

JUNE 26, 2010 14 Tammuz 5770 Parshat Balak

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Following over two million hits, the Youtube parody "We Con the World" was removed, due to allegations of 'copyright abuse'. Although the press office of the Israeli government distanced itself from the video just hours after having released it; many felt that 'finally, the enemy is getting a taste of its own medicine', with this successful propaganda stunt.

This parsha breaks from the setting of most of the Torah, which tells the story of Moshe and Bnei Yisrael. The majority of this parsha is an exchange between Balak and Bilam, which takes place seemingly unbeknownst to our main characters. Of course, this is not true – Moshe who is writing the Torah, is being dictated to by Hashem and he therefore must be aware of this entire episode, albeit without his physical presence as testimony. What is striking is that much of the Torah contains conflict between Moshe and Bnei Yisrael, as they attempt to oppose the Divine plan (with the ten times they 'test' the Almighty) and this greatly frustrates Moshe, causing him to go to great lengths to thwart their attempts. However, in our parsha, Moshe does nothing to avert the plans of Bilam and Balak. If he knows that they are attempting to draw down spiritual curse upon the people, why does he not fight that with spiritual blessing?

The Talmud says "By law, Esav hates Yaakov". Thousands of years of anti-Semitism can attest to the fact that there will always be enemies of the Jewish people. We cannot change that. There are those who want to destroy the State of Israel. No amount of propaganda will ever change their minds. It is not worth the effort of having a 'war of words' with Balak and Bilam, it will not achieve anything. Whose minds can we change? The millions of onlookers

who are watching the struggle. The proverbial "Bnei Yisrael" who are sitting on the fence, sometimes unsure what to believe. By presenting the world of fence-sitters with the facts and the truth and doing this with sincerity and integrity, we will win them over. By utilizing gutter tactics like our enemies, we will only be looked upon as untrustworthy propagandists.

May we merit peace in the Holy Land and upon all Earth speedily in our days.

**Rabbi Daniel Friedman**  
*Beth Israel Congregation,  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada*

### Winn-Dixie's Candy Corn

**Brands:** Winn-Dixie  
**Products:** Candy Corn  
**Company:** Winn-Dixie Stores, Inc.- Jacksonville, FL  
**Issue:**

This product mistakenly bears an unauthorized OU symbol and is not kosher. The product is being withdrawn from the marketplace.

### America's Choice Berry Blend

**Brands:** America's Choice  
**Products:** Berry Blend –  
UPC: 7 54807-10063  
**Company:** A & P, Montvale NJ  
**Issue:**

This product mistakenly bears an unauthorized OU symbol. The product is being withdrawn from the marketplace.



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*Design & Layout by Sarah*

### UPCOMING EVENTS @ OU WEST COAST

➤ **Community Wide**  
**Shiva Asar B'Tammuz**  
**Mincha-Maariv**

▶ **THIS Tuesday**

**JUNE 29, 7:20pm**

Hosted by  
**Beth Jacob Congregation**  
Beverly Hills

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**October 22-24**

**OU Weekend in La Jolla, CA**

*Sheraton Hotel--La Jolla*  
*Meals at Adat Yeshurun*

*\$350 per/couple*

Info: [EstherR@ou.org](mailto:EstherR@ou.org)

### **RABBIS WEIL AND WEINREB** **OF THE ORTHODOX UNION** **TEAM UP FOR** **TISHA B'AV ALL-DAY WEBCAST**

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An OU tradition continues again this year with OU Executive Vice President Emeritus **Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb's** annual four-hour Tisha b'Av webcast on [www.ou.org](http://www.ou.org) and [www.ouradio.org](http://www.ouradio.org), to be immediately followed by OU Executive Vice President **Rabbi Steven Weil's** Tisha b'Av presentation.

**Rabbi Weinreb's live webcast** will take place at 9am EDT from the **Young Israel of Woodmere on Long Island, NY.**

**Rabbi Weil's will begin** at 1pm EDT, 10am PDT, 3,000 miles away at **Shaarey Zedek Congregation in Valley Village, CA.**

**Tisha b'Av is observed on**  
**Tuesday, July 20 this year.**

## OU SYNAGOGUES AROUND THE REGION

### Beverly Hills: Cong. Beth Jacob (310) 278-1911

- **Women's Spring Seudah Shlisheit Series with the Rebbetzins:**  
**JULY 10, 6pm:** Rebbetzin/Dr. Hindy Posy @1531 Glenville

