

SCHEDULE

ליל שבת קדש

Early Mincha & Shabbos @Main Shul 7:00 PM

Candle Lighting &

On Time Mincha @Main Shul 8:18 PM

יום שבת קדש

Daf Yomi - *By Pinchas Friedman* 7:30 AM

Shacharis - (*Direct Flight*) 8:30 AM

-Sof Zman K"ס- א"ח 8:36 א"ח 9:27

Followed by Kiddush

Mincha - 2:15 PM

Pirkei Avos - NO SHIUR THIS WEEK!

Mincha - 8:10 PM

- Followed by Shalosh Seudos with a special guest speaker,
Rabbi Dani Kermaier

Maariv - 9:27 PM

CANDLES NEXT SHABBOS - 8:18PM

Weekday Minyanim

Sunday - י"ז בתמוז
Shiva'asar Be'tamuz

Fast Begins: 4:33 AM

Shacharis I 6:30 AM

Daf Yomi 7:30 AM

Shacharis II 8:30 AM

Mincha 1:45 PM

Mincha 8:00 PM

Maariv 8:55 PM

Fast Ends: 9:19 PM

Weekdays

Daf Yomi 5:45 AM

Shacharis:

- Monday & Thursday 6:40 AM

- Tue, Wed, Fri 6:45 AM

Mincha (Mo-Th) 1:45 PM

MINCHA/MAARIV 8:25 PM

Daf Yomi (Take II) 9:00 PM

Maariv (Mo - Th) 9:45 PM

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Shalosh Seudos

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NEW MEMBERS - SAY HI! (Or Hello)



Shul Contacts

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Rabbi Teichman

410-570-3333 or ravzt@ohelmoshebaltimore.com

Laining Schedule:

Pinchas Friedman- Lain@OhelMosheBaltimore.com

Kiddush, Shalosh Seudos Sponsorship, Hall rental:

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Rabbi Zvi Teichman

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2808 SMITH AVE

BALTIMORE, MD 21209

WWW.OHELMOSHEBALTIMORE.COM

DAVEN@OHELMOSHEBALTIMORE.COM

(410) 878-7521

Issue #388

RABBI'S MESSAGE:

"I am but a Fool and I Believe!"

We can only imagine how startled Bilaam must have been when his she-donkey suddenly opened her mouth to give him a piece of her mind. We are taught that this miraculous 'mouth' that enabled a donkey to speak was created on the eve of the Shabbos of Creation at twilight, together with the 'mouth' of the earth that swallowed Korach and the 'mouth' of the well that provided water in the wilderness subsequent to the death of Miriam.

Despite this obvious marvel of a talking donkey, what seems even more fascinating is the fact that this donkey had quite a personality. With a cynicism more caustic than Mr. Ed and an honesty more genuine than Eeyore, this girl had sass. Questioning Bilaam she inquires as to why he struck her three times. Bilaam responds by telling her it was because she humiliated him, adding that were he to have had a sword he would've killed her. She challenges Bilaam asserting that she was his loyal steed forever, never having bucked him once and therefore deserves special consideration and not the reactive abuse he inflicted on her.

Do donkeys have feelings, attitudes or understanding?

The wonder of the faculty of speech it was granted pales in significance to the phenomena of it possessing a rather complex and assertive personality. Why then is the 'mouth' emphasized more than the intelligence and persona it clearly acquired?

Bilaam is frustrated and reacts violently to his steed's behavior by striking it with his staff. It is not just frustration he expresses but a sense of humiliation. He accuses the donkey of having, *mocking him*, *התעללה בו* (במדבר כב ט), the intellectual capacity to intentionally act with contempt that he held her responsible and was 'offended'?

Even if we confer intelligence to the donkey in what way was her behavior indicative of derision? Possibly she was rebelling, but wherein was there any evidence of her poking fun of Bilaam?

Immediately prior to Bilaam incriminating his prized donkey of disrespect the Torah describes how the donkey exclaims, *מה עשיתי לך כי הכיתני זה שלש רגלים* (שם כח), "What have I done to you that you struck me these three times"? Rashi quotes the Midrash that says the donkey was alluding to Bilaam's intent to destroy a nation that celebrates the three pilgrimages to Jerusalem on the three festivals. The phrase 'שלש רגלים' used by the donkey to refer to the three 'times' Bilaam struck her is also used to refer to the three holidays, Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkos, that our nation celebrates. The root word *רגל*, can mean 'times' or alternately imply the 'feet' that make the trek to celebrate the holidays in the Temple, thus used metaphorically to mean the Holidays, which are related to the *רגלים*, feet.

What was special about mentioning this particular mitzva that would cease to exist if Bilaam's plan was successful more than the other 612 that would have been abolished as well?

The renowned rabbinic figure of London, Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Ferber, jestfully suggests that the donkey after having crippled Bilaam's leg while avoiding the angel that was standing in her way causing her to crush his leg up against the wall, noticed that Bilaam had to now resort to using a staff to assist his movement. Her reference to the *שלש רגלים*, the three 'feet', was an intentional double entendre, meant to allude to the pilgrimages to Jerusalem that Bilaam sought to uproot as well as to 'mock' the now 'three legged' Bilaam who would need a 'third' leg, i.e. his staff, to support himself. (כרם העצי בלק)

Perhaps Bilaam was well aware all along that donkeys have no feelings, brains nor intentions. The dialogue here represented a message from G-d through the 'mouth' of a donkey who is merely one part of the myriad of details of life that are carefully orchestrated from on high, who represents here Providence in all its minutia.

