

SORCERERS AND DONKEYS

BASED ON A SHIUR BY RAV CHANUCH WAXMAN

INTRODUCTION: THE PLAN

וַיִּשְׁלַח מְלָאכִים אֶל־בְּלָעַם בֶּן־בְּעוֹר פְּתוּרָה אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַנָּהָר אֲרָץ
בְּנֵי־עַמּוֹ לְקַרְאֵלֹו לֵאמֹר הִנֵּה עִם יֵצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם הִנֵּה כֶּסֶה אֶת־עֵינַי
הָאָרֶץ וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב מִמְּלִי:

BALAK SENT MESSENGERS TO BALAAM SON OF BEOR IN PETHOR,
WHICH IS BY THE EUPHRATES, IN THE LAND OF HIS KINSFOLK, TO
INVITE HIM, SAYING, "THERE IS A PEOPLE THAT CAME OUT OF
EGYPT; IT HIDES THE EARTH FROM VIEW, AND IT IS SETTLED NEXT
TO ME.

וַעֲתָה לְכֶהֱנֵא אָרְה־לִּי אֶת־הָעַם הַזֶּה כִּי־עֲצוּם הוּא מִמְּנֵי אוֹלֵי
אוֹכַל נִכְה־בּוֹ וְאֶגְרֶשְׁנוּ מִן־הָאָרֶץ כִּי יִדְעֵתִי אֵת אֲשֶׁר־תְּבַרֵךְ מְבֹרָךְ
וְאֲשֶׁר תְּאָר יוֹאֵר:

COME THEN, PUT A CURSE UPON THIS PEOPLE FOR ME, SINCE THEY
ARE TOO NUMEROUS FOR ME; PERHAPS I CAN THUS DEFEAT THEM
AND DRIVE THEM OUT OF THE LAND. FOR I KNOW THAT HE WHOM
YOU BLESS IS BLESSED INDEED, AND HE WHOM YOU CURSE IS
CURSED."

Source 1: Bamidbar Ch. 22

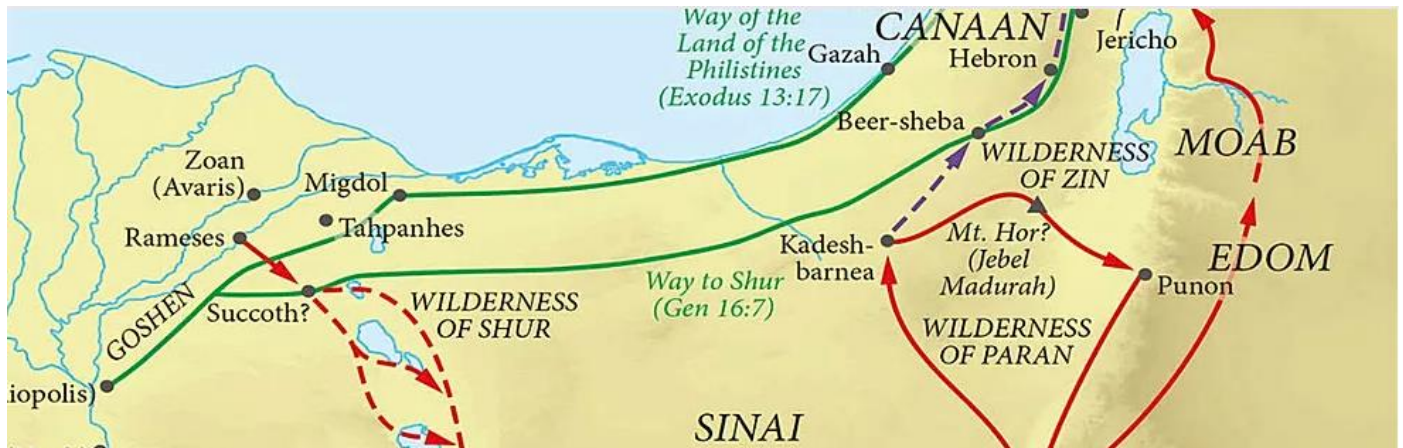
וַיִּסְעוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיַּחֲנוּ בְּעַרְבֹת מוֹאָב מֵעֶבֶר לַיַּרְדֵּן יְרֵחוֹ: (ס)

The Israelites then marched on and encamped in the steppes of Moab, across the Jordan from Jericho.

