



The sorts of

# tidbits

my father, Rav Meir Zlotowitz zt"l, made sure his family was up to date on  
from the mundane, to the profound, to the 'thanks for reminding me!'



In Memory of Rav Meir Zlotowitz zt"l

Parashas Balak 5784  
July 19th • 13 Tamuz

## Shivah Asar B'Tamuz

The fast of Shiva Asar B'Tamuz is this Tuesday, July 23rd. Five tragedies occurred on Shiva Asar B'Tamuz: 1) The first Luchos were broken, 2) In the waning days of the First Bais Hamikdash, the daily *tamid* offering ceased being brought, 3) In the waning days of the Second Bais Hamikdash, the walls of Yerushalayim were breached, ultimately leading to its destruction, 4) Apostimos burned a Sefer Torah, and 5) An *avodah zarah* was placed in the Bais Hamikdash.

During *chazaras hashatz* of *Shacharis*, the *sheliach tzibbur* adds *Aneinu* as a stand-alone berachah (between *Go'el Yisrael* and *Refá'einu*). *Selichos*, *Avinu Malkeinu*, *Tachanun*, and *Kerias haTorah* follow *chazaras hashatz*. *Tefillas Minchah* includes *Kerias haTorah* with the *haftarah* of *Dirshu Hashem*. Those fasting add *Aneinu* (as part of *Shema Koleinu*). *Bircas Kohanim* is recited in *chazaras hashatz*. Even *Nusach Ashkenaz* says *Sim Shalom* (instead of *Shalom Rav*). *Chazaras hashatz* is followed by *Avinu Malkeinu*.

## 3 The Three Weeks

The Y'mei Bein Hametzarim, the Three Weeks, begin at *shekiya* (sunset) on Monday evening, July 22nd. The Three Weeks between the 17th of Tamuz and the 9th of Av, is a national period of mourning over the *Churban* of both *Batei Mikdash*. One should give focus to the *churban* and *galus* during this period. Activities restricted during this period include:

**Music and Dancing:** Children of chinuch age are included. Many poskim are lenient when the music is secondary in nature (e.g. background music on a story CD) or when the listening is not for enjoyment (e.g. to help one stay awake while driving). Many poskim are stringent regarding acappella "*sefirah* music". Playing and practicing music are permitted for the purpose of earning a livelihood (e.g. professional musician). Playing music to develop one's skill is a matter of dispute amongst the poskim.

**Haircuts and Shaving:** Men, women and children are included in the prohibition. In cases of discomfort many permit women to tweeze and remove hair from areas other than the head. One should consult with a Rav in regards to a father, *sandek* and *mohel* at a bris, and in regard to an *avel* who finishes the *sheloshim* mourning period during this time.

**Weddings:** Weddings are not held during this period. An engagement may be celebrated, although without dancing or music. A *Sheva Berachos* may be held without music, although dancing (and singing) is permitted.

**Shehecheyanu:** We avoid situations that would necessitate reciting the *berachah* of *shehecheyanu* (e.g. eating new fruits, etc.).

**Miscellaneous:** One should consult with a Rav regarding signing a contract on a new home, moving into a new home, house decorating and elective surgery.

## Reminders

The final opportunity for Kiddush Levanah in the USA is this Motzaei Shabbos Parashas Balak, July 20th.

As the precarious situation in Eretz Yisrael unfortunately continues, each person should increase reciting *tehillim* and performing other *mitzvos* as a *zechus* for the many *Acheinu Beis Yisrael* in travail and captivity as well as for the soldiers in battle.

Pirkei Avos: Perek 6 | Daf Yomi - Friday: Bavli: Bava Basra 24 • Yerushalmi: Maaser Sheni 46 • Mishnah Yomis: Kiddushin 1:8-9 • Oraysa: Next week is Succah 32b-34b.

Make sure to call your parents, in-laws, grandparents and Rabbi to wish them a good Shabbos. If you didn't speak to your kids today, make sure to connect with them as well!

