMIDIM

A Nation Apart

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Part I. World of Separation

The Gentile Prophet

The story of Bilaam and his prophecy about the Am Yisroel is an episode unlike anything else in the entire Torah. All of a sudden a gentile comes into the picture and he's speaking words that take up a big space in the *chumash*. And his words are all Torah! It was *Shechinah medaberes mitoch grono shel Bilaam* – the words spoken by Bilaam are the words of Hashem.

Now to understand how important were Bilaam's words, we should remember what the gemara (Brachos 12b) says: "*Bikshu likvoa parshas Balak b'krias shema* – our sages wanted to make it obligatory to

read the words that Bilaam said, every day at the time of *kriyas Shema*.

Just like we say everyday "Shema Yisroel Hashem Elokeinu, Hashem Echad," they wanted to include the *parsha* of Bilaam. Why didn't they do it? Only because of *tircha d'tzibura*. It would be too burdensome on the people to recite so much. It takes too much time; you have to go home to eat breakfast and catch the train to work. That's the only reason the sages didn't make it obligatory – otherwise we would be saying a good portion of this week's *parsha* every day by Shacharis.

Behold A People

Now, if it's so important that it deserves to be said every day, we should put our mind to this subject of the gentile prophet who came into the Torah and opened his mouth to speak at length about the greatness of the Am Yisroel.

Now, what's the first thing Bilaam said? He opened his mouth and out came the words of Hashem: *הֵן עַם לְבָדָד יֹשֶׁבֵן* – *Behold a people that dwells alone*, *וּבְגוֹיִם לֹא יִתְחַשָּׁב* – *and they're not counted among the nations*.

He's saying two things here. *Behold they are a people who must dwell alone* – it means that as much as possible we have no connection with the nations of the world. We quarantine ourselves from all the nations, physically and intellectually, and we dwell alone in this world.

And why is that? Because *u'vagoyim lo yischashav* – we're not counted among the nations. That's the second point. If you're walking with your friend in a field and there's grass growing, do you say, "I'm here with Chaim and also the grass"? No! Grass is grass. That's what *lo yischashav* means. When you walk

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among the *goyim* on the street – you’re walking on 5th Avenue at 5:00 when all the office buildings are emptying out; there are thousands of people walking on the street – you’re the only one that’s walking there. All the rest are *kechatzir hasadeh*, like grass growing in the fields (Yeshayah 40:6).

A Universe of Difference

Now if you’re a real American and you’re saturated with ideas of democracy and equality and pluralism, so you think, “Well, we have to recognize that all human beings are equally important. Certainly we’re a good nation, but you cannot downplay the other people. It’s selfish and chauvinistic.” If that’s your reaction, it means you don’t begin to know the ABC’s of Judaism!

Of course, *goyim* shouldn’t hear this. “Ethnocentricity”, they’ll call it. What can we do, however? We can’t go against the Torah. Of course, we’re not going to take out ads and publicize it in the gentile newspapers, but it’s in the Bible anyhow; it’s in the *chumash!* And it’s there because Hakodosh Boruch Hu wants us to know this always; the same way you know Shema Yisroel Hashem Elokeinu Hashem Echad, we also know *u’vagoyim lo yischashav*, that we’re not counted among the nations.

Now I know it’s not easy because you might think that outside other people look like you; in Bensonhurst people look like you. In Germany, people look like you. But don’t make any mistake – you have to look with Torah eyes and not be fooled by superficialities. You know, if you go to the zoo you’ll see behind the glass, in the monkey cages, they look something like you too. The gorilla can sit there on his rock and he’s looking at you. An interesting little face. Almost like a human face. Don’t make any mistake. A monkey is not a human being! There’s a universe of difference between them.

And so, just as there is a great difference between a monkey and a man although they look alike, so between all the nations of the world and Am Yisroel, there’s a world of difference! And I don’t care how much people will try to negate this; they are

accustomed to modern ideology but we’re talking Torah now and in Torah the comparison between Am Yisroel and the *umos ha’olam* is not less than the comparison between a gentile and the monkey behind the bars. The gentile is a world apart from the monkey. But the Jew is a world apart from him! That’s what it means *u’vagoyim lo yischashav*.

