

**Tell a story**  
**Parshah Balak**  
**by Julie Zhuk on 2022-08-13**

**Comments**

The story starts out with the Moabite king named Balak hiring an evil prophet named Bilam to curse the Jews. His intention of cursing the Jews didn't pan out as he would have liked. Instead when he would open his mouth, he was involuntarily offering blessings to the Jews. There is a verse in the haftara summarizing the events that happened as, "My people! Remember now what the king of Moabite did and how he plotted. And the son of Beor named Bilam told king Balak that he couldn't curse the Jews from Shittim until Gilgal which is found in the book of Micha 5:6. The last phrase meant to remember the further kindness that G-d gave to the Jews because He brought the Jewish People from Shittim. It was in Shittim that they made many transgressions when they were with the daughters of Moav.

Then they went to Gilgal in Israel and their transgressions were notwithstanding in a short time. There was a miracle of the splitting of the Jordan River for them. The last part of the verse alludes to the Parshah too. There was an unfortunate episode to which it refers at the very end of it. Our Sages teach that the person who suggested to Balak of having this evil plan to send out the daughters of Moav to seduce the Jewish people was none other than Bilam himself. Bilam made sacrifices several times where he offered on seven different altars before trying to curse the Jews. The same number of altars as those that were built by the Jewish forefathers. Bilam did his best to carry out the offerings in quantity. He did this so he could bribe G-d into granting him his desire in cursing the Jews. The haftarah refers to the idea that our Sages ascribe to Bilam the verse, "With what shall I approach G-d, subdue myself before Him?

Shall I approach Him with Olah-sacrifices, with calves that are a year old? Will G-d be pleased with thousands of animals such as rams or tens of thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn to atone for my rebellion or the fruit of my body meaning my other sons for the sin of my soul? Hearing all of these things, G-d didn't feel impressed with any of these large sacrifices that were being volunteered by the evil person, Bilam. G-d responded as the Midrash ends asking if He needs human beings to feed Him, is He in the kind of need for sacrifices? If He needed these sacrifices He would tell His angels to offer them! For G-d what mattered is the purity of the person who was making any kind of sacrifice.

There were several themes that happened when Bilam tried to give blessings to the Jews. These were found in the Haftara and among them was the following that Bilam stated, for from the top of the rocks he saw him meaning the Jewish nation and from the hills he viewed them. It's found in the haftara that G-d told Micha to argue with the mountains and let the hills hear his voice. In both places, the rocks and the hills allude to the forefathers and mothers of the Jewish nation. Bilam stated that there was no sorcery in Yaakov, nor any divination in Israel. This corresponded with Micha saying in the haftara that he would destroy any witchcraft from Bilam's land and you will no longer have any fortune tellers. Another theme that Bilam had was the Jewish nation crouches; he lies down like a lion; this is found in the book of Bamidbar 24:9. Micha used the same metaphor saying that the remnant of Yaakov would be like the lion among the animals of the forest. Bilam concluded his prophecy with a prediction about the end of days found in the book of Bamidbar 24:14. This is where the haftara start with the topic of the Jews

bringing blessings to those nations that submit to the rulership of G-d and destruction upon those who resist. At the beginning of the haftara there is a war known as Gog and Magog. What would happen is the enemy force would try to resist the domino of G-d over the world. During this time, many Jews were living among the nations.

The prophet Micha said the remnant of Yaakov instead of the remnant of Israel, because the name Yaakov reflects submission. It was indicating that the Jewish people would have undergone terrible tribulations and persecutions. The remnant of Yaakov would be in the midst of many nations. It would be like the dew coming from G-d. It would be like the showers upon the grass, not hoping for any man and not having any expectation from the people. This verse is explained in two ways, those Jews who would survive during the time of Mashiach's era would have full trust in G-d. It would be just like anyone was ready to admit how futile it was to place hope in a human being to give the world rain or dew. The only one who could cause rain or dew to come down was G-d. The only way for G-d to grant the Jews that is if they were to put their full trust in Him.

If and when there would be a war between the Jews and another nation, the Jews would need to rely on G-d for them to have success. Instead of simply relying on human allies. The second way this could be understood is from a verse explaining that those Jews who were still in exile would become the greatest blessing for any nation that would be willing to accept the rulership of G-d. The Jews would be for this nation like dew and rain itself. Having rain and dew would bring blessing to the world and may simply mean that G-d would bless the other nations materially in the merit of the Jewish People. Or it may refer to the fact that the Jewish people could teach the nations the truth about G-d and it would result in them getting the blessings they deserved. The Jews had been like dew and rain for the rest of the world throughout their stay when they were in exile.

