

Parshas **BALAK** 5776

22-23 JULY 2016 / 17 TAMMUZ 5776

CANDLE LIGHTING THIS WEEK: 5.19PM
EREV SHABBOS MINCHA THIS WEEK: 5.20PM
SHABBOS MINCHA: 5.00PM
SHABBOS ENDS: 6.10PM

SHABBOS CANDLE LIGHTING NEXT WEEK: 5.22PM



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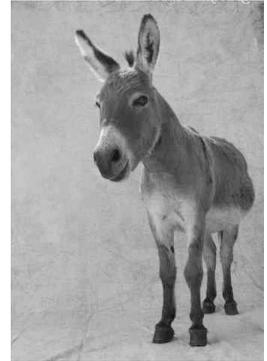
Ohr Somayach

LATEST TIME FOR MORNING SHEMA THIS WEEK: 9.30AM
EARLIEST TIME FOR EVENING SHEMA THIS WEEK: 6.09PM

OVERVIEW

Balak, king of Moav, is in morbid fear of Bnei Yisrael. He summons a renowned sorcerer named Bilaam to curse them. First, G-d speaks to Bilaam and forbids him to go. But, because Bilaam is so insistent, G-d appears to him a second time and permits him to go. While en route, a malach (emissary from G-d) blocks Bilaam's donkey's path. Unable to contain his frustration, Bilaam strikes the donkey each time it stops or tries to detour. Miraculously, the donkey speaks, asking Bilaam why he is hitting her. The malach instructs Bilaam regarding what he is permitted to say and what he is forbidden to say regarding the Jewish People. When Bilaam arrives, King Balak makes elaborate preparations, hoping that Bilaam will succeed in the curse. Three times Bilaam attempts to curse and three times blessings issue instead. Balak, seeing that Bilaam has failed, sends him home in disgrace.

Bnei Yisrael begin sinning with the Moabite women and worshipping the Moabite idols, and they are punished with a plague. One of the Jewish leaders brazenly brings a Midianite princess into his tent, in full view of Moshe and the people. Pinchas, a grandson of Aharon, grabs a spear and kills both evildoers. This halts the plague, but not before 24,000 have died.



IF IT CAN HAPPEN TO BILAAM, IT CAN HAPPEN TO ANY OF US

Parshas Balak contains an incident which teaches us a tremendous ethical lesson. For me personally, it is one of the scariest mussar teachings in the Torah.

This incident involves a person named Bilaam, who had a tremendous power of speech. Whomever he blessed was blessed; whomever he cursed was cursed. He was a very powerful man — a person who did not command divisions of armies; but he had an almost magical power of speech.

Bilaam is asked to employ this power against the Jews. He knows that G-d does not want him to go, but he decides to go nevertheless. While on the way, what happens to him? His donkey stops, refuses to move, then all of a sudden the donkey opens up his mouth and starts talking to him. Since the history of the world began, such a thing never happened — and never again will happen — that a donkey should talk to a man.

If someone doubts whether what he is doing is right or wrong and suddenly his car stops and tells him “Don't go” (and not just one of those recorded voices saying “Your seatbelt isn't buckled...”) — would that not cause the person to at least stop and wonder whether he is doing the right thing?

We may ask this question even about a person who was not perceptive. However, Bilaam was a wise person. He was a perceptive person. How does a perceptive person view his donkey talking to him?

Bilaam should have said to himself, “My strength is my speech. Who gave me that power? G-d. The proof is that the same G-d who gave me the power of speech, just gave my donkey the power of speech! “Who gives a mouth to man or Who makes one dumb...” [Shmos 4:11] From where is my strength? Me talking is not any bigger miracle than my donkey talking. It's the same strength of G-d.”

What should Bilaam have concluded? He should have concluded that he was not using his power of speech correctly, and that he should turn back. Is this not as clear as day? Is the message not clear? Shouldn't that make an impression? Yet it did not.

This is the lesson we need to learn — how blind people can be! When a person has some type of personal motive — whether it is money or power or anything — a person can literally become completely blind. G-d can

almost spell it out to him... G-d CAN actually spell it out to him, but he will not see it!

That is what is so frightening. It can be as clear as day to the objective observer, but the person on his way to sin cannot see what is in front of his own eyes! This is terribly frightening, because if it can happen to Bilaam, it can happen to any one of us! If Bilaam can be blinded, we can be blinded.

BABY BOY



Mazel tov to **David & Ronit Segal** on the birth of a baby boy. Mazel tov to proud grandparents **Dennis & Sue Fogel** and **Natie & Marilyn Segal**. **The Shalom Zachor** will ^YH take place this Friday night at 6 Corbel Crescent from 8.30pm

TZEISCHEM L'SHALOM

A heartfelt "Tzeischem L'Shalom" to **Jeremy & Yael Bank and family**, children of **Susan Bliedan** (and the late **Steven Bliden z'l - Shlomo Yoel ben Yehudah**, who's Yortzeit takes place this week) and **Brian & Heather Bank**. May they have a true aliya with Brocha and Hatzlocha!

The community offer sincere condolences to **Richard Hochstadter** on the passing of his sister

Dianne Goldberg z'l in the prime years of her life. The Shiva house and prayers are taking place at 14 Quintondale Court, Orchards Rd until Tuesday morning 26 July, Shacharis - 7.00am, Mincha - 5.15pm
המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים

CARLEBACH MINYAN

The Carlebach Minyan is on recess and will resume on **Friday 29th July**. Wishing everyone a good Shabbos and safe travels to those going on vacation!

YORTZEITS THIS WEEK

- **Susan Blieden** for her late husband and **Daphna, Yael, Yehoshua & Liora** for their late father
- **Ruth Rappoport** for her late husband
- **Michelle Glickman** for her late mother
- **Evan Skaar** for his late father
- **Arnold Connack** for his late sister
- **Mervyn Swartz** for his late mother
- **Diane Miller** for her late father

CHILDREN'S BIRTHDAYS

Daniel Abramson
Shai Jawno
Batya Levin

Happy Birthday!

This is the tremendous mussar to be derived from the incident of Bilaam: There are none so blind, as those who will not see.

Rabbi Frand - www.torah.org

SPECIAL SHABBOS MORNING MEN'S PARSHA SHIUR

RABBI CHAIM YISROEL BLUMENFELD

Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivas Neveh Tzion in Telz Stone
Parsha shiur for men before the Brocha

SHABBOS MORNING LADIES SHIUR

There will be one combined ladies shiur by **RABBI WOLPE** before the Brocha

SHABBOS AFTERNOON SHIUR

RABBI ZAIL

SUMMARY AND INSIGHTS
HALOCHAS OF THE THREE WEEKS

Shabbos afternoon at 4.20pm

17 TAMMUZ FAST DAY THIS SUNDAY 24 JULY

Fast begins:	5.39am
Shachris: (6.50am neitz)	6.20am - Main Shul 7.00am - Small Shul 8.00am - Main Shul
Mincha:	1.05pm 5.05pm
Fast ends:	5.56pm



CSO
BASIC TRAINING
COURSE



Course starting **Wed 27 July 2016**. To reserve your place or to find out more, please contact Stacey on jhbtraining@cso.org.za

SECURITY TIP: How well do you know the people who work for you? Always ensure that the correct background and criminal checks have been done on your domestic staff and office employees.

