

Congregation

★ ★ ★ "Beth Yosef" ★ ★ ★

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

Rabbi Aharon Farhi

*Parashat **Hukat & Balak***

12th Tamuz 5786

Maqam Mahur

Issue #1165

Mr. Eliyahu Levy, President

*Haftarat **Vehaya She'erit***

June 27th 2026

*Candle Lighting 8:12pm * Shekiah 8:30pm * Shir Hashirim 7:00pm followed by Mincha Friday Night
Shaharit Shabbat 8:15am * Mincha Shabbat 7:55pm * Shabbat Ends 9:12pm & Rabbenu Tam 9:42pm
Time for Talit 4:01am * Seasonal Hour 87 * Alot Hashahar 3:41am * Netz Hachama 5:28am
Weekday Mincha 7:00pm * Earliest Time for Arbit 7:18pm * Tzet Hacocharim 9:07pm * Chatzot 12:59
Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema 8:02am * Latest Time for Morning Amidah 9:29am*

***The 17th of Tammuz Fast on Thursday July 2nd begins 3:46am, and ends 8:55pm, &
for strict 9:07pm***

***Generously sponsored by the kind-hearted Mr. Jack Saadia, his wife Shella and their
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their family in all areas physically and spiritually, Amen***

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

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Hukat

We must ask, how did *Moshe Rabbenu* change *Hashem's* commandment when He told him to "speak to the rock," yet he changed it and hit the rock instead? And an even more difficult question: How could *Hashem* say to him, "*Yaan lo he-emanem bi*" (Because you did not trust in Me), when *Hashem* Himself testified about *Moshe*, "He is trusted throughout My house"? The *Or Hachaim Hakadosh* explains that among the conditions *Hashem* made with the entire creation was that they should behave according to the laws of nature and not change their nature throughout the world's existence. However, they must listen to true *amaleh Torah* (those who toil in Torah) and do whatever they decree upon them, even changing their own nature. Therefore, before the giving of the Torah, *Moshe Rabbenu* needed the *matteh* (staff) to change nature, just as we saw *Hashem* tell him: "Take your staff and stretch out your hand," and further, "And strike the dust of the earth," and also, "And you shall strike the rock and water will come out of it"—all accomplished through

physical action and not through speech. However, after the giving of the Torah, when *Moshe* became a great and true *Talmid Chacham*, he was capable of changing nature through speech alone. Yet, in his immense humility, *Moshe* did not want to appear before the nation as though he could change nature by the mere breath of his mouth, so he struck the well of water with the *matteh* that was in his hand. Therefore, *Hashem* said to him: "*Yaan lo he-emanem bi*." How should we read the word *he-emanem*? The letter *Heh* must be pronounced with a *mile'el* accent (stressed on the first part of the word) and not *mil'ra* (stressed on the last part of the word). The explanation is as follows: If the letter *Heh* is read *mil'ra*, it means that you yourselves did not believe. But reading it *mile'el* means you did not strengthen the belief in the eyes of the nation. For if a true *Talmid Chacham* can change nature through the power of his mouth and not through action, then the entire nation would run to study Torah so they too could change nature. That is what is meant in the Pasuk, "*Yaan lo*

he-emanem bi". May Hashem protect us, Amen.

Balak

Why did *Balak* merit that *Rut Hamoabiyah* should descend from him? The answer is, in order to receive his reward for the forty-two *korbanot* (sacrifices) that he offered together with *Bilam*. "And *Bilam* arose in the morning and said... go to your land". Why in the morning? So that they would leave his house immediately and he wouldn't have to give them breakfast. In contrast, *Abraham Abinu*, even while sick and elderly, nevertheless ran in the heat of the day and provided his guests with a lavish feast. Therefore, the *Chachamim* said in *Abot*: Be among the students of *Abraham Abinu*—who possesses a good eye, and not among the students of *Bilam* the wicked—who possesses an evil eye. (*Or Hachaim*) *Balak* says to *Bilam*: "Behold, a people has come out of Egypt and they cover the face of the earth". What did *Balak* mean with this statement, isn't it obvious that the Jews left Egypt and they were a large nation? The *Or Hachaim* explains: *Bilam* was an advisor to *Paroh*, and he had advised *Paroh* to surround Egypt with various types of witchcraft so that no one could leave, and he also advised killing the boys so they wouldn't multiply. Therefore, *Balak* said to him: Your words and advice were useless. Behold, a nation has left Egypt and your witchcraft accomplished nothing, and your advice to diminish the number of the Jews did not succeed, as the Pasuk says, "behold, they cover the face of the earth" and have become many.

