

# Midyan: Inner Battle

1 Moses spoke to the people, saying: "Arm from yourselves men for an army, to wage war on Midian... from all tribes of Israel, you shall send to war."

Numbers 31:3-4

"From all tribes of Israel"—including the tribe of Levi.

Rashi's commentary<sup>1</sup>

Waters Eden - R. Kaplan

2 Gemilbar 31

<sup>21</sup> Elazar the Kohen said to the men of the legion who came to the battle, "This is the decree of the Torah, which HASHEM commanded Moses: <sup>22</sup> Only the gold and the silver, the copper, the iron, the tin, and the lead — <sup>23</sup> everything that comes into the fire — you shall pass through the fire and it will be purified; but it must be purified with the water of sprinkling; and everything that would not come in the fire, you shall pass through the water. <sup>24</sup> You shall immerse your garments on the seventh day and become purified; afterward you may enter the camp."

3

The Torah tells us that the metal utensils the Israelites brought back as spoil had to undergo a special purification before they could be used. If they were cooking utensils that were used over fire—which "comes through fire"—they would have to be Kashered (made Kosher) by heating in fire, as is indeed the law.<sup>32</sup> This, however, is not enough. Before these vessels could be used, they would also have to be "purged in water for a Niddah"—that is, immersed in the same kind of Mikvah required for a Niddah.<sup>33</sup> Utensils not used over fire need only be washed thoroughly and immersed.

✦ From this we learn two things. First, we see that all metal utensils made by a non-Jew must be immersed before they can be used. Secondly, we learn that when vessels must be Kashered, this should be done before their immersion.

4 Our sages liken the table to an altar, and therefore, every utensil used on a Jewish table must be sanctified, just like vessels used on the altar of the Holy Temple (Bais HaMikdash).<sup>34</sup> This is part of a Jew's sanctifying every element of his life.

Like all the other laws involving Mikvah, this one is a *Chok* or "decree," for which no reason is given. Indeed, in introducing this rule, the Torah openly states (Numbers 31:21), "This is the decree (*Chukah*) of the Torah, which God commanded Moses." Nevertheless, this rule still has a degree of logic.

שם חיים ר' פרידמן - [ח' - א' ע']

למדנו שאכלות על ירושלים פרושה להרגיש ולחוש את חסרון והעדר כבוד שמים בבריאה, ומתוך זאת לשאוף שיתגלה כבוד שמים, ושאיפה זו מתבטאת בכל חלקי עבודת ה', הן בלימוד והן בחפלה והן בבין אדם לחברו, כאשר חכליתן רק לקדש שם שמים, ללא עירוב שאיפות אחרות. וכדבר רבינו יונה בשערי תשובה (ש"ג, קמח): "כי הדבר ידוע אשר מדרכי קידוש השם יתברך, להודיע בכל מבטא שפתיים וכל אשר ירמוז עינים ובכל הנהגה ופועל ידים, כי יסוד נפש האדם וצבי עדין והטוב העיקר והתועלת והיקר אשר בו, עבודת השם ית' ויראתו ותורתו, כמו שנא' "כי זה כל האדם" וזה הדבר כבוד אלקים."

Ethics from Sinai - R. Budin

7 Let all your deeds be for the sake of Heaven.

We know that Judaism does not outlaw or prohibit the physical pleasures of life. Eating, drinking, marriage—all are integral parts of the total life of the Jew. In fact, the *nazir* who takes an oath to refrain from drinking wine must bring a sin-offering afterward because he has thus deprived himself of the lawful joys of existence.<sup>187</sup>

But since actions for physical pleasure are so closely related to the bestial and ugly, how can they form an integral part of a spiritual life in Torah? Rabbi Yosé advises: "Let all your deeds be for the sake of Heaven." Endow these activities with the right intentions, with a proper purpose.

