

Review:17-18th Century Overview

Cossacks

- Lithuanian tribe of warriors, led by Bogdan Chmielnicki.
- Were originally hired by the Polish King to fight against the Tatars.
- When some of their legal powers were taken away, they joined the Tatars and took revenge on the Polish nobles.....and ended up killing Jews.
- The Polish King sent 6,000 soldiers to fight the Cossack army, but did not succeed.
- After the King of Poland died, the Cossacks continued to kill, and incited an uprising of *serfs* against the *noblemen*.
- In total, they destroyed 300 cities, and killed 300,000 Jews.
- Based on the ת"ח ות"ט רמב"ן, we see that the real reason the Jews suffered during ת"ח ות"ט was because of their sins.

Shabsai Tzvi (1626-1676)

- Born in Smyrna, Turkey
- Said שם המפורש in Shul in Smyrna, and the Rabbis put him in חרם
- Avraham Yocheni produced 'old' document saying that Shabsai Tzvi is the משיח
- Married a ספר תורה in Salonika, and Salonika Rabbis put him in חרם
- Raphael Chalabi (in Cairo, Egypt) financed his campaign
- Travelled to Israel, but was not accepted
- Returned to Cairo, Egypt and married a woman who claimed to be destined to marry Moshiach.
- Over 10 years later, he returned to Israel, and was accepted!!
- He returned to Smyrna, Turkey and claimed to be משיח
 - His followers declared עשרה בטבת and תשעה באב to be a יום טוב.
 - Abolished the laws of כשרות
- Tried to overthrow the Sultan, but was arrested
- Nechemia Cohen announced that Shabsai Tzvi is a fraud
- Shabsai Tzvi converted to Islam

Aftermath of Shabsai Tzvi

- Other people claimed to be משיח or גלגולים of Shabsai Tzvi (i.e. Nechemia Chiyun of Amsterdam)
- Another imposter started debates with the Church about the truth of the Torah.
- Rabbis decreed that קבלה should not be studied until age 40 (because false משיח used קבלה to mislead people)
- Jews were on 'high alert' for new false משיח:
 - Ramchal
 - Born in Italy, and at age 20, wrote a ספר on קבלה (second זוהר)
 - The רבנים accused him of associating with the ideas of Shabsai Tzvi's followers, and placed restrictions on him.
 - After he wrote a new ספר קבלה (with permission from his Rabbi), he was put in חרם, and his ספרים were burned
 - He moved to Amsterdam, where he authored the מסילת ישרים
 - R' Yonasan Eibeshitz (Rov of Hamburg)
 - Wrote a קמיעה to help women that were having stillborn children
 - R' Yaakov Emden accused him of referencing the Shabsai Tzvi, and wanted to put him in חרם
 - This מחלוקת divided the community - caused R' Yaakov Emden to move to Amsterdam, and led Emperor Frederick of Denmark to remove R' Yonasan from his position as Rov

France

- The French Revolution (1789) - the 'middle class' overthrew the monarchy (King), and gave everyone equal rights - including Jews.
- Napoleon Bonaparte (Emperor of France) - allowed them to leave the ghettos and open businesses, because he wanted them to assimilate.
- Great Sanhedrin - Napoleon organized a group of 71 Rabbis to answer 12 questions....provided a legitimacy to the Jews, and also paved the way for Jews to assimilate