

SCHEDULE

שבת קדש

Mincha Erev Shabbos	7:00 & 8:12 PM
Candle lighting	8:12 PM
Daf Yomi	7:30 AM
Shacharis- Followed by Kiddush	8:30 AM

-Sof Zman K"Ts- א"מ 8:44 א"ג 9:33

Mincha	2:15 PM
Pirkei Avos	7:30 PM
Mincha -	8:10 PM
Followed by Shalosh Seudos	
Maariv -	9:20 PM

Weekday Minyanim & Shiurim

Sunday

Shacharis I	6:50 AM
Daf Yomi	7:30 AM
Shacharis II	8:30 AM
Mincha / Maariv	8:20 PM

Weekdays

Daf Yomi	5:45 AM
Shacharis:	
Monday, Thursday	6:40 AM
Tues., Wed, Fri.	6:45 AM
Mincha (Mon -Thur)	1:45 PM
MINCHA/MAARIV (Mo.-Thur)	8:20 PM
Daf Yomi (Take II)	9:00 PM
Maariv (Monday-Thursday)	9:45 PM

MEMBER *Spotlight* **More than just hello!**

This Week: Avi & Meria Mandel

- ◆ **Originally from:** Queens (Avi) & Far Rockaway (Meira)
- ◆ **Occupation:** General Manager, Park Heights Roofing (Avi), Day care provider & Makeup Artist (Meira)
- ◆ **Interesting place you've been:** Switzerland (Meira) and Uman (Avi)

Member Trivia: Name a member that Kayaks for fun!

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Shul Contacts

@OhelMosheBaltimore.com

Rabbi Teichman

410-570-3333 or ravzt@hotmail.com

Gaboim:

Naftali Miller (Rishon) & Chaim Meister (Sheni)- Gabbai@

Laining Schedule:

Pinchas Friedman- Lain@

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CONGREGATION OHEL MOSHE
2808 SMITH AVE
BALTIMORE, MD 21209

WWW.OHELMOSHEBALTIMORE.COM
DAVEN@OHELMOSHEBALTIMORE.COM
(410) 878-7521

Issue#343

The Final Battle

Moshe Rabbeinu is told that he is to take vengeance against the Midianite nation. The Midianites had just successfully carried out a devious plan seducing 24,000 Jewish men into worshipping the idol of *Baal Pe'or*.

Moshe is informed by G-d, "afterward you will be gathered unto your people" (במדבר י"ח), with this deed, Moshe would be concluding his noble mission here on earth.

Despite the fact that he is directed by G-d to undertake this effort he chooses to enlist the services of Pinchas to lead the soldiers in battle.

Rashi (שם ט"ח) quoting the Midrash informs us that Pinchas is selected because he has an old score to settle with the descendants of Midian. It was the Midianites after all who sold his maternal grandparent, Yosef, as a slave, who ultimately ended up in Egypt:

Midianite men, traders, passed by... and sold Yosef... (בראשית ל"ח)

Apparently the sale of Yosef by the Midianites wasn't just a coincidence of Midianite merchants happening to be travelling by and taking advantage of a good deal. There was something sinister in their intention. They sought to sabotage the future aspirations of the children of Yaakov by taking this initiative in assuring a permanent schism in this noblest of families.

It was in this light that Moshe now conscripts Pinchas to avenge for that evil plot as well.

This sin of worshipping *Baal Pe'or* is connected to an prior idolatrous act the nation partook in early in its history.

The Midrash (שמי"ד סי' מ"א) indicates that the Sin of the Golden Calf was first fully atoned for only after the Jewish nation, having defeated the Midianites and taking their spoils, present an offering to G-d of all the gold vessels (במדבר ל"א) *to atone for our souls*.

The verse goes on to list five items: anklet, bracelet, ring, earring and clasp.

This, the Midrash says, fulfilled the verse (שמות כ"א) that instructs that when someone steals an ox and slaughters and sells it he must repay fivefold for this sin. In this case the "ox" represents the sin of the Golden Calf which found its reparation in the "fivefold" offering presented after the conquest of Midian. (בית ש"י - דרשות סי' מ"א)

Evidently the succumbing to *Pe'or* echoed the earlier worship of the Golden Calf, and with the subsequent offering all was now repaired.

What brings us full circle in these historical events is the fact that the sin of the Golden Calf is linked with the tragic event of the sale of Yosef.

When the Tabernacle was dedicated the Torah instructs the Children of Israel to take a he-goat for a sin offering, and a calf and a sheep as an elevation-offering. (ויקרא ט"ז)

The Sifra on this verse teaches that the he-goat is to atone for the sin of selling Yosef, where they disguised his death by slaughtering a goat and dipping Yosef's tunic in its blood deceptively claiming to Yaakov that a savage beast devoured him. The calf brought here is to amend for the sin of the Golden Calf.

The Midianites unleashed a long chain of events that began with their intervention in the sale of Yosef that finds further expression somehow in the sin of the Golden Calf that repeats itself in the worship of *Pe'or* and concludes happily with defeat of the nation of Midyan.

The fifth Lubavitcher Rebbe, the Holy Rashab, in a fascinating essay discussing the subject of the *kelipah* (the "shells" that imprison the holy sparks of divine light) of Midian, enlightens us with the following:

The name קל"ק, Midian is etymologically related to the word קלון, meaning strife and contention. [In a personal sense,] the kelipah of Midian expresses itself through separation and division, baseless hatred and disunity between hearts; this is the exact opposite of the side of holiness, which is characterized by unity...