Why should we eat?—to keep the body healthy. Why do we need a healthy body?—so that our minds may also be healthy, that we may be mentally and physically able to observe the *mitzvot* and be complete Jews. Thus, even the most lowly activity can be done "for the sake of Heaven," as a part of the worship of the Almighty.

sa נתיב

וי"ל הענין, שמלחמת מדין אכן היתה מלחמה כבדה מאד על עצם קיומו של עם ישראל. וכמד"כ עמי זכר נא מה יעץ בלק מלך מואב ומה ענה אותו בלעם בן בעור, ואיתא ע"ז בווה"ק (ח"ג שה.), שלא היתה עת צרה קשה יותר לישראל מיום היותם לגוי כבשעה זו, אף יותר מעת שעמדו על הים וממצבם הקשה לאחר חטא העגל. והענין בזה משום דעצת בלעם ובלק היתה ע"ד ולבן בקש לעקור את הכל, שביקשו לקעקע את יסוד קיומו של עם ישראל. שבלעם ובלק היו ראשי הקליפה כחות הסט"א הגדולים ביותר של האומות, וכדאיתא (זח"ג קיב): שבלק היה מכשף עוד יותר גדול מבלעם, והם היו הכנגד של כח הקדושה. ורצו לעקור את הכל, מלחמה על פרט מסויים אך יש מלחמה לעקור את הכל, שלא נלחמו על ענין מסויים אלא רצו לעקור את עם ישראל לגמרי משורשו שלא יהיו עוד העם הנבחר להש"ת, ע"י שיעשו פירוד בין הקב"ה וישראל. ומשום כך היתה זו הצרה הגדולה ביותר לישראל שמעולם לא היתה כמותה. וכדאיתא בחז"ל (סנהדרין קו.). שאמרו אלקיהם של אלו שונא זימה הוא, ולכן רצו להכשילם בזה כדי לעקורם מן השורש. וזהו פי' כי צוררים הם לכם, שלא אמר כי צוררים היו לכם אלא צוררים הם לכם, היינו לא מפני שנלחמו בהם בעבר, אלא שהם המה כחות הקליפה העומדים עתה כנגד עם ישראל ורוצים לעקור אותם מהשורש.

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והסט"א, המלחמה המכרעת של עם ישראל על הקמים לכלותו מן היסוד, שלא היתה עוד מלחמה כזאת. ומבואר גם ענין השבי והמלקות, שלא היה זה סתם שלל בעלמא אלא כל כחות הטומאה ומרכבת הטומאה היתה בשבי ובמלקות הזה, והיו צריכים להוציא מידיהם את ניצוצות הקדושה שנפלו בידם ולהעלותם לקדושה. וע"כ כתבה התורה את כל הסוד איד שחלקו את השלל שבוה העלתו אל הקדושה. והאריכה התורה כ"כ בענין איד שהעלו לקדושה את כל כחות הטומאה של מדין, משום שזה חלק בלתי נפרד מכיבוש הקליפה, ולולא זה לא היו יכולים לכבוש אותם.

8 In his commentary on *Avoth*, Rabbi Hayyim of Volozhin has something quite interesting to say about doing everything "for the sake of Heaven." In his prophecy, Isaiah says, "As the rain comes down, and the snow, from heaven, and does not return there, until it waters the earth and makes it bear

and sprout, giving produce to the sower and bread to the eater—so shall be My word that goes forth from My mouth: it shall not return to Me empty, until it shall accomplish that which I have wanted, and succeed where I have sent it."<sup>158</sup>

*Nineteen Letters*  
R. Hirsch

9 The word *geshem*, "rain," also denotes physical matter in general. Now, it is our religious belief that all physical blessings come from Heaven, bestowed upon us by a beneficent Almighty. But in what sense do they "return there"? The chemical processes of nature are not "one way," but rather cyclical; thus, there are the nitrogen cycle and the rain cycle. For every process that happens there is a reverse or corrective process which keeps things in balance. Even so must there be a vaster cycle which unites the physical and the spiritual.

We merit all material things by the grace of Heaven. The cyclical "return to Heaven" is accomplished when a person responds with a *b'rachah*, a blessing, acknowledging his indebtedness and gratitude to the Almighty; it is achieved when a person uses the bounty he has received, to live a life under Torah; when he "knows God in all His ways" and conducts his physical activities with a central spiritual intent. In this manner, physical matter leads to spiritual values, the word of God returns, the cycle of providence is complete.

11 A Our purpose in life, therefore, is not the acquisition of possessions; we should not measure our achievement in life by the volume of outer or inner treasures that we accumulate. Our life's mission is concerned with what we become, what we make of ourselves, and what we give, not what we get. We should measure our attainments by the extent to which we fulfill God's Will with the help of our outer and inner acquisitions, utilizing every single one, small or large, for truly human deeds of Divine service. Our endeavors to acquire inner and outer possessions have value only because they provide us with the means to perform such deeds.

