

The book of Numbers

Balak - בלק



Coastal Landscape with Balaam and the Ass (1636 painting by Bartholomeus Breenbergh)

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Balak is the 40th weekly Torah portion (פָּרָשָׁה, parashah) in the annual Jewish cycle of Torah reading and the seventh in the Book of Numbers. In the parashah, Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, tries to hire Balaam to curse Israel, Balaam's donkey speaks to Balaam, and Balaam blesses Israel instead. The parashah constitutes Numbers 22:2–25:9. The parashah is made up of 5,357 Hebrew letters, 1,455 Hebrew words, 104 verses, and 178 lines in a Torah Scroll (סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה, Sefer Torah).

Jews generally read it in late June or July. In most years (for example, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022, 2024, 2025, and 2028), parashah Balak is read separately. In some years (for example, 2020, 2023, 2026, and 2027) when the second day of Shavuot falls on a Sabbath in the Diaspora (where observant Jews observe Shavuot for two days), parashah Balak is combined with the previous parashah, Chukat, in the Diaspora to synchronize readings thereafter with those in Israel (where Jews observe Shavuot for one day).

 **Aliya: Kohen-Chessed-Abraham** 

In the first reading (עלייה, aliyah), Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, grew alarmed at the Israelites' military victories among the Amorites. He consulted with the elders of Midian and sent elders of Moab and Midian to the land by the Euphrates to invite the prophet Balaam to come and curse the Israelites for him. Balaam told them: "Spend the night here, and I shall reply to you as YHVH may instruct me." God came to Balaam and said: "You must not curse that people, for they are blessed."

Chapter: 22

2. וַיֵּרָא בְּלָק בֶּן-צִפּוֹר אֶת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאִמֹרִי:

2. And Balak the son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites.

3. וַיִּגַּר מוֹאָב מִפְּנֵי הָעָם מְאֹד כִּי רַב-הוּא וַיִּקְיָן מוֹאָב מִפְּנֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

3. And Moab was sore afraid of the people, because they were many; and Moab was overcome with dread because of the children of Israel.

4. וַיֹּאמֶר מוֹאָב אֶל-זִמְרִי בְּדִין עֲתָה יִלְוֹכּוּ הַקְּהָל אֶת-כָּל-סְבִיבֹתֵינוּ

כְּלוּזָה הַשְּׂוֹר אֶת יֶרֶק הַשְּׂדֵה וּבְלָק בֶּן-צִפּוֹר מְלַךְ לְמוֹאָב בָּעֵת הַהוּא:

4. And Moab said unto the elders of Midian: 'Now will this multitude lick up all that is round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field.' --And Balak the son of Zippor was king of Moab at that time.--

5. וַיִּשְׁלַח מוֹאָב מְלָאכִים אֶל-בְּלָעָם בֶּן-בְּעֹר פְּתוּרָה אֲשֶׁר עַל-הַנָּהָר אַרְיָן

בְּנֵי-עַמּוֹ לְקָרֵא-לוֹ לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה עָם יֵצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם הַנֵּה כִסָּה אֶת-עֵינַי

הָאָרֶץ וְהוּא יֵשֵׁב בְּמִלְכִי:

5. And he sent messengers unto Balaam the son of Beor, to Pethor, which is by the River, to the land of the children of his people, to call him, saying: 'Behold, there is a people come out from Egypt; behold, they cover the face of the earth, and they abide over against me.

6. וְעַתָּה לְכֵה-נָא אָרְה-לִי אֶת-הָעָם הַזֶּה כִּי-עֲצוּם הוּא מִפְּנֵי אוֹלֵי אוֹכְלֵי

נֹכַח-בּוֹ וְאֶגְרָשֶׁנּוּ מִן-הָאָרֶץ כִּי יֵדְעֵתִי אֶת אֲשֶׁר-תִּבְרָךְ מִבְּרַךְ וְאֲשֶׁר

תֵּאָר יוֹאָר:

6. Come now therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me; peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land; for I know that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed.'

7. וַיִּלְכּוּ וְקָנִי בּוֹאֵב וְקָנִי מוֹדִיָן וְקִסְמִים בְּיָדָם וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל-בְּלָעָם וַיְדַבְּרוּ

אֵלָיו דְּבָרֵי בְּלָק:

7. And the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the rewards of divination in their hand; and they came unto Balaam, and spoke unto him the words of Balak.

8. וַיֹּאמְרוּ אֵלָיָם לֵינוּ פֹה הַלְלִילָה וְהִשְׁבַּחְתָּ אֶתְכֶם דָּבָר כַּאֲשֶׁר יִדְבַר יְהוָה

אֵלָי וַיֵּשְׁבוּ שְׂרֵי-בּוֹאֵב עִם-בְּלָעָם:

8. And he said unto them: 'Lodge here this night, and I will bring you back word, as YHVH may speak unto me'; and the princes of Moab abode with Balaam.

9. וַיָּבֹא אֱלֹהִים אֶל-בְּלָעָם וַיֹּאמֶר מִי הָאֲנָשִׁים הָאֵלֶּה עִמָּךְ:

9. And God came unto Balaam, and said: 'What men are these with thee?'

10. וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלָעָם אֶל-הָאֱלֹהִים בְּלָק בֶּן-צֹפֹר מִלֶּךְ בּוֹאֵב שְׁלַח אֵלָי:

10. And Balaam said unto God: 'Balak the son of Zippor, king of Moab, hath sent unto me saying:

11. הִנֵּה הָעָם הַיֵּצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם וַיִּכַּס אֶת-עֵינַי הָאָרֶץ עִתָּה לְכָה קָבֵה-לִּי אֹתוֹ אוֹלֵי אוֹכַל לְהַלְלוֹם בּוֹ וְגַרְשֵׁתִיו:

11. Behold the people that is come out of Egypt, it covereth the face of the earth; now, come curse me them; peradventure I shall be able to fight against them, and shall drive them out.'

12. וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל-בְּלָעָם לֹא תִלְךָ עִמָּהֶם לֹא תֵאָר אֶת-הָעָם כִּי

בָּרוּךְ הוּא:

12. And God said unto Balaam: 'Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people; for they are blessed.'

—◆ Aliya: Levi-Gevurah-Isaac ◆—

—◆ When combined, Aliya: Fifth, Hod, Aaron ◆—

In the second reading (עלייה, aliyah), in the morning, Balaam asked Balak's dignitaries to leave, as God would not let him go with them, and they left and reported Balaam's answer to Balak. Then Balak sent more numerous and distinguished dignitaries, who offered Balaam rich rewards in return for damning the Israelites. But Balaam replied: "Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not do anything, big or little, contrary to the command of YHVH my God." Nonetheless, Balaam invited the dignitaries to stay overnight to let Balaam find out what else God might say to him, and that night God told Balaam: "If these men have come to invite you, you may go with them."

13. וַיָּקָם בְּלָעָם בַּבֹּקֶר וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-שָׂרֵי בְלָק לָכוּ אֵל-אֲרֻצְכֶם כִּי מֵאֵן יִהְיֶה לְתַתִּי לְהִלְךָ עִמָּכֶם:

13. And Balaam rose up in the morning, and said unto the princes of Balak: 'Get you into your land; for YHVH refuseth to give me leave to go with you.'

14. וַיָּקוּמוּ שָׂרֵי מוֹאָב וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל-בְּלָק וַיֹּאמְרוּ מֵאֵן בְּלָעָם הִלְךָ עִמָּנוּ:

14. And the princes of Moab rose up, and they went unto Balak, and said: 'Balaam refuseth to come with us.'

15. וַיִּסַּף עוֹד בְּלָק שְׂלֹזוֹ שָׂרִים רַבִּים וְנִכְבְּדִים מֵאֵלֶּה:

15. And Balak sent yet again princes, more, and more honourable than they.

16. וַיָּבֹאוּ אֵל-בְּלָעָם וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ כֹּה אָמַר בְּלָק בֶּן-צִפּוֹר אֶל-נָא תִּמְנַע

בְּמִהְלֶךְ אֵלַי:

16. And they came to Balaam, and said to him: 'Thus saith Balak the son of Zippor: Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming unto me;

17. כִּי-כִבֹּד אֶכְבְּדְּךָ מְאֹד וְכֹל אֲשֶׁר-תֹּאמַר אֵלַי אֶעֱשֶׂה וּלְכֵה-נָא

קָבֵה-לִּי אֶת הָעָם הַזֶּה:

17. for I will promote thee unto very great honour, and whatsoever thou sayest unto me I will do; come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people.'

18. וַיַּעַן בְּלָעָם וַיֹּאמַר אֶל-עַבְדֵי בְלָק אִם-יִתֶּן-לִּי בְלָק מִלֶּא בִּיתוֹ כֶּסֶף

וְזָהָב לֹא אוֹכַל לְעֵבֵר אֶת-פִּי יְהוָה אִלְמָּה לַעֲשׂוֹת קְטָנָה אוֹ גְדוֹלָה:

18. And Balaam answered and said unto the servants of Balak: 'If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of YHVH my God, to do any thing, small or great.

19. וַעֲתָה יָשְׁבוּ נָא בְּזֶה נָם-אֲתֶם הַלַּיְלָה וְאִדְעָה בֵּה-יִסַּף יְהוָה דְּבַר עִמִּי:

19. Now therefore, I pray you, tarry ye also here this night, that I may know what YHVH will speak unto me more.'

20. וַיָּבֹא אֵלֵהֶם | אֶל-בְּלָעָם לֵימַר וַיֹּאמַר לוֹ אִם-לִקְרָא לְךָ בָּאוּ

הָאֲנָשִׁים קוּם לְךָ אֲתֶם וְאֶךְ אֶת-הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר-אִדְבַּר אֵלַיךְ אֲתֵנו תַּעֲשֶׂה:

20. And God came unto Balaam at night, and said unto him: 'If the men are come to call thee, rise up, go with them; but only the word which I speak unto thee, that shalt thou do.'

In the third reading (עלייה, aliyah), in the morning, Balaam saddled his donkey and departed with the dignitaries, but God was incensed at his going and placed an angel in Balaam's way. When the donkey saw the angel standing in the way holding his drawn sword, the donkey swerved from the road into the fields, and Balaam beat the ass to turn her back onto the road. The angel then stationed himself in a lane with a fence on either side. Seeing the angel, the donkey pressed herself and Balaam's foot against the wall, so he beat her again. The angel then stationed himself on a narrow spot that allowed no room to swerve right or left, and the donkey lay down under Balaam, and Balaam became furious and beat the ass with his stick. Then God allowed the donkey to speak, and she complained to Balaam. And then God allowed Balaam to see the angel, and Balaam bowed down to the ground. The angel questioned Balaam for beating his donkey, noting that she had saved Balaam's life. Balaam admitted his error and offered to turn back if the angel still disapproved. But the angel told Balaam: "Go with the men. But you must say nothing except what I tell you." So Balaam went on. Balak went out to meet Balaam on the Arnon border, and asked him why he didn't come earlier. But Balaam told Balak that he could utter only the words that God put into his mouth.

