

BS"D



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INTERNET PARSHA SHEET ON PINCHAS - 5764

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RABBI ZVI SOBOLOFSKY

A Daily Challenge

Which pasuk in the Torah is the cornerstone for our entire avodas Hashem? Chazal respond in a medrash that it is the pasuk in Parshas Pinchas that mandates the daily offering, and encompasses the service of Hashem in its entirety: "Es hakeves echad taaseh baboker, vees hakeves hasheini taaseh bein haarbayim," (Bamidbar 28:4). What is so significant about the daily sacrifice that warrants its distinction as the foundation of our avodas Hashem?

There are two different challenges in avodas Hashem. Special occasions, such as yomim noraim, and shalosh regalim arise which obligate us to reach new heights of spirituality. There is, however, a second aspect of avodas Hashem and this is the daily avodah. It is relatively simple to reach spiritual heights on sporadic occasions. On a daily basis, without a specific excitement of the moment, it is much more difficult to attain such levels. It is this latter aspect of avodas Hashem that is symbolized by the korban tamid. It is neither the korban Pesach nor the avodas Yom Hakippurim that is singled out as the cornerstone of our avodah. Rather, emphasis is placed on our ongoing commitment every morning and evening.

It is the significance of the korban tamid that has linked this mitzvah to many tragedies in our history. One of the events commemorated and mourned on shivaasar beTamuz is the cessation of this korban. In contradistinction, we do not commemorate the termination of the korban Pesach or the avodas Yom Hakippurim.

Chazal relate to us another tragedy associated with the korban tamid (Bava Kama 82b). During the internal wars of the Chashmonaim, even though Yerushalayim was under siege, the korban tamid continued to be offered. The lambs for the korbanos were lifted over the walls of Yerushalayim in a basket. Eventually the Chashmonaim on the outside decided to stop this procedure, and trick their fellow Jews inside the walls by placing a pig inside the basket.

This was not merely a trick by warring factions within the Jewish people, but also a sign from Hashem regarding the deteriorated spiritual state of the Jews. A pig is the only non-kosher animal that has split hooves but does not chew its cud. It appears kosher, yet upon examining its inner being we realize that it is not. The Jewish people continued their external service of the korban tamid, but their inner-selves had become disqualified. Their offering korbanos while fighting amongst themselves was symbolized by the pig.

It is during the period of the three weeks, which begin with the cessation of the korban tamid, that we are required to rededicate ourselves to daily, pure avodas Hashem.

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Ohr Somavach

From: ohr@ohr.edu Sent: July 07, 2004 To: parasha-qa@ohr.edu

Subject: Parsha Q&A - Parshat Pinchas

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Parshat Pinchas <http://ohr.edu/yhiy/article.php/1772>

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

All references are to the verses and Rashi's commentary, unless otherwise stated

1. Why was Pinchas not originally a kohen?
* 25:13 - Kehuna (priesthood) was given to Aharon and his sons (not grandsons), and to any of their descendants born after they were anointed. Pinchas, Aharon's grandson, was born prior to the anointing.
2. Why was Moav spared the fate of Midian?
* 25:18 - For the sake of Ruth, a future descendant of Moav.
3. What does the yud and hey added to the family names testify?
* 26:5 - That the families were truly children of their tribe.
4. Korach and his congregation became a "sign." What do they signify?
* 26:10 - That kehuna was given forever to Aharon and his sons, and that no one should ever dispute this.
5. Why did Korach's children survive?
* 26:11 - Because they repented.
6. Name six families in this Parsha whose names are changed.
* 26:13,16,24,38,39,42 - Zerach, Ozni, Yashuv, Achiram, Shfufam, Shucham.
7. Who was Yaakov's only living granddaughter at the time of the census?
* 26:46 - Serach bat Asher
8. How many years did it take to conquer the Land? How long to divide the Land?
* 26:53 - Seven years. Seven years.
9. Two brothers leave Egypt and die in the midbar. One brother has three sons. The other brother has only one son. When these four cousins enter the Land, how many portions will the one son get?
* 26:55 - Two portions. That is, the four cousins merit four portions among them. These four portions are then split among them as if their fathers were inheriting them; i.e., two portions to one father and two portions to the other father.
10. What do Yocheved, Ard and Na'aman all have in common?
* 26:24,56 - They came down to Mitzrayim in their mothers' wombs.
11. Why did the decree to die in the desert not apply to the women?
* 26:64 - In the incident of the meraglim, only the men wished to return to Egypt. The women wanted to enter Eretz Yisrael.
12. What trait did Tzlofchad's daughters exhibit that their ancestor Yosef also exhibited?
* 27:1 - Love for Eretz Yisrael.
13. Why does the Torah change the order of Tzlofchad's daughters' names?
* 27:1 - To teach that they were equal in greatness.
14. Tzlofchad died for what transgression?
* 27:3 - Rabbi Akiva says that Tzlofchad gathered sticks on Shabbat. Rabbi Shimon says that Tzlofchad was one who tried to enter Eretz Yisrael after the sin of the meraglim.
15. Why did Moshe use the phrase "G-d of the spirits of all flesh"?
* 27:16 - He was asking G-d, who knows the multitude of dispositions among the Jewish People, to appoint a leader who can deal with each person on that person's level.

