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Shabbat - Balak,

Sat. 29 - 30 Jun. 2018 - 17th of Tamuz, 5778 -

יז תמוז תשע"ח

שבת פ' בלק

Issue Number 852

Baal Koreh	Mr Jacob Oved	(Page - 856).
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Fast 17 of Tamuz - Sun, 1st July. צום שבעה עשר בתמוז - (בדחה) ביום ראשון 1 יולי.

Fast Starts 03:47 - terminate, 22:20 תחילת הצום 03:47 - סיום 22:20

Shir Hashirim, Mincha, Kabalat Shabbat & Arbit. 19:00

Shabbat Candles. 21:06

Shabbat Shahrit - Followed by Kiddush. (Shema 8:19). 08:30

Daf Hayomi with Rabbi Asher Sebbag Shlit"a. 19:40

Mincha Shabbat Followed by Seuda Shlishit (Sunset - 21:21). 20:40

Arbit Motzei Shabbat followed by Havdalah. 22:36

Shahrit Weekday - (Mon. & Thu. - 06:40) (Sunday & Bank/H - 07:30). 06:45

Daf Hayomi with Rabbi Asher Sebbag Shlit"a. 18:30

Mincha & Arbit 19:15

Next Friday: Shir Hashirim, Mincha, Kabalat Shabbat & Arbit. 19:00

Next Friday: Candles. **Shabbat. Pinchas** 21:03

Balak 5778 (Numbers 22:2-25:9)

Jun 24, 2018

by Rabbi Kalman Packouz

GOOD MORNING! The story is told of Napoleon walking through the streets of Paris one Tisha B'av (the 9th day of the Hebrew month of Av, a day of fasting and mourning for the destruction of the two Temples). As his entourage passed a synagogue he heard wailing and crying coming from within; he sent an aide to inquire as to what had happened. The aide returned and told Napoleon that the Jews were in mourning over the loss of their Temple. Napoleon was indignant! "Why wasn't I informed? When did this happen? Which Temple?" The aide responded, "They lost their Temple in

Jerusalem on this date 1700 years ago." Napoleon stood in silence and then said, "Certainly a people which has mourned the loss of their Temple for so long will survive to see it rebuilt!"

If we know our history and understand it, then we can put our life in perspective. We can understand ourselves, our people, our goals, our values. We will know the direction of our lives, what we want to accomplish with our lives and what we are willing to bear in order to fulfill our destiny. Friedrich Nietzsche put it well, "If you have a 'why' to live for, you can bear with any 'how'."

We are now entering the Three Weeks, the time between the 17th of

Tamuz (observed Sunday, July 1st) and the 9th of Av (starting Saturday day night, August 21st). This is a period when many tragedies happened to the Jewish people. Why do we mourn the loss of the Temple after so many years? What did and does it mean to us?

The Temple was a central focal point of the Jewish people. Three times a year -- Passover, Shavuot and Sukkot -- the Jews living in the Land of Israel came to worship and celebrate at the Temple. It offered us the ultimate opportunity to come close to the Almighty, to elevate ourselves spiritually. It represented the purpose of the Jewish people in the Land of Israel - - to be a holy people united with the Almighty in our own land ... a Jewish state. That is what we seek to regain and that is why we mourn and remember the loss of what we once had.

What can one read to gain knowledge, get perspective, to understand who the Jewish people are and what we are about? Certainly, reading the **Five Books of Moses** is the place to start. I recommend the Artscroll Stone Edition. **Nineteen Letters** by Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch will give a tremendous understanding of the Jewish purpose. **Nine Questions People Ask About Judaism** and **Why the Jews - - The Reason for Anti-Semitism** by Praeger and Telushkin address central issues of the Jewish people. And then there is **Judaism in a Nutshell: God** by Rabbi Shimon Apisdorf for people who are long on curiosity, but short on time. For a fascinating read, **The Non-Orthodox Jew's Guide to Orthodox Jews -- why we do what we do, wear what we**

wear and think what we think by David Baum.

In Jewish cosmology, the Three Weeks are considered to be such an inauspicious time period that one is not allowed to get married. From the 1st of Av (July 13th), one is even advised to push off court cases until after the 10th of Av (July 22nd). We refrain from hair-cutting, purchasing or wearing new clothing, listening to music and pleasure trips. It is a time for self-reflection and improvement.

On the 17th of Tamuz, five calamitous events occurred in our history: 1) Moshe broke the first Tablets of the Ten Commandments when he descended from Mt. Sinai and saw the worshipping of the Golden Calf 2) The Daily Sacrificial Offerings ceased in the First Temple due to lack of sheep 3) The walls of Jerusalem were breached during the siege of the Second Temple 4) Apustumus-the-Wicked burned a Sefer Torah and 5) An idol was placed in the Sanctuary of the Second Temple.

The 17th of Tamuz is a fast day. The fast begins approximately an hour before sunrise and continuing until about an hour after sunset. The purpose of the fast is to awaken our hearts to repentance through recalling our forefathers' misdeeds which led to tragedies and our repetition of those mistakes. The fasting is a preparation for repentance -- to break the body's dominance over a person's spiritual side. One should engage in self-examination and undertake to correct mistakes in his relationship with God, his fellow man and with himself.