The Jews were always an indispensable source of substance for other nations because G-d blessed the world in their merit and the Jews bore witness to the existence of G-d and providence. This will only become obvious on a wide scale in the future. The remnant of Yaakov among the enemy nations, in the midst of a lot of people would be like a lion among the animals of a forest. It would be like the lion cub that is among the herds of sheep, where if a strange animal crossed its path, the lion cub would step on it and tear it apart. There would be none to save it from its attacker. The verse starts with the same words as the previous one. This verse adds the expression among the nations. The term refers to the hostile nations that wouldn't accept G-d's sovereignty. The Zohar also tells us that G-d would resurrect the Jewish People's ancient enemies such as Nevuchadnetzar and Sancheriv. Those would be destroyed in their battle when fighting the Jewish people.

This description of a lion cub devouring the sheep is describing the Jewish nation when fighting an enemy. It seems strange for it is the very opposite of our standing in exile, where we usually would be like the sheep among the wolves. At the end of days, the name of G-d would become sanctified and everyone would see how He is the true Judge. He would be the one to always repay the wicked in a measure-for-measure type of way. Anyone wicked would get the punishment they deserved from G-d. The Midrash says the hand of G-d would be raised against the adversaries of the Jews along with their enemies and they would be exterminated. G-d would be victorious. There are several times when G-d uses the term "fingers" when speaking about His own hand. One example of this was when He explained to Noach how to save himself and his family from the Flood that was coming. G-d demonstrated with His "little finger" how to build the ark.

When the Jews were being mistreated by the Egyptians, G-d showed them to use His “ring finger”. By using that finger, the Jews could smite the Egyptians with the Ten plagues as they admitted after the plague of lice that it was G-d’s finger! It was G-d who inscribed in the Ten Commandments on the Tablets with His “middle finger” about the verse that stated these commandments were written with G-d’s finger. That is found in Shemos 31:18. The Jewish People had sinned with the Golden Calf and G-d told Moshe to count every Jew with a half-shekel coin. This half-shekel coin was going to redeem each man from the punishment of death. G-d again used His forefinger to show Moshe what coin the Jewish People were to donate. In the future G-d is going to use His thumb instead of the other fingers. Using His thumb He will be using His entire hand to show His might to the enemies of the Jews.

The Midrash explains that when the words “in this world” are used it means, G-d is merely extending “one finger” to help the Jews. In the future, He will reveal His whole hand. That way He will show the full force of what He is capable of and His glory. There is also the explanation that the “hand” is referring to the strength of the Jewish People. The hand is mentioned in the singular to indicate the ease with which the Jews will overcome their enemies at the end of time. There will be a future victory, but it won’t be achieved with man made weapons or devices of the sort. None of this will be necessary because G-d Himself will conduct the war with His own Divine power. He will be able to remove all natural means of warfare from Israel and that way the Jews will not be able to say they won a war due to some weapon they’ve used. There is a verse in the Midrash using Hebrew letters. It translates to G-d saying, He will cut off the chariots.

In the time of the redemption a time will come to pass that G-d plans to eliminate the enemy’s horses from their midst and destroy their chariots as well. Horses and chariots were used during wars in ancient times. They refer to armaments of any age. Micha the prophet predicted that G-d would get rid of all airplanes, tanks, missile, and bombs from the Jewish People’s midst. That way the Jews wouldn’t need these things in order to win a war in the future. After the war these weapons would not be needed. After a war there would be an everlasting peace. The Midrash also gives a verse of G-d saying, He will demolish the fortified cities of the enemies land and demolish all and any fortresses. The Jews didn’t have these kinds of cities or fortresses. G-d was constantly sheltering them. G-d didn’t want them to live in that kind of an environment, He didn’t want them to live in walled cities.