Like Night and Day

The truth is that what we’re saying here, you say it yourself every week: **הַמְבַדֵּיל בֵּין אֹר לְחֹשֶׁךְ** – *The One who separates between light and darkness*, **בֵּין יִשְׂרָאֵל לְעַמִּים** – *He also separates between Yisroel and the nations*. It means, the difference is like night and day.

Now pay attention to the parallelism. Light, daytime is one thing. Nighttime is something else. You can’t compare them – they’re polar opposites. Daytime, the sun is shining; you can see everything. Nighttime is dark, it’s black. Yisroel and the *amim* are just as far apart as nighttime and daytime.

An Italian, let’s say he’s a decent Italian – not a criminal like our Governor but even a good moral Italian – you have to know that he looks like you, but really there’s a very great difference between an Italian and *lehavdil*, a Jew. A tremendous difference! A world of difference!

Nature’s Secrets

Now, in order to impress upon us this fundamental teaching of *havdalah*, Hakodosh Boruch Hu implanted into His *briyah* this principle. It’s an overwhelming fact of creation, a thread that runs through everything.

When we learn *chumash*, in the very first chapter of *Bereishis*, we’re confronted immediately with a spectacular phenomenon. **עֵץ פְּרִי עֵשָׂה פְּרִי לְמִינוֹ** (*Bereishis* 1:11), “Trees that produce *according to its kind*”.

We’re in a hurry – it was just Simchas Torah and we didn’t even have time to look over the *sedrah* properly and the *ba’al koreh* is rushing through the *sedrah* quickly. It’s a pity we miss that part. *Lemino!*

Again and again that word is repeated. Ten times! תּוֹצֵא הָאָרֶץ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה לְמִינָהּ, according to its species (*ibid.* 1:24). Over and over it is repeated in that *parsha*; every animal, every plant, *lemineihu* – according to its own classification. That's the will of Hashem, that there should be clear demarcations in the *briyah*.

Ants and Rats

Anyone who takes a little bit of time to study the world around him will be able to tell you that among the most notable and pervasive phenomena in creation is the segregation of the species. The *yad Hashem* has put an instinct into every kind of living creature – whether it's insects or birds or mammals or reptiles or fish – that they feel an aloofness from other species; they detest one another. And not only will they not propagate from a different kind but they won't even attempt to do so; they don't evince even an interest in the other kind. In general a male of one species will ignore a female of another species, unless of course he considers her a candidate for breakfast.

Not only will different species not mate with each other but even two kinds of one species won't be interested in a *shidduch*. Here you have two kinds of ants; they won't propagate from each other. Hakodosh Boruch Hu put into their makeup certain instincts and certain chemical reactions that make them distasteful to each other. From their glands they give forth certain chemicals, pheromones, that to their own kind smell sweet but to another kind of ant are foul and nauseating. It's a remarkable thing. The same chemical is attractive to its own kind and it's repulsive to the other kind.

Here you have two rat species; in one, the female has three teats and in another she has four teats – but they're both rats. And now there's a male Romeo rat of the three teat variety and he's cruising around in the sewer looking for romance and he meets up with a female, only that she has four teats. It doesn't even enter his mind to look twice! He has such instincts implanted in him that he turns away in disgust. He is so constructed by the Borei that he has no interest at all!

Wonders of The Designer

And it's that way all across creation. From the birds in the mountains to lizards in the swamp. Wherever you look, you see no exception to this. Even fish! There are trillions of fish wandering in the depths of the dark sea – some of them dwell near the bottom of the abyss where it's always dark – and still they never make any errors. They fertilize only the eggs of their own kind.