21. וַיָּקָם בַּלְעָם בַּבֹּקֶר וַיַּזְבֵּשׂ אֶת-אֲתוֹנוֹ וַיִּלְכֶּה עִם-שָׂרֵי מוֹאָב:

21. And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab.

22. וַיִּזְזַר-אִף אֱלֹהִים ֹ כִי-הוֹלֵךְ הוּא וַיִּתְיַצֵּב מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה בַּדֶּרֶךְ לְשֹׁטֵן לוֹ

וְהוּא רֹכֵב עַל-אֲתוֹנוֹ וַיִּשְׁנִי נְעָרָיו עִמּוֹ:

22. And God's anger was kindled because he went; and the angel of YHVH placed himself in the way for an adversary against him. --Now he was riding upon his ass, and his two servants were with him.--

23. וַתֵּרָא הָאֲתוֹן אֶת-מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה נֹצֵץ בַּדֶּרֶךְ וַזָּרְבוּ שְׁלוֹפָה בְּיָדוֹ וַתֵּט

הָאֲתוֹן מִן-הַדֶּרֶךְ וַתִּלְכֶּה בְּשֵׂדֶה וַיִּף בַּלְעָם אֶת-הָאֲתוֹן לְהַטִּיתָהּ הַדֶּרֶךְ:

23. And the ass saw the angel of YHVH standing in the way, with his sword drawn in his hand; and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field; and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way.

24. וַיַּעֲמֹד מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה בְּמִישְׁעוֹל הַכְּרָבִים גֶּדֶר מְוֵה וְגֶדֶר מְוֵה:

24. Then the angel of YHVH stood in a hollow way between the vineyards, a fence being on this side, and a fence on that side.

25. וַתִּרְאֵהָ הָאֱתוֹן אֶת-מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה וַתִּלְוֹץ אֶל-הַקִּיר וַתִּלְוֹץ אֶת-רִגְלָהּ בְּלֶעָם אֶל-הַקִּיר וַיִּסַּף לְהַכֹּתָהּ:

25. And the ass saw the angel of YHVH, and she thrust herself unto the wall, and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall; and he smote her again.

26. וַיִּוָּסֵף מַלְאָךְ-יְהוָה עֲבוּר וַיַּעֲמֵד בְּמָקוֹם צָר אֲשֶׁר אֵין-הֶרֶף לְנָטוֹת יָמִין וּשְׂמֹאל:

26. And the angel of YHVH went further, and stood in a narrow place, where was no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left.

27. וַתִּרְאֵהָ הָאֱתוֹן אֶת-מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה וַתִּרְבֹּץ תַּזוֹת בְּלֶעָם וַיִּזּוּר-אָף בְּלֶעָם וַיַּךְ אֶת-הָאֱתוֹן בַּמַּקֵּל:

27. And the ass saw the angel of YHVH, and she lay down under Balaam; and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with his staff.

28. וַיִּפְתְּחוּ יְהוָה אֶת-פִּי הָאֱתוֹן וַתֹּאמֶר לְבַלְעָם מַה-עָשִׂיתִי לָךְ כִּי הִכִּיתָנִי זֶה שָׁלַשׁ רְגָלִים:

28. And YHVH opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam: 'What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?'

29. וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלַעָם לְאֱתוֹן כִּי הִתְעַלְלָת בִּי לֹא יֵשׁ-זוֹרֵב בְּיָדִי כִּי עָתָה הִרְגֵתִיךָ:

29. And Balaam said unto the ass: 'Because thou hast mocked me; I would there were a sword in my hand, for now I had killed thee.'

30. וַתֹּאמֶר הָאֱתוֹן אֶל-בְּלַעָם הֲלוֹא אֲנֹכִי אֲתִנֶּךָ אֲשֶׁר-רָכַבְתָּ עָלַי מֵעוֹדְךָ עַד-הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה הֲהִסְכֵּן הִסְכַּנְתִּי לַעֲשׂוֹת לָךְ כֹּה וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא:

30. And the ass said unto Balaam: 'Am not I thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden all thy life long unto this day? was I ever wont to do so unto thee?' And he said: 'Nay.'

31. וַיִּגַּל יְהוָה אֶת-עֵינָי בְּלֵעָם ֹ וַיֵּרָא אֶת-מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה נֹצֵב בְּדֶרֶךְ וּזְרָבוֹ
שָׁלַכָה בְּיָדוֹ וַיִּקַּד וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּוּ לְאֲפָיו:

31. Then YHVH opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of YHVH standing in the way, with his sword drawn in his hand; and he bowed his head, and fell on his face.

32. וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה עַל-מָה הִכִּיתָ אֶת-אַתְנָךְ זֶה שְׂקֹוֹשׁ רַגְלָיִם
הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי יֹצֵאתִי לְשִׁטָּן כִּי-יִרְטֵ הַדֶּרֶךְ לְנַגְדִּי:

32. And the angel of YHVH said unto him: 'Wherefore hast thou smitten thine ass these three times? behold, I am come forth for an adversary, because thy way is contrary unto me;

33. וַתֵּרֶאֱנִי הָאֲתוֹן וַתֵּטֵ לִפְנֵי זֶה שְׂקֹשׁ רַגְלָיִם אוֹלִי נָטַתָּה מִפְּנֵי כִי עִתָּה
גַּם-אֶתְכָּה הִרְגִּיתִי וְאוֹתָהּ הוֹיִיתִי:

33. and the ass saw me, and turned aside before me these three times; unless she had turned aside from me, surely now I had even slain thee, and saved her alive.'

34. וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלָעָם אֶל-מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה זָוַתְּ אֶתִּי כִי לֹא יָדַעְתִּי כִי אַתָּה נֹצֵב
לִקְרָאתִי בְּדֶרֶךְ וְעִתָּה אִם-רַע בְּעֵינַי אֲשׁוּבָה לִי:

34. And Balaam said unto the angel of YHVH: 'I have sinned; for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me; now therefore, if it displease thee, I will get me back.'

