

Shabbat Balak

20 July 2024 14 Tammuz 5784

Torah Reading:

Numbers 24:1-25

(1) Now Balaam, seeing that it pleased יהוה to bless Israel, did not, as on previous occasions, go in search of omens, but turned his face toward the wilderness. (2) As Balaam looked up and saw Israel encamped tribe by tribe, the spirit of God came upon him. (3) Taking up his theme, he said:

Some of the poetic portions of this chapter are unclear. Word of Balaam son of Beor, Word of the man*man** Heb. gever; more precisely, a man who makes his presence felt. whose eye is true,***whose eye is true** Others “whose eye is (or, eyes are) open”; meaning of Heb. uncertain.*

(4) Word of one who hears God's speech,
Who beholds visions from the Almighty,
Prostrate, but with eyes unveiled:

(5) How fair are your tents, O Jacob,
Your dwellings, O Israel!

במדבר כ"ד:א'-כ"ה

(א) וַיֵּרָא בְלַעַם כִּי טוֹב בְּעֵינָי
יְהוָה לְבָרֵךְ אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְלֹא־הֵלֵךְ
כְּפָעַם־בְּפָעַם לְקַרְאֵת נְחָשִׁים
וַיֵּשֶׁת אֶל־הַמַּדְבָּר פָּנָיו: (ב) וַיֵּשֶׁא
בְלַעַם אֶת־עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל
שֹׁכֵן לְשִׁבְטָיו וַתְּהִי עָלָיו רוּחַ
אֱלֹהִים: (ג) וַיֵּשֶׁא מְשָׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר
נְאֻם בְּלַעַם בְּנוֹ בְעֹר וּנְאֻם הַגִּבּוֹר
שָׁתֵם הָעֵינַן: (ד) נְאֻם שִׁמְעַ
אִמְרֵי־אֵל אֲשֶׁר מַחֲזִיהַ שְׂדֵי יַחֲזִיהַ
נִפְלַ וּגְלוּי עֵינָיִם: (ה) מַה־טָּבוּ
אֹהֲלֶיךָ יַעֲקֹב מִשְׁכְּנֹתֶיךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל:
(ו) כִּנְחָלִים נָטְיוּ כִּגְנַת עָלַי נְהַר
כְּאֹהֲלִים נָטַע יְהוָה כְּאֲרָזִים
עָלֵי־מַיִם: (ז) יִזְל־מַיִם מִדְּלִיּוֹ
וְזָרְעוּ בְּמַיִם רַבִּים וַיִּרְם מְאִיג
מִלְכּוֹ וַתִּנְשֵׂא מְלֻכְתּוֹ: (ח) אֵל
מוֹצִיאֵנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם כְּתוֹעַפֶת רְאֵם
לוֹ יֹאכַל גּוֹיִם צָרְיוֹ וְעִצְמֹתֵיהֶם

(6) Like palm-groves that stretch out,

Like gardens beside a river,

Like aloes planted by יהוה,

Like cedars beside the water;

(7) Their boughs drip with moisture,

Their roots***Their roots** *Lit. "and its seed."* have abundant water.

Their ruler shall rise above Agag,

Their sovereignty shall be exalted.

(8) God who freed them from Egypt
Is for them like the horns***horns** *See note at 23.22.* of the wild ox.

They shall devour enemy nations,

Crush their bones,

And smash their arrows.

(9) They crouch, they lie down like a lion,

Like a lioness;***lioness** *Heb. lavi*;

NJPS "king of beasts." See the first note at 23.24. who dares rouse them?

Blessed are they who bless you,

Accursed they who curse you! (10)

Enraged at Balaam, Balak struck his hands together. "I called you," Balak

said to Balaam, "to damn my

enemies, and instead you have

blessed them these three times! (11)

Back with you at once to your own place! I was going to reward you

richly, but יהוה has denied you the

reward." (12) Balaam replied to

Balak, "But I even told the

messengers you sent to me, (13)

'Though Balak were to give me his

יגִרם וְחֲצִיו יִמְחֹץ: (ט) כָּרַע

שָׁכַב כְּאָרְי וּכְלָבִיא מִי יִקִּימְנוּ

מְבָרְכֶיךָ בְּרוּךְ וְאֶרְרֶיךָ אֲרוּר: (י)