## Next on the Calendar

The fast of Shiva Asar B'Tamuz is on Tuesday, July 23rd and marks the beginning of the Y'mei Bein Hametzarim, the Three Weeks | Tisha B'av begins on Monday evening, August 12th

## Parshah in a Paragraph

**Balak:** Balak sends messengers to Bilaam • Bilaam refuses to come • Balak sends more distinguished messengers, Bilaam again refuses • Hashem appears to Bilaam and 'permits' him to go • An angel deters Bilaam's donkey three times • After striking his donkey, the donkey speaks and Bilaam is forced to admit that he wronged her • Bilaam tells Balak that he will speak only that which Hashem will put in his mouth • Balak prepares sacrifices three times • Bilaam blesses the Bnei Yisrael three times • An angry Balak sends Bilaam on his way • Bilaam predicts future events • Bnei Yisrael sin with the daughters of Moav • 24,000 perish in a plague • The plague ceases when Pinchas kills Zimri and Kozbi.

**Haftarah:** The *haftarah* of Parashas Balak is *leined*. Michah (5:6-6:8) encourages Klal Yisrael to remember Hashem's many great chasadim, among them that He prevented Bilaam from cursing them.

## 613 Taryag Weekly

**Balak:** 104 Pesukim • No Mitzvos Listed

## For the Shabbos Table

When Bilaam's donkey stops him on his way to Balak, Bilaam tells the malach that "If it is bad

in your eyes then I will return home" (22:34). To which the Malach replies, "Go with these people". Rashi explains with the Midrash, "B'derech she'adam rotzeh leleich ba, molichin oso" i.e., a person is led along the path he wishes to travel, even a path of wrongdoing. Thus, Bilaam was allowed to go ahead on the evil path he chose.

Rav Moshe Chodosh zt"l asks: Why didn't Rashi bring this lesson earlier in the parasha, when Hashem gave Bilaam initial permission to go? Rav Chodosh answers that while Bilaam may have been agreeable to return home had he been forced to, this was obviously not his desire. This was evident now that he sought to forge ahead despite repeated warning signs that this was not Hashem's will. Thus, we see here specifically that the inner will of a person has the ability to overpower him and lead him down the road he seeks to take.

It can be added that Bilaam says to Balak "Lo uchal laavor es Pi Hashem" (24:13), I am unable to violate the word of Hashem. It was only the direct word of "Pi Hashem" that would be an obstacle for Bilaam, yet he still sought any means to circumvent it. When it comes to a country's civil laws it is indeed possible to find loopholes to get around the 'letter' of the law, despite violating the spirit of the law. But when dealing with Hashem, Who seeks our hearts and our love for Him, it is not enough merely to follow the letter of the law as recorded in Shulchan Aruch. We need to adhere to His underlying will and make His will, ours (Pirkei Avos 2:4). By ensuring that our actions abide not only to the language of the command, but to Hashem's true intent, we are promised that He in turn will take care of our own wishes.

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# זמנים לשבת



Parshas Balak | July 19-20

	ר"ת	שקיעה שבת	סקש גר"א שבת	סקש מ"א שבת	שקיעה Friday Night	הדלקה עש"ק	פג מנחה עש"ק
Atlanta	9:57	8:45	10:12	9:29	8:46	8:28	7:18
Baltimore	9:40	8:28	9:34	8:45	8:29	8:11	6:58
Boston	9:27	8:15	9:08	8:14	8:15	7:57	6:43
Catskills	9:39	8:27	9:23	8:30	8:28	8:10	6:55
Chicago	9:31	8:19	9:15	8:22	8:20	8:00	6:48
Cleveland	10:07	8:55	9:51	8:59	8:55	8:37	7:23
Detroit	10:14	9:02	9:56	9:02	9:03	8:45	7:30
Lakewood	9:33	8:21	9:24	8:33	8:21	8:03	6:50
Las Vegas	9:06	7:54	9:12	8:27	7:55	7:37	6:25
Los Angeles	9:14	8:02	9:27	8:44	8:02	7:44	6:34
Miami	9:24	8:12	10:04	9:25	8:12	7:54	6:48
Monsey	9:35	8:23	9:21	8:30	8:24	8:06	6:52
Montreal	9:47	8:35	9:13	8:13	8:36	8:18	7:01
New York	9:34	8:22	9:22	8:31	8:22	8:04	6:51
Orlando	9:34	8:22	10:06	9:26	8:23	8:05	6:57
Passaic	9:34	8:22	9:22	8:31	8:23	8:05	6:51
Philadelphia	9:41	8:29	9:24	8:33	8:29	8:11	6:57
Toronto	10:04	8:52	9:39	8:43	8:53	8:35	7:19
Yerushalayim	8:59	7:43	9:16	8:34	7:43	7:08	6:16

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