

Congregation



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

Rabbi Aharon Farhi

*Parashat **Balak***

16th Tammuz 5785

Maqam Bayat

Issue #1124

Mr. Eliyahu Levy, President

*Haftarat **Vehaya Sheerit***

July 12th 2025

*Candle Lighting 8:09pm * Shekiah 8:27pm * Shir Hashirim 6:45pm followed by Minha Friday Night
Shaharit Shabbat 8:15am * Minha Shabbat 7:50pm * Shabbat Ends 9:08pm & Rabbenu Tam 9:38pm
Time for Talit 4:11am * Seasonal Hour 85 * Alot Hashahar 3:54am * Netz Hachama 5:36am
Weekday Minha 7:00pm * Earliest Time for Arbit 7:17pm * Tzet Hacoachavim 9:03pm * Chatzot 1:01
Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema 8:09am * Latest Time for Morning Amidah 9:34am
Summer Minyan Shaharit every weekday morning in Beth Yosef at 6:45am*

Generously sponsored by the good-hearted **Mr. Oni Mamrout, his wife Ranat, their parents, and their children.** May Hashem bless their entire family with spiritual and physical blessings of success, Amen.

Those who wish to contact Rabbi Aharon Farhi can call (646) 552-3412

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Moab said to the elders of Midian: Now the congregation will chew up our entire surroundings, as an ox chews up the greenery of the field. Why do they refer to Bnei Yisrael as the 'congregation'? What is the significance of their 'surroundings'? Also, what is the reference in the parable to the ox chewing grass? We will explain: the elders of Midian asked Balak why he feared Bnei Yisrael – hadn't Hashem instructed them not to fight with Moab? Balak explained that he wasn't afraid of Bnei Yisrael, but rather he feared their surrounding neighbors, the 'congregation' surrounding them. Why? Because if their neighbors would venture out and conquer them, then Bnei Yisrael would no longer be restricted from waging battle against Moab, just as they were able to overpower Amon and Moab through Sihon. Once there is new leadership in place, once a congregation of surrounding forces takes control, then Bnei Yisrael are no longer prohibited from war with Moab. Now we can understand the

parable as follows: When we recite blessings on fruits and vegetables, we correct the sin of Adam Harishon and make Tikun. However, regarding the grass, since we do not eat it, but rather the animals eat the grass, we can perform the Tikun by eating the animals that eat the grass, so that when we make a blessing on the meat, the grass that the animal ate is included. So too, while Bnei Yisrael cannot directly conquer Moab, they would be able to conquer Moab through conquering the surrounding areas which have already conquered Moab. Like a person eats the meat of the animal that ate the grass, so too Bnei Yisrael conquer the surrounding congregation, the neighboring territories, that conquered Moab. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

Insights on the Parasha

A number of times in this week's Parasha, Bilam had explained that he could only ever say what Hashem places in his mouth, nothing more nothing less. If so, why is he

called wicked? Even regarding hitting his donkey, he wasn't able to see the angel blocking the path and hit his donkey to continue moving just as any rider would have done. If all he did was proper, what was his sin? He is called a sinner and wicked because at the onset he knew that the entire plan was against the will of Hashem and that he really wasn't supposed to go along at all, as Hashem already told him that he cannot curse the blessed nation. He should never have gotten involved in the first place. This is why he is called wicked. He is also called a sinner because after they could not succeed in cursing the nation, he still went ahead and advised Balak to cause Bnei Yisrael to sin with the daughters of Moab in order to gain a victory over them.