### Beverly Hills: Young Israel-North BH: (310) 276-7650 [info@YINBH.org](mailto:info@YINBH.org)

- **Shabbat JUNE 26:** Guest Elliot Brandt, AIPAC – Graduates Shabbat
- **Shabbat JULY 3:** Guest, OU President Steve Savitsky
- **Shabbat JULY 10:** Guest – Rabbi David Mahler
- **Shabbat JULY 16-17:** S-I-R Rabbi Natan Slifkin, 'The Zoo Rabbi'
- **Shabbat JULY 31:** Guest Rabbi Bentzion Kravitz
- **Shabbat AUG 14:** Guest Ofir Fisher, of The OR Movement
- **Shabbat AUG 21:** Guest Rabbi Baruch Sufirin
- **Shabbat AUG 28:** Guest Rabbi Zvi Schindel, Maimonides Academy faculty

Calabasas Shul: (818) 591-7485

Canada-Calgary: House of Jacob-Mikveh Israel (403) 259-3230

### Canada-Edmonton: Beth Israel (780) 488-2840

- **Shabbat JUL 3-4:** S-I-R Rabbi Daniel Lerner
- Canada-Vancouver: Schara Tzedek (604) 736-7607

Denver, CO : BMH-BJ Cong (303) 388-4203

### Denver, CO: EDOS (303) 322-7943

- **SUN JUNE 27:** Fiesta Reception honoring Aniko & Dr. Miguel Mogyoros
- Irvine, CA: Beth Jacob (949) 786-5230

LA: Adas Torah (310) 203-9659 [www.adastorah.com](http://www.adastorah.com)

LA: Aish Hatorah (310) 278-8672 x 305 or [tsullivan@aishla.com](mailto:tsullivan@aishla.com)

LA: B'nai David-Judea (310)-276-9269 or [amram@bnaidavid.com](mailto:amram@bnaidavid.com)

LA: Etz Jacob (323) 938-2619

LA: Mogen David Cong. (310) 556-5609

LA: Young Israel of Century City: (310) 273-6954

LA: Young Israel of Hancock Park: (323) 931-4030

### LA: Yeshiva of LA (YOLA) 310-203-3197 [yeshivarabbi@juno.com](mailto:yeshivarabbi@juno.com)

- **MINCHA/MAARIV: SUN-THURS, 15 minutes before Shkiah;**  
**LATE MAARIV: SUN-THUR 10pm. M-TH am/pm: adults/students chavrusas**
- Laguna Woods, CA: Beth Torah (949) 587-1967 (a retirement community)

### La Jolla: Adat Yeshurun (858) 535-1196

- **OCT 22-24: OU Shabbaton in La Jolla.** Info [estherR@ou.org](mailto:estherR@ou.org)
- Las Vegas, NV: Shaarei Tefila (702) 384-3565 (Mikva 384-3317)

Oakland, CA: Beth Jacob (510) 482-1147

Palm Springs, CA: The Desert Synagogue (760) 327-4848

Palo Alto, CA: Emek Beracha (650) 857-1800 (Mikva 493-5555)

Phoenix, AZ: Beth Joseph (602) 277-8858

Portland, OR: Kesser Israel (503) 222-1239

### Sacramento, CA: Keneseth Israel Torah Center (916) 481-1159

- **SUN JUNE 27, 11am:** Speaker Noah Alpert, entrepreneur/dynamic motivational speaker/author... "Business Mensch"

San Diego, CA: Cong. Beth Jacob (619) 287-9890

San Diego, CA: Kehillat Ahavat Yisrael-KAY (858) 633-0181

San Francisco, CA: Adath Israel (415) 564-5665

### Seattle: Bikur Cholim Machzikay Hadath (206) 721-0970

- **SUN JUNE 27:** Gala honoring Elaine/Marshal Hartholz & Joe/Julie Greene
- Seattle: Ezra Bessaroth (206) 722-5500

Seattle: Sephardic Bikur Holim (206) 723-3028

Valley Village, CA: Shaarey Zedek Cong. (818) 763-0560

Venice, Pacific Jewish Center-The Shul on the Beach:(310)392-8749

Washington-Mercer Island: Shevet Achim (206) 275-1539

### Woodland Hills: Beit HaMidrash (818) 999-2059 (5850 Fallbrook Ave.)

- **SUNs @ 8:30am:** following 8am minyan-Shiur-Baba Kama w/Rabbi Yaakov Rechinzt

