

## SCHEDULE

שבת קדש

**Candle Lighting & Mincha 4:42 PM**

Daf Yomi 7:30 AM

Shacharis-Followed by Kiddush 8:30 AM

-Sof Zman K"ס- א"ג 9:07 א"ג 9:50

Mincha 2:15 PM

Mincha - 4:35 PM

Followed by Shalosh Seudos

Maariv - 5:52 PM

Father/Son Learning 6:45 PM

*Avos U'Banim*

6:45 PM

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### Weekday Minyanim

#### Sunday

Shacharis I 6:50 AM

Daf Yomi 7:30 AM

Shacharis II 8:30 AM

Mincha / Maariv 4:50 PM

**\*\*CHANGE: 7:45 Maariv now Mo-Th Only\*\***

#### Weekdays

Daf Yomi 5:45 AM

*Shacharis:*

-Monday & Thursday 6:40 & 7:47 AM

-Tue, Wed, Fri 6:45 & 7:47 AM

Mincha (Mo-Th) 1:45 PM

MINCHA/MAARIV 4:50 PM

**NEW MAARIV (Mon-Thurs) 7:45 PM**

Daf Yomi (Take II) 9:00 PM

Maariv (Monday-Thursday) 9:45 PM

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### Shul Contacts

@OhelMosheBaltimore.com

#### Rabbi Teichman

410-570-3333 or ravzt@ohelmoshebaltimore.com

#### Gaboim:

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

#### Laining Schedule:

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# אהל משה



*Rabbi Zvi Teichman*

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Issue #363

## RABBI'S MESSAGE:

### A Sign of the Times

On the night of Pesach we retell how G-d brought us out of Egypt with a 'strong hand' and an 'outstretched arm' and with 'great terror', ובאורות, and with 'signs' and with 'wonders'.

We go on to describe how the 'signs' here specifically refer to the *מטה*, the staff of Moshe. We cite as proof the verse where G-d instructs Moshe, ואת *המטה* הזה תקח (שמות ד ד) בידך אשר תעשה בו את *האורות* (שמות ד ד) *Take in your hand this staff with which you will perform the signs.*

Isn't the staff merely a tool and the medium by which Moshe would bring about G-d's miracles?

What significance is there in emphasizing this staff? Wouldn't it be more appropriate to make reference to the marvelous transformation of the laws of nature in bringing about the plagues?

Why indeed was it even necessary to utilize this proverbial 'magic wand'? What is this mysterious staff that G-d required it to accompany Moshe in his dispatching of all these miracles?

When Moshe hesitates in undertaking this great mission by casting doubt whether the people will believe him that G-d spoke to him and accept his claimed role as savior, G-d asks a seemingly rhetorical question.

(במות ד ד) *G-d said to him, "What is that in your hand?"*

Moshe answers simply: *מטה, "A staff"*.

G-d then goes on to direct Moshe to cast the staff on the ground where it turns into a snake, Moshe recoils in fear and is then told to grasp the snake's tail turning it back into a staff once again.

What is this strange dialogue between G-d and Moshe, questioning the obvious?

There are three words used in the Torah to describe a staff, *מטה*, *מקל* *משענת*, and *מטה*. *מטה* usually indicates its utility as a means to hit or beat down an adversary, rooted in *קלה*, denoting a devaluation or diminishing. Often it is used in context of a shepherd who uses it to control his flock.

The use as *משענת* is based on the word *שען*, to support, intimating a staff that is used to assist in walking or standing, relying on it for support. This finds its expression when discussing the infirm and elderly and their need for support.

The *מטה* however implies something much more than a functional tool. Rooted in the word *נטה*, to stretch and extend, the *מטה* is a tall staff that symbolizes one's influence representing one's stature that reaches and displays one's character and social standing.

