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HAVE A NAGEELA SHABBOS

KID FRIENDLY TORAH MAGAZINE

A PROJECT OF NAGEELA WEST COAST,
JOYFULLY JEWISH EXPERIENCES

SEASON 9, EPISODE 31

PARSHAS BALAK 5785



TORAT SCENE-A-EYE

THIS FEATURES AN AI GENERATED PICTURE THAT HAS NUMEROUS HINTS
TO THE WEEKLY PARSHA. THIS WEEK'S IS ABOUT PARSHAS BALAK

DVAR TORAH

GO FIGURE

.....

"The Yiddish are coming! The yiddish are coming!"

That may or may not have been the desperately urgent cry sent up by the Moabites as our ancestors, the Children of Israel approached through the desert. Full disclosure here, we were pretty scary. I mean, people were old enough to remember what had happened to the Egyptians, and all the groups who had attacked the Jews, like Amalek, had failed miserably. So we were a military power. Aside from that, our ancestors traveled in style! No they didn't have convertibles, but they had miraculous clouds with them, which is pretty cool, magical sky bread, a river of fresh spring water that accompanied the camp. I would have been intimidated, too! Despite that, it's important to note that God had told the Jewish people NOT to attack Moab, and we were going to pass by, leaving them alone.

Moab was nervous about the Jewish infestation, understandably, and so they decided to get an exterminator. There was a guy named Billam (his friends called him Billy- JK, he didn't have any friends) who was known to have some kind of spiritual powers. Those he blessed were blessed and those he cursed were cursed. The leaders of Moab hired Billam to curse the Jewish people, and I don't mean the %@##)!\$@! type of curse. I mean the spooky, heebiejeeby kind of curse.

CONTINUED ▼

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DEEP THOUGHTS

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IF A PERSON ISN'T
SUPERSTITIOUS, CAN
THEY STILL BE A
LITTLE BIT STITIOUS?



JOIN US!

.....

WE HAVE PROGRAMS FOR MIDDLE
SCHOOL KIDS FROM ALL OVER THE
WEST COAST. PLEASE CONTACT US
FOR DETAILS!



camp Nageela West is gonna make some
illi-NOISE

STAY TUNED FOR
INFO ON
SUMMER 2026!

DVAR TORAH

CONTINUED

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He could say bad things should happen to you and they would come true! So anyway, the Moabites hire Billy to do some cursing, and long story short, he tries and fails to curse the Jewish people. Somewhere in the story we missed a talking donkey (yes, this came out before Shrek), his leg getting crushed, and Billam falling asleep over his dinner. God would not allow Billam to curse the Jewish people. In fact, Billam, was compelled to BLESS the Jews! Partially as a result of this, male descendants of Moab are forever forbidden to marry into the Jewish nation, which is a fairly serious consequence.

Moab also never got to compete in any figure skating competitions.

Wait, who said anything about figure skating?

I dunno, but now that we're on the topic, I want to tell you about two of the best American figure skaters in the early 1990s:

Nancy Kerrigan won the bronze medal in the 1992 winter olympics, and the silver medal in the world championships, cementing her as one of the best skaters in the world. Tonya Harding was another spectacularly successful figure skater. She was the first American woman to land a triple axel in competition, won the 1991 US championships and medaled in the world championships. Yet she was not quite as good as Nancy Kerrigan, and she desperately wanted to win a gold medal. Approaching the 1994 Olympics (I know what you're thinking: "How can there be winter olympics in 1992 and 1994?" It happened. Look it up), she wanted that medal so much that she decided to use metal. That is a metal crow bar, when she arranged to hire some thugs to break Kerrigan's kneecaps. Ouch. Though they did injure Nancy Kerrigan, she was able to recover before the olympics and went on to win the silver medal. Tonya Harding? She placed 8th and then was banned from the sport completely.



There's something I noticed about the whole Billam story that I had missed originally. When feeling threatened, Moab's first instinct was to curse the Jewish people. Couldn't they have been safe had they asked Billam to BLESS them instead? One healthy blessing for national security and defeating enemies, along with a few incantations for the stock market and digestive health- voila! They would be good to go! But that wasn't on their minds. When facing an adversary,, their first instinct was to tear down someone else, rather than to build themselves up. We can simulate what might have happened had they hired Billam to bless them. They would have gotten a blessing, we would have avoided them, and all would have lived happily ever after. Oh, and perhaps Moab would not have had a marriage restriction put upon them. Moab and Harding, when faced with an obstacle, decided to tear that obstacle down, rather to try and build themselves up.

