**Some Questions to Ponder:**

1. From all the readings for this Shabbat, which reading touched your heart and fired your imagination?

I was touched by the Hkaham’s commentary on the “central topic” of the pericope. His looking at the repeated phrase “led astray” was very astute and perceptive.

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 22:4?

**to the elders of Midian** - But did they not always hate each other, as it says, “who defeated Midian in the field of Moab” (Gen. 36:35), when Midian came against Moab in battle?

**as the ox eats up** – Why is an ox used as an example?

**at that time** – What is the meaning of the pasuk?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 22:5?

**to Pethor** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: פְּתוֹרָה?

**the land of his people** – Whose people are we discussing?

**to call for him** – Why was he called?

**A people has come out of Egypt** – How is this important?

**“behold, they have covered the ‘eye’ of the land”** – Who are considered the ‘eye’ of the land?

**and they are stationed opposite me** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: מִמֻּלִי?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 22:11?

**curse it** – What is the meaning of the Hebrew word: קָבָה־לּי?

**and drive it out** – Where are they being driven out of?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 22:18?

**a house full of silver and gold** – What does this show us?

**I cannot... transgress** – What is he saying here?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 22:21?

**saddled his she-donkey** – What do we learn from this phrase?

**with the Moabite dignitaries** – Why is he linked with the Moabites?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 22:22?

**because he was going** – What did Bilaam understand from this phrase?

**to thwart him** – What is HaShem trying to thwart him?

**and his two servants were with him** – What do we learn from this pasuk?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 22:23?

**The she-donkey saw** – What did the donkey see?

**with his sword drawn in his hand** – Why is a sword mentioned?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 22:30?

**Have I become accustomed** – What is the meaning of this Hebrew phrase: הַהַסְכֵּן הִסְכַּנְתִּי?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 22:33?

**Had she not turned** – What is the meaning of this Hebrew word: אוּלַי?

**I would also have killed you** – What is the meaning of this Hebrew phrase: גַּם אֽתְכָה הָרַגְתִּי?

**and spared her** - Why are we speaking of sparing her?

***2Timothy 3:8*** *And just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men of depraved mind, rejected as regards the faith.*

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 22:34?

**for I did not know** – What does this tell us about Bilaam?

**if it displeases you, I will return** – What is the purpose of this reply?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 23:4?

**[God] chanced upon** – What is the meaning of this Hebrew word: וַיִּקָּר?

**the seven altars** – What are ‘the’ seven altars?

**and I offered up a bull and a ram on [each] altar** – What is the meaning of these two animals?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 23:8?

**How can I curse whom God has not cursed** – Why could he not curse this people?

**If the Lord has not been angered** – What does this teach us?

1. What question/s were asked of Rashi in B’Midbar 23:9?

**For from its beginning, I see them as mountain peaks** – What is the meaning of this pasuk?

**It is a nation that will dwell alone** – Why are they dwelling alone?

**and will not be reckoned among the nations** – What is the meaning of this pasuk?

1. In your opinion what is the intent of Hakham Tsefet’s pericope by the hand of his scribe Mordechai (Mark) for this Shabbat?

Make sure you are well connected to HaShem and that you have a good teacher so that you are not led astray.

Walter Oakley: We must intimately know the scriptures and their oral elucidation and to know the dynamic (living) power of G-d!

Lloyd Nelson: Just as Balaam new of G-d and was aware of some of His traits and tendencies, he was still in the dark, as he had no Torah sage to teach him the Oral Torah. All he had to rely on was his own understanding of what he thought was perhaps G-d’s will.

In Mordechai we see the same circumstance in that the Sadducee’s who did not believe in the resurrection or the Oral Torah (teachings), they could not arrive at the proper conclusion to their question. The Written Torah without the Oral Torah is likened unto the body without its soul. (Golem)

Dr. Elizabeth Oakley: I believe he is telling us how important it is for us to have a proper regiment of Torah Study. It is the only thing that can sharpen our spiritual senses and keep us headed in the proper direction.

Lukas A. Nelson: Strengthening of one’s scriptural knowledge and obedience to El Shaddai continues one on the path to serve as Mashiach’s talmid; these practices serve to equip one to render how others have gone astray.