History in Brief

200 years after the Hurban, calendar year 270. After the passing of Rabbenu Hakadosh and R' Natan Hababli, the last of the Tanaim, Rav went up to Eretz Yisrael to be the leader and the first of the Amoraim, 218 years after the Hurban. Who was his colleague? Shemuel. Who was Shemuel? The son of Rebi Aba Bar Aba, known also as Abuha DeShemuel. Shemuel's father was a merchant in the city Neherdea along the Nahar Perat. One time, Rebi Yehuda Ben Betera put in an order to purchase material from the father of Shemuel, but the material he received was too expensive for him to pay. He asked him to please send a less expensive material that he could afford. The father of Shemuel assured him that his words were worth more than the material, and he is agreeable to wait to be paid until after the material has been sold for a profit to others. Rebi Yehuda Ben Betera blessed him for his kindness and generosity which would enable him to make a living, blessing him with a son who would be great in Torah like Shemuel

Hanavi. This blessing came to fruition when his son was born, who he named Shemuel. His son grew up to be great in Torah. He was therefore called the father of Shemuel, Abuha DeShemuel.

Mussar: Lashon Hara

The sin of the one who speaks ill of his friend is great, even if he speaks the truth, and the one who even speaks lies is called a slanderer. The one who speaks evil of his friend one who sits and says: So and so did this, or so and so were his ancestors, or so and so I heard about him, and says things of reproach about him. Our Sages said: Evil speech is equivalent to idolatry, incest, and bloodshed. Evil speech is divided into six parts: 1 - One who speaks evil about people who have done wrong, and the people who hear remain silent, showing themselves to be listening to these things, and is therefore included in the sin of evil speech with the one who speaks it. 2 - One who speaks evil of the ancestors of so and so, this is also a great sin. 3 - If one slanders and disgraces his friend in front of others because of the deeds of his ancestors, or because of the deeds of one of his relatives. 4 - It is forbidden to tell a son that his father did such and such evil deeds in his life, and even if he tells it to his son without anyone else hearing, it is also forbidden and violates "You shall not deceive your neighbor" in violation of the words of the Pasuk. 5 - If one tells a repentant person about his earlier sins, there is a great punishment in this, because after he repents, his sins are turned into merits for him, and when this one shames him with offenses that are already merits, he puts an obstacle before him, because he thinks in his heart that if he were ashamed, then I will shame him in return! He then enters into a dispute of hatred and revenge with him, and perhaps he will even return to his first sins as

a result of all the shame. 6 - If you see your friend who has committed a sin in secret, do not reveal it for he probably will repent on his own. It is also forbidden to speak about the kosher tax collectors that they are thieves. Therefore, one should shut his mouth and not speak negatively at all, and Hashem will forgive us, Amen.

Health and Recovery

The following are behaviors that are good for your body's overall health: 1 - Clean your teeth every six months at a dentist. 2 - Make sure your mouth is closed from a very young age, especially while sleeping. 3 - You should sleep at least six hours a night. 4 - Do not switch abruptly from light to darkness and vice versa. 5 - Do not hold your phone or cell phone between your shoulder and ear without your hands. 6 - Avoid standing for long periods of time. 7 - Stay away from speakers. 8 - Completely avoid all types of smoking. 9 - Avoid holding back your waste excretion. 10 - Fill out a genetics chart. 11 - Perform laboratory tests and fill out a test monitoring chart. 12 - From the age of 30-35, take care of your cartilage and avoid lifting particularly heavy loads. 13 - Starting at age 40, measure intraocular pressure, blood pressure, and blood sugar levels. 14 - Starting at age 50, check the carotid arteries in the neck (carotis) and bone density with an ultrasound. And now let's start with a few sentences about what is happening inside our bodies. Our bodies are constantly renewing themselves, breaking down what exists and rebuilding it. The skin and nails we have today are not the same as they were a year ago, or that we will have in a week, a month, or a year. The body rebuilds itself through the food that is absorbed into the bloodstream through the small intestine, and what is broken down is mostly eliminated through liquid stools and sweat.