B From the slightest mental faculty, and the nerve ganglia which serve it, to the strength of your hand, with which you are able to bring about changes in Creation and to which the entire realm of nature and every being within your reach are subject—all your capabilities are but tools lent to you, which one day will appear before the throne of God as witnesses for or against you, testifying whether you neglected them or used them well, whether you wrought blessing with them or curse. Accordingly, there is an outer, universally applicable criterion by which to judge man's deeds: whether or not they correspond to the Will of God. And there is an inner criterion by which to judge a man's greatness, which differs from case to case: not the sum total of his achievements and the amount of resources with which he has been endowed, but whether he has used them to the best of his ability to do God's Will.

C It follows that, in spite of one's best intentions, his life may be an utter failure if his actions were not the right ones. On the

other hand, if a man abided by God's Law, his life may be sublimely great even though showing only minor accomplishments, if the means allotted to him did not permit major ones. Thus happiness and perfection consist of using all one's outer and inner possessions in fullest measure according to God's Will—which alone is what makes man great.<sup>7</sup>

10 The law to which all forces submit instinctively and involuntarily—to this law you, too, are to subordinate yourself, but consciously and of your own free will. Consciously and freely! This is man's eminent vocation, his highest privilege. All forces<sup>5</sup> are ranged in service around God's throne. Their standing is concealed from them, and their countenance is covered, so that they do not see the purpose of their mission. They sense only the impetus to action, and they act in accordance with their assigned task. But you, man, your countenance is half uncovered; your place is in part revealed to you; you are able to regard, and consecrate, yourself as a servant of God. You are able to gain an inkling of your mission, as God has attuned your ear to perceive it. Surrounded by God's servants<sup>6</sup> busily at work, and sensing in yourself, too, the impetus to act, would you not join their chorus with the joyful cry of allegiance: *שמעו ושמעו*, "We will do and therefore listen," will act and, in carrying out the mission, will try to comprehend its intent? Consciously and freely—thus to be first and preeminent in this legion of God's servants.<sup>8</sup>

12 \* "The angel in charge of man's coming into existence," says one of our Sages,<sup>b</sup> "takes the seed which is to develop into a human being, brings it before the Holy One, Whose Will all beings serve,<sup>8</sup> and asks, 'This seed—what shall become of it in life? Shall the human being growing from it be strong or weak, wise or simple, rich or poor?' But he does not ask whether he shall be 'good or bad,' for everything depends upon God except for the fear of God"—except the faithful fulfillment of one's duty, with the means granted to him. Thus let us not judge man by all those things that are not really in his hands but, rather, by that which God put entirely in his control and which, therefore, can alone constitute his greatness—his fear of God.

13 Thus comprehended, the purpose of man can be attained by anyone, at any time, with his individual measure of strength and means. Whoever, in his lifetime, fulfilled the Will of God toward the creatures brought into his orbit, wronging none, assisting each one to the best of his ability to reach the goal that God intended for it—he was truly a man; he expressed justice and love in his life. His entire life, all of himself, his thoughts, feelings, speech and action—even his business transactions and personal enjoyments—represented service of God. Such a life transcends all vicissitudes.<sup>9</sup> Whether in luxury or privation, abundance or want, whether with tears of joy or of sorrow, such a human personality, unchanging almost like God, sees in every new blessing, as in every loss, merely another challenge to tackle anew the same unchanging task.

הוא אהרן ומשה (ו כו). פרשי יש מקומות שמקדים אהרן למשה יש מקומות שמקדים משה לאהרן לומר ששקולין באהרן. והוא דבר חמדה שמשם היה אהרן הנביאים רבו של כל העולם ועל ידו ניתנה התורה ואיך אמר שאהרן שקול. יש לפרש בשני דרכים, א) דכיון דגם אהרן היה בשליחות ה' להוציא את ישראל, אי שכח משה גדול משל אהרן, מימ כיון שגם אהרן הוצרך להיות בזה, הן שרין בזה, שבחלק שהגדול צריך לקטן והא חולקין בריית (ב) דכיון דאהרן עשה כל ימיו בשלימות כל רצון השי"ת שהיה אפשר לו לעשות הוא שקול כמשה, אי משה היה גדול ולכן היה עליו יותר דברים מימ כיון ששניהם עשו מה שנצטוו ונשלחו כפי יכלתם הגדול הן שרין במעלה.