Now, let us not be so blinded by habit that we overlook this miracle. If it was an accident that happened during the time of development as the academicians claim, then an accident could happen maybe once. The truth is that it would be a strain on our credulity to believe that it happened even once. That requires so many adjustments in the nerves, in the secretions, and in the instincts that it is absolutely ludicrous to say it could happen by accident. To say that it happened in ten cases by accident is more than ludicrous – it's insanity. And to say that it happened in every single species in the universe is just gibberish. It's plain foolishness for anybody to think that such a thing is not an open demonstration of design by the Great Designer.

And so we see clearly that the general plan of Hashem in creation is the phenomenon of *havdalah*, separation. He gives the different species an instinctive drive to keep separate. And we shouldn't disdain that plan of Hashem. When we see how Hashem maintains the distinction between those whom He wishes to keep separate we have to say *mah rabu ma'asecha Hashem meod amku machshevosecha* – How deep are Your plans Hashem.

Science of Race

But we'll take it a step further now – we'll see how deep this plan really is. Because we see that this principle of separation applies to human beings too. It's an error to think that some people are black by accident. I'm not going to be prejudiced but I'm not going to be a liberal either. We'll just look at it scientifically *al pi haemes*. When people were made black, it's as clear as day that the purpose was to

segregate the blacks that they shouldn't marry with people of other races. This has nothing to do with one race being better than another – I'm not talking about that at all. But it's clear as day that Hakodosh Boruch Hu is favorable to *havdalah*. He has demonstrated that clearly in His creations.

Now, if you didn't know about Hakodosh Boruch Hu then everything is an accident but when we study the wonders whereby Hakodosh Boruch Hu separates all the species of nature, we can understand quite clearly that He is intending to separate the races of mankind. After the races of man were differentiated, blacks forever beget black progeny, the yellow races invariably have yellow offspring, and even the subdivisions such as the Mongolians and Indians continue to maintain their particular characteristics forever. *Lemineihu* – according to its kind.

Hashem implanted it in nature – once something is a separate classification it's inherent in the *briyah* to remain aloof and to maintain the separation. And that means that the *havdalah bein Yisroel la'amim*, the lesson of *am levadad yishkon* that Bilaam taught us in this week's *parsha*, is part of the plan of creation and it is maintained forever by Hakodosh Boruch Hu.

Part II. Nation of Separation

Studying History

Now, once we have established Hakodosh Boruch Hu's desire for *havdalah* wherever we look in the *briyah*, we can take it a step further and see that same hand of Hashem in history too. Hakodosh Boruch Hu has intervened throughout history to ensure that His people remained the *am levadad yishkon u'vagoyim lo yischashav*.

And we're obligated to study that – not only in order to appreciate what Hakodosh Boruch Hu has done for His people in the past, but also because we get an insight into what He wants from us in the future.

We'll start from the very beginning of our nation because Avraham Avinu was the father of our people and in his life we find a remarkable case of this system of Hashem.

Ur Kasdim

Everybody knows that Avraham Avinu was born in Ur Kasdim. What happened? הוֹצֵאתִיךָ מֵאוּר כַּשְׁדִּים – “I took you out of Ur Kasdim” (Bereishis 15:7). Now for the time being forget about any hidden meanings – we're not talking now about the furnace of fire into which he was cast. That's true also, but we're talking now about *peshuto shel mikra*. “I took you out of Ur Kasdim,” means, “Avraham, you should know what I did for you. I took you out of your neighborhood, away from the children with whom you played when you were a little boy. I separated you from the streets where you used to roam because I have big plans for you.” When Avraham left his hometown, that was one of the greatest events in the history of the world.

Don't think it was an accident, a quirk of history! Hakodosh Boruch Hu gave him an order: “Get going!” and Avraham was forced to leave. “I took you out of Ur Kasdim,” Hashem said. He didn't wait for Avraham to run away; He put His plan into place and sent Avraham packing! It's too dangerous to leave something like that to chance. If you want to produce an Avraham, a great man who is going to be the father of the nation that dwells alone, then you must make sure that he should be *levadad yishkon* and quarantined against any wrong influence.

