

# Parsha Q&A



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## Parshas Balak

For the week ending 10 Tamuz 5755 (17 Tamuz 5755)\*

7 & 8 July 1995 (14 & 15 July 1995)\*

\* week ending dates for locations outside of Israel

### Parsha Questions

1. Which two traditional enemies joined forces to combat the Jewish People?
2. Why did Moav consult Midian?
3. Since Bilaam was such an evil person why did Hashem grant him prophesy?
4. On what basis did Balak think that Bilaam's curse would be effective?
5. Why didn't the elders of Midian remain overnight with Bilaam?
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. Hashem told Bilaam that he should not curse the Jewish People. What did Bilaam hope to achieve by going to Balak?
11. In his conversation with his donkey, how did Bilaam shame himself in front of the princes?
12. Why was Bilaam's donkey slain by the *Mal'ach*?
13. Why did Bilaam tell Balak to build seven altars?
14. In which ways does the Jewish nation "not reckon itself among the nations"?
15. Why did Balak direct Bilaam where to go to curse the Jewish People?
16. Why did Balak tell Bilaam to curse the Jewish People from Rosh Hapigah?
17. What tragedy befell the Jewish People at Rosh Hapigah?
18. Why are the Jewish People compared to 'lions'?
19. How does a Jew lie down at night?
20. What were Bilaam's three primary characteristics?
21. What did Bilaam see that made him decide not to curse the Jewish People?
22. 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?
23. Why is Amalek called "The First of Nations"?

BONUS

Q:

Bilaam praised the Jewish People by saying, "Who has counted the dust of Yaakov? (23:10)" Rashi says this refers to the *mitzvos* that the Jewish People perform in connection with the dirt and ashes (*Parah Adumah, Kelayim, etc.*).

Why is it so difficult to count the *mitzvos* performed with dirt?

### I Did Not Know That!

"And Hashem opened the mouth of the donkey" (22:28).

Hashem was informing Bilaam that he was no more fit for prophecy than his donkey.

Kli Yakar

## 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.
- 22:4 - Moav saw that Sichon and Og were defeated in a supernatural fashion. They consulted Midian to find out what was the strength of Moshe. (Moshe lived much of his life in Midian).
- 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.
- 22:9 - 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.
- 22:20 - He hoped to persuade Hashem to change his mind.
- 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 was more expert at divination than Bilaam.
- 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*.
- 23:24 - He reads *Shema* and entrusts his spirit into the hands of Hashem, so that Hashem protects him.
- 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.
- 24:20 - It was the first nation to attack the Jewish People.

BONUS

A:

Bilaam wasn't praising the number of *mitzvos*, but the reward for performing those *mitzvos*. That reward can't be enumerated.

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