

Congregation



\*\*\* 2108 Ocean Parkway Brooklyn, N.Y. 11223 \*\*\*

**Rabbi Aharon Farhi**

*Parashat* **Balak**

16<sup>th</sup> Tammuz 5781

*Maqam Bayat*

Issue #943

**Mr. Eliyahu Levy, President**

*Haftarat* **Vehaya She'erit**

June 26<sup>th</sup> 2021

*Candle Lighting 8:12pm \* Shekiah 8:30pm \* Shir Hashirim 7:00pm followed by Minha Friday Night  
Shaharit Shabbat 8:15am \* Minha Shabbat 7:55pm \* Shabbat Ends 9:12pm & Rabbenu Tam 9:42pm  
Time for Talit 4:00am \* Seasonal Hour 87:00 \* Alot Hashahar 3:43am \* Netz Hachama 5:27am  
Weekday Minha 7:30pm \* Earliest Time for Arbit 7:17pm \* Tzet Hacoachavim 9:07pm \* Chatzot 12:58  
Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema 8:04am \* Latest Time for Morning Amidah 9:33am*

***The 17<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz Fast on Sunday June 27<sup>th</sup> begins 3:44am, and ends 8:55pm, & strictly 9:07pm***

*Those who wish to contact R' Farhi can call (646) 552-3412*

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2415 Ocean Parkway, Brooklyn NY 11235**

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Please do not read this bulletin during Tefillah or Keriat Hatorah

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Our Sages teach us: The wicked Bilam had three bad traits: a bad eye, a haughty spirit, and overindulgence. Where do we see this? The first trait we see from the difference in his words with Balak's words. Balak had said that the Jews had left Egypt, meaning he believed it was all in the past, and that they would not merit further miracles. Bilam however said that they were the nation that is leaving Egypt, meaning they were still deserving of miracles, and by focusing on this he did so with a bad eye. It also says that Bilam raised his eyes and noticed how the Jews were encamped, thus putting a bad eye on them. The second trait we see from the way Bilam twisted the words of Hashem. Hashem told Bilam not to go with the people of Balak, however when Bilam gave over this message, he said that Hashem did not want him to go with people who were not worthy enough, thus displaying his trait of a haughty spirit. The third trait Bilam displayed when he declared that even if they would pay him an exorbitant amount for his services, he wouldn't be able to do anything against Hashem's will, meaning that he would have liked to receive such an exorbitant payment, as he was one who would overindulge in material pleasures. Now, let's examine Bilam from another angle: His donkey started speaking to

him miraculously. Obviously, this was an act of Hashem to get Bilam's attention and convince him to redirect his intentions. Anyone else would have gotten the hint immediately. But not Bilam, who acted and responded to the donkey as if conversation was normal and expected at this point. Bilam didn't even blink. He believed in himself so much so that he couldn't even see the obvious attempt to get his attention which should have caused him to second guess his actions. He hated the Jews so much, and his haughtiness was so great, that any challenge was taken in stride and debated without reserve. The only other solution at that point was to show Bilam an actual angel with a sword ready to take his life, for only then will someone so narrow minded and self-centered be able to stop and think for a moment that perhaps he should be considering the fact that his intentions may not be correct and against Hashem. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

### ***Insights on the Parasha***

**1 – *Stretching out like brooks*** – just as one who is impure dips in the water and is purified, so too one who frequents Bet Knesset and Bet Midrash will leave behind his sinful ways, and become full of Mitzvot and Torah. The

Chafetz Chaim explains: harm comes to a person through his speech. In just a half hour a person can sin with his mouth by speaking Lashon Hara, mockery, ridicule, slander, abusive words, wasteful words, however there is only so much a person can sin within a half hour if he needs to perform actions, as actions require time to execute. Words are free, quick, and instant. Therefore, it is best to remain within the walls of a Bet Knesset or a Bet Midrash, places where people are usually careful with their words, and instead speak in Torah and prayer, for then you will accumulate Mitzvot and merits, and be protected from sins.

### ***History in Brief***

*82 years after the Temple's destruction, in the year 150AD.* A Roman senator named Tornos Rufus would try to outsmart Rebi Akiva with his questions against Hashem. He once asked him: why does Hashem hate those who serve idolatry? Rebi Akiva said he would return the next day and answer his question. The following day Rebi Akiva told over a dream he had the previous night in which he saw two dogs, one named Tornos Rufus and the other named Rufina. The Roman senator got angry at Rebi Akiva who was surely mocking him and his wife and screamed that such insolence was deserving of death! Rebi Akiva calmly answered, "But what's the difference? Do you not also eat, drink, breathe, reproduce, sleep, and die, just like a dog? Just because I call you a dog, why would that make you mad? Well, Hashem created heaven and earth, gives life and sustenance, and yet you take wood and stone and call it the same name as Hashem! That is why Hashem hates those who serve idolatry." Another time, he asked Rebi Akiva why the Jews perform a Brit Milah if Hashem created the body the way it is – why change Hashem's perfect creation? Rebi Akiva brought some wheat and a loaf of bread and asked which of the two was better. Surely the loaf of bread! But didn't Hashem create the wheat? The senator then asked, if so, why isn't

man born circumcised? Why would Hashem create man incomplete? Rebi Akiva explained that Hashem created us incomplete so that we would be commanded to complete ourselves through Brit Milah for Hashem, and therefore receive merits and rewards for fulfilling Mitzvot.