35. וַיֹּאמֶר מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה אֶל-בְּלָעָם כֹּף עִם-הָאֲנָשִׁים וְאָפַס אֶת-הַדָּבָר
אֲשֶׁר-אָדַבֵּר אֵלֶיךָ אֲתוּ תִדְבַּר וַיִּכַּף בְּלָעָם עִם-שְׂרָי בְּלָק:

35. And the angel of YHVH said unto Balaam: 'Go with the men; but only the word that I shall speak unto thee, that thou shalt speak.' So Balaam went with the princes of Balak.

36. וַיִּשְׁמַע בְּלָק כִּי בָא בְּלָעָם וַיֵּצֵא לִקְרָאתוֹ אֶל-עִיר מוֹאָב אֲשֶׁר עַל-
גְּבוּל אַרְנוֹן אֲשֶׁר בְּקִצֵּה הַגְּבוּל:

36. And when Balak heard that Balaam was come, he went out to meet him unto Ir-moab, which is on the border of Arnon, which is in the utmost part of the border.

37. וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלָק אֶל-בְּלָעָם הֲלֹא שְׁלַחְנוּ שְׁלֹחַי אֵלֶיךָ לְקַרְא-לְךָ לָמוֹת
לֹא-הִלַכְתָּ אֵלַי הָאֲמֹנִים לֹא אוֹכַל כְּבָדְךָ:

37. And Balak said unto Balaam: 'Did I not earnestly send unto thee to call thee? wherefore camest thou not unto me? am I not able indeed to promote thee to honour?'

38. וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלָעָם אֶל-בְּלָק הֲנֵנּוּ-בְּאֵתִי אֵלֶיךָ עֲתָה הֲיִכָּל אוֹכַל הַדָּבָר
מֵאוֹמְתָה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁיִים אֱלֹהִים בְּפִי אֲתוּ אֲדַבֵּר:

38. And Balaam said unto Balak: 'Lo, I am come unto thee; have I now any power at all to speak any thing? the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak.'

 **Aliya: Fourth-Netzach-Moses** 
 When combined, Aliya: Sixth, Yessod, Joseph 

In the fourth reading (עלייה, aliyah), Balaam and Balak went together to Kiriath-huzoth, where Balak sacrificed oxen and sheep, and they ate. In the morning, Balak took Balaam up to Bamoth-Baal, overlooking the Israelites. Balaam had Balak build seven altars, and they offered up a bull and a ram on each altar. Then Balaam asked Balak to wait while Balaam went off alone to see if God would grant him a manifestation. God appeared to Balaam and told him what to say. Balaam returned and said: "How can I damn whom God has not damned, how doom when YHVH has not doomed? . . . Who can count the dust of Jacob, number the dust-cloud of Israel? May I die the death of the upright, may my fate be like theirs!" Balak complained that he had brought Balaam to damn the Israelites, but instead Balaam blessed them. Balaam replied that he could only repeat what God put in his mouth.

39. וַיֵּלֶךְ בְּלָעָם עִם-בְּלָק וַיָּבֹאוּ קִרְיַת הַזֹּצוֹת:

39. And Balaam went with Balak, and they came unto Kiriath-huzoth.
40. וַיִּזְבְּחוּ בְּלָק בַּקָּר וּבַצֹּאן וַיִּשְׁלַחוּ לְבָלָעָם וּלְשָׂרָיו אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ:

40. And Balak sacrificed oxen and sheep, and sent to Balaam, and to the princes that were with him.

41. וַיְהִי בַּבֹּקֶר וַיִּקְחוּ בְּלָק אֶת-בְּלָעָם וַיַּעֲלֵהוּ בְּמוֹת בָּעֵל וַיִּרְא מוֹשֶׁם קִצְּהָ

הָעַם:

41. And it came to pass in the morning that Balak took Balaam, and brought him up into Bamoth-baal, and he saw from thence the utmost part of the people.

Chapter: 23

1. וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלָעָם אֶל-בָּלָק בְּנֵה-לִי בָּזֵה שִׁבְעָה מִזְבְּחוֹת וְהִכֵּן לִי בָּזֵה שִׁבְעָה פָּרִים וְשִׁבְעָה אִילִים:

1. And Balaam said unto Balak: 'Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven bullocks and seven rams.'

2. וַיַּעַשׂ בְּלָק כְּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בְּלָעָם וַיַּעַל בְּלָק וּבְלָעָם פָּר וְאֵיל בְּמִזְבְּחוֹ:

2. And Balak did as Balaam had spoken; and Balak and Balaam offered on every altar a bullock and a ram.

3. וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלָעָם לְבָלָק הֲתֵיצֵב עָל-עֹלֹתֶיךָ וְאֹלֹכָהּ אוֹלִי יִקְרָה יְהוָה לְקָרְאתִי וְדַבֵּר בֵּה-יִרְאֵנִי וְהִגִּדְתִּי לְךָ וַיֵּלֶךְ שָׁפִי:

3. And Balaam said unto Balak: 'Stand by thy burnt-offering, and I will go; peradventure YHVH will come to meet me; and whatsoever He showeth me I will tell thee.' And he went to a bare height.

4. וַיִּקְרַ אֱלֹהִים אֶל-בְּלָעָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֶת-שִׁבְעַת הַמִּזְבְּחוֹת עָרְכֹתִי וְאָעַל פָּר וְאֵיל בְּמִזְבְּחוֹ:

4. And God met Balaam; and he said unto Him: 'I have prepared the seven altars, and I have offered up a bullock and a ram on every altar.'