1. What do you think is the interpretation of the Master’s reply to the Sadducee’s delegation in Mark 12:24?

Since we know that the end will be like the beginning, and since we know that Adam was an androgynous man with both Adam and Eve fused together, we know that in the end man will be androgynous with both male and female permanently fused together. HaShem will join them appropriately in the Olam HaBa, but they are not joined in the Messianic age and you should not think that there will be another wedding in that age.

Dr. Elizabeth Oakley: He is telling them that they have not had or are not having proper Torah Study. They cannot discern the truth as it is stated in the Torah.

Lloyd Nelson: It would be interpreted as; If you knew Torah, both Written (static) and Oral (dynamic), you would be able to see the error in your logic. With this wisdom displayed by Yeshua it would be difficult to trap him in his words and we must find another way.

Lukas A. Nelson: Their beliefs through ignorance and faithlessness lead them astray; that is to say that they stubbornly do not study what has been given to them. A man is desperately lost if he doesn’t believe something he cannot see and refuses to study what he can see.

1. What part of the Torah Seder fired the heart and imagination of the Psalmist for this week?

The Psalmist is captivated by the coming new moon and it’s regeneration. He is comparing this to the Jewish people who are viewed by HaShem as soon to be regenerated (not cursed). As you have taken care of the beasts, how much more will you preserve your people and meet their needs. Finally, the Psalmist sees the end of the wicked Bilaam and the blessing that the Jewish people will feel at that time.

1. What part of the Torah Seder fired the heart and the imagination of the prophet this week?

Micah sees the Midianites and Moabites as being assigned the place of all the heathens in shame and disgrace. He takes note of the fact that the mouth is the principal weapon and that this is the organ that will be covered. He see them as fearful as Bilaam when he sees the angel. He also notes that He forgives His people and pardons their transgressions so that they are blessed rather than cursed.

The Prophet Nahum sees the benefits that the Jewish people receive because they trust in HaShem. When they are to be afflicted by Bilaam’s curse, HaShem is good to them. He sees the Midianites and the Moabites as besieging Israel and yet Israel is blessed instead.

1. What part/s of the Torah Seder, Psalm, and the prophets fired the heart and the imagination of Hakham Tsefet for this week?

Walter Oakley: **Torah Seder**

This week’s Hakham Tsefet’s pericope is filled with verbal and thematic connections to the Torah Seder.

1. Repetitive use of the Hebrew word raah parallels the Greek eidotes

2. Balak sends messengers Heb. malakim which is paralleled by the Greek aggelos

3. The Hebrew word shalach also parallels aggelos

4. The Hebrew text speaks of Balaam’s vision seeing “from the beginning.” Yeshua refers to the restoration of humanity to the beginning when Adam ha’rishon was androgynous.

**Tehillim**

Hakham Tsefet connects with the Psalm through the idea of those who are sent one i.e. Angels and the spirit sent forth. Tehillim 104:30 / Mordechai 12:25

Rashi also points out that this bears relation to the resurrection, which is a sub theme of our pericope.

**Ashlamatah**

Micah – The nations will see (raah) and be ashamed. (Micah 7:16) This parallels the Greek word eidotes used by Yeshua in telling the Tz’dukim that they do not know (see). Mordechai 12:24 The connection to Micah 7:19 gives us the antithesis of Tz’dukim belief who believes that G-d had created the universe and then resigned from any interaction with it.

Nahum uses two Hebrew words equated with power Chazak and Coach. These words serve as parallels to the Greek word dunamis, which serves to illustrate G-d dynamic power.

1. After taking into consideration all the above texts and our Torah Seder, what would you say is the general prophetic message from the Scriptures for this coming week?

Take care to trust HaShem and to seek a good teacher so that you are not led astray and can indeed be blessed by HaShem and withstand the evils that will come.

Dr. Elizabeth Oakley: 1. Find and subject oneself to a good Hakham

2. Find or buy a companion to study Torah

3. Memorize the Written and Oral Law

Lloyd Nelson: Be like our Messiah who was always ready to give an answer, go to any length necessary to acquire Torah Wisdom, Understanding, and Knowledge.

Lukas A. Nelson: Seek to place the truth of our Master deep within our soul and understanding: to guide us in discerning the intents/misguidance of others, and to sanctify His Name in all things.

Walter Oakley: The Torah Sederim are prophetic, be prepared to live the Torah Seder and reading in the coming weeks. Be ready to confront those who do not believe in the resurrection and Oral Torah (scriptural ignorance)