### ***Health and Recovery***

To better understand the importance of relieving the body from waste in a timely manner, and the potential damage that can be caused to the body when one procrastinates with this, we will illustrate this point with the difference between a person who finds an ant on his table and a person who feels an ant enter into his clothes. A person who feels an ant in his clothing will immediately get up and go to the dressing room to get rid of it. The same is true of the need to relieve oneself. As soon as we receive a warning from the body, we must immediately remove the pest from our bodies, even if we are sitting with important people and need to interrupt, or in any given situation. The correct education is to accustom your children from an early age to go to the bathroom before going out of the house, and again when coming home. To become accustomed to always initially go to the bathroom will save them in the future from a lot of trouble. Drinking deficiency is one of the causes of bladder cancer. A study of 48,000 people conducted by researchers at Harvard University, and Ohio State University, found that those who drank more than eight glasses of water per day had a 51 percent lower risk of developing bladder cancer compared to people who only drank two cups a day. In addition, the lack of drinking water makes the waste become concentrated, and as a result, a person constantly feels the need to relieve himself, always in only small concentrated amounts.

### ***Mussar: Love for Others***

Everyone is obligated to love others. The way to develop this love is to help others, whether physically, spiritually, or monetarily.

Everyone needs help from others, no matter their financial or spiritual standings. Give gifts to others and show that you care about them. Through these actions you will develop a sense of love for others. Be forgiving and easy going. In business, be honest and courteous to others. Do not be strict with people or particular. Speak softly and kindly. Be careful not to embarrass others, and avoid confrontations. Smile pleasantly to people, for this will enhance the love for one another. Be concerned about the welfare of another, and soften their worries. If one confides their secrets or private issues to you, do not reveal them to anyone. If one angers you, let it pass. Do not listen to talk about the faults or shortcomings spoken of another. Always strive to find the good in people. Follow these steps and you will love others, and be loved by others in turn, and by Hashem, Amen.

#### **Rishon LeSion:**

##### ***R' Chaim Nissim Abulefia 1776-1861***

Once, R' Chaim and his assistant traveled to Tiberias to visit the graves of Tzaddikim. During their visit, the assistant went out to buy some food for his Rabbi. On the way he encountered a group of young Arabs. He did not understand Arabic and therefore did not know what they were planning until he began feeling the pain of the rocks thrown at him from all sides. As they laughed, he bled. He somehow managed to escape, and made his way back to safety. When he came upon a local, he screamed in protest about the attack from these youngsters. The local recognized the group and advised the assistant to visit the Sheikh of the city and tell him of the attack, as one of the boys in that gang was the Sheikh's son and he would surely punish him for his crimes. He even offered to show him the palace of the Sheikh. When the assistant met with the Sheikh, he showed him the wounds that his son had inflicted upon him. The Sheikh got angry and promised he would punish him with lashes. He then asked the

attendant if his Rabbi would be able to come to his palace and grace him with his holy presence. He was sent to bring R' Chaim to the palace on a donkey. As they traveled, the assistant told R' Chaim what had happened, but R' Chaim's face fell. Surely this was not good, as one day the son would become a senator and he will not be kind to the Jews when he remembers this story. When they reached the palace, the Sheikh came out and greeted them, looking upon the holy face of R' Chaim, seeing the honor of one who is like an angel of Hashem.

#### ***Story***

*R' Tzvi Hersh is telling over a personal story to the once wealthy man and his Gabbai attendant:* As he boarded a wagon that would take him to visit the great Rav Sar Shalom, the Rebbe from Belz, he noticed that the wagon driver was unwilling to leave unless the wagon was filled completely with passengers, as this was his way of making a livelihood, and every passenger's fare was important to him. He then went to each passenger and demanded payment before departing on the journey, as more than once a passenger would reach his destination only to explain that he had no money to pay the driver. When he reached the young R' Tzvi Hersh, the boy realized that he did not have nearly enough money even for this form of transportation, and so with embarrassment he told the driver that he had only a little amount compared to the full fare. The driver got angry, and told the boy that if he could not pay the fare then his seat on the wagon would need to be occupied by someone who could pay in full, as this was his livelihood and he could not forfeit the difference.

#### **Laws: Shabbat**

**1** – If one continues Seudah Shelisheet until even the conclusion of Shabbat, he still recites Retzeh Vehachalitzenu in Birkat Hamazon, even if he stopped actually eating from before

the conclusion of Shabbat, as long as he did not yet pray Arbit. If he already prayed Arbit, then it is excluded from Birkat Hamazon.

**2** – If Rosh Chodesh begins Saturday night, when he still recites Retzeh Vehachalitzenu in Birkat Hamazon as explained above, he does not recite Yaaleh Veyavo. However, he should try not to eat a Kezayit after dark in his continued meal so as not to be in doubt regarding the recitation of Yaaleh Veyavo.

**3** – During the Amidah recited on Shabbat, we say *Be'Ahava, with love*, a couple of times. The reason is because although we were initially forced to accept the Torah and were unable to initially accept it with love, nonetheless Shabbat was given to us before the Torah, and Shabbat we accepted with love. We therefore emphasize this point while praying Amidah during Shabbat.

**4** – During Keter of Mussaf, we recite *Shema Yisrael* together, and end off with '*Ani Hashem Elokechem*'. The reason is as follows: In the days of Rav, the Persian king decreed that Jews cannot recite Shema. What did they do? They stuck it within the Kedusha so that it would at least not be forgotten. A large snake came during midday and swallowed the king whole, thus ending the decree. The Sages then left Shema in Kedusha of Mussaf and Neilah specifically (as those prayers do not include Shema), so that future generations would remember the miracle. Weekday Rosh Chodesh Mussaf, however, does not include Shema, as it is not like Shabbat and Yom Tov to spread the memory of the miracle.

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*Tizku L'Mitzvot, Amen!*

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