5. וַיֵּשֶׁם יְהוָה דְּבַר בְּפִי בְלָעָם וַיֹּאמֶר שׁוּב אֶל-בְּלָק וְכַה תְּדַבֵּר:

5. And YHVH put a word in Balaam's mouth, and said: 'Return unto Balak, and thus thou shalt speak.'

6. וַיָּשָׁב אֵלָיו וְהִנֵּה נֹצֵב עָל-עֹלֹתוֹ הוּא וְכָל-שָׂרֵי מוֹאָב:

6. And he returned unto him, and, lo, he stood by his burnt-offering, he, and all the princes of Moab.

7. וַיֵּשֶׂא מִשְׁלֹו וַיֹּאמֶר מִן-אֲרָם יִנְזְזֵנִי בְּלָק מִלֶּכֶה-מוֹאָב מִהַרְרֵי-קָדָם לְכַה אָרָה-לִי יַעֲקֹב וְלְכַה אֲעִמָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל:

7. And he took up his parable, and said: From Aram Balak bringeth me, the king of Moab from the mountains of the East: 'Come, curse me Jacob, and come, execrate Israel.'

8. מִה אֶקְבֹּל לֹא קָבָה אֵל וּמִה אֶעָם לֹא וְעַם יְהוָה:

8. How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? And how shall I execrate, whom YHVH hath not execrated?

9. כִּי-מִרְאֵשׁ עָרִים אֶרְאֶנּוּ וּמִגְבְּעוֹת אֲשׁוּרֵינוּ הֵן-עַם לְבָדָד יִשְׁכֹּן וּבְגוֹיִם לֹא יִתְוַשֵּׁב:

9. For from the top of the rocks I see him, and from the hills I behold him: lo, it is a people that shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations.

10. מִי מִנְּהַ עֲפָר יַעֲקֹב וּמִסֶּפֶר אֶת-רַבֵּעַ יִשְׂרָאֵל תָּמוֹת גְּפִשִׁי מוֹת יִשְׂרָאֵל וּתְהִי אֲזוּרִיתִי כְמוֹהוּ:

10. Who hath counted the dust of Jacob, or numbered the stock of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, and let mine end be like his!

11. וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלֶקֶךָ אֵל-בְּלָעֶם מִה עָשִׂיתָ לִּי לְקַבֵּל אֵיבֵי לְקוֹזְתֶיךָ וְהִנֵּה בִרְכָתְךָ בָּרֶךְ:

11. And Balak said unto Balaam: 'What hast thou done unto me? I took thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast blessed them altogether.'

12. וַיַּעַן וַיֹּאמֶר הֲלֹא אֵת אֲשֶׁר יְשִׁים יְהוָה בְּפִי אֶשְׁמַר לְדַבֵּר:

12. And he answered and said: 'Must I not take heed to speak that which YHVH putteth in my mouth?'

In the fifth reading (עלייה, aliyah), Balak took Balaam to the summit of Pisgah, once offered a bull and a ram on each of seven altars, and once again Balaam asked Balak to wait while Balaam went off alone to seek a manifestation, and once again God told him what to say. Balaam returned and told Balak: "My message was to bless: When He blesses, I cannot reverse it. No harm is in sight for Jacob, no woe in view for Israel. YHVH their God is with them." Then Balak told Balaam at least not to bless them, but Balaam replied that he had to do whatever God directed.

13. וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו בְּלֶקֶךָ לָךְ-נָא אֵתִי אֶל-מִקְוֹם אַחֲזֵר אֲשֶׁר תִּרְאֶנּוּ מִשָּׁם אֶפְסֵ קַצָּהוּ תִרְאֶה וְכֻלּוֹ לֹא תִרְאֶה וְקִבְּנוּ-לִי מִשָּׁם:

13. And Balak said unto him: 'Come, I pray thee, with me unto another place, from whence thou mayest see them; thou shalt see but the utmost part of them, and shalt not see them all; and curse me them from thence.'

14. וַיִּקְוֶהוּ שְׂדֵה עֲפִים אֶל-רֹאשׁ הַפְּסִגָּה וַיִּבֶן שִׁבְעָה מִזְבְּחוֹת וַיַּעַל פָּר וְאֵיל בְּמִזְבְּחוֹ:

14. And he took him into the field of Zophim, to the top of Pisgah, and built seven altars, and offered up a bullock and a ram on every altar.

15. וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-בְּלָק הִתְיַצֵּב כֹּה עַל-עֹלְתֶךָ וְאֲנֹכִי אִקְרָה כֹּה:

15. And he said unto Balak: 'Stand here by thy burnt-offering, while I go toward a meeting yonder.'

16. וַיִּקָּר יְהוָה אֶל-בְּלָעָם וַיֵּשֶׁם דְּבַר בְּפִיו וַיֹּאמֶר שׁוּב אֶל-בְּלָק וְכֹה תִדְבָּר:

16. And YHVH met Balaam, and put a word in his mouth, and said: 'Return unto Balak, and thus shalt thou speak.'

17. וַיָּבֵא אֵלָיו וְהָיוּ נֹצֵב עַל-עֹלְתוֹ וְשָׂרֵי מוֹאָב אֵתוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ בְּלָק מִה-דְּבַר יְהוָה:

17. And he came to him, and, lo, he stood by his burnt-offering, and the princes of Moab with him. And Balak said unto him: 'What hath YHVH spoken?'

18. וַיֵּשָׂא מִשְׁכּוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר קוֹם בְּלָק וּשְׁמַע הַאֲזִיעָה עָרִי בְּנֵי צֹפֵר:

18. And he took up his parable, and said: Arise, Balak, and hear; give ear unto me, thou son of Zippor:

19. לֹא אִישׁ אֵל וְיִכָּזֵב וּבֶן-אָדָם וַיִּתְנַזֵּם הֲהוּא אָמַר וְלֹא יַעֲשֶׂה וְדַבֵּר
וְלֹא יִקְיַמְנָה:

19. God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: when He hath said, will He not do it? or when He hath spoken, will He not make it good?