Source 2: Devarim 1:5

בְּעֶבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹאָב הוֹאִיל מֹשֶׁה בְּאֶרֶץ אֶת־הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת לֵאמֹר:

On the other side of the Jordan, in the land of Moab, Moses undertook to expound this Teaching. He said:



Source 3: Bava Batrah 14b

ומי כתבן משה כתב ספרו ופרשת בלעם ואיוב יהושע כתב ספרו ושמונה פסוקים שבתורה

The *baraita* now considers the authors of the biblical books: **And who wrote the books of the Bible? Moses wrote his own book, i.e., the Torah, and the portion of Balaam in the Torah, and the book of Job. Joshua wrote his own book and eight verses in the Torah, which describe the death of Moses.**

Rabbi Chanoch Waxman:

The narrative flow of the Torah can be defined as the saga of the relationship between God and those he has chosen, the forefathers, Moshe and the people of Israel. It is the story of God's promises, his revelation, and the trials and travails of his chosen people. Sefer Bamidbar constitutes a particular piece of this history, the story of the journey through the desert to the Promised Land and the transition from one generation to another. From this perspective, we may well wonder why the Torah inserts the story of Balak and Bilam here in Sefer Bamidbar. It is not about the travels and travails of the people or their relationship with the Divine. It is not law, and it is not crucial to the obvious themes of the book. If so, why indeed does the Torah bother with the story of Parashat Bilam? What is the point of its presence in Sefer Bamidbar?

Source 4a): Bamidbar 22:21

וַיָּקָם בִּלְעָם בְּבֹקֶר וַיַּחְבֵּשׁ אֶת־אֲתוֹנוֹ וַיִּלְךָ עִם־שָׂרֵי מוֹאָב:

When he arose in the morning, Balaam saddled his ass and departed with the Moabite dignitaries.

4b) Rashi

ויחבש את אתונו. מכאן שהשנאה מקלקלת את השוירה, שחבש הוא בעצמו; אמר הקב"ה רשע כבר קדמה אברהם אביהם, שנאמר בראשית כ"ב "וישכם אברהם בבקר ויחבש את חמרו" תנחומא

:

AND HE SADDLED HIS DONKEY — From here we may learn that the hatred one bears for a person makes one disregard the rule imposed upon him by his exalted position, for he, himself, not a servant, did the saddling. The Holy One, blessed be He, said: You wicked man! Their ancestor Abraham has already anticipated you

in this, as it is said, ([Genesis 22:3](#)) “And Abraham rose up early in the morning and saddled his ass”

4c) Midrash Tanchuma

מִיָּד הַשְּׂכִימִים בַּבֶּקֶר, שָׁנְאָמַר: וַיָּקָם בַּלְעָם בַּבֶּקֶר וַיַּחְבֵּשׁ אֶת אֶתּוֹנוֹ. וְכִי לֹא הָיָה לוֹ עֶבֶד וְלֹא שִׁפְחָה. אֲלֵא מֵרֵב שִׁנְאָה שִׁשְׁנָא אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל, קִדְמָתוֹ וְעִמְד בְּזִרְיֹזוֹת הוּא בְּעֶצְמוֹ. אָמַר לוֹ הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, רָשָׁע, כָּבֵר קִדְמָה אֲבָרְהָם אֲבִיהֶם לְעִקְדַת יִצְחָק בְּנוֹ, שָׁנְאָמַר: וַיִּשְׁכֵּם אֲבָרְהָם בַּבֶּקֶר וַיַּחְבֵּשׁ אֶת חֲמוּרוֹ

Source 5: Bamidbar 22:20

וַיָּבֹא אֱלֹהִים אֶל-בַּלְעָם לַיְלָה וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אִם-לִקְרֹא לְךָ בָּאוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים קוּם לָךְ אִתָּם וְאֵךְ אֶת-הַדְּבָר אֲשֶׁר-אֲדַבֵּר אֵלֶיךָ אֲתוֹ תַעֲשֶׂה:

That night God came to Balaam and said to him, “If these men **have come to invite you**, you may go with them. But whatever I command you, that you shall do.”

