

Balak, Torah, July 20, 2024

Numbers 22:2-38

(2) Balak son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. (3) Moab was alarmed because that people was so numerous. Moab dreaded the Israelites, (4) and Moab said to the elders of Midian, “Now this horde will lick clean all that is about us as an ox licks up the grass of the field.” Balak son of Zippor, who was king of Moab at that time, (5) sent messengers to Balaam son of Beor in Pethor, which is by the Euphrates, in the land of his kinsfolk, to invite him, saying, “There is a people that came out of Egypt; it hides the earth from view, and it is settled next to me. (6) Come then, put a curse upon this people for me, since they are too numerous for me; perhaps I can thus defeat them and drive them

במדבר כ"ב:ב'-ל"ח

(ב) וַיֵּרָא בַלַּק בֶּן־צִפּוֹר אֶת
כָּל־אֲשֶׁר־עָשָׂה יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאֹמְרֵי: (ג)
וַיִּגַר מוֹאָב מִפְּנֵי הָעָם מְאֹד כִּי
רַב־הוּא וַיִּקְחַן מוֹאָב מִפְּנֵי בְנֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל: (ד) וַיֹּאמֶר מוֹאָב אֶל־זִקְנֵי
מִדְיָן עֲתָה יִלְחָכּוּ הַקָּהָל
אֶת־כָּל־סִבִּיבֹתֵינוּ כְּלַחֵךְ הַשּׁוֹר אֶת
יֵרֶק הַשָּׂדֶה וּבַלַּק בֶּן־צִפּוֹר מִלֶּדֶךָ
לְמוֹאָב בָּעֵת הַהִוא: (ה) וַיִּשְׁלַח
מַלְאָכִים אֶל־בְּלָעַם בֶּן־בְּעֹר
פְּתוּרָה אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַנָּהָר אֲרָץ
בְּנֵי־עַמּוֹ לְקַרְאֵלֹו לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה עָם
יֵצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם הִנֵּה כֹסֶה אֶת־עֵינַי
הָאָרֶץ וְהוּא יֵשֵׁב מִמְּלִי: (ו) וְעַתָּה
לְכֵה־נָא אָרְה־לִּי אֶת־הָעָם הַזֶּה
כִּי־עֲצוּם הוּא מִמֶּנִּי אוֹכֵל
נֶפֶחַ־בּוֹ וַאֲגַרְשֶׁנוּ מִן־הָאָרֶץ כִּי

out of the land. For I know that whomever you bless is blessed indeed, and whomever you curse is cursed.” (7) The elders of Moab and the elders of Midian, versed in divination, set out. They came to Balaam and gave him Balak’s message. (8) He said to them, “Spend the night here, and I shall reply to you as יהוה may instruct me.” So the Moabite dignitaries stayed with Balaam. (9) God came to Balaam and said, “What do these men want of you?” (10) Balaam said to God, “Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab, sent me this message: (11) Here is a people that came out from Egypt and hides the earth from view. Come now and curse them for me; perhaps I can engage them in battle and drive them off.” (12) But God said to Balaam, “Do not go with them. You must not curse that people, for they are blessed.” (13) Balaam arose in the morning and said to Balak’s dignitaries, “Go