Leaving Terach

Now, when Avraham came to Charan, he was sojourner in a foreign land; he and his family were total strangers in Charan. It was a great accomplishment to be alone and Avraham got busy. אֶת הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר עָשׂוּ בְּהָרָךְ (Bereishis 12:5). Avraham made great achievements at that time – *Avraham megayer es ha'anashim v'Sarah megayeres es hanashim* (Rashi *ad loc.*). The Rambam (Avodas Kochavim 1:3) says that thousands of students gathered around Avraham Avinu.

But it wasn't enough. Because here in Charan an encumbrance still remained – the environment of his immediate family. And so Hakodosh Boruch Hu told him to keep on going. *Lech lecha*, it's time to move on.

And something remarkable happened now. You can call it a *nes*. It was a hidden *nes*, but it was the open hand of Hashem and we should study it. What happened? When Hashem told Avraham to go to forsake Charan and head to *Eretz Canaan*, his father didn't go along with him! Terach remained behind. **וַיָּמָת תְּרַח בְּהָרָר**. Years later when he died, he was still in Charan (Bereishis 11:32).

Now, that was a very queer thing. Actually, it should have been impossible. Because Avraham couldn't tell his father, "Stay here, don't go with me." After all, his father was the one who took everybody out of Ur Kasdim in the first place (*ibid.* 11:31) **וַיִּקַּח תְּרַח** **אֶת אַבְרָם בְּנוֹ**. Terach was the initiator. And you have to remember that when they left Ur Kasdim, Terach had already planned to go to Canaan. It says that openly (*ibid.*). **וַיֵּצְאוּ לְלֶכֶת אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן**. Terach had set out originally to go to Eretz Canaan.

Developing Arthritis

And so if Terach's plan had been to go to Eretz Canaan, only that he stopped off in Charan, so when Hakodosh Boruch Hu commanded Avraham to go to Canaan, why shouldn't Terach have continued too? It was his original plan after all! And you can be sure that Terach was a loyal disciple of his son. There's no question that if Avraham was *migayeir geirim*, if he was teaching *Elokus* and belief in Hashem to others, so he taught his father too.

We should have asked this *kasha* ourselves. Why didn't Terach come along with his son to the land of Canaan? How many sons like Avraham did Terach have anyhow? If a man has a great son so surely he is proud of him! And when the son is commanded by a vision from Hashem to go to Eretz Canaan, so Terach should have said, "My son, that was my first plan anyhow. I'm going with you." But no, he didn't go! It's a remarkable instance here. Terach and the family didn't want to budge.

Now why Terach couldn't go, I wouldn't be able to tell you. Maybe Hakodosh Boruch Hu gave him arthritis. Maybe he had good swimming pools and hot baths in Charan. I cannot tell you exactly why he didn't go, but he didn't go! And it was the *yad Hashem*. A remarkable thing! And don't think I'm manufacturing ideas. It's open *pessukim*.

Developing Perfection

So we begin to see a plan here that Hakodosh Boruch Hu is peeling off others from Avraham in order to create the nation that dwells alone. Avraham could never fulfill his destiny if he had his father with him. Now that may seem hardhearted to many people. After all, it's his father. But what won't Hashem do to create the perfect people?!

And if Avraham's family had come along with him from Charan to Eretz Canaan, he would never have been able to become the father of the Jewish nation. To be among others would have been an obstacle, a barrier too high to climb over, and Avraham would never have developed the perfection required to be the progenitor of the Am Hashem. We wouldn't even know about the name Avraham. I'm sure he would have remained great but without isolation he couldn't have created the isolated nation and his name would be a name that went lost in history.

Losing Lot

There was one of Avraham's family that did go along and that was Lot. Lot was a loyal disciple, a loyal *talmid*. Don't think Lot was a nobody. Lot learned well from his uncle Avraham; he learned very well. Where do you think Lot learned *mesiras nefesh* for *hachnasas orchim*? You remember when Lot was in Sedom and visitors came – and in Sedom it was forbidden to entertain visitors – but Lot was so loyal to Avraham's teachings that he went out in the street publicly and he welcomed the visitors in the street at a danger to his life. So you might say, such a *talmid*, what's so bad if his nephew would come along? Would a loyal nephew impede Avraham from his career of *levadad yishkon*?

