



Shabbat P. Balak,

Sat. 7 - 8 Jul. 2017 - 14th of Tamuz, 5777 -

יד תמוז תשע"ז

שבת פ' בלק

Issue Number 801

Baal Koreh

Mr Jacob Oved & Mr
Nathanel Sheldon (Page-856).

Mufteer & Haftarah

Mr Ezekiel J. Ezekiel (Page -1189).

Fast 17 of Tamuz - Tue, 11th July.

צום שבועה עשר בתמוז - ביום שלישי 11 יולי.

Fast Starts 03:39 - terminate, 22:12

תחילת הצום 03:39 - סיום 22:12

Shir Hashirim, Mincha, Kabalat Shabbat & Arbit.

19:00

Shabbat Candles.

21:02

Shabbat Shahrit - Followed by Kiddush. (Shema 8:23).

08:30

Daf Hayomi with Rabbi Asher Sebbag Shlit"a.

19:30

Mincha Shabbat Followed by Seuda Shlishit. (Sunset - 21:17).

20:30

Arbit Motzei Shabbat followed by Havdalah.

22:30

Shahrit Weekday - Sunday - Shahrit (07:30). (Mon & Thu 06:40)

06:45

Daf Hayomi with Rabbi Asher Sebbag Shlit"a.

18:15

Mincha & Arbit

19:15

Shir Hashirim, Mincha, Kabalat Shabbat & Arbit.

19:00

Shabbat Candles. **P. Pinchas.**

20:57

Balak (Numbers 22:2-25:9)

Balak 5777

GOOD MORNING! The story is told of Napoleon walking through the streets of Paris one Tisha B'av (the 9th day of the Hebrew month of Av, a day of fasting and mourning for the destruction of the two Temples). As his entourage passed a synagogue he heard wailing and crying coming from within; he sent an aide to inquire as to what had happened. The aide returned and told Napoleon that the Jews were in mourning over the loss of their Temple. Napoleon was indignant! "Why wasn't I informed? When did this happen? Which Temple?" The aide responded, "They lost their Temple in Jerusalem on this date 1700 years ago."

Napoleon stood in silence and then said, "Certainly a people which has mourned the loss of their Temple for so long will survive to see it rebuilt!"

If we know our history and understand it, then we can put our life in perspective. We can understand ourselves, our people, our goals, our values. We will know the direction of our lives, what we want to accomplish with our lives and what we are willing to bear in order to fulfill our destiny. Friedrich Nietzsche put it well, "If you have a 'why' to live for, you can bear with any 'how'."

We are now entering into a period that has historically been one of sadness for the Jewish people -- the Three

Weeks. This is the time between the 17th of Tamuz (observed Tuesday, July 11th) and the 9th of Av (starting Monday night, July 31st until Tuesday night). This is a period when many tragedies happened to the Jewish people. Why do we mourn the loss of the Temple after so many years? What did and does it mean to us?

The Temple was a central focal point of the Jewish people. Three times a year -- Passover, Shavuot and Sukkot -- the Jews living in the Land of Israel came to worship and celebrate at the Temple. It offered us the ultimate opportunity to come close to the Almighty, to elevate ourselves spiritually. It represented the purpose of the Jewish people in the Land of Israel - - to be a holy people united with the Almighty in our own land ... a Jewish state. That is what we seek to regain and that is why we mourn and remember the loss of what we once had.

What can one read to gain knowledge, get perspective, to understand who the Jewish people are and what we are about? Certainly, reading the [Five Books of Moses](#) is the place to start. I recommend the Artscroll Stone Edition. [Nineteen Letters](#) by Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch will give a tremendous understanding of the Jewish purpose. [Nine Questions People Ask About Judaism](#) and [Why the Jews - - The Reason for Anti-Semitism](#) by Praeger and Telushkin address central issues of the Jewish people. And then there is [Judaism in a Nutshell: God](#) by Rabbi Shimon Apisdorf for people who are long on curiosity, but short on time. For more history and understanding of

the holidays, read [Book of Our Heritage](#) by Eliyahu Kitov.

In Jewish cosmology, the Three Weeks are considered to be such an inauspicious time period that one is not allowed to get married. From the 1st of Av (July 24th), one is even advised to push off court cases until after the 10th of Av (August 2nd). We refrain from hair-cutting, purchasing or wearing new clothing, listening to music and pleasure trips. It is a time for self-reflection and improvement.

On the 17th of Tamuz, five calamitous events occurred in our history: 1) Moshe broke the first Tablets of the Ten Commandments when he descended from Mt. Sinai and saw the worshipping of the Golden Calf 2) The Daily Sacrificial Offerings ceased in the First Temple due to lack of sheep 3) The walls of Jerusalem were breached during the siege of the Second Temple 4) Apustumus-the-Wicked burned a Sefer Torah and 5) An idol was placed in the Sanctuary of the Second Temple.

The 17th of Tamuz is a fast day. The fast begins approximately an hour before sunrise and continuing until about an hour after sunset. The purpose of the fast is to awaken our hearts to repentance through recalling our forefathers' misdeeds which led to tragedies and our repetition of those mistakes. The fasting is a preparation for repentance -- to break the body's dominance over a person's spiritual side. One should engage in self-examination and undertake to correct mistakes in his relationship with God, his fellow man and with himself.