G-d wanted the Jews to live in cities with open walls and for there to be more air around them. G-d planned on getting rid of any witchcraft from the enemies’ hands and they would no longer have astrologers. Before a war, meoneim, soothsayers, were used a lot and there were fortune tellers who could predict what times were lucky or not lucky for a beginner to start. These soothsayers would gaze out at the sky to read certain signals that were displayed. The Torah doesn’t allow Jews to use any magicians or astrologers. In ancient times there were Jews who transgressed by doing this. King Shaul was a righteous leader and when he was in a desperate situation, he turned to a woman who practiced this stuff. G-d planned to eliminate any images or monuments the enemies of the Jews had. They would no longer bow to the work of their hands. In the future wars, Jews would turn only to G-d and not to any other foreign power. The work of your hands could be seen as the guardian angels of the nations.

When Jews transgressed we invest in that power using power that we create. The energy that the nations needed opposed us and in the future we will do teshuva and not need this power. Another verse in the Midrash talks about G-d declaring taking away images and monuments the

non Jewish nations had. These non Jewish nations used to bow down to these images and to the work of their hands. G-d told the Jews in any future wars, they would only turn to Him and not to any foreign power. The work of one's hands can also be described figuratively to the guardian angels of the nations. It means that when Jews transgress, they are investing in the work of their hands using the power that they create, the energy that the Jews enemies use to turn against us. In the future generation, Jews will do teshuva and will no longer lend the enemies our strength. G-d told the Jews that He was going to uproot their ashaira-trees from their midst. It means G-d was going to destroy their enemies all together.

G-d plans to use His anger and His fury, to wreak vengeance on the nations. The non Jewish nations will never have seen this power coming from G-d before. This last part of the verse can be understood as the non Jewish nations didn't listen to G-d and that is why they will be punished. They will be punished for refusing to accept the rulership of the One True G-d. G-d shows His kinship to the Jewish People. The biblical character we know of as Micha comes back to the failings of his fellow men. He warns them to repent and he introduces the theme with the entreaty. He tells them to please listen and he indicates that the Jews should not act like the nations mentioned above, because they wouldn't listen to G-d in the future generation. Micha asks the Jews to listen to what G-d told him. G-d told him to arise and argue with the mountains and let the hills hear their voices.

One simple explanation of this is the prophet, Micha is bidden to speak loudly and openly so that even the mountains and hills would hear him. Otherwise these mountains and hills would be called upon as witnesses, since they had been in existence since before the beginning of time. Another explanation of what Micah was trying to explain to the Jewish people is, they should be turning to their forefathers, named 'mountains', and to the mothers who were referred to as the 'hills'. By turning to them they would be able to hear the kindness that G\_d was performing for the Jewish People and how they had turned back to Him using their evil ways.

The 'mountains' are being referred to as the Torah Sages, who are the ones to bear responsibility for the people's behavior. These mountains are the ones who are supposed to guide the Jews. The next verse in this Midrash will go into more depth of what G-d meant. G-d has a dispute with His people and He will argue with the Jews to prove that He is right. When the mountains are brought up they are referred to as the nation's Torah Teachers. The very foundations of the world itself and the Torah scholars who are the ones to guide the Jews. Micah reminds the Jews that G-d showed them kindness since mankind was created in the first place. It was G-d who made the Jews a nation themselves and He was only asking a little bit from the Jewish people in return. Micah was predicting a punishment towards the Jews that would be coming from G-d. That punishment was for the many transgressions they did. From His perspective, the Jews deserved this punishment. It was fair because the Jews had made many mistakes to get to this point. G-d cried out to the Jews, "How much have I done for you! He asks them if He troubled them demanding an excessive sacrificial service in return?

He wanted to know why the Jews had turned away from Him so many times. There are examples G-d uses where He considers them so much that He doesn't overtax them with sacrifices. G-d asked the Jews to bring sacrifices using only domestic animals such as cows, bulls, goats, or sheep. G-d didn't allow them to offer up wild animals that roamed freely in a field or a forest. He wanted to spare the Jews that were in trouble of hunting them. G-d is always considerate of the Jews.

He has never taxed the Jews in an unreasonable manner. If the Jews were being ruled by a king, they would have heralds that would be sent to proclaim a royal edict. This would make all of the king's subjects listen to the herald. G-d on the hand, allowed Jews to read the Shema prayer in any position that they wanted to whether it was standing, sitting, or walking. With the help of Micah using a verse in the Midrash, He reminded the Jews that it was Him who brought them out of Egypt. It was Him who redeemed them from being enslaved to the Egyptians. It was G-d who sent Moses, Aaron, and Miriam to be in front of the Jews. That way these three would lead the way for the Jews.