And the answer is yes. *Levadad* means *levadad*! And so Hakodosh Boruch Hu used a strategy. He made Avraham and Lot become very wealthy; they had a big herds of cattle and flocks of sheep and soon Lot felt he was being crowded by Avraham; he wanted more space for his livestock to develop. And there began to develop some friction between the shepherds of Avraham and the shepherds of Lot. You must know that Hakodosh Boruch Hu was the One who was pulling the strings from behind the curtains. He's the One who put into the shepherds' heads to disobey Avraham's orders. Until finally Avraham proposed, הַפָּרֶד נָא מֵעַלִּי – *Why don't we separate from each other?*

Unnatural Separation

And now again a *neis* happened. Lot knew who his uncle was. He was a loyal *talmid* who recognized the greatness of his rebbe. And so Lot should have said, "Separate? Never! I'll fire all my shepherds and give up all of my livestock if they are going to be a cause for dissension. I don't want anything except to be with you." But that's not what he said. A miracle took place and Lot accepted the offer to separate.

Now we take it as a matter of course. An uncle and his nephew had some dissension and they separated. They were partners in a business for many years and finally they broke up – it's quite natural.

Oh no, it's not natural at all. It was *very* unnatural, *very* unusual for Lot to leave Avraham Avinu. So why did Lot agree to separate from his rebbe? What caused him to accept the offer of *hipared na mei'alai*? It was the *yad Hashem*! There was a plan here! Hakodosh Boruch Hu was building the future of the Am Yisroel, of the *hen am levadad yishkon*, a nation that must dwell alone. And Avraham could never become what he did had he been in close contact with Lot. In order to become great, to become the father of the Am Yisroel, Avraham had to fulfill *levadad yishkon* on the greatest level possible.

No Outsiders

Another interesting thing. I say interesting but it's more than interesting. It's the hand of Hashem. What is it? Avraham had no daughters. Did you ever think about that? You think that was an accident?

For Avraham, a daughter would be an encumbrance because he would have to take a son-in-law. You can't take your own son and marry him to your daughter; Avraham would have to bring in somebody from outside, and Hakodosh Boruch Hu didn't want anybody from the outside. Avraham's nation had to be rescued from any kind of outside influence. It's a remarkable thing to see that, to see how Hakodosh Boruch Hu's plan was *levadad*! It's a very important point that shouldn't be overlooked.

And that's the plan of Hashem forever; it's a plan that goes like a golden thread throughout our history. In order to preserve the integrity of Avraham's ideals, Hakodosh Boruch Hu created the system of *badad*, to be alone.

Forty Years of Isolation

When we start studying our history, we see that this principle is repeated again and again. Yishmael was sent away. The *bnei hapilagshim* were peeled off from our family too. Hashem also sent Eisav away. And when we went down to Mitzrayim, Yosef was sent ahead to prepare for us, so that we should be able to live separately from the Mitzrim. There was a constant supervision by Hakodosh Boruch Hu over our people and this detail of *am levadad* was most important of all.

And that's why when we came out from Egypt into the *midbar*, Hakodosh Boruch Hu kept us isolated for forty years in the wilderness! Forty years of no contact with any nation! This was Hashem's intention from the very beginning, like it says: "And I led you forty years in the Wilderness... in order that you should know that I am Hashem your G-d" (Dvarim 29:4-5). It was a forty year *kollel* where they learned Torah and Daas Hashem, unencumbered by anything

else. And that's one of the reasons it was the choicest of all the periods in our subsequent history!