יִדְעֹתִי אֵת אֲשֶׁר-תְּבָרֵךְ מְבָרֵךְ
וְאֲשֶׁר תְּאָר יוֹאֵר: (ז) וַיֵּלְכוּ זִקְנֵי
מוֹאָב וְזִקְנֵי מִדְיָן וְקִסְמִים בְּיָדָם
וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל-בְּלָעָם וַיְדַבְּרוּ אֵלָיו דְּבָרֵי
בְּלָק: (ח) וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיהֶם לֵינוּ פֹה
הַלַּיְלָה וְהִשְׁבַּתִּי אֶתְכֶם דָּבָר
כַּאֲשֶׁר יְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֵלַי וַיֵּשְׁבוּ
שָׁרֵי-מוֹאָב עִם-בְּלָעָם: (ט) וַיָּבֹא
אֱלֹהִים אֶל-בְּלָעָם וַיֹּאמֶר מִי
הָאֲנָשִׁים הָאֵלֶּה עִמָּךְ: (י) וַיֹּאמֶר
בְּלָעָם אֶל-הָאֱלֹהִים בְּלָק בֶּן-צִפּוֹר
מֶלֶךְ מוֹאָב שָׁלַח אֵלָי: (יא) הֲנִה
הָעָם הֵיצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם וַיִּכַּס אֶת-עֵינָיו
הָאָרֶץ עֲתָה לְכָה קָבַה-לִּי אֹתוֹ
אוּלַּי אוּכַל לְהִלָּחֵם בּוֹ וְגִרְשָׁתִיו:
(יב) וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל-בְּלָעָם לֹא
תֵלֵךְ עִמָּהֶם לֹא תֹאֵר אֶת-הָעָם כִּי
בְרוּךְ הוּא: (יג) וַיָּקָם בְּלָעָם בַּבֹּקֶר
וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל-שָׂרֵי בְלָק לָכוּ
אֶל-אַרְצְכֶם כִּי מֵאֵן יְהוָה לְתַתִּי
לְהֵלֵךְ עִמָּכֶם: (יד) וַיִּקְוֹמוּ שָׂרֵי

back to your own country, for יהוה will not let me go with you.” (14) The Moabite dignitaries left, and they came to Balak and said, “Balaam refused to come with us.” (15) Then Balak sent other dignitaries, more numerous and distinguished than the first. (16) They came to Balaam and said to him, “Thus says Balak son of Zippor: Please do not refuse to come to me. (17) I will reward you richly and I will do anything you ask of me. Only come and damn this people for me.” (18) Balaam replied to Balak’s officials, “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 my God (19) יהוה. So you, too, stay here overnight, and let me find out what else יהוה may say to me.” (20) That night God came to Balaam and said to him, “If the agents have come to invite you, you may go with them.

מֵאֲבָב וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־בְּלָק וַיֹּאמְרוּ מֵאֲנִי
בְּלָעָם הֲלֹךְ עִמָּנוּ: (טו) וַיִּסָּף עוֹד
בְּלָק שְׁלַח שָׂרִים רַבִּים וְנִכְבְּדִים
מֵאֲלֵהָ: (טז) וַיָּבֹאוּ אֶל־בְּלָעָם
וַיֹּאמְרוּ לוֹ כֹּה אָמַר בְּלָק בֶּן־צְפּוֹר
אֶל־נָא תִמְנַע מִהֲלֹךְ אֵלַי: (יז)
כִּי־כִבֵּד אֶכְבְּדֶךָ מְאֹד וְכֹל
אֲשֶׁר־תֹּאמַר אֵלַי אֶעֱשֶׂה וּלְכֵה־נָא
קָבֵה־לִּי אֵת הָעָם הַזֶּה: (יח) וַיַּעַן
בְּלָעָם וַיֹּאמַר אֶל־עַבְדֵי בְּלָק
אִם־יִתְּנוּ־לִי בְּלָק מְלֵא בֵיתוֹ כֶּסֶף
וְזָהָב לֹא אוֹכֵל לְעֵבֵר אֶת־פִּי יְהוָה
אֵלֹהֵי לַעֲשׂוֹת קִטְטָה אוֹ גְדוּלָה:
(יט) וְעַתָּה שָׁבוּ נָא בְּזֵה גַם־אַתֶּם
הַלִּילָה וְאֲדַעָה מִה־יִּסָּף יְהוָה דִּבְרֵי
עַמִּי: (כ) וַיָּבֹא אֱלֹהִים | אֶל־בְּלָעָם
לִילָה וַיֹּאמַר לוֹ אִם־לִקְרָא לְךָ בָּאוּ
הָאֲנָשִׁים קוּם לְךָ אִתָּם וְאֵךְ
אֶת־הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר־אָדַבֵּר אֵלֶיךָ אַתָּה
תַּעֲשֶׂה: (כא) וַיָּקָם בְּלָעָם בַּבֶּקֶר
וַיַּחְבֹּשׁ אֶת־אַתְנֹו וַיִּלְךָ עִם־שָׂרֵי