Source 6: Bereishit 22:2

וַיֹּאמֶר קַח-נָא אֶת-בְּנֶךָ אֶת-יִחִידְךָ אֲשֶׁר-אָהַבְתָּ אֶת-יִצְחָק וְלֶךְ-לְךָ אֶל-אֶרֶץ הַמֹּרְיָה וְהַעֲלֵהוּ שָׁם לְעֹלָה עַל אֶתֶד הַהָרִים אֲשֶׁר אֹמַר אֵלֶיךָ:

And He said, “Take your son, your favored one, Isaac, whom you love, **and go to the land of Moriah**, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the heights that I will point out to you.”

Source 7: Bereishit 22:3

וַיִּשְׁכֵּם אֲבָרְהָם בַּבֶּקֶר וַיַּחְבֵּשׁ אֶת-חֲמוּרוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת-שְׁנֵי נְעָרָיו אִתּוֹ

So early next morning, Abraham saddled his ass **and took with him two of his servants**

Source 8: Bamidbar

וַיַּחַר־אַף אֱלֹהִים כִּי־הוֹלֵךְ הוּא וַיִּתְיַצֵּב מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה בְּדַרְךָ לְשַׁטֵּן לוֹ וְהוּא רֹכֵב
עַל־אֲתוֹנוֹ וּשְׁנֵי נַעֲרָיו עִמּוֹ:

But God was incensed at his going; so an angel of the LORD placed himself in his way as an adversary. He was riding on his she-ass, **with his two servants alongside**

Also, the appearance of the מלאך ה' standing in his way to prevent him from cursing עם ישראל

Source 9: Bereishit Ch. 22:11-12

וַיִּקְרָא אֵלָיו מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אַבְרָהָם וַיֹּאמֶר הִנְנִי:

**Then an angel of the LORD called to him from heaven:
“Abraham! Abraham!” And he answered, “Here I am.”**

וַיֹּאמֶר אַל־תִּשְׁלַח יָדְךָ אֶל־הַנֶּעֱר וְאֶל־תַּעַשׂ לוֹ מְאוּמָה כִּי עֵתָה יָדַעְתִּי כִּי־יִרָא
אֱלֹהִים אֶתָּה וְלֹא חָשַׁכְתָּ אֶת־בְּנֶיךָ אֶת־יְחִידְךָ מִמֶּנִּי:

And he said, “Do not raise your hand against the boy, or do anything to him. For now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your favored one, from Me.”

Source 12: Bamidbar 22:25

וַתִּרָא הָאֲתוֹן אֶת־מִלְאָךְ יְהוָה וַתִּלְחֹץ אֶל־הַקִּיר וַתִּלְחֹץ אֶת־רַגְלָהּ
בַּלְעָם אֶל־הַקִּיר וַיִּסֹּף לְהַכֹּתָהּ:

The donkey, seeing the angel of the LORD, pressed herself against the wall and squeezed Balaam’s foot against the wall; so he beat her again.

Source 13: Bamidbar 22:31

וַיִּגַל יְהוָה אֶת־עֵינָיו בְּלֶעָם וַיֵּרָא אֶת־מַלְאָךְ יְהוָה נֹצֵב בְּדֶרֶךְ וְחָרְבוֹ
שֶׁלֶפָה בְּיָדוֹ וַיִּקְדּוּ וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ לְאִפָּיו:

Then the LORD uncovered Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the way, his drawn sword in his hand; thereupon he bowed right down to the ground.

Source 14: Bereishit 22:4

בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי וַיִּשָּׂא אַבְרָהָם אֶת־עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא אֶת־הַמָּקוֹם מֵרְחֹק:

On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place from afar.

Source 15: Bereishit 22:13-14

וַיִּשָּׂא אַבְרָהָם אֶת־עֵינָיו וַיֵּרָא וְהִנֵּה־אֵיל אַחֲרַי נֶאֱחָז בְּסִבְבֵּי בְּקַרְנָיו וַיִּלֶךְ אַבְרָהָם
וַיִּקַּח אֶת־הָאֵיל וַיַּעֲלֵהוּ לְעֹלָה תַחַת בְּנוֹ:

When Abraham looked up, his eye fell upon a ram, caught in the thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering in place of his son.