וַיַּחֲרֵאֲף בְּלֶק אֶל־בְּלָעַם וַיִּסְפֹּק

אֶת־כַּפָּיו וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלֶק אֶל־בְּלָעַם

לֵקֵב אֵיבִי קָרָאתִיךָ וְהִנֵּה בִּרְכָתְךָ

בְּרוּךְ זֶה שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים: (יא)

וְעַתָּה בָּרַח־לְךָ אֶל־מְקוֹמְךָ

אֲמַרְתִּי כִּי־בָדַד אֲכַבְּדֶךָ וְהִנֵּה מִנְעֶךָ

יְהוָה מִכְּבוֹד: (יב) וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלָעַם

אֶל־בְּלֶק הֲלֹא גַם אֶל־מְלֹאכֶיךָ

אֲשֶׁר־שָׁלַחְתָּ אֵלַי דִּבַּרְתִּי לֵאמֹר:

(יג) אִם־יִתֶּן־לִי בְּלֶק מְלֵא בֵיתוֹ

כֶּסֶף וְזָהָב לֹא אוֹכֵל לְעֵבֶר

אֶת־פִּי יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת טוֹבָה אוֹ

רָעָה מִלְּבַי אֲשֶׁר־יְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אִתּוֹ

אֲדַבֵּר: (יד) וְעַתָּה הִנְנִי הוֹלֵךְ

לְעַמִּי לְכָה אֵיעֶצְךָ אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשֶׂה

הָעַם הַזֶּה לְעַמְּךָ בְּאַחֲרִית

הַיָּמִים: (טו) וַיֵּשֶׂא מְשָׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר

נָאִם בְּלָעַם בָּנּוּ בְעֹר וּנְאִם הַגִּבּוֹר

שָׁתֵם הָעַיִן: (טז) נָאִם שָׁמַעַ

אֲמַר־יֵאל וַיִּדַע דַּעַת עֲלִיוֹן מַחֲזֶה

שִׁדְי יִחַזֶּה נִפְל וּגְלוֹי עֵינָיִם: (יז)

אֲרָאנוּ וְלֹא עָתָה אֲשׁוּרְנוּ וְלֹא

קָרוֹב דֶּרֶךְ כּוֹכָב מֵיעֶקֶב וְקָם

שָׁבַט מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל וּמִחֹץ פְּאֵתֵי

מוֹאָב וְקָרְקַר כָּל־בְּנֵי־שֵׁת: (יח)

וְהָיָה אֲדוֹם יִרְשָׁה וְהָיָה יִרְשָׁה

house full of silver and gold, I could not of my own accord do anything good or bad contrary to יהוה's command. What יהוה says, that I must say.' (14) And now, as I go back to my people, let me inform you of what this people will do to your people in days to come." (15) He took up his theme, and said:

Word of Balaam son of Beor,
Word of the man**man* See note at v.

3. whose eye is true,

(16) Word of one who hears God's speech,

Who obtains knowledge from the Most High,

And beholds visions from the Almighty,

Prostrate, but with eyes unveiled:

(17) What I see for them is not yet,
What I behold will not be soon:

A star rises from Jacob,

A scepter comes forth from Israel;

It smashes the brow of Moab,

The foundation of**The foundation*

of Samaritan "the pate of," cf. Jer.

48.45; others "breaks down." all children of Seth.

(18) Edom becomes a possession,
Yea, Seir a possession of its enemies;
But Israel is triumphant.

(19) A victor issues from Jacob
To wipe out what is left of Ir. (20) He saw Amalek and, taking up his theme, he said:

A leading nation is Amalek;