But whatever I command you, that you shall do.” (21) When he arose in the morning, Balaam saddled his ass and departed with the Moabite dignitaries. (22) But God was incensed at his going; so a messenger of יהוה took a position in his way as an adversary. He was riding on his she-ass, with his two servants alongside, (23) when the ass caught sight of the messenger of יהוה standing in the way, with his drawn sword in his hand. The ass swerved from the road and went into the fields; and Balaam beat the ass to turn her back onto the road. (24) The messenger of יהוה then stationed himself in a lane between the vineyards, with a fence on either side. (25) The ass, seeing the messenger of יהוה, pressed herself against the wall and squeezed Balaam’s foot against the wall; so he beat her again. (26) Once more the messenger of יהוה moved forward and stationed himself on a spot so

מוֹאָב: (כב) וַיַּחֲרֹאֲף אֱלֹהִים
כִּי־הוֹלִךְ הוּאֹ וַיִּתְיַצֵּב מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה
בְּדַרְךְ לְשַׁטֵּן לוֹ וְהוּא רֹכֵב
עַל־אֲתוֹנוֹ וּשְׁנֵי נֹעָרָיו עִמּוֹ: (כג)
וַתֵּרָא הָאֲתוֹן אֶת־מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה נֹצֵב
בְּדַרְךְ וַחֲרָבוֹ שְׁלֹפָה בְּיָדוֹ וַתִּט
הָאֲתוֹן מִן־הַדָּרֶךְ וַתֵּלֶךְ בַּשָּׂדֶה וַיִּךְ
בְּלִעָם אֶת־הָאֲתוֹן לְהַטְתָּהּ הַדָּרֶךְ:
(כד) וַיַּעֲמֵד מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה בְּמִשְׁעוֹל
הַכְּרָמִים גָּדַר מִזֶּה וּגְדַר מִזֶּה: (כה)
וַתֵּרָא הָאֲתוֹן אֶת־מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה
וַתִּלְחֹץ אֶל־הַקִּיר וַתִּלְחֹץ אֶת־רַגְלָהּ
בְּלִעָם אֶל־הַקִּיר וַיִּסֹּף לְהַכֹּתָהּ:
(כו) וַיּוֹסֶף מִלְאָךְ־יְהוָה עָבוֹר
וַיַּעֲמֵד בְּמָקוֹם צָר אֲשֶׁר אֵין־דָּרֶךְ
לְנִטּוֹת יָמִין וּשְׂמֹאל: (כז) וַתֵּרָא
הָאֲתוֹן אֶת־מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה וַתִּרְבֹּץ
תַּחַת בְּלִעָם וַיַּחֲרֹאֲף בְּלִעָם וַיִּךְ
אֶת־הָאֲתוֹן בַּמַּקֵּל: (כח) וַיִּפְתַּח
יְהוָה אֶת־פִּי הָאֲתוֹן וַתֹּאמֶר
לְבִלְעָם מָה־עָשִׂיתִי לָךְ כִּי הִכִּיתָנִי

narrow that there was no room to swerve right or left. (27) When the ass now saw the messenger of יהוה, she lay down under Balaam; and Balaam was furious and beat the ass with his stick. (28) Then יהוה opened the ass's mouth, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you that you have beaten me these three times?" (29) Balaam said to the ass, "You have made a mockery of me! If I had a sword with me, I'd kill you." (30) The ass said to Balaam, "Look, I am the ass that you have been riding all along until this day! Have I been in the habit of doing thus to you?" And he answered, "No." (31) Then יהוה uncovered Balaam's eyes, and he saw the messenger of יהוה standing in the way, his drawn sword in his hand; thereupon he bowed right down to the ground. (32) The messenger of יהוה said to him, "Why have you beaten your ass these three times? It is I who came