וַיִּקְרָא אַבְרָהָם שֵׁם־הַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא יְהוָה יִרְאָה אֲשֶׁר יֹאמַר הַיּוֹם בְּהַר יְהוָה
יִרְאָה:

And Abraham named that site Adonai-yireh, whence the present saying, "On the mount of the LORD there is vision."

WHAT ARE WE TO MAKE OF THIS CONNECTION?

Source 16: Bamidbar 22:5

וַיִּשְׁלַח מַלְאָכָיִם אֶל-בְּלָעַם בֶּן-בְּעוֹר פְּתוֹרָה אֲשֶׁר עַל-הַנָּהָר אֶרֶץ בְּנֵי-
עַמּוֹן לִקְרֹא-לוֹ לֵאמֹר הֲנִה עִם יִצְאָא מִמִּצְרַיִם הֲנִה כָּסָה אֶת-עֵינַי הָאָרֶץ
וְהוּא יֹשֵׁב מִמְּלִי:

Balak sent messengers to Balaam son of Beor in Pethor, which is by the Euphrates, in the land of his kinsfolk, to invite him, saying, “There is a people that came out of Egypt; it hides the earth from view, and it is settled next to me.

Source 17: Devarim 23:4-5

לֹא-יָבֹא עַמּוֹנִי וּמוֹאָבִי בְּקִהְלֵי יְהוָה גַּם דְּוֹר עֲשִׂירִי לֹא-יָבֹא לָהֶם
בְּקִהְלֵי יְהוָה עַד-עוֹלָם:

No Ammonite or Moabite shall be admitted into the congregation of the LORD; none of their descendants, even in the tenth generation, shall ever be admitted into the congregation of the LORD,

עַל-דִּבְרֵי אֲשֶׁר לֹא-קִדְּמוּ אֶתְכֶם בְּבִלְחָם וּבִמְלִים בְּדַרְךָ בְּצֵאתְכֶם
מִמִּצְרַיִם וְאֲשֶׁר שָׂכַר עָלֶיךָ אֶת-בְּלָעַם בֶּן-בְּעוֹר מִפְּתוֹר אֲרָם
נִהְרִים לְקַלְלָךְ:

because they did not meet you with food and water on your journey after you left Egypt, and because they hired Balaam son of Beor, from Pethor of Aram-naharaim, to curse you.—

Source 18: Bereishit 24:3-4: Avraham charges his servant to find a wife for Yitzchak

וְאֶשְׁבִּיעַךָ בַּיהוָה אֱלֹהֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֱלֹהֵי הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תִקַּח אִשָּׁה לְבָנִי מִבְּנוֹת הַכְּנַעֲנִי אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי יוֹשֵׁב בְּקִרְבּוֹ:

and I will make you swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites among whom I dwell,

כִּי אֶל־אֶרֶצִי וְאֶל־מוֹלְדוֹתַי תֵּלֵךְ וְלִקַּחְתָּ אִשָּׁה לְבָנִי לְיִצְחָק:

but will go to the land of my birth and get a wife for my son Isaac.”

A few pesukim later... פסוק י'

