

Pinchas 2017

1.

Antagonists

“Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying: Harass the Midianities and smite them; for they harassed you through their conspiracy that they conspired against you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cozbi, daughter of a leader of Midian etc.” (25, 16-18)

"וידבר יקוק אל משה לאמר. צרור את המדיניות והכיתם אותם. כי צררים הם לכם בנכליהם אשר נכלו לכם על דבר פעור ועל דבר כזבי בת נשיא מדין אחתם המכה ביום המגפה על דבר פעור."

Rashi explains that this pasuk is commanding us to antagonize the Midianities. The Kli Yakar wonders why we aren't commanded to antagonize the Moabites. The pasuk (25, 1) previously stated "Israel settled in Shittim and the people began to commit harlotry with the daughters of Moav." "The people" refers to the Jews. Meaning, they were the ones who began the illicit relations. They went to the tents of the Moabite women. The initiator is held more accountable than the other participant. The reason why we are commanded to antagonize the Midianites is because they initiated the harlotry. Dissimilarly, since the Moabites didn't initiate, there is therefore no commandment to antagonize them. Cozbi went after Zimri because she is a Midianite. There were several tactics the Midianites used to go after the Jews. They verbally tried to entice the Jews by flirting with them and the like. They also tried to intoxicate the Jews in order to get them to have illicit relations (Similar to Yael intoxicating Sisera, and Yehudis as well.).

2.

Shofar

"In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, there shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall do no laborious work, it shall be a day of shofar sounding for you." (29, 1)

"ובחדש השביעי באחד לחדש מקרא קדש יהיה לכם כל מלאכת עבדה לא תעשו יום תרועה יהיה לכם."

What is the reason that we are commanded to blow/hear the shofar? What does blowing a rams horn accomplish?

A) It's a chok.

B) Kabbalistic reasons.

C) The Rambam (hilchos teshuva 3, 4) explains that the shofar helps us awaken from our spiritual slumber. (עורו ישינים משנתכם ונרדמים הקיצו מתרדמתכם וחפשו במעשיכם וחזרו בתשובה וזכרו בוראכם) The shofar is our spiritual alarm clock. The Chinuch (mitzvah 405) offers a similar explanation as well. Since we are physical, we typically need a physical catalyst that will enable us to awaken etc.

D) The Chinuch (mitzvah 331) offers another reason. The shofar reminds us of akadas Yitzchak. We must imagine as if we are bound to the mizbeach and are about to be

slaughtered. (לקבוע מחשבתינו על ענין עקידת יצחק ונצייר בנפשנו לעשות גם בנו כמוהו (יצחק) לאהבת יי, ומתוך כך) The truth is that the Gemara in Rosh Hashana (16a), in

a different context, already says this reason. We specifically use a ram's horn in order that Hashem will remember akadas Yitzchak.

E) The Avudrum (siddur on Rosh Hashana) offers ten reasons why we blow the shofar. One of the reasons is because **Rosh Hashana is the first day of the creation of the world.** (This goes in accordance to the opinion of Rebbi Eliezer, not according to Rebbi Yehoshua (Rosh Hashana 10)). Trumpets and other instruments are sounded when a king is appointed. It is for this reason we blow the shofar on Rosh Hashana. **Since Hashem became our king then, it is therefore fitting to blow the shofar.**

F) **Rosh Hashana is the first day of the ten days of repentance. We blow the shofar in order to symbolize that this is the beginning and that we should repent.**

G) **The shofar will remind us of Har Sini. We will then accept upon ourselves what our forefathers accepted upon themselves at Har Sini: the Torah and mitzvos.**

H) **The shofar will remind us of the prophet's words** as stated in the pasuk (Yechezkel 33, 4).

I) **The shofar will remind us of the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash. The sounds from the shofar will remind us of the sounds from our enemies during war. We will then ask Hashem to rebuild the Beis Hamikdash.**

J) **The shofar will remind us of the day of judgment, aka Yom Kippur.**

K) **The sounds from the shofar will help gather the Jews and create unity.**

L) **The shofar will remind us of resurrection.**

The Ramban (23, 24) is bothered why the pasuk itself doesn't offer a reason for blowing the shofar. The shofar is blown during the month of Yom Kippur, the time when we are getting judged. Since we will be judged, we must properly repent. By hearing the shofar we will be more prone to probably properly repent. The pasuk thus alludes to this idea.

Why do the Rambam and Chinuch list the mitzvah of shofar in parshas Pinchas as opposed to parshas Emor where the mitzvah of shofar is first related? The Ateres Tzvi (pages 280-281) answers this question based on a Gemara. The Gemara in Rosh Hashana (29) quotes a seeming contradiction between two pesukim. One pasuk says that Rosh Hashana is a "remembrance of the shofar", while another pasuk says that shofar is a "day of the shofar." The Gemara reconciles this by stating that the pasuk that says that Rosh Hashana is a day of the shofar refers to a regular Rosh Hashana. Whereas, the pasuk that says that Rosh Hashana is a remembrance of the shofar refers to Rosh Hashana that falls out on Shabbos. The Ateres Tzvi explains that the main halacha to blow shofar on Rosh Hashana is learned from the pasuk in parshas Pinchas. This is why the Rambam and Chinuch list the mitzvah of shofar from the pasuk in parshas Pinchas, where the obligation to blow/hear shofar is derived from. The pasuk in parshas Emor refers to Rosh Hashana that falls out on Shabbos.

The Shemen Hatov (chalek beis on the moadim) explains that we don't blow shofar when Rosh Hashana falls out on Shabbos because Shabbos itself accomplishes that which the shofar intends to accomplish. Furthermore, the silence of not blowing the shofar is greater the sounds produced from the shofar. There are three levels: speech, shofar sound and then silence. The reason why the shofar sound is better than speech is because the shofar sound is more internal. Meaning, the shofar sound is produced from ones breath which is from the internal organs which is more internal than the location where speech is produced, ones mouth. Silence is superior because it is more internal. It is more internal because it remains in the body.