20. הֲגַה בָּרַךְ לְקוֹזְתֵי וּבָרַךְ וְלֹא אֲשִׁיבָנָה:

20. Behold, I am bidden to bless; and when He hath blessed, I cannot call it back.

21. לֹא-הִבִּיט אֶן בִּיעֲקֹב וְלֹא-רָאָה עָמַל בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיו עִמּוֹ
וַיִּתְרוּעַת מִלְּךָ בּוֹ:

21. None hath beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath one seen perverseness in Israel; YHVH his God is with him, and the shouting for the King is among them.

22. אֵל מוֹצִיאָם מִמִּצְרַיִם כְּתוֹעַפֹת רָאִם לוֹ:

22. God who brought them forth out of Egypt is for them like the lofty horns of the wild-ox.

23. כִּי לֹא-נִזְוַשׁ בִּיעֲקֹב וְלֹא-קָסַם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל כְּעֵת יֹאמֵר לִיעֲקֹב וּלְיִשְׂרָאֵל
מִה-פַּעַל אֵל:

23. For there is no enchantment with Jacob, neither is there any divination with Israel; now is it said of Jacob and of Israel: 'What hath God wrought!'

24. הֵן-עַם כָּלְבִיא יְהוִים וּכְאֲרֵי יִתְנַשֵּׂא לֹא יִשְׁכַּב עַד-יֵאכַל טָרֵף וְדָם-
זוֹלָלִים יִשְׁתָּה:

24. Behold a people that riseth up as a lioness, and as a lion doth he lift himself up; he shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain.

25. וַיֹּאמֶר בָּלָק אֶל-בָּלְעָם גַּם-קָב לֹא תִקְבְּנוּ גַם-בָּרַךְ לֹא תִבְרַכְנוּ:

25. And Balak said unto Balaam: 'Neither curse them at all, nor bless them at all.'

26. וַיַּעַן בְּלָעָם וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-בָּלָק הֲלֹא דִבַּרְתִּי אֵלֶיךָ לֵאמֹר כָּל אֲשֶׁר-
יְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֲתוֹ אֶעֱשֶׂה:

26. But Balaam answered and said unto Balak: 'Told not I thee, saying: All that YHVH speaketh, that I must do?'

—  Aliya: Sixth-Yessod-Joseph  —

—  When combined, Aliya: Seventh, Malchut, King David  —

In the sixth reading (עליה, aliyah), Balak took Balaam to the peak of Peor, and once offered a bull and a ram on each of seven altars. Balaam, seeing that it pleased God to bless Israel, immediately turned to the Israelites and blessed them: "How fair are your tents, O Jacob, your dwellings, O Israel! . . . They shall devour enemy nations, crush their bones, and smash their arrows. . . . Blessed are they who bless you, accursed they who curse you!" Enraged, Balak complained and dismissed Balaam.

27. וַיֹּאמֶר בָּלָק אֶל-בְּלָעָם לְכֵה-נָא אֶקְוֶזְךָ אֶל-מְקוֹם אַזָּר אוֹלֵי יִישָׁר
בְּעֵינַי הָאֱלֹהִים וְקִבַּתוּ לִי מִשָּׁם:

27. And Balak said unto Balaam: 'Come now, I will take thee unto another place; peradventure it will please God that thou mayest curse me them from thence.'

28. וַיִּקְוֶז בָּלָק אֶת-בְּלָעָם רֹאשׁ הַפְּעוֹר הַנִּשְׁקָף עַל-פְּנֵי הַיַּשִּׁימוֹן:

28. And Balak took Balaam unto the top of Peor, that looketh down upon the desert.

29. וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלָעָם אֶל-בָּלָק בְּנֵה-לִי בָּזֵה שִׁבְעָה מִזְבְּחוֹת וְהִכֵּן לִי בָּזֵה
שִׁבְעָה פָּרִים וְשִׁבְעָה אֵילִם:

29. And Balaam said unto Balak: 'Build me here seven altars, and prepare me here seven bullocks and seven rams.'

30. וַיַּעַשׂ בָּלָק כַּאֲשֶׁר אָמַר בְּלָעָם וַיַּעַל פָּר וְאֵיל בְּמִזְבְּחוֹ:

30. And Balak did as Balaam had said, and offered up a bullock and a ram on every altar.

1. וַיֵּרָא בַלְעָם כִּי טוֹב בְּעֵינָיו יְהוָה לְבָרֵךְ אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא-הֲלֹךְ כְּפַעַם-
בְּפַעַם לְקַרְאֵת נְזֻשִׁים וַיֵּשֶׁת אֶל-הַמִּדְבָּר פָּנָיו:

1. And when Balaam saw that it pleased YHVH to bless Israel, he went not, as at the other times, to meet with enchantments, but he set his face toward the wilderness.

2. וַיֵּשֶׂא בַלְעָם אֶת-עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל שֹׁכֵן לְשִׁבְטָיו וְתַהֲי עֲלָיו רוּחוֹ
אֱלֹהִים:

2. And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel dwelling tribe by tribe; and the spirit of God came upon him.

