

NACH NUGGETS

Sefer Yehoshua Perek 13:1 through Perek 13:23

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This week we covered Sefer Yehoshua Perek 13 starting from pasuk 1 and going up to and including Perek 13 Pasuk 23.

This week learning is mentioned a few times in Talmud Bavli. The Gemarah in Chulin daf 60b that discusses interesting and eloquent words used by different amoraim. The Gemarah begins by quoting a pasuk. In listing the parts of the land of Israel that remained unconquered at the end of Yehoshua's life the pasuk (יהושע יג, ג) says: *חמשת סרני פלשתים העזתי והאשדודי האשקלוני הגתי והעקרוני והעוים* - *five lords of the Philistines—the Gazites, the Ashdodites, the Ashkelonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites—and those of the Avvim*

The Gemarah asks: אמר חמשה וחשיב שיטא - The Pasuk originally said five princes but then counted six?! The Gemarah answers: אמר ר' יונתן ארונקי שלהן חמשה - Rav Yochanan said: The *arnoki* (distinguished ones) who were actually princes, numbered only five. The Gemarah continues: כתוב א"ל רב חסדא לר' תחליפא בר אבינא - Rav Chisdah said to Rav Tachlafta bar Avina ארונקי באגדתך ופרשה - Write down the teaching with the word *arnoki* in your collection of Agaddah but explain it in writing as well.

The next Gemarah discusses a familiar character that is mentioned in Perek 13. The person is Bilam. The Gemarah in Sanhedrin 106a discusses Bilam's death. The Gemarah starts off quoting a pasuk in the Torah (Bamidbar 31:6) that deals with Bilam's death:

ואת מלכי מדין הרגו על חלליהם וגו' את בלעם בן בעור הרגו בחרב בלעם מאי בעי התם א"ר יוחנן שהלך ליטול שכר עשרים וארבעה אלף [שהפיל מישראל] אמר מר זוטרא בר טוביה אמר רב היינו דאמרי אינשי גמלא אזלא למיבעי קרני אודני דהוו ליה גזיזן מיניה

With regard to Balaam, it is stated: "And they slew the kings of Midian, with the rest of their slain...And Balaam, son of Beor, they slew with the sword" (Numbers 31:8). The Gemara asks: Balaam, what did he seek there; what was his role in that war? He lived in Aram. Rabbi Yoḥanan says: He went to collect payment for twenty-four thousand members of the Jewish people, whom he felled with his advice. Mar Zutra bar Toviya says that Rav says that this is in accordance with the adage that people say: A camel goes to seek horns and the ears that it had severed from it. Not only was Balaam unsuccessful in collecting his fee, he also lost his life.

The Gemarah continues by quoting a pasuk in Yehoshua 13:22

ואת בלעם בן בעור הקוסם קוסם נביא הוא א"ר יוחנן בתחלה נביא ולבסוף קוסם אמר רב פפא היינו דאמרי אינשי מסגני ושילטי הואי אייזן לגברי נגרי

his fear upon us and ask that all creatures should fear Him. The Psychiatrist explained that fear is the major cause of the mental illnesses that beset mankind. In order to preserve one's mental health one should be free of fears, and so there is certainly no reason why anyone should ever pray for fear. Rav Soloveitchik goes on to say that although he is not a psychiatrist, what this man told him helped him to understand the true nature of that prayer. He answered the psychiatrist as follows: "Everyone seems to be beset with fears of all kinds. Some are afraid that they will not be able to succeed in their careers, others fear losing their wealth or status or that they will fail to attain sufficient prominence. Many people are afraid of sickness and bodily weakness. In generations past, fear of leprosy engulfed the world; today people live in fear of cancerous growth. Many people do not go to see a doctor even when they have pains lest he diagnosis "the disease". Man is plagued constantly by all sorts of lesser fears. I am not a psychiatrist, but I do know that one major source of fear can wipe out all lesser fears. What fear can overtake man, thereby uprooting all other fears, such as that of failure, of poverty, of old age, of rejection or of disease? Only the fear of Hashem! That is the reason behind the expression in the High Holy Day prayer, "וּבְכֵן יִתֵּן פְּחָדְךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל כָּל מַעֲשֶׂיךָ וְאִמְתָּךְ עַל כָּל מַה" - "שִׁבְרָאֲתָּ" - "Cast they fear, O Lord our G-d, upon all Thy handiwork and Thine awe upon all that Thou hast created" We pray that this great fear will free us from those other ones which lurk everywhere, upsetting our lives.

May we all merit to have the proper fear of Hashem in our hearts and may Hashem accept our prayers favorably.

Haftoros mentioned in this week's learning: This week's learning is not mentioned in any haftoros
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