It is interesting to note that Saddam Hussein was a student of Jewish history.

He named the nuclear reactor (from which he planned to create a bomb to drop on Israel) -- you guessed it, Tamuz 17! (Want the source? [Two Minutes Over Baghdad](#) by Amos Perlmutter). I also highly recommend ShabbatShalomAudio.com and aish.com/holidays. There are many excellent articles and insights on our website.



TORAH PORTION OF THE WEEK

Balak, Numbers 22:2 - 25:9

This week's portion is one of the most fascinating psychologically-revealing portions in the whole Torah! Bilaam, a non-Jewish prophet, was granted a level of prophecy close to Moshe's level of prophecy. The Almighty gave Bilaam these powers so that the nations of the world could not say at some point in the future, "If we had a prophet like Moshe, we too would have accepted the Torah and would have lived according to it." Bilaam is an intriguing character -- honor-driven, arrogant and self-serving. Unfortunately, not too unique amongst mankind.

Balak, the king of Moav, wanted to hire Bilaam to curse the Jewish people for a fortune of money. It is interesting that Balak believed in God and the power of invoking a curse from God, yet thought that God would change His mind about His Chosen People. (God is not a man who changes his mind). Bilaam was very desirous to accept the assignment to curse the Jews -- more for the profit motive than the prophet motive.

The Almighty allowed Bilaam to go to Balak (cautioning him to only say

what God told him). The Almighty gives every person free-will and allows us to go in the direction that we choose. Three times Bilaam tried to curse us and three times the Almighty placed blessings in his mouth. Balak was furious! So, Bilaam gave him advice with hopes of collecting his fee -- "If you want to destroy the Jewish people, entice the men with Moabite women and tell the women not to submit until the men bow down to an idol." Balak followed the advice and consequently the Almighty brought a plague against the Jewish people because the men fell for Bilaam's plot. We see from this that the Almighty hates licentiousness and idol worship.

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Dvar Torah

*based on [Growth Through Torah](#) by
Rabbi Zelig Pliskin*

The Torah states:

"And the Almighty said to Bilaam, do not go with them. Do not curse the nation for they are blessed" (Numbers 22:12).

Bilaam tells the messengers from Balak, "God refuses to let me go with you" implying that he could only accompany representatives of a higher social status. How is it possible that Bilaam misunderstood the Almighty's message to refer to the honor due someone of his own "distinguished" status, rather than the plain meaning of the words?

From here we see the power of bias to blind a person. Bilaam's own arrogance led him to fool himself about what he thought were the Almighty's intentions. It is clear to any unbiased person that the Almighty did not want

Bilaam to curse the Jewish people. However, a person usually hears just what he wants to hear.

Each of us must realize that we too have biases and selective hearing. By being aware of our biases, hopefully we can avoid making embarrassing and

costly mistakes. By discussing with a friend, we can further protect ourselves from our biases.



Shabbat Shalom,
Kalman
Rabbi Kalman
Packouz

Mazel Tov to: Russell and Farah Sheldon on their son Nathanel's Bar Mitzva. The kiddush is presented for the occasion.

Mazel tov to: Yvonne and Harry Fattal on the wedding of their Daughter Elizabeth to Jeremie.

Guest speaker next Shabbat: Rabbi Eli Salomon from (Israel). The Rabbi collects funds to support soldier's families who lost a member, on the battlefield.

Kolel: With the patronage of the Rabbi and the Committee, on Sunday 9th of July, a Halacha shiur will start at Ohel David under the responsibility of Rabbi Mordehai Cohen. This shiur is dedicated to people with a background in Limoud Torah. Our objective is to provide students between the age of 17 to 97 with a strong and structured methodology to understand the way the Halacha is defined. How the Guemara, the rishonim, Maran Yossef Karo, the Aharonim and our contemporary Rabanim understood and built the rules that define the halacha. The course will take place every Sunday between (09:30 to 12:30) at Ohel David Synagogue hall ground floor, For more detail and registration, please contact Rabbi Mordehai Cohen, (07713 695864).

Dear all: When we have an event at the synagogue such as a Bar Mitzvah, please do not make a fuss if somebody is sitting in your regular seat. Thank you.

Sefer Torah: We will be presented with a new sefer torah and Haftorah sefer at the end of November (Heshvan).

Security Alert: Please be very vigilant when you leave the Synagogue. Do not stand in groups and chat, go home without gathering on the main road. Be safe and alert.

THE KEHILLA WISHES חיים ארוכים "LONG LIFE"
TO THE FOLLOWING WHO HAVE YAHRZEIT

01 Tammuz Mr Sami Shemie	12 Tammuz Mrs Vera J Wegscheider
07 Tammuz Mr Raphael Mansour	17 Tammuz Mr David Gigi
08 Tammuz Mr Fred Dalah	17 Tammuz Mr Y. Kelly Saltoun
08 Tammuz Mr Andrew Dalah	19 Tammuz Mr Moshe Moses
09 Tammuz Mr David Gigi	23 Tammuz Mr Charlie Morris
13 Tammuz Mrs Muzel Gubbay	29 Tammuz Mr Saul Benjamin
12 Tammuz Mr William Abner	27 Tammuz Mr Cesar Sassoon

Quote of the Week

Everything that irritates us about others
can lead us to an understanding of ourselves