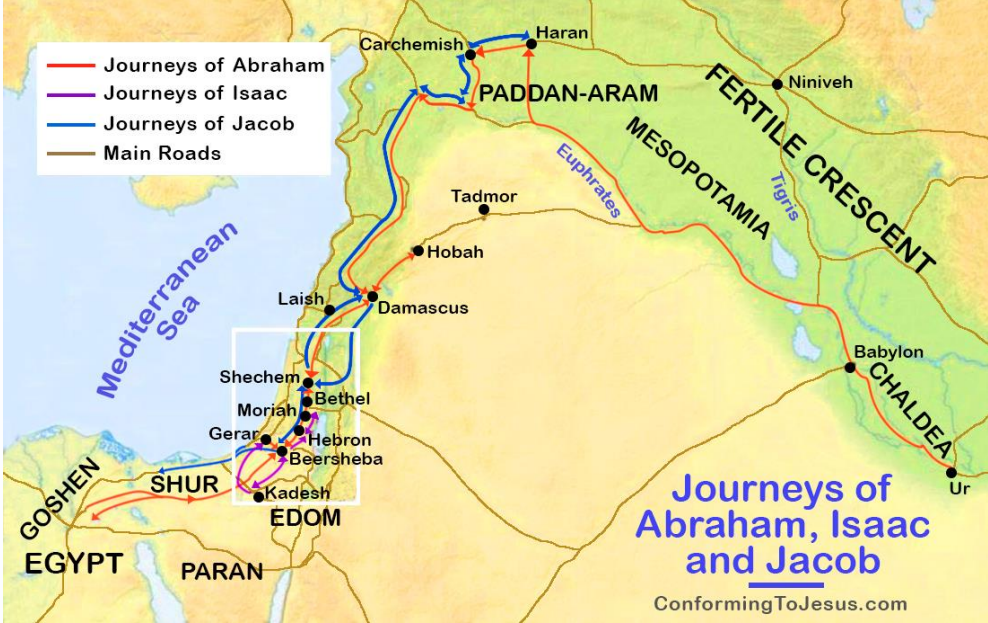
וַיִּקַּח הָעֶבֶד עֶשְׂרֵה גַמְלִים מִגְּמְלֵי אֲדֹנָיו וַיֵּלֶךְ וְכָל־טוֹב אֲדֹנָיו בְּיָדוֹ וַיָּקָם וַיֵּלֶךְ אֶל־אֲרָם נְהָרִים אֶל־עִיר נְחוֹר:

Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and set out, taking with him all the bounty of his master; and he made his way to Aram-naharaim, to the city of Nahor.

Some Geography...

Mesopotamia (Arabic: بلاد الرافدين *Bilād ar-Rāfidayn*, Ancient Greek: Μεσοποταμία) is a historical region of Western Asia situated within the Tigris–Euphrates river system, in the northern part of the Fertile Crescent, in modern days roughly corresponding to most of Iraq, Kuwait, the eastern parts of Syria, Southeastern Turkey, and regions along the Turkish–Syrian and Iran–Iraq borders.^[1]

Aram-Naharaim^[a] is the ancient land of the Arameans and biblical term for a region in Upper Mesopotamia along the elbow of the Euphrates River.^[1] It is mentioned five times in the Hebrew Bible^[2] or Old Testament. In Genesis, it is used somewhat interchangeably with the names *Paddan Aram* and *Haran* to denote the place where Abraham stayed briefly with his father Terah's family after leaving Ur of the Chaldees, while *en route* to Canaan (Gen. 11:31), and the place from which later patriarchs obtained wives, rather than marry daughters of Canaan.



Source 19: Bamidbar 22: 6

וְעַתָּה לְכֵה-נָא אֶרְהֶ-לִי אֶת-הָעַם הַזֶּה כִּי-עֲצוּם הוּא מִמֶּנִּי אוּלַי אוּכַל נִכְה־בוֹ
וְאֶגְרֹשׁוּ מִן-הָאָרֶץ כִּי יָדַעְתִּי אֶת אֲשֶׁר-תְּבָרֵךְ מְבָרֵךְ וְאֲשֶׁר תְּאָר יוֹאֵר:

Come then, put a curse upon this people for me, since they are too numerous for me; perhaps I can thus defeat them and drive them out of the land. **For I know that he whom you bless is blessed indeed, and he whom you curse is cursed.**”

Source 20: Bereishit 12:3

וְאֶבְרַכֶּה מְבָרְכֶיךָ וּמְקַלְלֶיךָ אֶאְרַךְ וְנִבְרַכְוּ בְךָ כָּל מִשְׁפְּחֹת הָאָדָמָה:

I will bless those who bless you And curse him that curses you;
And all the families of the earth Shall bless themselves by you.”

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LINKAGE? BILAAM...

- is not the father of future generations,
- does not faithfully follow after God's word to Canaan to found a new nation,
- does not build altars to God's name to preach the faith, and
- is not the knight of faith willing to sacrifice even his own son on God's command.