16. Moshe "put some of his glory" upon Yehoshua. What does this mean?

* 27:20 - That Yehoshua's face beamed like the moon.

17. Where were the daily offerings slaughtered?

* 28:3 - At a spot opposite the sun. The morning offering was slaughtered on the west side of the slaughtering area and the afternoon offering on the east side.

18. Goats are brought as musaf sin-offerings. For what sin do they atone?

* 28:15 - For unnoticed ritual impurity of the Sanctuary or its vessels.

19. Why is Shavuot called Yom Habikkurim?

* 28:26 - The Shavuot double-bread offering was the first wheat-offering made from the new crop.

20. What do the 70 bulls offered on Succot symbolize?

* 29:18 - The seventy nations.

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From: alessonaday@chofetzchaimusa.org

Sent: June 28, 29, 30 & July 1, 2004

Subject: Pertinent Information

A Lesson A Day 9 Tammuz, 5764 / June 28, 2004

SEFER CHOFETZ CHAIM

Day 98 – Pertinent Information

The prohibition, "Do not accept a false report" (see Day 91), teaches us that loshon hora should not be listened to and must not be accepted. However, when the information being conveyed is important to know for constructive reasons, it merits one's attention and may be listened to. Just as relating negative information l'toeles, for a constructive purpose, is not considered speaking loshon hora, so too is listening for a constructive purpose considered responsible and proper. Information that one may listen to includes anything that might help to prevent or correct undue harm to any individual, be it the listener, the speaker, the person spoken about, or another party. It would also include information that could help prevent or correct damage that is physical, financial, emotional or spiritual. It is correct to listen to a person's claim against someone else if one thinks that he can be of help in rectifying the situation, or if the listener or someone else might be vulnerable to similar treatment by the person being spoken about. It is permissible to listen to information about a person with whom one is planning to collaborate in a joint venture, if the information is pertinent to that relationship. In all of the above instances, the information is being listened to for a constructive purpose, and hence is not considered loshon hora.

A Lesson A Day 10 Tammuz, 5764 / June 29, 2004

SEFER CHOFETZ CHAIM

Day 99 – A Matter of Intent

While listening to negative information for constructive purposes is not a violation of the prohibition against accepting loshon hora, before taking the liberty of listening to such information one must be sure that he will not be guilty of causing the speaker to sin.

We have seen that in order to convey pertinent information that would otherwise be considered loshon hora several conditions must be met. For example, the speaker's intent must be to bring about a positive result. If the speaker does not have constructive intent, his words are loshon hora, despite the fact that the information is important for the listener to hear.

In such a case, being a listener would be a transgression of "Before a blind person do not place a stumbling block" (Vayikra 19:14).

If one is privately doing business with someone and then, by coincidence, a friend begins speaking loshon hora about that very individual, one is required to interrupt him or walk away! Since the speaker is unaware that the listener is doing business with this person, the speaker is talking loshon hora and must be stopped. After interrupting him, one may tell him that the information he had begun to relate may be important to the listener, and that he may continue speaking provided that he can honestly relate it for that constructive purpose.

A Lesson A Day 11 Tammuz, 5764 / June 30, 2004

SEFER CHOFETZ CHAIM

Day 100 – Inquiries

In light of the above (see Day 98), if one must inquire about a person, family, community, or school in order to make an important decision, but does not want others to know what he is contemplating, he may not engage people in casual conversation with the aim of obtaining pertinent derogatory or harmful information. Unaware that his speech is constructive, the speaker is guilty of speaking loshon hora, and the listener who drew him into conversation has caused him to sin.

