

YOUNG ISRAEL OF THE MAIN LINE

Weekly Update

Rabbi Avraham Steinberg
273 Montgomery Ave.
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19044



Stan Sved, President
(610) 667-3255
www.yiml.org

Parshas Balak

פרשת בלק

ט' תמוז תשס"ח—12-11 July

Shabbos Davening Times

Earliest candle lighting:	6:58pm
Candle lighting:	8:13pm
Mincha - Friday:	7:00pm
Sof Zman Krias Shema:	9:25am
Shacharis:	8:45am
Mincha followed by Seudah Shlishis:	8:00pm
Maariv:	9:15pm

Weekday Davening Times

Shacharis Sunday:	8:00am
Shacharis (Mon., Thu.):	6:40am
Shacharis (Tue., Wed., Fri.):	6:50am
Mincha/Maariv (Sun.-Thu.):	8:15pm

Next Shabbos Times

Candle lighting:	8:09pm
Mincha - Friday:	7:00pm

Calendar of Shiurim

DAY	TIME	TOPIC	SPEAKER	NOTES
Shabbos	7:55am–8:15am	Parsha Chabura	C. Diamond	ROTATES
Shabbos	8:15am	Mishlei Shiur	R. Steinberg	
Shabbos	7:15pm	Special Halacha Shiur	R. Steinberg	
Shabbos	After Mincha	Medical Halacha	D. Eisenberg	
Sunday	After Shacharis	Sefer Hachinuch	M. Buchbinder	
Mon., Wed.	After Maariv	Mishna Berura	Eli Back	
Sun.–Fri.	15 min. before Shacharis	Chovos haLevovos	R. Steinberg	
Monday	9:00pm	Advanced Gemora: Makkos	R. Steinberg	
Thursday	10:10pm	Nefesh Hachaim	Rav Sholom Kamenetsky	

*All shiurim are at YIML unless specified.

THIS SHABBOS

Kiddush and Shalosh Seudos:

Kiddush this week is being sponsored by Shmuel & Henya Novick to commemorate the yahrzeit of Shmuel's father, Tzvi Yaakov ben Shmuel Mordechai.

Seudah Shlishis is being sponsored by Josh & Tal Weinberger on the occasion of Josh's siyum on Maseches Zevachim and l'ilui nishmas his grandmother, Leah bas Rav Yisachar Dov, on the occasion of her jahrzeit this coming week.

Special Halacha Shiur:

There will be a Special Halacha Shiur this Shabbos at 7:15pm (45 minutes before Mincha): *Can a Beis Din's Ruling be Appealed?*, given by Rabbi Steinberg at the Young Israel.

CONDOLENCES

YIML extends birchas tanchumim to Mrs. Joan Betesh on the loss of her mother, Mrs. Rose Kibrick Katz ל"ה. Joan will continue to sit shiva at her house, 403 Bala Circle, until Monday morning.

All submissions, suggestions, and sponsorships should be directed (by Wednesday evening) to the editor of the Weekly Update, פלוגי בן פלוגי (weeklyupdate@yiml.org).

MAZEL TOV!

To Rabbi Baruch & Mrs. Miriam Lichtenstein and Family...

... on the birth of their new grandson, born to Arye and Hindel Berman. The Shalom Zachor will be at 9:45pm Shabbos evening, at their home: 41 N. Highland Avenue, Bala Cynwyd.

To Avi & Julie Zohar and Family...

... on the bris of Eitan Binyamin.

Welcome!

... to our newest mispallelim, Dr. & Mrs. Ari Weintraub and Family. We wish them Mazel and Bracha in their new home and community!

E-SCRIP

YIML is now partnering with e-Scrip to raise funds for our shul! All Guardian's shoppers are eligible. You don't need to have a computer to sign up. Please contact Janet Eisenberg ((610) 664-8554) for more details.

ONGOING EVENTS

Chevra Mishnayos:

The Chevra Mishnayos is now learning Seder Kodshim. See the shul bulletin board to sign up.

Women's Tehillim Group:

The Tehillim Group meets Mondays at **10:00am** at 345 Bala Ave.

Women's Chovos haLevovos Group:

The Chovos haLevovos Group meets Tuesdays at 9:30am at 8 Concord Circle.

Are you on our e-mail list?

To subscribe to the shul mailing list, send a message to majordomo@chaseplanet.us with the following in the message body (all one line): `subscribe yiml YOUR-EMAIL`

Rabbi Steinberg Contact Information

Shul: (610) 667-3255 E-mail: rabbi@yiml.org

President Stan Sved Contact Information

Cell: (215) 219-9231

D'VAR TORAH by Rabbi Berel Wein

Poor Balak and Bilaam. If they would have lived in our generation they would have undoubtedly received great and favorable media coverage, interviews on CNN and invitations to speak at the Hebrew University to tell their side of the story.

The part about the speaking donkey would certainly have made for great feature articles where it would be pointed out that Bilaam is not to be blamed for beating his animal—rather it is all the fault of that conquering, occupying, bullying angel that inserted himself into the picture.

Yet, no matter what the revisionist historians will say, Balak and Bilaam remain the guilty villains in Jewish tradition and minds. There was no justification to demonize and curse an entire people who intended to do you no harm. Bilaam is a non-governmental, allegedly not-for-profit, one man organization, proclaiming great ideals while at the same time condoning enslavement and murder of thousands. And, in spite of his protestations of idealism and even-handedness, he is for hire..

He is the original spin artist, the public relations genius, the amoral unprincipled guru looking always for new clients. He is so good and effective at his task that apparently only the Lord Himself is able to rein him in and make him speak truths and blessings when that was not his original intent.

Bilaam is toppled from his self-importance by the God that he claims to represent and have contact with. His ultimate punishment is not so much his death at the hands of the Jews but it is the humiliating experience of being forced to bless when he intended and promised his employer to curse. Poor Bilaam—he should have waited a few millennia to ply his trade.

The Talmud teaches us that Bilaam's antipathy to the Jewish people was already apparent at the beginning of the Jewish sojourn in Egypt. He was the advisor to the Pharaoh who recommended that Pharaoh enslave the Jewish people and kill all of their male children. When God, through Moshe, thwarted that evil design and Israel emerged triumphant from Egypt in great numbers Bilaam tried a different tack using Balak in his effort to destroy the Jewish people.

And finally when this scheme is stopped by Divine intervention, he advises the use of lust and sinfulness to destroy Israel. His advice costs the lives of twenty-four thousand Jews. No wonder Jews throughout the ages have characterized Bilaam as 'Bilaam harasha'—Bilaam, the evil one. He has no reason or justification for his malevolence and enmity.

It is just there, like much of the anti-Semitism that infects a great deal of the supposedly civilized intellectual world today. It is difficult to deal with such baseless yet intense hatred and venom.

I think it obvious that God intervenes to spare us from many of the actions of our enemies and friends. Thus the story of Balak and Bilaam remains relevant and current as the topics and events in our world today. Balak and Bilaam are able to exact a price from us in lives, fortune and social standing. But now, as then, they are unable to defeat us.

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