History in Brief

220 years after the destruction of the Temple, calendar year 270

There was an incident involving *Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi*, who had a *Tzadoki* (Sadducee) in his neighborhood who used to cause the *Rabbi* distress. *Rabbi Yehoshua* took a rooster, tied it near his bed, and said: When the moment arrives that this rooster's comb turns white—which is the moment *Hashem* gets angry each day—I will curse him. When that moment arrived, the *Rabbi* fell asleep. When he awoke, he said: It must be *Hashem* does not desire this, as it is stated, "And His mercy is upon all His creations." *Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi* also said: If the nations of the world only knew how

beautiful the *Bet Hamikdash* was for the gentiles and how much goodness it brought them, they would have surrounded the *Bet Hamikdash* with soldiers to guard it. When *Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi* would delve into the words of *Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai* and found them difficult to understand, he would go to his grave, which was near his home, and ask him, and immediately *Eliyahu HaNabi* would come to him and clarify the matters.

Health and Recovery

Another reason to avoid sleeping right after eating is because even after you finish your meal, the process of saliva secretion continues for up to nearly two hours. This occurs according to the demands of the stomach, depending on the type of food, its quantity, and how well it was chewed. Therefore, if a person goes to sleep within two hours after eating and lies on their left side, they will experience saliva drooling from their mouth onto the pillow. This happens because during sleep, a person is only capable of swallowing saliva about ten times an hour, whereas when you are awake, you swallow saliva fifty times an hour. During sleep, the excess saliva secreted for digestion ends up on the pillow and the stomach does not receive the amount of saliva it requires. For some older individuals, saliva secretion is diminished, either because they do not chew their food enough or because they do not drink enough water. Since they require extra saliva for digestion, they tend to eat something sweet at the end of their meal, such as a date or a raisin, because sweetness increases saliva secretion. There is a piece of good advice for when you arrive home tired and hungry in the afternoon: eat a small amount of fruits or vegetables, and then you can go take a rest. This rest, which will be on a stomach that is not entirely empty, will be much more effective. It can also be much shorter than if you had gone to rest before the heavy digestion process ended, and you will be able to wake up from it easily. Then, the afternoon meal you eat after the vegetables will not be eaten with a feeling of intense hunger. As a result, you will also be able to fulfill the command of the Rambam not to overfill one's stomach, and your weight will not increase.

Mussar: Hachnasat Orhim

1- Welcoming guests is a mitzvah from the Torah, which is included in the Torah's commandment to "love your neighbor as yourself." 2- Welcoming guests is greater than receiving the Divine

Presence. **3-** Welcoming guests is making an effort to bring into one's home people who are in need of food, drink, and lodging, and who do not have these things readily available to them. **4-** If a guest arrives entirely on their own, or if they are local townspeople just coming by for a visit, receiving them does not fulfill the specific mitzvah of welcoming guests. **5-** Both men and women alike are obligated in the mitzvah of welcoming guests. **6-** Proper etiquette dictates that a wife should not receive guests without her husband's permission. **7-** Welcoming guests applies whether the guests are wealthy or poor, although hosting the poor fulfills the mitzvah of Tzedakah as well. **8-** There is a uniquely high merit in hosting a Talmid Chacham in one's home. **9-** If there is a concern that a guest's behavior is unseemly, or if there is a fear of damage or corruption to the household, one is not obligated to bring them into the home. **10-** One who brings in a guest specifically to lodge for the night also fulfills the mitzvah of welcoming guests. **11-** Going out to greet and receive a guest is itself a part of fulfilling the mitzvah. **12-** Personally taking care of all the guest's needs carries more mitzvah merit than doing so through a messenger. **13-** As soon as the guest enters the house, they should be allowed to rest so they can unwind from the toil and strain of the journey. **14-** One should show the guest where the shower and restroom are so they can wash up and relieve themselves, as they might be too embarrassed to ask. **15-** One must host the guest with a cheerful and welcoming countenance so that they do not feel like a burden upon the host.