There are those who are shortsighted and only see their needs and goals and refuse to pay attention to the journey, merely to their destination. When things don't pan out according to plan they lash out mindlessly at the objects of their frustration. How many times did you curse your iphone when it suddenly lost service? Did you ever kick your car when it stalled? Have you banged your fist in angered disappointment when your computer crashed?

Bilaam certainly was aware of a G-d that administrates every detail of life, but he was

blinded by his ambition and reacted angrily at the circumstances of life that constantly interfered with his map.

The Jewish nation marches towards destiny but never loses consciousness of the obstacles that must be hurdled that are all part of what forges our character. Three times a year they leave their homestead, exposing it unprotected to their foes, with a faith that G-d watches over us. That thrice a year pilgrimage fuses into our psyche that awareness that enables us to trek the most dangerous terrain with aplomb.

Bilaam is crippled, blind in one eye, that denies him the ability to perceive with any depth, and in need of a 'third leg', because when one who walks alone without Providence as his guide, is unable to maintain a healthy 'balance' in his journey.

When Bilaam lashes out to the donkey that he perceives as deriding him, he is really reacting to the difficulties of life in general that frustrate him. He is angry at Providence and foolishly strikes the innocent animal as if it was the cause of his despair.

One can have an absolute faith in a Creator yet not instill the instinct to react in consonance with that belief, allowing oneself to be discomfited.

The strength of our nation lays in the ability to embed this belief into our psyche.

The verse when describing Bilaam's journey it states (שם כג ג), *He went alone*.

Bilaam walks alone, refusing time and again to pay heed to the hand of Providence that reaches out to him.

The Rishonim reveal that the word שפי can be an acronym for (רמיה נ יי) *שה פזורה ישראל*, *Israel is a scattered sheep*, or alternately (תהלים קטו ו) *שומר פתאים י-ה-ו-ה*, *Protector of the simple is G-d*. (פענח רזח בלק ועוד)

Bilaam thought we were as vulnerable as him and exposed to danger like scattered sheep. But little did he know that the 'simple' one is protected by G-d.

The Holy Baal Shem after all the Torah and lofty levels of faith he had achieved was wont to say regarding the verse that states (משלי יד טו) *The thoughtless believe every word*,

"אך בין א נער און אק גלייב!" "I am but a fool and I believe!"

At the end of the day there is so much we don't nor can possibly comprehend regarding the circumstances of life, and the only thing that can accompany us is that 'thoughtless' faith in G-d, knowing that there is a rhyme and there is a reason.

The Shulchan Aruch records that during the days between the seventeenth of Tamuz and Tisha B'Av one shouldn't walk alone nor hit one's students. The Rama adds that this is due to the demonic force known as *Ketev Meriri* that has dominion during these days. (או"ח סוף סימן תקנא)

ולא קם נביא עוד בישראל כמשה (דברים לז י), *Never again has there risen a in Israel a prophet like Moshe*.

The Midrash says though that among the other nations 'קם', there did *rise up*, and that is Bilaam.

The Megaleh Amukos teaches that the word 'קם', that alludes to the rise of Bilaam is an acronym for *קטב מריירי*, for Bilaam sought to amplify this evil force during these dangerous days.

The Holy Seer of Lublin informs us that the three Shabbosos that occur during these weeks correspond to the three festivals. Within these dark days we possess the power to rediscover our special connection to G-d once again.

One must never 'walk alone' during these days but rather strive to gain a deeper perception of the reality that G-d holds our hand and accompanies us even in the most difficult of times.

We must overcome the negative attitude of frustration associated with Bilaam, that 'strikes

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This info is provided by YOU through the member database. Please be sure to update so we can celebrate and commemorate important dates with you!

Nichum Avaylim

Mrs. Teichman Concludes Shiva for her Father,
Rabbi Simcha Tyk, Motzei Shabbos in Lakewood.

out' accusingly and mindlessly to everyone and each circumstance that we blindly 'blame' for our own misfortune.

In the town of Brisk an unauthorized demonstration took place on Erev Shabbos to promote the heeding of Shabbos among the community. The local authorities didn't take this lightly and summarily arrested the Rosh haKahal, the head of the community, and threw him into a dank and dark cell. He commiserated over his plight as Shabbos descended for here he was alone without wine to make kiddush nor food to celebrate the holy day. After two hours or so the prison cell door opened to reveal the entry of none other than the Rav himself, the illustrious and beloved Maharil Diskin, who came to sit with him. His joy was indescribable for he felt how privileged he was that to sit in the revered Rabbi's presence that was worth giving up all the accoutrements of Shabbos.

(ישעיה סג ט), *In all their affliction He was afflicted*.

The word *no*, in this verse is written with an נ, but we read it with a ל, *to Him*.

There is 'no' affliction for those who realize *no*, *He is afflicted* with us.

When you are feeling frustrated and down because of the situation you find yourself in, remember and rejoice in the notion that precisely then is when G-d is closest to you.

If we cry out, "I am but a fool" and that is exactly why "I believe", we will merit to sense His support in all that we encounter!

באהבה,
צבי טייטלבוים