3. וַיֵּשֶׂא מִשְׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר נָאִם בַּלְעָם בְּנֹו בְעֹר וַנְאִם הַגִּבּוֹר שְׂתֵם הָעֵינָן:

3. And he took up his parable, and said: The saying of Balaam the son of Beor, and the saying of the man whose eye is opened;

4. נָאִם שְׁמַע אֲמַרִי-אֵל אֲשֶׁר מוֹזְזָה שְׂדֵי יוֹזְזָה נָפַל וְנָלְי עֵינָיִם:

4. The saying of him who heareth the words of God, who seeth the vision of the Almighty, fallen down, yet with opened eyes:

5. מַה-טָּבוּ אֱהַלְיָ יַעֲקֹב מִשְׁכְּנֹתָיָהּ יִשְׂרָאֵל:

5. How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, thy dwellings, O Israel!

6. כְּנִזְזָלִים נָפְיִו כְּגִזַּת עָלְי נָהָר כְּאֱהָלִים נָטַע יְהוָה כְּאֲרוֹזִים עָלְי-בָמִים:

6. As valleys stretched out, as gardens by the river-side; as aloes planted of YHVH, as cedars beside the waters;

7. יִזְל-בָּמִים מִדְּלָיו וְזָרְעוּ בְּבָמִים רַבִּים וַיִּרֶם מִאֲגָג מִלְכּוֹ וְתִנְשֵׂא מִלְכָּתוֹ:

7. Water shall flow from his branches, and his seed shall be in many waters; and his king shall be higher than Agag, and his kingdom shall be exalted.

8. אֵל מוֹשִׁיָאֻ מִמִּצְרַיִם כְּתוּעֵפֹת רַאִם לֹו יֵאכֹל גִּזְיִם עֲרִיו וְעַצְמוֹתֵיהֶם יִגְרֶם
וּזְצִיו יִמְזֹזֵן:

8. God who brought him forth out of Egypt is for him like the lofty horns of the wild-ox; he shall eat up the nations that are his adversaries, and shall break their bones in pieces, and pierce them through with his arrows.

9. כָּרַע שָׁכַב כְּאֲרִי וְכִלְבִּיא מִי יִקְיִמֵנוּ מִבְּרַכְיָהּ בְרוּךְ וְאֲרִיָה אָרוּר:

9. He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a lioness; who shall rouse him up? Blessed be every one that blesseth thee, and cursed be every one that curseth thee.

10. וַיִּזְזֶר-אֶף בָּלָק אֶל-בְּלָעָם וַיִּסְפֹּק אֶת-כַּפָּיו וַיֹּאמֶר בָּלָק אֶל-בְּלָעָם
לָקַב אֵיבֵי קְרָאתֶיךָ וְהִנֵּה בִּרְכַת בָּרַךְ יְהוָה שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים:

10. And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam, and he smote his hands together; and Balak said unto Balaam: 'I called thee to curse mine enemies, and, behold, thou hast altogether blessed them these three times.

11. וְעַתָּה בְּרוּז-לִךְ אֶל-מִקְוֵמָה אֲבִירְתִּי כַבֵּד אֲכַבְּדְךָ וְהִנֵּה מִנְעֶרְךָ יְהוָה
מִכְבוֹד:

11. Therefore now flee thou to thy place; I thought to promote thee unto great honour; but, lo, YHVH hath kept thee back from honour.'

12. וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלָעָם אֶל-בָּלָק הֲלֹא גַם אֶל-מַלְאָכֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר-שָׁלַחְתָּ אֵלַי
דִּבַּרְתִּי לֵאמֹר:

12. And Balaam said unto Balak: 'Spoke I not also to thy messengers that thou didst send unto me, saying:

13. אִם-יִתֶּן-לִי בָלָק מִלֵּא בֵיתוֹ כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב לֹא אוֹכַל לְעַבֵּר אֶת-פִּי יְהוָה
לַעֲשׂוֹת טוֹבָה אוֹ רָעָה מִלְּבַי אֲשֶׁר-יְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶתִּי אֲדַבֵּר:

13. If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of YHVH, to do either good or bad of mine own mind; what YHVH speaketh, that will I speak?

In the seventh reading (עלייה, aliyah), Balaam replied once again that he could not do contrary to God's command, and blessed Israelites once again, saying: "A scepter comes forth from Israel; it smashes the brow of Moab." Then Balaam set out back home, and Balak went his way. While the Israelites stayed at Shittim, the people went whoring with the Moabite women and worshiped their god Baal-peor, enraging God. God told Moses to impale the ringleaders, and Moses directed Israel's officials to slay those who had attached themselves to Baal-peor. When one of the Israelites publicly brought a Midianite woman over to his companions, Phinehas son of Eleazar took a spear, followed the Israelite into the chamber, and stabbed the Israelite and the woman through the belly. Then the plague against the Israelites was checked, having killed 24,000.

14. וְעַתָּה הִנְנִי הוֹכֵךְ לְעַמִּי לְכֹה אֵינְעֶצֶךָ אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה הָעָם הַזֶּה לְעַמְּךָ
בְּאַזְוָרִית הַיָּמִים:

14. And now, behold, I go unto my people; come, and I will announce to thee what this people shall do to thy people in the end of days.'

15. וַיֵּשֶׂא מִשְׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר נָאִם בְּלָעַם בְּנֹו בְּעַר וַנְּאִם הַגִּבֹּר שְׂתֵם הָעֵינָן:

15. And he took up his parable, and said: The saying of Balaam the son of Beor, and the saying of the man whose eye is opened;

16. נָאִם שְׂמִיעַ אִבְרִי-אֵל וַיִּדַע הָעֵת עֲלִיוֹן מִזֹּוה שְׂדֵי יוֹזֵה נֹפֵל וְגִלְי
עֵינָיִם:

16. The saying of him who heareth the words of God, and knoweth the knowledge of the Most High, who seeth the vision of the Almighty, fallen down, yet with opened eyes:

17. אֶרְאֶנּוּ וְלֹא עֲתָה אֲשׁוּרֶנּוּ וְלֹא קָרוֹב דָּרֶךְ כּוֹכָב מִיַּעֲקֹב וְקָם שִׁבְט
מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל וּמִזֹּזֵן פְּאֵתַי מוֹאָב וְקָרַקַר כָּל-בְּנֵי-שֵׁת:

17. I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not nigh; there shall step forth a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite through the corners of Moab, and break down all the sons of Seth.