15  
ובארתי זאת  
דביב דף י ע"ב דיוסף בריה דר' יהושע הלש  
אינדי א"ל אבה מאי חזית א"ל עולם הפוך  
ראיתי עליונים למטה ותחתונים למעלה א"ל  
עולם ברוד ראית, שתמיה מאד איך אמר שהוא  
עולם הפוך, הא דאי בעה"ו האדם רואה רק  
לעניים והתם הוא עולם האמת, אבל צריך לומר  
דראה שגם בעולם האמת אומרים שהם עליונים  
אלו שהיו ידועים בכאן עליונים ועל התחתונים  
שהם תחתונים, ומימ היו העליונים למטה  
התחתונים למעלה, ולכן אמר שהוא עולם  
הפוך. והשיב לו אביו שהוא עולם ברוד משום  
שהקבי"ה אינו בא בטרונא ותובע מכל אחד רק  
כפי כחו, ולכן אלו שכחם קטן בכשרונותיהם  
וכדומה אבל עשו כפי כחם קיימו שליחותם  
בעה"ו ולכן הם למעלה, והעליונים אי שהם  
יותר גדולים ועשו יותר מעשים טובים  
מהתחתונים אבל היו יכולים לעשות יותר תורה  
ומעשים לפי כשרונותיהם וכוחותיהם והתשלו  
קצת לכן הם למטה, וא"כ נמצא שבעשו שניהם  
כפי כחם הם שקולים במדרגת.

16

Thus man, in his earthly form, belongs to this world, and his earthly existence is full of significance. Just as no breath of air, nor the tiniest blade of grass or beetle exists for naught, but contributes its share—slight though it may be—which God's wisdom uses to build the edifice of the universe, thus, too, no pleasure, no thought, no deed—no matter how modest—is empty and futile. If they are in accordance with God's purpose, they form the handiwork that we deliver into God's hands, for Him to embody in the overall structure of the universe. Fulfillment of God's Will, with our possessions and pleasures, with thought, word and deed<sup>10</sup>—this is the content of our life. We must properly understand this Will, however, for therein lies the unique greatness of man: whereas the voice of God speaks in or through all other creatures, in the case of man it speaks to him, challenging him to accept it, voluntarily,<sup>11</sup> as the innelling force directing his work in life.

17 Consulting the Wise - R. Pliska

[27] INTERVIEWER: What one thought would you suggest I reflect upon that will have a major effect on my life?  
RABBI YERUCHEM LEVOVITZ: "Constantly focus on the *Mishnah* in *Pirke Avos*: 'All of your actions should be for the sake of the Almighty.' When you meditate on this *Mishnah*, you will experience the elevated state of cleaving to and being connected with G-d with each and every movement you make."

18 Waters of Eden - R. Kaplan

The use of metals represents one of man's major steps toward civilization. Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch explains that a metal utensil is therefore the most visible sign of man's intelligent mastery over the earth and its materials.<sup>35</sup> Not only the shape, but the use of the material itself proclaims this fact.

This explains why metal vessels have a special status: Since glass is processed and melted like metal, it also has this status.

Eating, on the other hand, is an activity that primarily belongs to the animal sphere of man's nature. When a metal utensil is used for eating, this therefore represents man's highest mental faculties being employed to serve his animal nature.

The Torah requires, however, that even the most physical of man's activities be elevated to the realm of the spiritual. Before using a metal utensil for eating, we must first sanctify and elevate it to a level of holiness by immersion in a Mikvah.

The vessel will, in turn, sanctify the food served in it. In this manner, a Jew's eating utensils become like the consecrated vessels of the Holy Temple, which sanctified anything that was placed in them.<sup>36</sup>

19 The Inside Story - Ed. R. Tauber

"Also the world He placed in their hearts,"<sup>8</sup> proclaims the wisest of men. Each individual human being is a virtual world of personalities and character traits, a planet of "nations" constantly at battle over the territories and resources of body and soul. Love battles pride, anger battles empathy, will battles sloth, mind struggles with heart. Here, too, the war on "Midian" is unique, a war unlike any other waged on the battleground of the soul.

The Hebrew word *midian* means "strife." The war on Midian, then, is not a conflict involving some specific region of the human universe; it is a war on war itself, on the very phenomenon of dichotomy and discord within man. For man, in essence, is a unified, harmonious world, an integrated community with a common goal. It is the "Midian" in man that is the source of all disharmony and strife, within and (consequently) without.