Thus, when soliciting necessary information, one must make it clear to the other person that circumstances permit this and that his response, therefore will not constitute loshon hora.

A common practice in such situations is not only to refrain from divulging the purpose of the inquiry, but also to inquire about several people at once, so as to conceal the fact that it is a particular person about whom one is seeking information. This is absolutely forbidden. The desire to protect one's privacy does not justify irrelevant negative information and causing others to speak loshon hora.

A Lesson A Day 12 Tammuz, 5764 / July 1, 2004

SEFER CHOFETZ CHAIM

Day 101 - Soliciting Information: Preconditions

As it is forbidden to cause another Jew to transgress, one may not solicit information unless it is clearly permissible for the other person to offer such information. Thus, in order to solicit information, the following conditions must be met:

- (1) The person from whom information is being sought is not known to fabricate stories about others, to read into their behavior in an unjust manner, or to draw hurried conclusions about their character;
- (2) And the person is not known to exaggerate in his descriptions of events;
- (3) and it can be assumed that when informed that the information is necessary, he will not speak out of malice toward the subject; (thus, one may not seek information from a person who is not on good terms with the subject); and
- (4) it is clear that the information is necessary for a constructive purpose, and that there is no alternative to soliciting such information.

A Lesson A Day 13 Tammuz, 5764 / July 2, 2004

SEFER CHOFETZ CHAIM

Day 102 - Irrelevant, But Permissible

In the cases discussed thus far, the determining factor in making it permissible to listen to negative speech was relevance. If the information is important, in a constructive sense, for the listener to hear, it is proper for him to give his attention to what is being spoken, and at times to even solicit such information.

There are times when halacha permits listening to negative information which is of no relevance to the listener or any of his acquaintances. Where the speaker feels the need to express his anger or frustration for relief of emotional pain, one is doing an act of chesed (kindness) by

hearing the person out and expressing understanding of his feelings. If the listener feels that the speaker can be made to understand how he misjudged the person responsible for his frustration, he is obligated to do so. (Often, however, a person expressing his frustrations is in need of empathy and is not open to logic. At a later point, after the speaker has calmed down, the listener could approach him and attempt to explain how he may have misunderstood the situation.)

Care must be taken to keep the speaker from wandering from the matter at hand, and speaking irrelevantly about other faults of the one whom he feels has wronged him. Furthermore, one listening in such a situation must take care not to accept what he hears as fact.

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Covenant & Conversation
Thoughts on the Weekly Parsha from
RABBI DR. JONATHAN SACKS
Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew
Congregations of the British Commonwealth
[From last year]

Pinchas

JUST BENEATH THE SURFACE of this week's parshah is an exceptionally poignant story. It occurs in the context of Moses' prayer that G-d appoint a successor as leader of the Jewish people.

One hint is given in the words of G-d to Moses: "After you have seen [the land of Israel from afar] you also will be gathered to your people, as your brother Aaron was." Rashi is intrigued by the apparently superfluous word "also", and makes the comment that "Moses desired to die as Aaron had died."

2 In what sense was Moses envious of his brother? Was it that he, like Aaron, wished to die painlessly? Surely not. Moses was not afraid of pain. Was it that he envied his brother's popularity? Of Aaron, it was said that when he died, he was mourned by "all the children of Israel", something the Torah does not say in the case of Moses. This too cannot be the answer. Moses knew that leadership does not mean popularity. He did not seek it. He could not have done what he had to do and achieve it. The Ktav Sofer gives what is surely the correct interpretation: Aaron had the privilege of knowing that his children would follow in his footsteps. Elazar, his son, was appointed as high priest in his lifetime. Indeed to this day cohanim are direct descendents of Aaron. Accordingly to Ktav Sofer, Moses longed to see one of his sons, Gershom or Eliezer, take his place as leader of the people. It was not to be.

Rashi arrives at the same conclusion by noting a second clue. The passage in which Moses asks G-d to appoint a successor follows directly after the story of the daughters of Zelophehad, who asked that they be permitted to inherit the share in the land of Israel that would have gone to their father, had he not died. Rashi links the two episodes: "When Moses heard G-d tell him to give the inheritance of Zelophehad to his daughters, he said to himself, 'The time has come that I should make a request of my own -- that my sons should inherit my position.' G-d replied to him, 'This is not what I have decided. Joshua deserves to receive reward for serving you and never leaving your tent.' This is what Solomon meant when he said, 'He that keeps the vineyard shall eat its fruit and he that waits on his master shall be honoured.' Moses' prayer was not granted.