Challenges are a normal part of life, and sometimes they come in the form of a person or group with whom you are competing. How you deal with that says a lot about you. You can be like Moab, and try to destroy others, or you can work harder, smarter, better and try to improve yourself. Chances are you'll thrive, as you prove your mettle, and medal without metal.

Question of the Week

Answer on page 24

In this week's Parsha, Billam's donkey talks to him. Were else in the Torah does an animal speak directly to a person?



ONGOING
days till nageelawest girls session



9
days till nageelawest boys session

PARSHAL PARSHA

A brief summary of the weekly Torah porshon

PARSHAS BALAK

Billam makes a donkey of himself

- As the Jews travel toward Israel, some of the neighbors start getting nervous
- Balak, a powerful local king, makes an alliance with Midian, a country that was pretty mid. Yawn.
- They hire this guy named Billam known for his powerful curses, but who was actually a really high level prophet, on par with Moses in his prophecy. He probably also had an epic beard. I made that up, but it's probably true.
- Billam keeps asking God for permission to go curse the Jews and as you might've guessed God does not give him permission
- He begs so much that eventually God gives in, telling Billam he'd give him a lollypop if he stopped wailing in public. "You can go with these men, but you'll only be able to say the words I put in your mouth."

- God constantly gives Billam ways out to make a better choice, getting his donkey in a traffic jam, injuring his leg, sending an angel and generally making it difficult to go
- At one point it's getting so ridiculous, the donkey actually talks to Billam. He doesn't change his mind and continues along to meet Balak and curse the Jews.
- It doesn't work out the way he wants. God causes Billam to prophetically bless the Jewish people several times, getting Billam fired by his boss, and he goes home embarrassed and donkiless.
- Moab (Balak's nation) doesn't give up. They use the most effective method of attacking the Jewish people, getting us to sin.
- Many Jews are encouraged to worship a truly bizarre idol called Ba'al Peor, introduced to them by Moabite women. "Jacob, I'd like you to meet my weird god. Weird god, this is Jacob. No need for a handshake." A plague breaks out and thousands die
- Quick action saves the day as Pinchas, the grandson of Aaron uses a single spear to ummm, gently poke the two biggest instigators, killing them. OK yeah, it wasn't a gentle poke. But the plague stops and we move on, hopefully with a better clarity not to mess around with idols.
- This will totally be the last time any Jews make mistakes. Right? Riiight?



LOLZ

..... What's green and swims in an aquarium?
A trop-pickle fish

TORAT SCENE-A-EYE EXPLAINED

BILAM IS SHOWN HERE OVERLOOKING THE JEWISH ENCAMPMENT. THEIR TENTS ARE ALLIGNED IN A ROW AND A PILLAR OF CLOUD IS VISIBLE WHILE BALAK, THE KING OF MOAB, WITH SOME OF HIS RIDES HAVE PREPARED SOME ANIMALS AND AN ALTAR FOR BILAM'S USE. HE'S RIDING ON HIS DONKEY AND HE'S HOLDING A STICK (WHICH HE PRESUMABLY USED TO WHACK THE DONKEY). YOU MIGHT IMAGINE ONE OF BILAM'S LEGS AS INJURED.