20

Midian is the fragmentation of the human soul, the disconnection of its various "nations" and "factions" from their unifying source in the quintessence of man. War breaks out in the heart of man when its component parts lose sight of the singular objective which spawned them, so that each assumes an ego and agenda of its own.

21 The same is true on an interpersonal level. Our sages speak of "groundless hatred" as the greatest of evils; as Chassidic teaching explains, all hatred is, in truth, "groundless hatred." The "reasons" men and nations have for hating and destroying each other are but the various façades of the divisive "I" of Midian—the ego that belies the common source and goal of humanity and views the very existence of others as an encroachment upon the self.

As a rule, the tribe of Levi remains aloof from the mundane struggles of life. The same is true of the Levite in every individual, that sanctum of spirituality we each harbor in the pith of our souls. While no life is free of struggle, we insist on an inviolable island of sacredness in our lives, a part of ourselves that is not to be sullied by the conflicts that rage in the external self. But when it comes to the war on Midian, every tribe and facet of the soul must take up arms. Indeed, it is only with the participation of the Levite within—the element of self most in touch with its singular essence—that the battle on strife can be waged.

24 Or take two nations: on the surface, their goals and aspirations run counter to each other, giving rise to conflict and strife. But dissect these goals item by item and you will inevitably find areas in which they overlap and complement each other. This common ground may cover but five percent of each nation's collective will, but a beachhead of harmony has been achieved. Delve deeper yet, and this beachhead can be expanded. Explore the inner workings of each individual of each nation's millions, and the countless particulars of each individual's will, and additional areas of common interest and mutual dependency will come to light. The differences will remain, but instead of fueling strife, they will serve as the building blocks of harmonious coexistence.

Waters of Eden - R. Kaplan 27

26 *God planted a garden in Eden, to the east, and there He placed the man that He had formed. And God made the ground grow every tree that is pleasant to see and good to eat—and the Tree of Life in the middle of the garden, and the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. And a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it split, and became four headwaters. . . . And God took the man, and placed him in the Garden of Eden to work it and to watch it. And God commanded the man, saying, "From every tree of the Garden, you may eat. But from the Tree of Knowledge in the middle of the Garden, you may not eat—for on the day you eat from it, you will die.*

Genesis 2:8-17

22 How does one battle Midian? How does one restore the divine unity to a fragmented world? By delving even further into its plurality.

For such is the paradox of life: the more something is broken down to its particulars, the more we uncover opportunities for unity.

23 Take, for example, two physical substances. Your five senses perceive them as different and unconnected; but place them under a microscope and you will discover that they are comprised of similar components—they might even share an element or two. The deeper you delve, descending to the molecular, atomic and sub-atomic levels, the more unanimity you will find—and the more ways you will discover to harness these diverse substances toward a singular end.

25 Thus we introduce a new factor into the cosmic equation: harmony. We evolve from the ultimate singularity to plurality to diversity, but diversity need not disintegrate into strife. Instead, the diversity can be further dissected into the ingredients of harmony—a harmony that mirrors the singularity out of which the entire process was born.

27 tion of the river and its tributaries, interrupting the narrative for no apparent reason. This is all the more puzzling, since the river is never again mentioned in the entire account. Furthermore, the entire story of Eden teaches us a very important lesson about man and his condition, and in this context, the description of the river seems all the more out of place.

28 -

Evil was not part of man, but an outside force he could easily avoid. This was represented by the Serpent in the Garden, which was not part of man's makeup, but something outside of him. Man could debate with this evil or ignore it, like any other outside force. Evil urges and compulsions were not part of him, as they are now, so that now he cannot escape them, no matter where he goes.<sup>6</sup>

Man was given one commandment, not to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. In this Tree, good and evil were intermingled, in such a manner that they could not be separated. Once man partook of this tree, the same became true of him.

29 At that moment, evil became an intrinsic part of his being. He now had a *Yetzer HaRa*,—an Evil Urge—that was part of his psyche, and no matter what he would do, he could not escape it.<sup>9</sup> Just like the Tree of Knowledge, man was now a mixture of good and evil, and he would have to spend all his days fighting this evil and attempting to overcome it.

