

A SHORT VORT

BY RABBI CHANUCH YERES
RAV, BEIT KNESSET BEIT YISRAEL, YEMIN MOSHE

על דבר אשר לא קדמו אתכם בלחם ובמים בדרך בצאתכם ממצרים ואשר שגר עליך את בלעם בן בעור (כג:ה)
"Because they did not meet you with bread and with water on the way, when you came forth out of Egypt; and because they hired against you Balaam the son of Beor." (23:5)

While discussing why the nations of Ammon and Moav are perpetually excluded from joining the Children of Israel, why does the pasuk need to mention the two wrongdoings they perpetrated and not simply be satisfied with one reason? Why the need to mention both their aversion to providing humanitarian assistance to the Israelites in the desert as well as their attempt to engage Balaam, to render them off limits?

Rabbi Yonatan Eibeschitz (1690-1764, Prague) explains that people commonly try to justify their inappropriate actions. Only after inconsistencies are presented to them of their behavior, do they have no resort but to acknowledge their true intentions. Had Ammon and Moav only be accused of failing to supply rations to the Israelites in their sojourning, they simply could have claimed that they themselves were strapped for provisions, not allowing them the "privilege" of helping others. However, once disclosed that they had disbursed great wealth to employ Balaam on his dastardly mission to eliminate the Israelites, their weak alibi was revealed to all. Rather, it was their ingrained hostility toward the Israelites that stopped any attempt to aid the Israelites. It was both this self-deceit as well as their utter antagonism which eliminated any possibility of their joining ranks with the Children of Israel.

Shabbat Shalom



STATS

49th of the 54 sedras; 6th of 11 in Devarim.

Written on 212.8 lines; ranks 21st.

44 Parshiyot; 2 open, 42 closed; rank: 1.

110 pesukim; ranks 28th (5th in Devarim).

1582 words; ranks 23rd (5th in Devarim).

5856 letters; ranks 26th (6th in Devarim).



MITZVOT

74 mitzvot - 27 positive, 47 prohibitions;

Ki Teitzei has the most mitzvot (both positive and prohibitions) in the Torah.

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