Source 21: Bereishit Ch. 12

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-אַבְרָם לֵךְ-לְךָ מֵאֶרֶץ וּמִמּוֹלַדְתְּךָ וּמִבְּיַת אָבִיךָ אֶל-הָאָרֶץ
אֲשֶׁר אֲרָאָה:

The LORD said to Abram, **“Go forth from your native land and from your father’s house to the land that I will show you.**

Source 22: Bereishit 22:2

וַיֹּאמֶר קַח-נָא אֶת-בְּנֶךָ אֶת-יְחִידְךָ אֲשֶׁר-אָהַבְתָּ אֶת-יִצְחָק וְלָךְ-לְךָ אֶל-אֶרֶץ
הַמֹּרְיָה וְהַעֲלֵהוּ שָׁם לְעֹלָה עַל אֶחָד הַהָרִים אֲשֶׁר אֹמַר אֵלֶיךָ:

And He said, “Take your son, your favored one, Isaac, whom you love, **and go to the land of Moriah**, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the heights that I will point out to you.”

Source 23: Bereishit 22:16-18

וַיֹּאמֶר בִּי נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי נְאֻם-יְהוָה כִּי יַעַן אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָ אֶת-הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה וְלֹא חָשַׁבְתָּ
אֶת-בְּנֶךָ אֶת-יְחִידְךָ:

and said, “By Myself I swear, the LORD declares: Because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your favored one,

כִּי-בָרַךְ אֲבָרְכְךָ וְהִרְבֵּה אֲרַבֶּה אֶת-זַרְעֶךָ כְּכּוֹכְבֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם וְכַחֹל אֲשֶׁר עַל-שֵׁפֶת
הַיָּם וַיִּרְשׁ זַרְעֶךָ אֶת שַׁעַר אֹיְבָיו:

I will bestow My blessing upon you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars of heaven and the sands on the seashore; and your descendants shall seize the gates of their foes.

וְהִתְבָּרְכוּ בְזַרְעֶךָ כָּל גּוֹיֵי הָאָרֶץ עֲקֵב אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקִלִּי:

All the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your descendants, because you have obeyed My command.”

**CAN WE NOW TIE THE CONNECTION IN TO THE PLOT OF SEFER
BAMIDBAR?**

Rav Chanoch Waxman: In line with the blessing/curse theme of the text and unstoppable power of the original blessing established for Israel, the key term for curse that appears in both the Avraham narrative (Bereishit 12:3) and the Bilam narrative, the stem a.r.h. appears seven times in the Bilam-Balak story (22:6,6,6,12, 23:7, 24:9,9). By no accident, the term for blessing and the conceptual opposite of "curse," the root b.r.ch. appears fourteen times in the Bilam narrative (22:6,6,12, 23:11,11,20,20,25,25, 24:1,9,9,10,10), exactly twice the number of times that the term for curse appears. The power of Avraham's blessing outweighs the attempt to curse. Balak's plot is doomed to failure.

Source 24: Chizkuni

ואגרשנו מן הארץ שלקחו מיד סיחון שהיתה מתחלה שלי כשלקחה סיחון מיד מלך מואב הראשון.

Source 25: Shem MiShmuel

עתה ילחנו הקהל את כל סביבותינו, כבר דקדקנו ואמרנו טעם למה לא אמר העם כמו שהזכירם בכל הפרשה וכאן הזכירם בשם קהל, ונראה עוד לומר שעיקר פחדתם הי' מפני כח הכללי שבישראל, שכל האומות הם ענפין מתפרדין וישראל הם גוי אחד בארץ, וע"כ איתא במדרש שאמר ואגרשנו מן הארץ אינו מבקש אלא לגרשם שלא יכנסו לארץ כי ארץ ישראל היא המאחדת את הכלל ולא נתערבו עד שעברו את הירדן כמ"ש כמה פעמים בשם מהר"ל, וע"כ אמר עתה ילחנו הקהל את כל סביבותינו היינו מפני כח הקהילה שבישראל בזה יכולין לנצח את הכל, וכן הוא באמת כשישראל מתאחדין למטה שורה עליהם ענין כנסת ישראל למעלה וכמ"ש ויהי בישורון מלך בהתאסף ראשי עם יחד שבטי ישראל:

Source 26: Pirkei Avot 5:19

כָּל מִי שֵׁישׁ בְּיָדוֹ שְׁלֹשָׁה דְבָרִים הִלְלוּ, מִתְלַמְּיָדוֹ שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ. וְשֹׁלֶשׁ דְּבָרִים אַחֲרֵיהֶם, מִתְלַמְּיָדוֹ שֶׁל בַּלְעָם הַרְשָׁע. עַיִן טוֹבָה, וְרוּחַ נְמוּכָה, וְנֶפֶשׁ שְׂפֵלָה, מִתְלַמְּיָדוֹ שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ. עַיִן רָעָה, וְרוּחַ גְּבוּהָה, וְנֶפֶשׁ רְחֹבָה, מִתְלַמְּיָדוֹ שֶׁל בַּלְעָם הַרְשָׁע. מָה בֵּין תְּלַמְּיָדוֹ שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ לְתַלְמִידוֹ שֶׁל בַּלְעָם הַרְשָׁע. תְּלַמְּיָדוֹ שֶׁל אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ, אוֹכְלִין בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה וְנוֹחְלִין בְּעוֹלָם הַבָּא, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר מִשְׁלַח לְהַנְחִיל אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ אֲמַלֵּא. אָבֵל תְּלַמְּיָדוֹ שֶׁל בַּלְעָם הַרְשָׁע יוֹרְשִׁין גֵּיהֵנָם וְיִוֹרְדִין לְבֵּאֵר שַׁחַת, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר תְּהַלִּים נָה וְאֶתְהַ אֱלֹהִים תּוֹרִידֵם לְבֵּאֵר שַׁחַת, אֲנָשֵׁי דָמִים וּמְרָמָה לֹא יִחְצוּ יְמֵיהֶם, וְאֲנִי אֶבְטַח בָּךְ:

Whoever possesses these three things, he is of the disciples of Abraham, our father; and [whoever possesses] three other things, he is of the disciples of Balaam, the wicked. A good eye, a humble spirit and a moderate appetite he is of the disciples of Abraham, our father. An evil eye, a haughty spirit and a limitless appetite he is of the disciples of Balaam, the wicked. What is the difference between the disciples of Abraham, our father, and the disciples of Balaam, the wicked? The disciples of Abraham, our father, enjoy this world, and inherit the world to come, as it is said: "I will endow those who love me with substance, I will fill their treasuries" (Proverbs 8:21). But the disciples of Balaam, the wicked, inherit gehinnom, and descend into the nethermost pit, as it is said: "For you, O God, will bring them down to the nethermost pit those murderous and treacherous men; they shall not live out half their days; but I trust in You" (Psalms 55:24).

Source 27: Bamidbar 23:18-21

וַיִּשָּׂא מִשְׁלוֹ וַיֹּאמֶר קוּם בָּלַק וְשִׁמְעַתְּ הָאֲזִינָה עַדִּי בְּנֹו צִפּוֹר:

And he took up his theme, and said: Up, Balak, attend,
Give ear unto me, son of Zippor!

לֹא אִישׁ אֶל־יִכְזֹב וּבֶן־אָדָם וַיִּתְּנָחֶם הֵהוּא אָמַר וְלֹא יַעֲשֶׂה וְדָבָר וְלֹא יְקִימְנָה:

God is not man to be capricious, Or mortal to change His
mind. Would He speak and not act, Promise and not
fulfill?

הַגֵּה בְּרַךְ לְקַחְתִּי וּבְרַךְ וְלֹא אֲשִׁיבָנָה:

My message was to bless: When He blesses, I cannot
reverse it.

לֹא־הַבֵּיט אֲנִי בִּיעֲקֹב וְלֹא־רָאָה עֵמֶל בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיוֹ עִמּוֹ
וּתְרוּעַת מֶלֶךְ בּוֹ:

No harm is in sight for Jacob, No woe in view for Israel.
The LORD their God is with them, And their King's
acclaim in their midst.