18. וְהָיָה אֲדוֹם יִרְשָׁה וְהָיָה יִרְשָׁה יִשְׁעִיר אִיבֵיו וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל עֲשֶׂה זֹוִיל:

18. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also, even his enemies, shall be a possession; while Israel doeth valiantly.

19. וַיִּרְדֵּי בְּמִיעָקֵב וְהָאֶבְרִי שָׁרִיד בְּמַעִיר:

19. And out of Jacob shall one have dominion, and shall destroy the remnant from the city.

20. וַיִּרְא אֶת-עַמְּלֵק וַיִּשָּׂא מִשְׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר רֵאשִׁית גֹּזִיב עַמְּלֵק וְאֲזוּרִיתוֹ עֲרִי

אֶבְרִ:

20. And he looked on Amalek, and took up his parable, and said: Amalek was the first of the nations; but his end shall come to destruction.

21. וַיִּרְא אֶת-הַקֵּינִי וַיִּשָּׂא מִשְׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֵיתָן בּוֹשֶׁבֶךְ וְשִׁיבִים בְּסַלַע קִנְיָ:

21. And he looked on the Kenite, and took up his parable, and said: Though firm be thy dwelling-place, and though thy nest be set in the rock;

22. כִּי אִם-יִהְיֶה לְבַעַר קִיץ עַד-בְּמָה אֲשׁוּר תִּשְׁבְּכָ:

22. Nevertheless Kain shall be wasted; How long? Asshur shall carry thee away captive.

23. וַיִּשָּׂא מִשְׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֹי בְּמִי יוֹזִיחַ מִשְׁמוֹ אֵל:

23. And he took up his parable, and said: Alas, who shall live after God hath appointed him?

24. וְצִיִּם בְּיַד כְּתִיבִים וְעֵזוֹ אֲשׁוּר וְעֵזוֹ-עֶבֶר וְגַם-הוּא עֲרִי אֶבְרִ:

24. But ships shall come from the coast of Kittim, and they shall afflict Asshur, and shall afflict Eber, and he also shall come to destruction.

25. וַיָּקָם בְּלָעָם וַיִּכְרֶה וַיֵּשֶׁב לְמִקְדָּמוֹ וְגַם-בְּלָקָה הִלָּךְ לְדַרְכּוֹ: (פ)

25. And Balaam rose up, and went and returned to his place; and Balak also went his way.

Chapter: 25

1. וַיֵּשֶׁב יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשִׁטִּים וַיַּזְזוּל הָעָם לְאִזְוֹת אֶל-בָּנוֹת מוֹאָב:

1. And Israel abode in Shittim, and the people began to commit harlotry with the daughters of Moab.

2. וַתִּקְרְאוּן לָעָם לְאִזְוֵי אֱלֹהֵיהֶן וַיֹּאכַל הָעָם וַיִּשְׁתַּזְוּוּ לְאֵלֵהֵיהֶן:

2. And they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods; and the people did eat, and bowed down to their gods.

3. וַיִּצְבְּדוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְבַעַל פְּעֹר וַיִּזְוּ אִם-יְהוָה בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל:

3. And Israel joined himself unto the Baal of Peor; and the anger of YHVH was kindled against Israel.

4. וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה קִוּ אֶת-כָּל-רֵאשֵׁי הָעָם וְהוֹקֵעַ אוֹתָם לְיְהוָה

נִגְדָה הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיֵּשֶׁב זֶרֶן אִם-יְהוָה מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל:

4. And YHVH said unto Moses: 'Take all the chiefs of the people, and hang them up unto YHVH in face of the sun, that the fierce anger of YHVH may turn away from Israel.'

5. וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-שֹׁפְטֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הֲרֹגוּ אִישׁ אֶנְשָׁיו הַנִּצְבָּדִים לְבַעַל

פְּעֹר:

5. And Moses said unto the judges of Israel: 'Slay ye every one his men that have joined themselves unto the Baal of Peor.'

6. וְהָיָה אִישׁ מִבְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בָּא וַיִּקְרַב אֶל-אִזְוֵי אֶת-הַמִּדְיָנִית לְעֵינָי מִשָּׂה

וּלְעֵינָי כָּל-עַדְת בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל וְהָמָה בָכִים פְּתוּז אֶהֱל מוֹעֵד:

6. And, behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses, and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, while they were weeping at the door of the tent of meeting.

Aliya: Maftir

7. וַיֵּרָא פִּינְחָס בֶּן-אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן-אֶהֱרֹן הַכֹּהֵן וַיִּקָּם מִתּוֹךְ הָעֵדָה וַיִּקְחוּ רַמְזוֹ

בְּיָדוֹ:

7. And when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose up from the midst of the congregation, and took a spear in his hand.

8. וַיָּבֹא אִזְוֵר אִישׁ-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל-הַקִּבְּהָ וַיִּדְקָר אֶת-שֵׁנֵיהֶם אֶת אִישׁ

יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת-הָאִשָּׁה אֶל-קִבְּתָהּ וַתַּעֲצֵר הַמִּזְבֵּחַ מֵעַל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

8. And he went after the man of Israel into the chamber, and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her belly. So the plague was stayed from the children of Israel.

9. וַיְהִי הַיּוֹם הַמֵּוֹתִים בַּמּוֹצֵקֶה אַרְבָּעָה וְעֶשְׂרִים אָלֶף:

9. And those that died by the plague were twenty and four thousand.

(פפפ)

- End of Parasha -