

# KMS Family Parsha Sheet

בס"ד

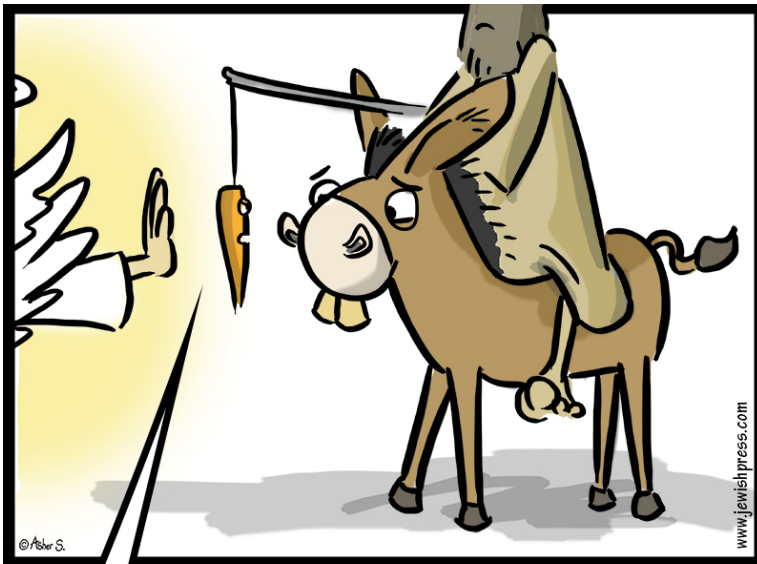
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Balak - בלַק

## Parsha Questions

(Answers on the back)

- 1) Which relative of Balak has a name linguistically related to a relative of Moshe?
- 2) Balak wants to curse Bnei Yisrael (22:6) "כי עצום הוא ממני" - Because he is too strong for me." Shouldn't it say "they are too strong for me?"
- 3) In this parsha, to whom does Hashem ask a question? What 3 other places in the Torah does Hashem ask someone a question?
- 4) How do we know Bilam hated the Jews more than Balak did?
- 5) Why is it significant that Bilam saddled his own donkey?
- 6) Why does Hashem get angry at Bilam for going with Balak's men (22:22) if He told him he could go with them (22:20)?
- 7) In this parsha, a donkey speaks to Bilam (22:28). Where else in the Torah does an animal speak to a human?
- 8) Why would Hashem override the laws of nature to have a donkey speak to Bilam?
- 9) Bilam compared his meeting with an angel to someone else's meeting with an angel. Who was the other person and what was the comparison?
- 10) What daily morning prayer begins with words said by Bilam?



"You're not really gonna stop are you? Who are you gonna listen to? a wacko in a white dress, or a perfectly sensible, deliciously juicy carrot?!"



## Words of Wisdom

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik

The student of Torah is like the amnesia victim who tries to reconstruct from fragments the beautiful world he once experienced. By learning Torah, man returns to his own self.

## Did You Know?

Tzaar Baalei Chayim (Causing Pain To Animals)

Rabbi Ozer Alport

It is forbidden to cause unnecessary pain and suffering to animals. There is a Talmudic dispute regarding the origin of this prohibition: is it Biblical or Rabbinical in nature? As there seems to be no explicit verse anywhere in the Torah forbidding a person to afflict pain on animals, what is the source of the prohibition according to the opinion that maintains that it is a Biblical mitzvah?

In his work Guide to the Perplexed (3:17), Maimonides suggests that this opinion is derived from our parsha.

G-d attempted to impede Balaam's journey by sending an angel to block his path, but only Balaam's donkey saw the sword-wielding angel. When the angel attempted to turn and avoid the angel, Balaam grew angry at the donkey, striking it and threatening to kill it. G-d opened the donkey's mouth and it asked him (Bamidbar 22:28), "What have I done to you that you struck me these three times?" The Rambam writes that these words of the donkey teach us that it is Biblically forbidden to strike or otherwise cause needless pain to animals.