Thus, with their ears attuned to every nuance, the sages and Rashi reconstructed a narrative that lies just beneath the surface of the biblical

text. What happened to Moses children? Was he, the great leader, inwardly disappointed that they did not inherit his role? What deeper message does the text communicate to us? Is there something of continuing relevance in Moses disappointment? Did G-d in any way provide him with consolation?

Moses and Aaron epitomize the two great roles in Jewish continuity - horim and morim -- parents and teachers. A parent hands on the Jewish heritage to his or her children; a teacher does likewise to his or her disciples. Aaron was the archetypal parent; Moses the great example of a teacher (to this day we call him Moshe Rabbenu, 'Moses our teacher'). Aaron was succeeded by his son; Moses by his disciple Joshua.

The sages at various points emphasised that Torah leadership does not pass automatically across the generations. The Talmud (Nedarim 81a) states:

Be careful not to neglect the children of the poor, for from them Torah goes forth, as it is written, "the water shall flow out of his buckets [midalyo]", meaning "from the poor [midallim] among them" goes forth Torah. And why is it not usual for scholars to give birth to children who are scholars? Rabbi Joseph said, that it might not be said that Torah is their legacy. Rabbi Shisha son of Rabbi Idi said, that they should not be arrogant towards the community. Mar Zutra said, because they act high-handedly towards the community. Were Torah leadership to be dynastic, a matter of inheritance, Judaism would quickly become a society of privilege and hierarchy. To this, the sages were utterly opposed. Everyone has a share in Torah. It is the shared patrimony of every Jew. Nowhere is this more clearly stated than in the great words of Maimonides:

With three crowns was Israel crowned -- with the crown of Torah, the crown of priesthood, and the crown of sovereignty. The crown of priesthood was bestowed on Aaron . . . The crown of sovereignty was given to David . . . The crown of Torah, however, is for all Israel, as it is said, "Moses commanded us the Torah, as an inheritance of the congregation of Jacob." Whoever desires it can win it. Do not suppose that the other two crowns are greater than the crown of Torah, for it is said, "By me [the Torah] kings reign and princes decree justice. By me, princes rule." Hence we learn the crown of Torah is greater than the other two crowns. This is one of the great egalitarian statements in Judaism. The crown of Torah is available to whoever seeks it. There have been societies which sought to create equality by evenly distributing power or wealth. None succeeded fully. The Jewish approach was different. A society of equal dignity is one in which knowledge -- the most important kind of knowledge, namely Torah, knowledge of how to live -- is available equally to all. From earliest times to today, the Jewish people has been a series of communities built around schools, sustained by communal funds so that none should be excluded.

The sages drew a strong connection between home and school, parent and teacher. Thus, for example, Maimonides rules:

A duty rests on every scholar in Israel to teach all disciples who seek instruction from him, even if they are not his children, as it is said, "And you shall teach them diligently to your children". According to traditional authority, the term "your children" includes disciples, for disciples are called children, as it is said, "And the sons of the prophets [meaning, the disciples of the prophets] came forth" (II Kings 2:3). In the same vein he writes elsewhere:

Just as a person is commanded to honour and revere his father, so he is under an obligation to honour and revere his teacher, even to a greater extent than his father, for his father gave him life in this world, while his teacher who instructs him in wisdom secures for him life in the world to come. The connection runs in the opposite direction also. Consistently throughout the Mosaic books, the role of a parent is defined in terms of teaching and instruction. "You shall teach these things diligently to your children." "It shall come to pass that when your child asks you . . . thus

shall you say to him." Education is a conversation across the generations, between parent and child. In the one verse in which the Bible explains why Abraham was chosen as the father of a new faith it says, "For I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just". Abraham was chosen to be both a parent and an educator.

Moses was therefore denied the chance to see his children inherit his role, so that his personal disappointment would become a source of hope to future generations. Torah leadership is not the prerogative of an elite. It does not pass through dynastic succession. It is not confined to those descended from great scholars. It is open to each of us, if we will it and give it our best efforts of energy and time. But at the same time, Moses was given a great consolation. Just as, to this day, cohanim are the sons of Aaron, so are all who study Torah the disciples of Moses. To some are given the privilege of being a parent; to others, that of being a teacher. Both are ways in which something of us lives on into the future. Parent-as-teacher, teacher-as-parent: these are Judaism's greatest roles, one immortalised in Aaron, the other made eternal in Moses.