זֶה שְׁלֹשׁ רַגְלִים: (כט) וַיֹּאמֶר
בְּלָעַם לְאַתּוֹן כִּי הִתְעַלְלִיתְּ בִּי לֹא
יִשְׁחָרֵב בְּיָדֵי כִּי עָתָה הִרְגַּתִּיךָ: (ל)
וַתֹּאמֶר הָאֵתּוֹן אֶל־בְּלָעַם הֲלוֹא
אֲנֹכִי אֶתְנֶנְךָ אֲשֶׁר־רָכַבְתָּ עָלַי
מֵעוֹדֶךָ עַד־הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה הֲהִסְכִּין
הַסִּכְּנֹתַי לַעֲשׂוֹת לְךָ כֹּה וַיֹּאמֶר
לֹא: (לא) וַיַּגֵּל יְהוָה אֶת־עֵינָי בְּלָעַם
וַיֵּרָא אֶת־מְלֶאךָ יְהוָה נֹצֵב בְּדַרְךָ
וַחֲרָבוֹ שְׁלֶפֶה בְּיָדוֹ וַיִּקַּד וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ
לְאַפָּיו: (לב) וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו מְלֶאךָ
יְהוָה עַל־מָה הִכִּיתָ אֶת־אֶתְנֶנְךָ זֶה
שְׁלֹשׁ רַגְלִים הֲנִה אֲנֹכִי יֵצְאֹתִי
לְשֹׁטָן כִּי־יִרְט הַדֶּרֶךְ לְנִגְדִי: (לג)
וַתֵּרְאֵנִי הָאֵתּוֹן וַתֵּט לְפָנָי זֶה שְׁלֹשׁ
רַגְלִים אוֹלִי נִטַּתָּ מִפָּנָי כִּי עָתָה
גַּם־אֶתְכֶּה הִרְגַּתִּי וְאוֹתָהּ הִחַיִּיתִי:
(לד) וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלָעַם אֶל־מְלֶאךָ יְהוָה
חָטָאתִי כִּי לֹא יָדַעְתִּי כִּי אַתָּה נֹצֵב
לְקִרְאתִי בְּדַרְךָ וְעָתָה אִם־רַע
בְּעֵינַיִךָ אֲשׁוּבָה לִּי: (לה) וַיֹּאמֶר

out as an adversary, for the errand is obnoxious to me. (33) And when the ass saw me, she shied away because of me those three times. If she had not shied away from me, you are the one I should have killed, while sparing her.” (34) Balaam said to the messenger of יהוה, “I erred because I did not know that you were standing in my way. If you still disapprove, I will turn back.” (35) But the messenger of יהוה said to Balaam, “Go with the men. But you must say nothing except what I tell you.” So Balaam went on with Balak’s dignitaries. (36) When Balak heard that Balaam was coming, he went out to meet him at Ir-moab, which is on the Arnon border, at its farthest point. (37) Balak said to Balaam, “When I first sent to invite you, why didn’t you come to me? Am I really unable to reward you?” (38) But Balaam said to Balak, “And now that I have come to you, have I the

מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה אֶל-בְּלָעָם לֵךְ
עִם-הָאֲנָשִׁים וְאָפַס אֶת-הַדָּבָר
אֲשֶׁר-אָדַבֵּר אֵלֶיךָ אֲתוֹ תִּדְבֹר וַיִּלָּךְ
בְּלָעָם עִם-שָׂרֵי בָלָק: (לו) וַיִּשְׁמַע
בָּלָק כִּי בָא בְלָעָם וַיֵּצֵא לְקִרְאָתוֹ
אֶל-עֵיר מוֹאָב אֲשֶׁר עַל-גְּבוּל אַרְנוֹן
אֲשֶׁר בְּקֶצֶה הַגְּבוּל: (לז) וַיֹּאמֶר
בָּלָק אֶל-בְּלָעָם הֲלֹא שָׁלַח שְׁלַחְתִּי
אֵלֶיךָ לְקִרְאָתְךָ לָמָּה לֹא-הִלַּכְתָּ
אֵלַי הָאֲמָנָם לֹא אוֹכַל כִּבְדְּךָ: (לח)
וַיֹּאמֶר בְּלָעָם אֶל-בָּלָק הִנֵּה-בָאתִי
אֵלֶיךָ עֲתָה הֲיִכַל אוֹכַל דָּבָר
מֵאוֹמָה הַדָּבָר אֲשֶׁר יַעֲשִׂים אֱלֹהִים
בְּפִי אֲתוֹ אֲדַבֵּר:

power to speak freely? I can utter
only the word that God puts into
my mouth.”