And that's what Bilaam saw. It was the especial plan of Hashem coming to fruition and when he saw our people he was so excited! He was jealous of us! **הֵן עַם לְבָרָד יִשְׁכֵן** – *It's the holy nation that dwells alone!* That's Hashem's plan! **וְגֵוִים לֹא יִתְחַשְׁבוּ** – *and they're not counted among the nations.*

A Nation Alone

And our nation didn't have to hear Bilaam's words to know that's how it was meant to be. They lived *am levadad yishkon*. They breathed it. It was in their bones because they studied the ways of Hashem. And so all of these things became models for them; examples for how to live their national and private lives.

And that's why afterwards, when they came into Eretz Canaan, no Jew ever moved out of the country. It's a remarkable thing. In the years from Yehoshua when they came into the land, down to the times of Chizkiya HaMelech, all the Bnei Yisroel dwelt only in Eretz Yisroel. Nobody dwelled outside.

And no gentiles lived in Eretz Yisroel. When Dovid HaMelech came, no gentiles dwelt at all in Eretz Yisroel unless in the role of slaves. And slaves had to be circumcised. They had to eat kosher and keep Shabbos. And so everybody was a *shoimer Torah* in Eretz Yisroel. Listen to what I'm telling you. That's the truth! There was nobody in Eretz Yisroel except those who were loyal to the Torah. And that was the great fulfillment of what Bilaam said, that we're a nation that dwells alone.

Part III. Forced Separation

Erecting The Ghetto Walls

Of course, once the Am Yisroel went into *golus*, so now something else was required – if we're scattered among the nations so even more effort is needed to resist the influence of the nations around

us. And so the Architect of our Nation's history invented a new contrivance to make sure we should remain alone and not be counted among the nations.

What did He do? He brought Paul and He brought Mohammed. These two arose and they made on their own, big strong beautiful fences to separate the Jewish nation from the rest of the world.

As soon as Christianity began, we were singled out as the nation that was guilty of the death of their founder. And from then on, the nations put us into ghettos and made decrees against us. Generation after generation, our forefathers lived in their ghettos. They ventured out to do business with the *goyim* but when they came back, the ghetto gate was locked at night. And those locked gates were a salvation for us. We were sheltered away from the gentiles and we were able to become great.

Mohammed too. When he came along, and when Umar came after him, they made many decrees against the Jews. Umar was a great benefactor for us – he put us into ghettos all over in the Oriental lands of the Near East. *Boruch Hashem!* That was the plan of Hashem!

Of course we're not going to say *yasher koach* to the *goyim* for all their decrees against us. They did it not to help us and in the next world they're getting what they deserve. But Hakodosh Boruch Hu is the One who deserves that *yasher koach* from us, because it was His guiding hand pulling the strings from behind the curtain.

Anti Semitic Walls

And that brings us to the important subject of anti-semitism. It's a big question that people ask me all the time. Why is there antisemitism? No matter what, it's always there; sometimes it's more undercover, sometimes less, but it's always bubbling under the surface.

We have to know that there is a fundamental reason why it's happening. If you want a reason for antisemitism don't listen to what the writers tell you. The truth is that it's part of the system of Hashem,

the system that was set into place in the lifetime of Avraham Avinu. Like Terach getting arthritis and Lot running away, like the fact that Avraham had no daughters, Hashem's guiding hand is a hand of *havdalah*, of keeping His chosen nation separate.

Purposeful Hatred

It's like the Gemara says in Kiddushin (72b): "*Im raisa shte mishpachos – If you find a that two families are constantly fighting with each other you have to know that – shemetz psul yesh b'achas meihem – something is wrong with one of the families.* Something is wrong with their lineage, their pedigree, and Hakodosh Boruch Hu doesn't want the good family to be adulterated by intermarriage with the inferior family.

So what do we learn from this? That hatred is sent by Hakodosh Boruch Hu for a purpose. And the function is to cause a wall to be erected where there is danger of overstepping the boundary.

Reminded by The Bum

So let's say tomorrow morning you're walking through the streets and you're in the best of moods; it's a spring day, you're happy, it's Friday too so you have a big paycheck now in your back pocket or in your wallet. And you're thinking about how lucky you are that you live in America! "We hold these truths to be self evident that all men are created equal!" The Constitution says so *bifeirush* – equal rights for everyone! And the *goyim*? You think they're nice people. And it's true; the gentiles can be very nice people. Everything is going well and you have kind intentions to everybody.