Man's very essence now became filled with contradictions. His life became full of conflict and its resulting frustrations, making a perfect society all but impossible. Man's spiritual nature and animal nature became two opposites, in constant conflict, causing mental anguish and imperfection.

31 But how does man purify himself and remove himself from this state of uncleanness? How does he disassociate himself from man's fallen state and reassociate himself with Eden?

This purification is primarily through water, through immersion in the Mikvah. Water is the primary connection that we have with the Garden of Eden.

The Talmud tells us that all the water in the world ultimately has its root in the river that emerged from Eden.<sup>22</sup> In a sense, this river is the spiritual source of all water. Even though a person cannot re-enter the Garden of Eden itself, whenever he associates himself with these rivers—or with any other water,—he is re-establishing his link with Eden.

33 Another manifestation of man's fallen state is the basic conflict between man and the world around him. Unlike other species whose food is a natural part of their environment, man must toil and work in order to eat. Thus, after man sinned, God told him (*Genesis 3:19*), "by the sweat of your brow, you shall eat bread."

In many respects, metal represents man's ability to destroy nature.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, this too is a basic manifestation of man's lack of harmony with nature. Rather than being a sign of man's perfection, civilization is something that was necessitated by man's lack of natural harmony with nature. His use of metal utensils is therefore also a sign of his expulsion from Eden.

Because of man's fallen nature, he must eat his bread through "the sweat of his brow." He cannot use his intellectual faculties to elevate himself spiritually, but is compelled to use his mind to procure the most basic animal necessities of life. This is particularly evident when man makes use of metal utensils in order to eat and satisfy his animal appetites.

In essence then, just as Niddah represents humanity's basic conflict within its own reproductive process, man's use of metal utensils for eating also represents the conflict of his intellect with respect to another of his natural functions, namely, eating. The Torah therefore states that metal vessels must be (*Numbers 31:23*), "purged with water for a Niddah." Metal vessels must re-establish their harmony with nature through their association with the waters of Eden, just like a Niddah must do so with respect to her sexuality. Like a Niddah, such vessels must be immersed in the Mikvah.<sup>48</sup>

30 Ultimately, all uncleanness is a result of Adam's sin.<sup>20</sup> Death and all other human imperfection was a result of this sin. If man would have remained in his elevated state in the Garden of Eden, nothing would exist that could cause uncleanness.

This explains why a person who has been defiled by something unclean was not allowed to enter the grounds of the Holy Temple. The Temple represents a miniature Garden of Eden. When Adam sinned, he was driven from this Garden. Therefore, anything associated with this sin prevents him from entering the miniature Garden of Eden that is the Temple. When a man is in a state of *Tumah* or uncleanness, he may not enter the Temple grounds under the severest of penalties.<sup>21</sup>

32 We can now go back to our original question. The story of Eden is interrupted with a description of the "River that ran out of the Garden of Eden." In the beginning of this section, we questioned the significance of this river. By now, the reason for the river is apparent. The Torah tells us that God planted a Garden, and in it, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. With it, the possibility was created that man would sin, and be evicted from Eden. Thus, even before God placed man in Eden, He established a link between the Garden and the world outside, namely the river which emerged from Eden.

The account of this river is therefore not an extraneous fact that merely interrupts the story. Rather, it is an important statement regarding man's condition in the world outside of Eden. Even though man has been expelled from Eden, a link remains. The concept of Mikvah is very closely associated with this link.

36 The context in which the law of immersion of vessels is derived is also very pertinent. The law was declared in the context of a war that Israel fought, which had its beginnings in sexual misconduct between the Jews and the Moabites that ultimately resulted in idolatry. The very fact that man could be tempted into a form of idolatry through sex, indicates that sex is a force that man finds difficult to control, and therefore is a sign of his imperfection. The fact that it can also lead man

to wage war and kill, is another sign of his imperfection and inability to live in harmony. The premeditated nature of the battle on the part of the Moabites also underscored the difference between Jew and non-Jew, again a result of man's fall. This entire episode demonstrates that man is not in a perfected state, and that Israel must maintain eternal vigilance if it is ever to return to it.<sup>49</sup>

37 The spoil that the Israelites brought back from this battle were metal eating utensils—"gold, silver, copper, iron, tin, and lead." That they were obtained through harlotry, idolatry, and killing underscored the fact that these utensils were also indicative of man's fallen state. Therefore, before they could be used, they too, had to be re-elevated through the Mikvah.