West LA: Westwood Kehilla (310) 441-5288x2 [director@kehilla.org](mailto:director@kehilla.org)

## COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ▶ **ONGOING: OU'S WOMEN'S TORAH NETWORK (WTN)**  
**Classes with Geri Wiener—Summer sessions start June 21 & 23**  
 → **MONs-Valley (private home):** → **WEDs-City (OU Hdqtrs):**
- ▶ **For Sale by Owner:** 2 BD + den at end of cul-de-sac on Kirkside Rd in Beverlywood. \$1,300,000.email: [KirksideDrive@gmail.com](mailto:KirksideDrive@gmail.com)

## PLEASE HELP THE OU JOB BOARD IMPROVE ITS SERVICES

The OU Job Board, in its continuing quest to help the communities we serve needs your help. Can you make this happen?

**Please** help the OU Job Board improve its services. Would you like the OU Job Board to offer you more services? We need you to give the OU Job Board feedback to the services it currently provides? We encourage you to fill out the OU Job Board Survey. It will take a minute of your time and will ultimately help you and K'lal Yisroel as we fine tune our services. Please follow this link to take our survey:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/PQ6JZ8F>

The OU Job Board is asking our entire membership to please go to the OU Job Board at [www.oujobs.org](http://www.oujobs.org) and register FREE OF CHARGE to become a member. Even if you have registered with us in the past, we are asking you to re-register now so we can update our current information and help us help you pinpoint jobs and services in your area.

## NCSY-JSU-YACHAD ANNOUNCEMENTS/EVENTS



**Office contact:** 310-229-9000 x 209 [www.westcoastncsy.com](http://www.westcoastncsy.com)

Want to help run a chesed project? call Solly at 310-557-6582

**CITY NCSY:** Call Solly @ 310-557-6582 or [Shess@westcoastncsy.com](mailto:Shess@westcoastncsy.com)

**Congrats to City Chapter** on their CHAPTER EXCELLENCE AWARD!

**Bonfire and Kumzitz this Sunday** night at 7pm at Dockweiler Beach

**DNL - MON-last one JUN 28- 7-8pm:** @ Pizza World 365 S. Fairfax Ave.

**Latte&Learning-TUES 7:30pm:**@CB&T-233 S. Beverly Dr. w/R' Josh Horwitz

**JR. NCSY:** (6-8 grade) Call Josh 310-694-2976 or [ncsyjosh@gmail.com](mailto:ncsyjosh@gmail.com)

... **NCSY Bar/Bat Mitzvah** tutoring available. *Talmud Torah* classes.

**YACHAD:** Call Perri @323-228-4191.

**\*\*CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE GRADUATES!\*\***

Check out pics from Spring Regional at [www.westcoastncsy.com](http://www.westcoastncsy.com)

## B'NEI AKIVA OF LA ANNOUNCEMENTS

→ **Office:** 310-248-2450 [bneiakivaLA@gmail.com](mailto:bneiakivaLA@gmail.com)

→ **Upcoming Events:**

*Have a great Summer!*

**\*\*CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE GRADUATES!\*\***



## ISRAEL'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD

### Go with Springo to cut through the tangled Web

A new web navigation service based solely on search term popularity, Springo may give Google a run for its money – or at least augment its service.

### Quality control for alternative energy success

Israel's BrightView Systems aims to encourage solar energy use by optimizing efficiency, improving quality and ensuring the reliability of solar panels.

### Still hope for Turkish-Israeli business

Their relationship may be in severe crisis, with calls for trade boycotts on both sides, but entrepreneurs believe the strong business connection between Turkey and Israel isn't over yet.

### A birth control pill for men

By jamming the biochemical machinery of sperm, an Israeli professor has created a new pill that could finally place the responsibility of birth control with men.

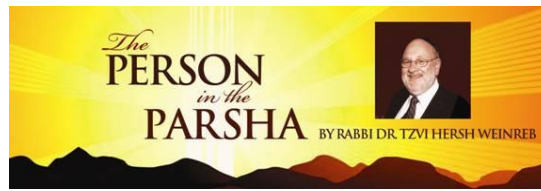
### Stopping schizophrenia before it starts

If administered in the early-onset stages of the disorder, drugs used to treat schizophrenia may have the power to prevent it, according to Israeli researchers.

### Who says old folk can't drive?

An Israeli research team finds that older drivers are more sensitive to potential hazards, while younger drivers tend to focus only on the road ahead.