Rishon LeSion:

Maran Hacham Ovadia Yossef 1921-2013

Hacham Ovadia would be careful never to waste a minute from learning Torah, to the point that he would instruct the Gabbai not to give him the honor of Petihat HaHechal, because in the time it would take to walk over to the Hechal and open the curtain he would be able to learn another Pasuk with Rashi. Eighty years ago, a Talmid Hacham would sacrifice everything in order to sit and learn Torah. When it became time to get married, it was exceedingly difficult to support a household during times of poverty. The girls asked, who will feed us? The poor boy sitting and learning in Yeshiva? Maran did not have an easy time getting married. The girls would ask amongst themselves, what will he feed us, pages of Gemara? And so, they would not date him. After some time, the daughter of R' Avraham Fattal zt"l was suggested as a match for Hacham Ovadia by his uncle R' Ovadia Shabo. The first date was conducted in his sister Mazal's house. They spoke about Torah and stories of Tzadikim. Everything they spoke about he explained with sources, in depth, and with clear details. She realized quickly that this was no ordinary Ben Torah that she was dating, he was a unique and authentic Talmid Hacham with great potential for growth.

Story

The businessman continues his story to Chaim Leib: When he could not afford the exorbitant increase in rent to pay the Poritz, he was thrown into a pit with his family. He convinced the guard to allow him to leave temporarily so that he could collect the money he needed to pay the Poritz and be released from the pit, a win-win for everyone. The guard finally agreed, and so the businessman went quickly from town to town telling over his story and begging his

brethren to help him. Blessed is our nation, for they donated generously, as best as they could, and he successfully collected four hundred gold coins in order to pay the Poritz in full. He had worked so hard to collect the money, barely eating or drinking, sleeping anywhere he could, traveling from place to place. How was it fair that the Poritz could do this to him so unjustly? To torture him and his family so cruelly just because he was exceedingly selfish and wanted to satisfy his desires, it was heartless and despicable. They had agreed upon completely different terms and the Poritz had changed the terms unjustly. But what could he do now, he had no choice but to pay him in full, if he wanted to free himself and his family from captivity.

Laws

1 – While your head is wrapped in the Talit after reciting the Beracha, but before you bring the Talit down over your body, if you hear Kadish, Kedusha, Barechu, or any Beracha, you are allowed to and you are supposed to answer accordingly.

2 – Do not speak until the Talit has been brought down to cover your body, folded over on each shoulder. Those who just drape the Talit over the shoulders without actually letting it hang down in the back, properly folded over on each shoulder, are making a mistake and are not fulfilling the Mitzvah, thus causing a wasted blessing to be recited.

3 – Eating after reciting a blessing strengthens Emunah. One who does not recite a blessing before eating is stealing the food from Hashem, and is a partner with destruction, and a colleague of Yeravam Ben Nevat who led Bnei Yisrael astray. When we recite a blessing, we declare that Hashem is the Almighty King and everything belongs to Him, as it says, the world is Hashem's and He fills it.

4 – A person must recite a blessing after he finishes eating or drinking the required amount

set by our Sages. A Beracha Acharona is recited after eating a Kezayit 28 grams. If it is bread, then Birkat Hamazon is recited. For drinks, he must drink at least 87 grams, and recites Boreh Nefashot afterwards.

Sponsors

*** ***Mr. David Farhi, his wife Suzy, and their children.*** Blessings and success for the entire family, Mazal Tov to ***Mr. Morris Guindi and his wife Rutti*** on the birth of a son ***Avraham***, Mabrouk, Amen. *** ***Blessed siblings: Shelomo, David, Huder, Yosef, and Shella of the Ballas Family.*** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their father ***Marco Mordechai Ben Kahila a"h***, Leilui Nishmat their brother ***Moshe Ben Evon a"h***, and Leilui Nishmat their mother ***Evon Bat Nazli a"h***, Amen. *** ***Mrs. Evett Huder Ballas, her parents, and her children.*** Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen. *** ***Mr. Nissim Alkada, his wife Rima, and their children.*** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat her father ***Yehuda Ben Rima a"h***, and Leilui Nishmat his mother ***Rachel Bat Latifah a"h***, Amen. *** ***Mrs. Olga Zalita and her children: Nissim, Moshe, Shlomo, Nina, Fifi, Leah, and Sarah.*** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their father ***Natan Ben Najla a"h***, Amen. *** ***Mrs. Adele Hudeidi and her children.*** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat her husband and their father ***Chaim Ben Farha a"h***, Amen.

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