It is interesting to note that Saddam Hussein was a student of Jewish history.

He named the nuclear reactor (from which he planned to create a bomb to drop on Israel) -- you guessed it, Tamuz 17! (Want the source? [Two Minutes Over Baghdad](#) by Amos Perlmutter). I also highly recommend [ShabbatShalomAudio.com](#) and [aish.com/holidays](#). There are many excellent articles and insights on our website.



TORAH PORTION OF THE WEEK

Balak, Numbers 22:2 - 25:9

This week's portion is one of the most fascinating psychologically-revealing portions in the whole Torah! Bilaam, a non-Jewish prophet, was granted a level of prophecy close to Moshe's level of prophecy. The Almighty gave Bilaam these powers so that the nations of the world could not say at some point in the future, "If we had a prophet like Moshe, we too would have accepted the Torah and would have lived according to it." Bilaam is an intriguing character -- honor-driven, arrogant and self-serving. Unfortunately, not too unique amongst mankind.

Balak, the king of Moav, wanted to hire Bilaam to curse the Jewish people for a fortune of money. It is interesting that Balak believed in God and the power of invoking a curse from God, yet thought that God would change His mind about His Chosen People. (God is not a man who changes his mind). Bilaam was very desirous to accept the assignment to curse the Jews -- more for the profit motive than the prophet motive.

The Almighty allowed Bilaam to go to Balak (cautioning him to only say

what God told him). The Almighty gives every person free-will and allows us to go in the direction that we choose. Three times Bilaam tried to curse us and three times the Almighty placed blessings in his mouth. Balak was furious! So, Bilaam gave him advice with hopes of collecting his fee -- "If you want to destroy the Jewish people, entice the men with Moabite women and tell the women not to submit until the men bow down to an idol." Balak followed the advice and consequently the Almighty brought a plague against the Jewish people because the men fell for Bilaam's plot. We see from this that the Almighty hates licentiousness and idol worship.

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Dvar Torah

*based on [Growth Through Torah](#) by
Rabbi Zelig Pliskin*

The Torah states:

"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my end be like his" (Numbers 23:10).

What did Bilaam mean when he said this?

We see from this statement of Bilaam that he realized the truth that one should lead a righteous life. Why then did he himself not live righteously and only wished that he could die and be rewarded as the righteous?

Rabbi Simcha Zissel of Kelm explained that although Bilaam had an intellectual awareness of the proper way to live, in his own life he found this too difficult. Because he had faulty character traits, he was not able to live according to the ideas and principles he knew were true. (Chochma Umussar, vol.1, p. 78)

We see from here the importance of correcting one's character traits. Without an awareness of what is proper and what is improper one cannot live righteously. However, even after one has studied and knows what is good and what is evil, he must be able to follow through in his daily behavior. A person needs to be in control of his impulses. Having this mastery over one's natural tendencies will enable a person to live according to his ideals. Lacking this, one will do all kinds of improper actions.

The problem is not one of knowledge, but of self-discipline. For this reason we must work on improving our character traits for only then will we be able to act righteous. The only way to die as a righteous person is to live as one, and to do this takes much self-discipline.



Shabbat Shalom,
Kalman
 Rabbi Kalman
 Packouz

Seuda Shelishi: presented by the Saltoun family ה"י in memory of the late Harav **Dov** ben Harav Eliezer Rosen ז"ל, the father of Shoshi Saltoun, ה"י. Also Seudat Hodaya on behalf of Kelly Saltoun, ה"י.

Kolel every Sunday: We are still having a Kolel every Sunday at the Synagogue hall from 09.30am - 12.00pm. Everyone is welcome.

ברוכים הבאים

Welcome to all who are visiting our Kehilla this Shabbat if you would like to enjoy a Shabbat meal at home of one of our members, please approach the honorary officers and they will be pleased to arrange this for you.

Dear all: If anyone wants an alliyah please approach our gubbay Adel, David or Ghassan before Shahrit not later then 9:15.

Security Alert: Please be very vigilant when you leave the Synagogue. Do not stand in groups and chat, go home without gathering on the main road. Be safe and alert.

THE KEHILLA WISHES חיים ארוכים "LONG LIFE" TO THE FOLLOWING WHO HAVE YAHRZEIT

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|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 01 Tammuz Mr Sami Shemie | 12 Tammuz Mrs Vera J Wegscheider |
| 07 Tammuz Mr Raphael Mansour | 17 Tammuz Mr David Gigi |
| 08 Tammuz Mr Fred Dalah | 17 Tammuz Mr Y. Kelly Saltoun |
| 08 Tammuz Mr Andrew Dalah | 19 Tammuz Mr Moshe Moses |
| 09 Tammuz Mr David Gigi | 23 Tammuz Mr Charlie Morris |
| 13 Tammuz Mrs Muzel Gubbay | 29 Tammuz Mr Saul Benjamin |
| 12 Tammuz Mr William Abner | 27 Tammuz Mr Cesar Sassoon |

Quote of the Week

Kindness is in our power even when fondness is not