G-d stated that if a human being that is king sends royal emissaries to finish a job in some district of their kingdom, they can expect the subjects there to treat them with respect and kindness. This means the subjects would have food provided for them and lodging accommodations as well. G-d comments on how He sent out Moses, Aaron, and Miriam in front of the Jews. He asks the Jews if ever had to exert themselves to supply Moses, Aaron, and Miriam with food and something to drink or to do some kind of service for them? G-d's answer to this was no, the Jews weren't expected to do these things. At the time, the manna as in food, was falling from the sky. This happened in the merit of Moses. The well provided water in the merit of Miriam. The Clouds of Glory that appeared when the Jews left Egypt was provided in the merit of Aaron.

These three great leaders helped the Jews benefit physically, they also nourished the Jews. The Jews also benefited spiritually from these three leaders. Moses taught the men, Aaron was able to achieve forgiveness for the many transgressions that the Jews did. It was through the service Aaron gave that the Jews were forgiven. Miriam taught the women. This verse included all of the kindness that G-d gave to the Jews for their time in the desert, a total of forty years. Towards the end of the forty year period of being in the desert, G-d told the Jews something. He said to please remember what Balak, who was the king of Moav, plotted against them. Bilam, the son of Beor, answered him and what really happened from the areas of Shittim until Gilgal. G-d wanted to remind the Jews everything that happened in their favor was because of Him. G-d wanted the Jews to know of His righteous deeds and that G-d was reminding the Jews that Balak wanted nothing else, but to destroy the Jews. Balak hired Bilam who wanted to curse the Jewish nation, but in the end Bilam wasn't able to curse the Jews. Bilam wasn't able to curse the Jews without the consent of G-d. Obviously he never got G-d's consent to do this, instead Bilam gave the Jews blessings. In the verse that talks about the two places, Shittim and Gilgal, it can be understood as the Jews needed to remember it was in Shittim they had their last stop in the desert. It was there that they transgressed with the daughters of Moav and served the idol named Peor. Even though the Jews did this, G-d was still kind to the Jews and in a fast way moved them over to the area called Gilgal. Gilgal was the first station in Israel, that was when G-d split the Jordan River for the Jews.

Gilgal is referring to the continued kindness G-d kept showing the Jews, in terms of helping them to win over the area of the land within the time frame of the next fourteen years. While they were trying to win over that land, the Jews had camped out in Gilgal. The Midrash points out that the words at the end of the verse, so that you may know G-d's righteous deeds, are important for us to understand. There are many explanations about this, starting with how Bilam had the chance to harm the Jews in the first place. That never happened, because G-d intervened. The Midrash tells us that on a daily basis there is a fraction of a moment when G-d feels angry at the world. He applies His attribute of justice in judging human beings. Humans

don't know when this moment that He is judging us isn't revealed to us. On the other hand, it was revealed to Bilam.

Bilam took advantage of it by wishing evil upon the Jews at an important time. It was a strategy that was guaranteed to work. G-d was being especially kind to the Jews at the time and He didn't show His anger all of the time that Bilam wanted to curse the Jews. By G-d doing this, it shows that He did a lot of righteous things for the Jews. The Jews have always been known to be His beloved people. There is another opinion saying that the last two parts of the verse are connected. G-d tells the Jews that despite the transactions they made in Shittim,

He showed His righteous ways because He continued to help the Jews in crossing the Jordan River and going into the land of Israel. G-d's deeds of righteousness refer to the same kind of kindness that is mentioned with Him, He doesn't trouble us with excessive service. Even though Jews have an additional debt, Jews still incur through other kindnesses that G-d gives us. These kindnesses are seen as Him thwarting Balak's plan.

Micah was able to predict the failed response the Jews would have for the kindness G-d showed them. Micah told the Jews that they could admit how they acted in an ungrateful way by transgressing His commandments. They were supposed to do teshuva, but they didn't do so. He asked the Jews if he should go in front of G-d feeling humble and ask Him to forgive them for their many transgressions. Should the Jews come before G-d with olah-offerings with animals such as calves that are a year old? Would G-d be pleased with thousands of animals such as rams or with tens of thousands of streams of oil to pour out onto mincha-offerings.

