

Parsha Q&A



Parshas Balak

For the week ending 12 Tammuz 5756 (19 Tammuz 5756)*
28 & 29 June 1996 (5 & 6 July 1996)*
* week ending dates for locations outside of Israel

Parsha Questions

1. Which two traditional enemies joined forces to combat the Jewish People?
2. Since Bilaam was such an evil person why did Hashem grant him prophesy?
3. On what basis did Balak think that Bilaam's curse would be effective?
4. Why didn't the elders of Midian remain overnight with Bilaam?
5. When did Bilaam receive his prophecies?
6. Hashem opened his conversation with Bilaam by asking, "Who are these men with you?" What did Bilaam deduce from this question?
7. How do we know that Bilaam hated the Jewish People more than Balak?
8. What is evidence of Bilaam's arrogance?
9. What is evidence of Bilaam's greed?
10. In his conversation with his donkey, how did Bilaam shame himself in front of the princes?
11. Why was Bilaam's donkey slain by the *Mal'ach*?
12. Why did Bilaam tell Balak to build seven altars?
13. In which ways does the Jewish nation "not reckon itself among the nations"?
14. Why did Balak tell Bilaam to curse the Jewish People from Rosh Hapigah?
15. What tragedy befell the Jewish People at Rosh Hapigah?
16. Why are the Jewish People compared to 'lions'?
17. On Bilaam's third attempt to curse the Jewish People he changed his strategy. What did he do differently?
18. What were Bilaam's three primary characteristics?
19. What did Bilaam see that made him decide not to curse the Jewish People?
20. In verse 24:19, Bilaam stated that a king, "shall rule and destroy the remnant of the city." Who is the king and which city?



Bonus Q: Bilaam's ability to curse was based on his knowledge of the precise '*rega*' (moment) each day of Hashem's '*anger*.' How long is a '*rega*? What curse against the Jewish People could Bilaam have uttered during that time?

I Did Not Know That!

Bilaam struck his donkey rather than curse it because he intended to curse the Jewish People that day, and only one curse can be effective on any given day.

Ba'al Haturim

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Parshas **Balak** — 12 Tammuz 5756, 28 & 29 June 1996

Production Design: Lev Seltzer

Recommended Reading List

Ramban

22:5	Balak's Rise to Power
22:20	Bilaam's Mission
22:23	The Donkey
23:16	Bilaam's Prophecy
24:20	Amalek

Sforno

22:2	What Balak Saw
22:6	Bilaam's Power
23:22	Jewish Conquest

Answers to this Week's Questions

All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary, unless otherwise stated

- 22:4 - Midian and Moav.
- 22:5 - So that the Gentile world could not say "If we also had prophets, we would also return to be good."
- 22:6 - He knew that Bilaam had helped Sichon to defeat Moav.
- 22:7 - They set for themselves a sign that if Bilaam didn't come right away, he would not be of help to them.
- 22:8 - Only at night.
- 22:9 - That Hashem isn't omniscient.
- 22:11 - Balak wanted to drive the Jewish People from the land. Bilaam sought to exterminate them.
- 22:13 - He suggested to the princes of Moav that Hashem wouldn't permit him to go with them due to their lesser dignity.
- 22:18 - He told the princes that Balak should give him all of his gold, since otherwise Balak would need to hire many armies.
- 22:29 - He told his donkey, "Were there a sword in my hand, I would slay you." He was hired to destroy an entire nation through his power of speech, yet for a donkey he needed a sword!
- 22:33 - So that people should not point to it and say, "This is the donkey that silenced Bilaam." Hashem is concerned for the dignity of mankind.
- 23:4 - Corresponding to the seven altars built by the Avos. Bilaam said to Hashem, "The ancestors of the Jewish People built seven altars, but I alone have built a number equal to all of them."
- 23:9 - They will not be exterminated like other nations. When they rejoice, no other nation rejoices with them. When other nations prosper, the Jewish People can share in their prosperity without having it effect their life in the World-to-Come.
- 23:14 - Balak foresaw trouble for the Jewish People at that site.
- 23:14 - Moshe died there.
- 23:24 - They arise in the morning, and 'strengthen' themselves to perform *mitzvos*.
- 24:1 - He realized that enchantments wouldn't convince Hashem to allow him to curse the Jewish People. He hoped that by calling attention to their sins, he would be permitted to curse them.
- 24:2 - An evil eye, pride, and greed.
- 24:2 - He saw each Tribe dwelling without intermingling. He saw the tents arranged so that no one could see into his neighbor's tent.
- 24:19 - The king is the *Mashiach* and the city is Rome.

Bonus

A:

A '*rega*' is the fraction of a second required to say the word '*rega*'. In that time, Bilaam could utter the word '*kalem*' (destroy them). Alternatively, Bilaam needed only to begin his curse during the '*rega*' of Divine anger, and then he could continue even afterwards.

Brachos 7a, Tosafos