שְׁעִיר אִיבֵיו וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל עֲשֵׂה חָיִל:
(יט) וַיֵּרֶד מִיַּעֲקֹב וְהָאֲבִיד שָׁרִיד
מֵעִיר: (כ) וַיֵּרָא אֶת־עַמְלֵק וַיִּשְׂא
מִשְׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר רֵאשִׁית גּוֹיִם עַמְלֵק
וְאַחֲרֵיתוֹ עַדִּי אֲבָד: (כא) וַיֵּרָא
אֶת־הַקִּינִי וַיִּשְׂא מִשְׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר
אֵיתָן מֹושֶׁבֶךְ וְשֵׁים בְּסֹלַע קִנְדִּי:
(כב) כִּי אִם־יִהְיֶה לְבַעַר קִינִי
עַד־מָה אֲשׁוּר תִּשְׁבֶּךְ: (כג) וַיִּשְׂא
מִשְׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר אֹי מִי יִחִי
מִשְׁמוֹ אֵל: (כד) וְצִים מִיַּד כְּתִים
וְעֵנוֹ אֲשׁוּר וְעֵנוֹ־עֵבֶר וְגַם־הוּא
עַדִּי אֲבָד: (כה) וַיִּקָּם בְּלֵעָם וַיִּלְךְ
וַיֵּשֶׁב לְמִקְמוֹ וְגַם־בָּלַק הִלְךְ
לְדֶרְכוֹ: {פ}

But its fate is to perish forever. (21)

He saw the Kenites and, taking up
his theme, he said:

Though your abode be secure,
And your nest be set among cliffs,

(22) Yet shall Kain* **Kain** *I.e., the
Kenites mentioned in v. 21.* be

consumed,

When Asshur takes you captive. (23)

He took up his theme and said:

Alas, who can survive except God
has willed it!

(24) Ships come from the quarter of
Kittim;

They subject Asshur, subject Eber.

They, too, shall perish forever. (25)

Then Balaam set out on his journey
back home; and Balak also went his
way.

Haftarah:

Micah 5:6-6:8

(6) The remnant of Jacob shall be,
In the midst of the many peoples,
Like dew from GOD,
Like droplets on grass—
Which do not look to anybody
Nor place their hope in mortals. (7)
The remnant of Jacob
Shall be among the nations,
In the midst of the many peoples,

מיכה ה'ו-ו'ח'

(ו) וְהָיָה | שְׂאֲרֵית יַעֲקֹב בְּקֶרֶב
עַמִּים רַבִּים כְּטֵל מֵאֶת יְהוָה
כְּרִבִּיבִים עָלֵי-עֵשֶׂב אֲשֶׁר
לֹא-יִקְוֶה לְאִישׁ וְלֹא יִיחַל לְבְנֵי
אָדָם: {פ}
(ז) וְהָיָה שְׂאֲרֵית יַעֲקֹב בְּגוֹלִים

Like a lion among beasts of the wild,
 Like a fierce lion among flocks of
 sheep,
 Which tramples wherever it goes
 And rends, with none to deliver. (8)
 Your hand shall prevail over your
 foes,
 And all your enemies shall be cut
 down! (9) In that day
 —declares GOD—
 I will destroy the horses in your
 midst
 And wreck your chariots. (10) I will
 destroy the cities of your land
 And demolish all your fortresses. (11)
 I will destroy the sorcery you
 practice,
 And you shall have no more
 soothsayers. (12) I will destroy your
 idols
 And the sacred pillars in your midst;
 And no more shall you bow down
 To the work of your hands. (13) I will
 tear down the sacred posts in your
 midst
 And destroy your cities. (14) In
 anger and wrath
 Will I wreak retribution
 On the nations that have not
 obeyed. (1) Hear what GOD is
 saying:
 Come, present [My] case before the
 mountains,
 And let the hills hear you pleading.
 (2) Hear, you mountains, GOD's
 case—