But Hashem has other plans. And so as you walk down the street, a bum is sitting on the corner and he calls out, "Jew-boy!" Or he throws a banana peel at you. Suddenly your daydream is not so sweet anymore.

You have to stop and think about that. Don't stop there – he might throw a glass bottle at you if you wait there too long – but when you turn the corner, after you walked a few blocks, you can stop and think:

"What's that for? What's the purpose of that?" The purpose is to prevent you from falling in love with him. You might like him; he looks human. He looks like your own cousin maybe. And therefore Hakodosh Boruch Hu said, let him come and remind you about what I told by means of Bilaam, that you're not one of the nations, that "you are the nation that dwells in solitude and you're not counted among the nations."

We don't mix with them. We have nothing to do with them. And their customs are not our customs. If they have televisions we don't; if they go to dances we don't; if they read filthy books and magazines we don't. We have no connection with the *Umos Ha'olam* and that's the first step of becoming great and achieving our greatest potential as Hashem's chosen people.

Anti Semitism and Persecution

Now suppose, we don't listen. Suppose we hear the words of Bilaam and we don't listen to them. Suppose we read the history of Avraham but we don't see the *yad Hashem*. Suppose we ignore the *yad Hashem* of anti-semitism and forget our function of *am levadad yishkon* and we mingle among the nations and learn from their ways. That's when the anti-semitism bubbles over and the persecution begins. Whenever you're about to fall in love with the people of the land you have to know something's going to happen. It won't be a banana peel; this time you're going to get a punch in the nose or a stone in the head. At the very least, they'll break your window.

And that's because there's no such thing as a good goy and there's no such thing as a bad goy. It's Hakodosh Boruch Hu who is good or *chalilah* bad. And it depends on us – if we keep away from them, they'll all be good. It'll bubble under the surface as a wall to keep us separate but it won't bubble over. But if we try to mingle them, then the best ones will become murderers.

Beginnings of The Holocaust

Like they did in Germany. Germany was a decent country and Hakodosh Boruch Hu could have made it

remain that way forever. But the Jews didn't let it be. If you had been in Germany before Hitler, you would have seen that the Jews were headed pell-mell towards self destruction; they were getting lost like nobody's business.

So Hakodosh Boruch Hu started building the wall a little higher. He caused Hitler to organize a most effective system. Not the death camps. Not the crematorium. It was a big card index, a huge department of the German state to ferret out Jews who had tried to assimilate into the gentile world. Even if you were only part Jew, you were discovered by this card index system that traced back your lineage generations back. You were listed who you are, your name and address, who your parents and grandparents on both sides were and your wife's parents and grandparents.

And any Jew who was named Hans – Hans is one of the attempts to hide among the gentiles – received a new name now on all his papers; he was Israel Hans. Let's say your family name was Wertful. So Hans Wertful might pass as a good gentile. But Israel Hans Wertful – that's already poor camouflage.

Or a German Jewish woman who chose the name Gretel, a nice German name. But Hitler gave her a new name, Sara Gretel. Oh how uncomfortable that is! Wherever she went, she had to show an identity card. And so the police said, "Sara Gretel. What are you doing riding on the subway? Jews can't ride on the subway. Jews have to walk. Sara Gretel, you're paying a telephone bill? Jews have no right to telephones."

A Divine Madness

And so the Jews in Germany and in other countries should have seen that a wall is being erected. "Why are they hating us?" Why are they legislating in such ways that are unthinkable for a modern democratic enlightened nation?"

It made no sense at all! And so they should have started thinking, "Maybe Hashem wants us to come back to the Torah principle of *uvagoyim lo yischashav*?"

That's what they should have thought but they didn't. They didn't listen to the rabbonim who tried to warn them because they were too in love with Germany.