Maybe these animals are not the right ones and they should give their firstborn child who is in a distinguished position in the family. This would mean the Jew is thinking about giving up their own child as a sacrifice! By doing this they would be atoning for their rebellious ways or at least their other children, the fruit of their innards to atone for their unintentional transgression of their soul. Micah was saying the person could give a large sacrifice to G-d because they are indebted to G-d. Whatever any human has in their possession it was originally given to them by G-d to begin with. This means that the person's children were never really his. Nor the animals that once belonged to the person, they originally were coming from G-d. If they give up the animal or their child as a sacrifice, they are merely returning them to G-d. The person feels they should at least repay G-d by giving large amounts of whatever they are going to use as a sacrifice.

Whatever they are giving up or giving back to G-d is very precious to them. The prophet Micah rejects the notion in this verse. We learn that external rites such as sacrifices are of value only if the person offering it keeps the mitzvos that G-d expects of them. This is G-d's number one command. There is a service that is expected of the Jews. G-d told us in the Torah that man, what is good in His eyes and what He demands of us is only to do justice. To have love for kindness and to walk privately with G-d. Micah declared that G-d demands only these three practices from Jews and He doesn't insist that we fulfill all of the six hundred and thirteen mitzvos of the Torah that apply to Jews. Over many years the amount of Jews has gone down, our leaders felt it was more important to establish general guidelines that would help Jews fulfill all of these mitzvos in the Torah.

The leaders chose those principles that were limited not to a specific group such as kohanim or men. Nor was this directed to a place like the Bais Hamikdash or Israel itself. These principles could be fulfilled by any Jews under any kind of circumstance. King David tried to follow eleven of these kinds of principles in Tehillim. The prophet, Yeshayahu, felt that his generation had

trouble following so many of these principles. He asked the Jews in his generation to follow six of them. Micha condensed the principles into three main guidelines and they are to do justice, to love the performance of being kind, and to act modestly and reticently in the presence of G-d. The Midrash will go into more depth of each of these three principles. What it means to do justice is to include the fulfillment of all of the mitzvos that are aimed at ensuring justice between a man and their neighbor. Examples of this are to not steal, to not kill anyone, and to stay away from oppression.

The next principle that the Midrash focuses on is loving kindness, to humans that means if a person never does anything that is not just against their fellow man, they are considered a tzaddik. They have lived a very successful life and G-d with His Divine wisdom will tell us that He requires of everyone not only to avoid harming other people, but to actively perform kindness towards others. Examples of this includes, clothing the poor, helping anyone who is unfortunate, visiting those who are sick, comforting those who are mourning, and burying the dead. The Midrash asks who was it that set the example for performing kindness? It was G-d Himself, because He clothed the naked. In this case the naked people were Aadam and Chava. G-d visited the sick, when Avraham was suffering pain after having his Bris. G-d buried the dead person meaning Moses. G-d prepared Aaron's shrouds and participated in his burial as well.

Jews are commanded to walk in G-d's way, He is considered to be merciful and we are supposed to be that way. G-d is considered to be gracious and we should be that way. G-d clothed the naked and we should do the same. He visited the sick, we should visit anyone who is sick. He buried the dead and we should do that as well. The Midrash uses the example of King Shlomo, who realized how beloved the performance of kindness is to G-d. King Shlomo built two special gates leading to the Bais Hamikdash. One was for bridegrooms and the other for anyone mourning. It is on shabbat that crowds of Jews used to stand between these gates. When they saw someone enter the gate of the bridegroom, they wished him the words, "May He Who dwells in this House grant you sons and daughters. When someone would enter the gate of mourners, anyone present would console him. They would say the words, "May He Who dwells in this House comfort you." By doing these things, the Jews were involved in the performance of kindness.

In Jersusalem there were a lot of voluntary groups of charity one could give to. If someone went to an engagement party, a wedding, a bris milo, etc. Jews did this to make the groom or the father of a new baby boy happy. There were other groups who undertook to comfort anyone in mourning and to bury the dead. The Jewish nation has always kept up these traditions and it is to this day that these ways are unique. People doing this shows G-d they are acting out of kindness. We have to think back in the time of the evil queen Izevel. She was the queen of King Achav. She ended up dying because she was thrown out of the window by her servants.