[www.Israel21c.org](http://www.Israel21c.org)



## Parshat Balak

June 26, 2010 – 14 Tammuz 5770

To read more articles and essays by Rabbi Weinreb, visit his blog at [www.ou.org/rabbi\\_weinreb](http://www.ou.org/rabbi_weinreb)

### "Doing It My Way"

Most of us have had occasions in our lives when we acted as supervisors over others. It might have been in our role as parents disciplining our children, it might have been as employers giving instructions to employees, or it might have been any number of other contexts in which we had to tell others what to do.

I sometimes reflect on the many times in my own personal and professional life when I suggested, counseled, or otherwise instructed others. And I often think of the diverse reactions I received to my attempts to influence or guide the behavior of another.

There were certainly those who rejected my instructions, sometimes passively, sometimes defiantly. My own children were quite creative in devising ways to ignore their father's commands. And I have had subordinates in various positions that I have held who sometimes stood up to me and simply said, "No!"

I have also experienced numerous occasions when my suggestions or commands were carried out to the letter. These were occasions when the individuals I supervised acted with commitment, with obedience to my wishes. I must admit to my great preference to these individuals. Every supervisor likes commitment.

But there is a middle category. Here, the subordinates neither defy their orders, nor perfectly conform to them. Rather, the subordinate's response is, "Yes, but!" "I will listen to what you say," they respond, "but I will do it my way!"

When I received responses in this middle category I found myself in a quandary. On the one hand, I wanted my orders obeyed, but on the other hand, I didn't want to squelch the initiative and self-reliance of the person to whom I was assigning the task. I may have preferred total commitment, but I compromised. I allowed concession.

It is from these personal reflections that I can better understand the interaction between the major character of this week's Torah portion (*Parshat Balak*), Balaam son of Be'or, and the Almighty.

Read the opening paragraphs of this week's Torah portion carefully. Balaam begins as a very pious individual who dares not make a move without the Lord's permission. He asks God whether he can accept the request he has received to curse the Israelites. God answers, "Do not go with them! You must not curse that people, for they are blessed." Balaam accepts this response with commitment. He tells Balak's dignitaries, "I cannot go with you."

But then Balak ups the ante and sends more numerous and more distinguished dignitaries to Balaam. Again, Balaam consults the Almighty. But this time, He responds, "You may go with them, but whatever I command you, you shall do." How do we understand this shift in the divine instructions?

Drawing upon our own personal human experiences in giving instructions to others, we can begin to understand this shift. At first, Balaam responds with commitment. In his second consultation with the Lord, that commitment has diminished. The second delegation of dignitaries has weakened Balaam's resolve. So God, so to speak, has to adapt to Balaam's "Yes, but!" And God offers a concession: "Obey me, but do it your way."

Our sages describe this concession with this adage: "On the road which man wishes to pursue, upon that road he is led." That is, God allows us to follow the paths we ourselves choose. Our free will is so important to Him that He concedes to our wishes, and allows us to "do it our way."

Of course, He prefers commitment, but He grants concession, hoping that, even in doing it our way, we will ultimately obey Him and conform, albeit imperfectly, to His will.

This approach to understanding one of the ways in which the Almighty deals with human weakness allows us to understand many other examples in the Bible of God's concessions to human willfulness.

Just a few short weeks ago, for example, we read in *Numbers* 13 of God's command to Moses to send spies, *meraglim*, to scout out the Promised Land. The commentaries struggle with the account in *Deuteronomy* 1 in which it is clear that it was the people's idea, indeed demand, that spies be sent, and not God's command. The rabbis resolved the problem of the differing texts by suggesting that God Himself did not think spies were necessary. He originally depended upon the people's commitment to rely unquestioningly upon His promise of the land to them. But the people wanted to "do it their way" by sending spies. God, as it were, relented, conceded. His command to send out spies was a concession He felt was necessary to grant in the absence of commitment.

This insight also helps us understand the questions which have been raised by students of the Bible for millennia about the desirability of a king in Israel. Is appointing a king a divine imperative, as some texts suggest? Or is it a concession by God to the will of the people? Here, too, our approach is helpful. If He could depend upon the people's total commitment to His divine sovereignty, then there would be no necessity for a king. But the people wanted it "their way", and so we have God's concession, the *mitzvah* of appointing a king.

This concept is particularly useful to apply to our own lives. Ideally, we all should act out of perfect commitment. But human nature often insists that we do it our way. The compassionate Lord of the universe "cuts us a bit of slack", and gives us some flexibility, but relies upon us not to veer too far from His expectations.