Ah, they loved Germany so much! I was in Germany in 1938. I had to go to Memel and as I was on the train in Germany, I had to lift up a suitcase of mine, a valise, onto the rack in the train. There was a well dressed tall, polite German and he came over to me and offered to pick up my valise and put it on the rack for me. I was sold to the German nation. They were so nice, so clean. They smelled good and they shaved every day. They had spotless kitchens. You walk through a German town, and the streets were clean; everything was orderly, everything was done precisely, everything was punctual. It was no wonder that the German Jews fell in love with the Germans.

That's why Hitler came. To teach us that we are not citizens of the world, that *u'bagoyim lo yischashav*. We are the one nation in the world and as soon as we learn that great principle, the better off we'll be.

Holocaust Studies

Unfortunately, it's not being studied. The lesson is being confused by Holocaust specialists and Holocaust seminars and conventions and books on the Holocaust. And all of them are garbage! All of them are full of lies! They're covering the truth up because these people who are holding the Holocaust sessions are the very ones who could cause a Holocaust! They're atheists themselves!

Here, imagine a round-table discussion, a Holocaust session. In the YIVO, the Jewish Yiddisher Visnshaftlekher Institute, they're sitting without yarmulkes, a bunch of old bald heads – most of them don't even eat kosher – and they're studying the causes of the Holocaust. Now what do you expect they'll come up with? So naturally, these people are blind and deaf and dumb. For them, *only* a Hitler could succeed.

The Glorious End

But we don't want to be deaf and dumb. Oh no, we want to learn the easier way, by studying what

Bilaam said about us: הָן עַם לְבָדָד יִשְׁכֵּן - It's a nation that dwells apart, וּבְגוֹיִם לֹא יִתְחַשְׁבּוּ - and we're not counted among the nations. Our entire success is the policy of aloofness - that has been the policy from the beginning and it's going to continue until the end of time.

When the time will come; *bayom hahu yehiyeh Hashem echad ushemo echad*, don't think it will be a union of all the nations. By no means! *Ein mekablīm geirim liyemos haMoshiach*, we won't accept any converts then. It will be a separate nation. We will be the aristocrats. *Atem kohanei Hashem tikra*, you'll be called the priests of Hashem. *Mamleches kohanim*, the holy nation! And as much as they will desire, the nations of the world won't be able to join us then. And that means that from the beginning of our history down to its glorious culmination, the principle is always maintained. הָן עַם לְבָדָד יִשְׁכֵּן, behold we are a nation that dwells alone!

Have A Wonderful Shabbos

LET'S GET PRACTICAL

Making Sense of Anti-Semitism

This week I will set aside thirty seconds every day to think about this fundamental principle of "a nation that dwells alone" and think about one way that I can make it more of a practical ideal in my life, by separating from the gentile culture that surrounds me.

Also, from now on, whenever I hear about even the most subtle incident of anti-semitism anywhere in the world I will recognize it for what it is - the Hand of Hashem reminding us about this importance of this great principle for our nation's survival and perfection.

This week's booklet is based on tapes:

208 - The Opposition to The Truth | 309 - Preface to Pesach IX | 534 - Nation that Dwells Alone | 546 - I Set You Apart | 922 - Prophecy of Bilaam

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

שאל אביך ויגידך זקניך ויאמרו לך

Q:

Should I be saying Tikkun Chatzos during this time of the year - the Three Weeks?

A:

Tikun Chatzos is a good thing, but don't just *daven it uhp*. I would say that it's a good idea to just sit down on the floor before you go to sleep - even for a minute. Do it after your wife falls asleep - or after your husband falls asleep - so that they won't think you've gone crazy. But sit on the floor in *aveilus* for the *Churban Beis Ha'mikdash*, mourning for the destruction, for a full minute and then go to sleep.

A minute is also good enough. Don't think it's a small thing. When I was a boy I used to say *tikun chatzos*. But now - even better - sit on the floor for a moment and think about what we're missing. A minute for the *Churban Beis Ha'mikdash* and then go to sleep. This is a very good *eitzah* you're hearing now - a very important piece of advice.

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