## Parsha Answers:

- 1) The father of Balak is Tzipor (BaMidbar 22:2), similar to the name of Moshe's wife, Tzipora (Shemot 2:21). Both names mean "bird."
- 2) Balak saw that David HaMelech would descend from him (through Ruth) and that he would conquer Moav. He wanted to stop this future adversary who would come from his own line.
- 3) Hashem asks Bilam, "Who are these men with you?" (22:9). In Parshat Breishit, Hashem asks Adam, "Where are you?" (3:9). and asks Kayin "Where is Hevel your brother?" (4:9). In Vayera, after Sarah laughed upon hearing the news of her upcoming childbirth, Hashem asks Avraham, "Why did Sarah laugh?" (18:13).
- 4) Rashi 22:11 - Balak wanted only to drive the Jews from the land. Bilam sought to exterminate them completely.
- 5) Rashi 22:21 - He hated Bnei Yisrael so much that he ignored his own stature and eagerly saddled the donkey himself. In contrast, Avraham loved Hashem so much that at the Akeidat Yitzchak he too saddles his own donkey, out of love.
- 6) Vilna Gaon - Hashem told Bilam to accompany them (22:20 - אתם) but not to be "with" them completely (22:12 - עמהם). Bilam went with full intent (22:21 - וילך עם שרי מואב).
- 7) In Parshat Breishit, the snake speaks to Chava and entices her to eat from the Tree of Knowledge (3:1).
- 8) Seforno - G-d's desire for repentance is so great that He even goes beyond the ordinary in order to give a person a chance at repentance. This is true even for a despicable human being such as Bilam.
- 9) Rashi 22:34 - Avraham. Bilam said, "G-d told me to go but later sent an angel to stop me. The same thing happened to Avraham: G-d told Avraham to sacrifice Yitzchak but later canceled the command through an angel."
- 10) מה טובו אהליו יעקב משכנותיו ישראל - How goodly are your tents, O Jacob, your dwelling places, O Israel.



## Tefilla Insights

### Mizmor Letodah (outorah.org)

This short psalm (#100), written by Moshe Rabbeinu, was recited by the Levites at the Temple when a thanksgiving offering was being sacrificed. There are four different times when a thanksgiving offering was brought. It was brought by one who was released from jail, one who traveled the ocean, one who healed from sickness, and one who traveled the desert.

Rav Schwab points out in his book that although this prayer refers to korbanot - sacrifices; it nevertheless is not located in our prayers amidst all of the other korbanot. Why not? He explains based on the Midrash Rabbah Vayikra that in the Messianic era all voluntary offerings will cease except for the Thanksgiving offering. The reason for this is that once the Moshiach, Messiah, arrives there will no longer be a need for personal and/or national requests. However, there will always be the need to be thankful.

It is interesting to note that if one arrives late and must skip a prayer or two in order to catch up to the chazzan, the Halacha is one should NOT skip Mizmor Letodah because of its importance.



## This Week In Jewish History


### Tammuz 17

(Aish.com)

Five major catastrophes occurred in Jewish history on the 17th of Tammuz: (1) Moses broke the tablets at Mount Sinai, in response to the building of the Golden Calf. (2) The daily offerings in the First Temple were suspended during the siege of Jerusalem in the 5th century BCE. (3) Jerusalem's walls were breached, prior to the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE. (4) Prior to the Great Revolt, the Roman general Apostamos burned a Torah scroll -- setting a precedent for the horrific burning of Jewish books throughout the centuries. (5) An idolatrous image was placed in the Holy Temple -- a brazen act of blasphemy and desecration.

## Key Number or Word In The Parsha

### Teruah - תרועה



Rashi (23:21) explains that the word **תרועה** comes from the word **רעות**, which means friend. He explains that even when Bnei Yisrael make mistakes Hashem still cares about us, like a friend.

This gives new meaning to the **תרועה** sounds of the Shofar on Rosh Hashana. When we hear those sounds we are reminded that Hashem cares about us. We are His **רעים אהובים**, beloved friends.