Rishon LeTzion -Maran Chacham Ovadia Yosef (1921–2013)

Difficult questions sat upon *Maran's* table, and from his house, halachic guidance went out to all of Israel. One of the topics that has developed the most in the past half-century is modern technology in light of halacha. *Maran* permitted the use of hearing aids on *Shabbat* for individuals who are hard of hearing and place the device in their ear. Likewise, regarding security cameras that operate automatically throughout all hours of the day, he ruled that it is permissible for a person to walk past them on *Shabbat*. The reasoning is that since he has absolutely no intention to be photographed, it constitutes a *pesik resha de-lo nicha leh* (an inevitable result that provides no benefit) regarding a rabbinic prohibition, which is permissible. *Maran* also ruled that it is a great *mitzvah* to donate one of one's kidneys to a sick

person, since the risk percentages for the kidney donor are extremely small, and the reality shows that 95% of donors emerge from this surgery healthy and live long years.

Damascus - Capital of Syria

In the year 610 of their era, there were wars between the Persians and the Byzantines. And who were the Byzantines? In the year 395, the Roman Empire split into two states: the Western with its capital in Rome, and the Eastern with its capital in Byzantium. Later, the Emperor Constantine came in the year 330, took control of Byzantium, and renamed the city Constantinople after himself. The Jews called it *Kushta*, and it is the city of Istanbul to this very day. He established the Christian religion as the official religion of Istanbul. In the year 1453, Byzantium, which is Istanbul, fell to the Turks. During the wars between the Persians and the Byzantines, the Jews of Damascus stood alongside the Persian conquerors. After the Muslim conquest, the Jews concentrated in the eastern part of Damascus, and that quarter was established as the Jewish street for generations until this day.

Laws

1- The fast of the *Shibah Asar b'Tammuz* will fall this year on Thursday, July 2nd, and everyone is obligated to fast. It begins in the morning at 3:46 AM and ends at 8:55 PM, and those who are stringent should wait until 9:07 PM. The time of the fast begins at *alot hashachar* (dawn), which is one seasonal hour and a fifth before *Netz hachamah* (sunrise). On the day of the fast, a seasonal hour is 87 minutes, and an hour and a fifth is 87 + 17, which equals 104 minutes before sunrise. Thus, dawn will begin at 3:46 AM.

2- Before sleeping, one should make a mental condition that they intend to wake up before dawn to eat and drink. If they did not make this condition, they are forbidden to eat upon waking up from their sleep.

3- A pregnant or nursing woman, a woman within twenty-four months of giving birth, a woman who has miscarried, someone who is sick—even if there is no danger to life—a sick person who has recovered but is still weak, and a frail elderly person are all exempt from fasting. It is permissible for them to eat, but it is proper that they should not eat for pleasure or

enjoyment, but rather only what they require for their health.

4- A groom within his seven days of wedding celebration, as well as the father of the baby, the *sandak*, or the *mohel*, are all obligated to fast. However, if the fast is postponed to Sunday they do not complete their fast, but rather they eat after *chatzot* (midday).

5- For someone who finds it very difficult (*istanis*) without brushing their teeth every morning, it is permissible to use toothpaste. One must be careful to tilt their face downward so that no water enters their throat.

6- A healthy person who is fasting is permitted to swallow pills or caplets for various ailments, such as headaches. However, if possible, they should take them without water, and on condition that the medications are for physical need and the palate derives no pleasure from them. If it is impossible to swallow them without water, they may drink a tiny bit of water to swallow the pill.

7- Someone who forgot and ate on the fast day, and afterwards remembered, must complete their fast. If they ate a *kezayit* (an olive's volume of food), even though they complete their fast, they do not recite the *Anenu* prayer in the *Minchah Amidah*.

8- Someone who forgot and recited a blessing over food or drink should taste a tiny bit of it so that their throat derives benefit, and their blessing will not have been made in vain.

9- After reciting *Anenu*, an individual concludes the blessing with "*Baruch Atah Hashem Shome'ah Tefilah*", and does not conclude with "*Ha'oneh le'amo Yisrael be'et tzarah*". This latter conclusion was only instituted for the *chazzan* when he says *Anenu* out loud during the repetition of the *Amidah* between the blessings of *Go'el* and *Rofe'ah*.

10- If someone forgot and did not say *Anenu*, they should continue the *Amidah* and do not go back. Instead, they should say *Anenu* without its concluding blessing at the end of the "*Elokai Netzor*" supplication.

11- It is permissible to smoke on a fast day.

12- A boy under thirteen years old and a girl under twelve years old are exempt from fasting.

13- For those who pray *Minchah Gedolah* the early afternoon prayer on a fast day, even if it is before *Plag Minchah*, there is no *Kohanim* in *Hazara*. Likewise, the "threefold blessing" of the *Kohanim* (the *Eloheinu v'Eloheh Abotenu*

prayer) is not recited by the congregation when there are no *Kohanim* present.

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