From: Shema Yisrael Torah Network [shemalist@shemayisrael.com]
Sent: July 08, 2004

PENINIM ON THE TORAH
BY RABBI A. LEIB SCHEINBAUM
Parshas Pinchas

Give us a possession (in Eretz Yisrael) among our father's brothers. (27:4) The five daughters of Tzafachad came to Moshe Rabbeinu with a taanah, complaint. They understood from the law that Eretz Yisrael was being divided up among the males of each family. Since their father had died without leaving any male progeny, they were concerned lest they be deprived of securing a portion of Eretz Yisrael. Rashi explains that their request was not motivated by a desire for financial gain, but rather by a passionate love for the Holy Land. This is why the pasuk traces their lineage back to Yosef HaTzaddik, whose love for Eretz Yisrael was boundless. The meraglim, spies, stand in contrast to Bnos Tzafachad; they slandered the land because they lacked that intrinsic love for the country.

When someone cares deeply about an object, a person, a mission, or an organization, he will move heaven and earth to assure its success. His love forms the basis for his perspective and, concomitantly, his reaction. The meraglim described Eretz Yisrael as they saw it. They saw a country that was heavily fortified, cities that were inhabited by powerful giants and fruit that was unusual in its size. Wherever they went, they noticed that funerals were taking place. Everything seemed to be against them. They also forgot that Hashem, Who took them out of Egypt amidst the greatest miracles and wonders, had promised them that they would conquer the land. Had their emunah in Hashem been on an appropriate level, it would have overwhelmed whatever doubts regarding the land that they might have harbored. Yehoshua and Calev, the two members of the spying mission who clung steadfast to their conviction, had no problem believing in the successful result of their quest to inhabit the land.

The result depends upon attitude. When one views the land with love, when he believes that it is good - as Bnos Tzafachad did, then any challenge that surfaces can - and will - be dealt with successfully. If the love for the land is phlegmatic, however, then any challenge that arises will generate a sense of hopelessness. The meraglim's lackluster feelings towards Eretz Yisrael reflected a deficiency in their spiritual character that lay at the foundation of their sin.

Love conquers whatever ambiguities one might have in regard to an endeavor. Horav Avraham Pam, zl, applies this concept to encourage bnei Torah to shteig, excel, and become great talmidei chachamim, Torah scholars. Many bnei Torah have the desire to achieve distinction

in Torah erudition, whether it is in the area of harbotzas Torah, dissemination, or in psak, halachic arbitration. Regrettably, for many, these dreams remain nothing more than fantasies. What happens?

A young man assesses his capabilities and potential, realizing that he does not have what it takes to achieve greatness in Torah. He is confronted with uncertainties. He strives to teach and imbue others with a love of Torah, but, alas, he does not know if he has the necessary skills to perform this function. Will he find a decent position? Will he make a living, or will he have to scrounge from paycheck to paycheck? These and many other doubts enter the mind of a young person about to trek upon the path that leads to greatness in Torah. These ambiguities can depress him to the point that he may give up before he even starts. He might choose a more secure and comfortable vocation. Of course, he would love to devote himself to a life of Torah, but so much uncertainty stands in his way.

Rav Pam posits that the source of this attitude is rooted in a lack of true ahavas Torah, love of Torah. One who truly desires distinction in Torah, whose love and passion for Torah is unequivocal, will not be bothered by doubts. Even for one whose level of intellectual acuity is limited, his desire and commitment will merit him great Siyata diShmaya, Divine assistance, to realize his goal. Hashem grants wisdom to he who desires and strives for it.

Love of Torah conquers questions of parnassah, livelihood. This does not suggest that one who dedicates himself to Torah will prosper materially. It only implies that the usual issues of material sustenance will not plague him. Hashem takes care of His own, of those whose love for His Torah transcend their material needs.