This happened after the dogs consumed her body. Some of her body parts like her skull and her feet and hands weren't touched by the vicious animals. This happened to her because she had used these to perform kindness with fellow Jews. Whenever a bridegroom and his bride used to pass by the palace, she joined in ten steps with them. She would clap to make them happy and it was her way of praising them. If a dead person was carried by the palace, the queen joined in and would strike her hands together in a mournful way and lament for the dead person. The dogs weren't granted dominion over the organs that had performed kindness, despite the queen's evil ways.

There is a Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai who is mentioned in this Midrash. He was walking in Jerusalem with a different Rabbi named Yehoshua. Rabbi Yehoshua was behind Yochanan ben Zakai. They passed a site of the destroyed Bais Hamikdash and Rabbi Yehoshua said the words in a sad manner, "Woe to us that the House of G-d where our transgressions were atoned, lies in ruins!" The other Rabbi responded saying, to not feel bad because they had a different atonement and it is just as great, the performance of being kind as the prophet had declared.

The prophet declared that he desires kindness and not sacrifice; this is coming from the book of Hoshaia 6:6. In that book it says that the world was built with kindness. Everything that Hoshaiia was saying was chosen by the Divine's presence. Hoshaiia the prophet spoke about performing justice, he called for loving the performance of kindness because it was demanded on a higher level. A person who loved to do something good out of the kindness of their heart wasn't content merely with providing minimal assistance to someone who is needy. Instead their love was what motivated them to help to the best of what they could do.

The person would act like a parent who out of great love for their child was going to provide for them, beyond the bare necessities and did it in a happy way. The words to be love of kindness has another meaning for Jewish people. If a Jew is prevented from actively assisting another person for some reason, they have to retain their love to perform the kindness. There is a demand for love of kindness that requires a Jewish person to cultivate an internal sensitivity to the person they are trying to help. The Midrash says that this requirement contradicts the person's inborn egocentric focus and develops their spiritual nature.

When people are acting in a modest way, that principle has a few concepts. The Midrash tells us that when we perform justice and kindness towards others we have to do so in a generous way where the person won't know why we are acting that way. We need to not have any kind of ulterior motive or show any ulterior motive to whoever we are helping. We should just help in a natural way. If there is a public event like a wedding or a funeral, they are to be held in the kind of atmosphere where there is restraint. People should always have G-d in mind, whenever they are doing anything.

Everything that Jews do that is considered a mitzvo is to be done in a way for Satan to not find room to criticize. It's really crucial to preserve the dignity of the person who we are being kind to or giving charity to. This way it doesn't get publicized that we are helping that person. People have a hard time staying generous with their money, their time, or doing something that requires their labor. If someone does not feel like they are appreciated or acknowledged for their kindness, then they will stop.

Humans naturally want appreciation from someone else and this appreciation is definitely deserved. Micah warned the Jewish People that G-d wanted from us to use justice around people and to be kind in private settings and when we are in front of Him. Our motive should be in the honor of G-d. Using justice in a good way and being kind to others is a way for Jews to complete the will G-d has for us and not to earn the gratitude of others from our good deeds.

The phrase of walking privately with G-d means doing mitzvos that go through one's mind. This has to do with being a loving person and fearing G-d. No one knows what anyone thinks, only

G-d is aware of the thoughts going on in one's mind. G-d has the desire for Jews to have the mindset of doing things revolving around His services. One of the reasons why Jews are supposed to act in a modest way is because we are doing things in private. We should act the same way in public and in private, we need to maintain a constant awareness that G-d is watching us and that is not an easy task for any human to do.

Rabbi Yossi testified about himself that the walls of his home never saw the hems of his robe. He meant that as he got undressed and ready to slip his robe over his head, he would first sit down on his bed to cover himself with a blanket. This way his body was never exposed. A person's true level of righteousness is known to them when they are not being observed. Yeshayahu was a prophet who warned the Jews that if they transgressed in the dark, their inner chambers would be sought out by G-d in the future with the use of light and candles.

There are guidelines which are cited by Micah, that seem to be simply basic in the prophet's eyes. It is not so easy for humans to practice this. Micah tells the Jews that G-d told you what is good and what isn't good in the eyes of G-d. The Midrash concludes saying that by using justice, being kind to others, and walking modestly with G-d we are bringing the greatest benefit to ourselves. We are achieving the goal that we were originally created to accomplish in the first place.