There are three types of leadership: Those who lead by strength and govern over those weaker than them, asserting their role with the power they possess. Next are the more noble ones who see an ability to pool resources and create alliances for the mutual benefit. But the greatest leaders are those who lead by inspiration, elevating humanity towards a higher goal, living lives of eternal values and purposeful existence. It is this type of leadership that provides man with an attainment of success that transcends mere physical comfort and satisfaction. *(Based on the Malbim)*

The 'mystical' staff of Moshe was created on the twilight following the sixth day of creation and handed down from Adam down through the Patriarchs and eventually ending up in the hands of Yosef. After Yosef died Yisro, also known as Re'u'el, who was an official in the court of Pharaoh took it and eventually implanted it into his garden where it remained embedded, resisting all efforts of

those who sought to wrest it from the earth. It was only when Moshe discovered it after entering the home of Yisro, that he succeeded in extracting it from its place.

(פרד"א פ"מ, ספר הישר, תרג"י שמות ב כא ועוד)

Yisro was a priest of Midyan. The Zohar teaches that the nation *מדין*, *Midyan*, is ensconced in a philosophy of *דין*, demanding justice and the preserving of rights, which when governed in a system bereft of higher ideals and values leads to *מדינים*, quarrel and contention. (זהר כרך ב סח.)

It was the Midyan nation who feared the encroaching Jewish nation with its newfangled claims of spiritual enrichment and therefore feared their '*violating the boundaries that have been set from the time of Noah*'. (במ"ר פ"ב)

Yisro knew that this mighty staff and its mystical powers could be corrupted in the hands of those who only understood a world within the confines of corporeal needs and benefit. He thus planted it symbolically in his 'natural' garden, declaring emphatically that the world must continue to operate within its limited boundaries until such time as a worthy leader would arise to uplift the world once again.

Moshe hesitates in self-doubt in undertaking the noble task of bringing G-d's nation to its proper stature. He feels unworthy and incapable of such an inspired goal, they deserve better he feels.

G-d pointedly asks of Moshe, who possesses the staff of Adam in his hands, "What is that object in your hand?" Is it a *מקל*, a tool to subdue, or a *משענת*, an instrument to support? Does it represent subversive power or the 'noble' goal of convenient and mutual benefit? Or does it exemplify a striving for a higher mission and more noble sense of accomplishment and spiritual achievement?

Moshe answers assertively, it is the latter that he seeks and yearns for.

G-d sought to prod from Moshe an awareness of that sense of mission that began with creation and continues through the generations in the able hands of Jewish leadership.

Moshe was taught that as long as one works towards that goal even if they have not risen to the stature they yet wish to attain, can succeed in being the vehicle to bring about the transformation of a finite world into a world of eternity.

The staff is truly the greatest 'sign'. One who grips fully that role will be borne upon the shoulders of our illustrious ancestors in being able to carry it through.

We may not each behold a 'magical' staff but every one of us possesses an identity as a Jew, and the knowledge of the role we must each play in inspiring the world we live in. Even if we still lack that sense of confidence in our personal spiritual achievements and feel we are incapable of making a difference, we must remember this vital lesson that we can indeed transform and enlighten all whom we encounter.

We can grasp the tail of that fear inducing snake and turn it into the very head of a staff, securing it in our palms and presenting a powerful statement of belief and commitment that will change the world and bring it to its glorious end-goal.

May we merit to carry that staff wherever we go.

בהבה,  
צבי טייכמאן

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### MINYAN ALERT:

The 7:47AM Shacharis and 7:45PM Maariv need more regulars. Please consider helping stabilize these minyanim by committing to being there daily and on time as they build up momentum and become more self sustaining.

### SECURITY NOTICE:

In light of the terrible tragedy in Paris this Erev Shabbos, we are increasing our security measures until further notice and will be keeping all doors in to the Shul locked at all times. Someone will be posted during deveining at the front door to open it for people as they arrive and the side door is accessible using the combination. If you don't know it, see any of the Gaboim, Motty Rabinowitz, or Michael Denise for instructions and/or to volunteer to help.