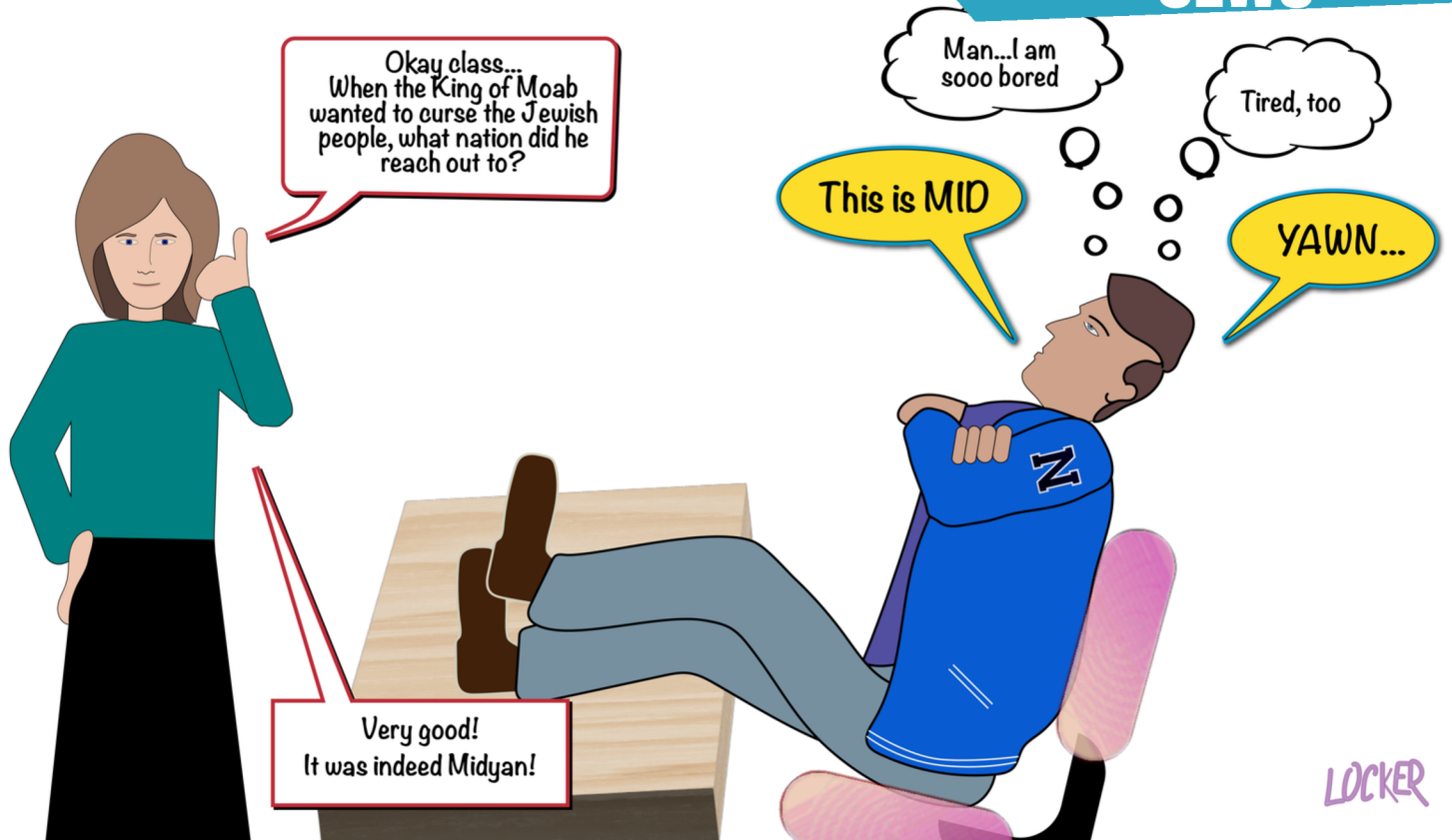


NA-NA-NA-NA-NA-
NA-NA-NAGEELA



How much do you love
being Jewish?

PICKLE JEWS



SHABBOS BUCKET LIST

HERE ARE A FEW CHALLENGES FOR YOU OVER SHABBOS. KIDS WHO COMPLETE THE BUCKET LIST BY THE END OF SHABBOS AND SEND IT IN CAN BE ENTERED IN A DARAWING FOR A PRIZE!

- ✓ Say or hear Kiddush at least once
- ✓ Compliment at least 3 different people
- ✓ Sing a song
- ✓ Eat something you really like
- ✓ Don't worship any statues
- ✓ Take a walk
- ✓ Clean up after yourself (at least once)
- ✓ Tell a joke that makes someone laugh 😂

Answer of the Week

Question is on page 2. Think first, don't cheat!

In the very beginning of the story, the snake spoke to Eve and convinced her to eat from the tree of knowledge

HAVE A FUN IDEA FOR OUR NEXT PICKLE JEWS COMIC, LOLZ OR DEEP THOUGHTS?

Please share it with us!
dlocker@nageelawest.org

Happy Birthdays!

Aaron Polonsky
Rosie Polonsky
Caleb Gould
Gavin Gould
Adam Borsody
Chaya Leos

Menacham Sosonov
Maya Elezra
Liddor Bega
Gabriel Lewis
Jake Michael



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