The kelipah of Midian, then, is baseless hatred, hatred that has no specific reason. It is not [aroused] because one has been harmed or opposed by another person in any

particular way. Such a hatred would be derived from an individual attribute, and hence is not the kelipah of Midian...

The presence of opposition is the cause of quarreling and contention.

The strife, contention, and hatred that stems from the kelipah of Midian is not activated by any specific point, but rather by the inability of one person to tolerate another, even if he does not know him and has never had any dealings with him. Such a person finds it impossible to unite with the other, since he hates him for no reason. This is what is called baseless hatred.

At times, this hatred settles on a specific point; a person has some complaint against his fellow man which he uses to explain his hatred. In reality, however, this is only a rationalization which follows the fact. The specific complaints are not the actual cause of the hatred. He may find some pretext and false charge to justify himself before others, but they do not represent the true cause. For this hatred arises solely from his inability to tolerate another. Its cause is yeshus egotism. He is so important in his own eyes that his yeshus and self-concern are dominant in every particular aspect [of his life]. This is why he cannot tolerate anyone else. His yeshus does not leave room for anyone else; [he views] another's existence as a detraction from his own, and hence intolerable.

Thus, it is primarily his own yeshus which leads him to view another person as an opponent. His opposition is not to a particular factor, but to the other's simply existing. The mere existence of another person detracts from his yeshus and prompts him [to view others as] opponents, making it impossible for him to tolerate them.

[In contrast,] the realm of holiness is characterized by bitul (self-effacement), and hence by oneness and synthesis. When one's attitude is one of bitul, he leaves room for others; he accepts them and becomes one with them.

Thus, in the realm of evil yeshus leaves no room for others, opposing them because of their very existence. This is the reason for divisiveness and intolerance. By contrast, the bitul of holiness leaves room for others, allowing one to accept an act in harmony with the world.

Midian was one of the children Avraham Avinu fathered with Keturah/Hagar. When he saw that they were incapable of absorbing his noble mission and were adversely affecting his beloved son Yitzchok, he sent them off to the Far East with special "gifts". Rashi says he gave them a שם טמאה, literally translated a "name of defilement".

Rav Dessler explains this to mean that these children were incapable of living with a notion of accountability, where one's success is contingent on adherence to the will of the Creator, where one creates a meaningful relationship with a benevolent G-d. These nations seek success through their own might and initiative incapable of fathoming a dependence on a higher power that directs our every step.

Avraham invested them with the great wisdom of the natural world, providing them sophisticated

tools by which to manipulate a physical world to its vast potential. But it would be left to operate, for the most part, independent of G-d's intervention, where man would be left to his own devices in determining his fate. This world although filled with vast potential is a world of "defilement" as it is detached from G-d's direct influence.

Midian can not tolerate us because we are diametrically opposed to his notion of existence.

When we allow ourselves to indulge in selfish interests we become victim to this *kelipah*, because the moment we are divested of interest and concern for each other, we have detached ourselves from G-d, whose spark resides within each one of us and finds its full expression in that unity.

The brothers succumbed to this negative influence and we are still reeling from the effects of the wholesale abandonment of our brother.

When Moshe delayed in arriving on "our" expected time of arrival at Mount Sinai, we immediately indulged in that same self-righteousness that echoed our earlier



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!!!HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!

Tziporah Nechama Marizan, Melissa Mako, Yehuda Frager, Samuel Pottash, Koby Wealcatch, Sophie Braun, Rena Cohn

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failure to see beyond our selves and remain faithful to one another. That was the sin of the Golden Calf.

The worship of *Baal Pe'or* entailed the ingestion of laxatives and subsequent relieving oneself upon the deity.

Perhaps this represents the notion of our being beasts of instincts and urges beyond our control as represented in the uncontrollable reflex to empty ourselves which is a testament to this distorted view of life. We survive solely by our own initiative and strengths, the Midianites contend, left to our own selfish devices and interests without any accountability, permitted to do whatever it takes to survive and thrive.

In face of the overwhelming temptation, being seduced by the daughters of Moav, we felt incapable of control, claiming it is simply too difficult. Submitting to urge we first paid allegiance to this corrupted belief by engaging in the reflexive act of *Pe'or*.

We lost many in that battle but recovered mightily in restoring our faith in a world that sees G-d in every facet and challenge, knowing that we can conquer the greatest of instincts and urges.

Pinchas was also a descendant of the former High Priest of Midian, Yisro.

Yisro the Midianite, in his very first encounter with his beloved son in law Moshe is described as (שמות י"ח) *וישאלו איש את רעהו לשלום (שמרת יח) and each inquired about the other's well being.*

Yisro the epitome of Midian is ready to become part of our nation. He is ready to discard the apathy, disdain and intolerance which is the product of Midian theology. He shows concern for his fellow man, sincerely displaying interest, love and appreciation for someone else.

Therein lays the test of our belief. Are we capable of seeing beyond our self and seeing the presence of G-d in those who stand before us.

The presence of the Almighty in our souls is directly proportional to how much room we leave for others in our hearts and lives.

May we defeat the enemy of Midian once and for all and bring about a unity that will resound mightily throughout the world!

בארה"ב, נבי טייכמן