בְּקֶרֶב עַמִּים רַבִּים כְּאַרְיֵה
 בְּבִהְמוֹת לְעַר כְּכֹפִיר בְּעֵדְרֵי צֹאן
 אֲשֶׁר אִם־עֵבֶר וְרִמָּס וְטָרַף וְאִין
 מְצִיל: (ח) תָּרַם יָדָךְ עַל־צָרֶיךָ
 וְכָל־אִיבֶיךָ יִכְרְתוּ: (ט) וְהָיָה
 בַּיּוֹם־הַהוּא נֹאֲס־יְהוָה וְהִכְרַתִּי
 סוּסֶיךָ מִקֶּרְבֶּךָ וְהִאֲבֹדְתִי
 מִרְכַבְתֶּיךָ: (י) וְהִכְרַתִּי עָרֶיךָ
 אֶרְצֶךָ וְהִרְסֹתִי כָל־מִבְצָרֶיךָ: (יא)
 וְהִכְרַתִּי כְשָׁפִים מִיָּדְךָ וּמַעוֹנָנִים
 לֹא יִהְיוּ־לְךָ: (יב) וְהִכְרַתִּי
 פְּסִילֶיךָ וּמִצְבּוֹתֶיךָ מִקֶּרְבֶּךָ
 וְלֹא־תִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה עוֹד לְמַעֲשֵׂה
 יָדֶיךָ: (יג) וְנִתְּשַׁתִּי אֲשִׁירֶיךָ
 מִקֶּרְבֶּךָ וְהִשְׁמַדְתִּי עָרֶיךָ: (יד)
 וְעֲשִׂיתִי בְּאֶף וּבַחֲמָה נֶקֶם
 אֶת־הַגּוֹיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא שָׁמְעוּ: {פ}
 (א) שָׁמְעוּ־נָא אֶת אֲשֶׁר־יְהוָה
 אָמַר קוּם רִיב אֶת־הַהָרִים
 וְתִשְׁמַעְנָה הַגְּבְעוֹת קוֹלְךָ: (ב)
 שָׁמְעוּ הָרִים אֶת־רִיב יְהוָה
 וְהֵאֲתַנּוּם מוֹסְדֵי אֶרֶץ כִּי רִיב
 לְיְהוָה עַם־עַמּוֹ וְעַם־יִשְׂרָאֵל
 יִתּוֹכַח: (ג) עַמִּי מֶה־עֲשִׂיתִי לָךְ
 וּמֶה הֶלְאֲתֶיךָ עָנָה בִּי: (ד) כִּי
 הֶעֱלֵתֶיךָ מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם וּמִבֵּית
 עַבְדִּים פָּדִיתֶיךָ וְאֶשְׁלַח לְפָנֶיךָ
 אֶת־מֹשֶׁה אֶהְרֹן וּמָרְיָם: (ה) עַמִּי
 זָכַר־נָא מֶה־יַעֲזֹן בְּלֶקֶת מִלְּךָ מוֹאֵב

You firm foundations of the earth!
 For GOD has a case against this
 covenanted people—
 A suit against Israel. (3) “My people!
 What wrong have I done you?
 What hardship have I caused you?
 Testify against Me. (4) In fact,
 I brought you up from the land of
 Egypt,
 I redeemed you from the house of
 bondage,
 And I sent before you
 Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. (5) “My
 people,
 Remember what Balak king of Moab
 Plotted against you,
 And how Balaam son of Beor
 Responded to him.
 [Recall your passage]
 From Shittim to Gilgal
 And you will recognize
 GOD’s gracious acts.” (6) With what
 shall I approach GOD,
 Do homage to God on high?
 Shall I approach with burnt
 offerings,
 With calves a year old? (7) Would
 GOD be pleased with thousands of
 rams,
 With myriads of streams of oil?
 Shall I give my first-born for my
 transgression,
 The fruit of my body for my sins? (8)
 “You have been told, O mortal, what
 is good,
 And what GOD requires of you:

וּמַה־עֲנֶה אֲתוֹ בְּלִעַם בֶּן־בְּעוֹר
 מִן־הַשְּׁטִיִּים עַד־הַגִּלְגָּל לְמַעַן דַּעַת
 צְדָקוֹת יְהוָה: (ו) בַּמָּה אֶקְדֶּם
 יְהוָה אֶפְיָ לֵאלֹהֵי מְרוֹם
 הָאֲקָדְמָנוּ בְּעוֹלוֹת בַּעֲגָלִים בְּנֵי
 שָׁנָה: (ז) הֲיִרְצֶה יְהוָה בְּאַלְפֵי
 אֵילִים בְּרַבָּבוֹת נַחֲלֵי־שָׁמֶן הָאֵתָן
 בְּכוֹרֵי פִשְׁעֵי פָרִי בִטְנֵי חֲטָאת
 נִפְשֵׁי: (ח) הֲגִיד לְךָ אָדָם
 מַה־טוֹב וּמַה־יְהוָה דּוֹרֵשׁ מִמֶּךָ
 כִּי אִם־עֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט וְאַהֲבַת
 חֶסֶד וְהִצַּנֵּעַ לָכֶת עִם־אֱלֹהֶיךָ:
 {ס}

Only to do justice
And to love goodness,
And to walk modestly with your God