Last, Rav Pam comments that this principle is not reserved only for Torah study. It applies to every area of spiritual endeavor. How often are we inspired to act on behalf of the community, in a spiritual endeavor, a tzedakah campaign, a neglected mitzvah awareness program, a chesed project, a kiruv, outreach, affair, only to be left with the inspiration and nothing else? We often perceive the need, and we have the tools and ability to carry out the task, but we renege at the last minute due to self-doubting. Will I succeed? Why has no one else undertaken this project? Will I receive community support? These and other doubts cross one's mind, and soon the self-doubting develops into a negative attitude, so that he rejects the plan. The fire of idealism has been extinguished by the feelings of ambiguity and uncertainty. Bnos Tzafachad teach us a valuable lesson: When one loves something - nothing stands in the way. When someone cares about Torah, about Klal Yisrael, about the Ribono Shel Olam, he doesn't just talk - he acts.

May Hashem... appoint a man over the assembly. (27:16)

It is related that when the rav of Slutsk, Poland, Horav Yaakov David Ridvaz, zl, was nearing death, the leaders of the community came to him to discuss the issue of a successor for the position of rav. After they left, his rebbetzin entered and implored him, "My dear husband, you are acutely aware that our financial straits are, at best, terrible. Please ask the leaders of the community to see to it that we receive a greater stipend. There is no way we can go on this way."

Rav Yaakov David looked up at his wife and said, "Should I be different from Moshe, whose primary concern prior to his death was for the community of Klal Yisrael - not for his family? We do not find Moshe supplicating Hashem for his personal needs - only for the needs of his flock."

His rebbetzin, who was a wise and learned woman, responded "Perhaps, that is why his grandson, Shevuel ben Gershom, ended up as a priest for idols." (This is a reference to Yonasan ben Gershom, who was later called Shevuel after he "returned to Hashem.") Prior to his repentance, however, he served as a priest, since he refused to accept charity and was willing to do anything to satisfy his desire for money. (Bava Basra 110a)

When the Ridvaz heard this, he agreed with his wife and implored his lay leadership on behalf of his family.

This paper is not here to discuss the propriety of her claim. Rather, this story is meant to point out that our spiritual leadership also has needs. A rav has a family, a rosh yeshivah has a wife and children. All too often, we think only of ourselves and the spiritual leader's obligation to serve us. Do we ever think about his family and his needs? We turn to them for advice regarding family situations, shidduchim, livelihood issues, problems with our children. Yet, do we ever stop to think that they also might have issues on their mind? To whom do they turn for advice, solace or a shoulder on which to cry? Do we ever take into consideration that the rebbe who teaches our children also has a family, and perhaps he has a situation at home that is taking its toll on him? The answer to all these questions is probably no. The reason is that we think that our spiritual leadership is here to serve us, and their circumstances are not our concern. While this is regrettable, it is probably true.

On second thought, getting back to the Ridvaz, he really should not have had to turn to his lay leadership for assistance. Had they been proper leaders, they would have cared enough about their rav to offer help on their own. I guess things have not changed much over the years.

Who shall go out before them and come in before them, who shall take them out and bring them in; and let the assembly of Hashem not be like sheep that have no shepherd. (27:17)

The Kesav Sofer explains the distinction between a shepherd who shepherds sheep and a spiritual leader whose only focus is the welfare of his human flock. A shepherd has one goal - himself. Everything he does is done so that his flock retains its current value. His flock is nothing more than a means, a vehicle, to increase the shepherd's material wealth. The roeh Yisrael's, Jewish spiritual leader's, mindset is focused only on his people, their physical and spiritual welfare, their families and their concerns, both personal and general. The Torah leader is prepared to sacrifice his life for his people. He goes out before them, as he leads in times of danger. Unlike the shepherd - who, upon seeing a wolf runs for his life, leaving his flock open to danger - the Torah leader stands resolute and fearless in the face any viscidude which confronts his people. He goes before them and remains with them throughout their challenges.

Horav Elchanan Wasserman, zl, the venerable Rosh Hayeshivah of Pre World War II Baranovitz, exemplified this calibre of leadership. His devotion to Klal Yisrael in general, and his yeshivah community in particular, was legend. Rav Elchanan spent a good part of 1938 in America on behalf of his yeshivah. During this time, he crisscrossed the country reaching out to Jews, inspiring and encouraging them to strengthen their ties with Hashem Yisborach. The political situation in Europe was rapidly deteriorating. As Rav Elchanan packed his bags to return to Europe, the black clouds of war were ominously approaching. In this dangerous atmosphere, friends approached Rav Elchanan and implored him to stay in America. Perhaps he should even bring over his two sons who remained in Europe. Rav Elchanan rejected their plea, countering, "I do not have only two sons. I have four-hundred; all of the yeshivah bachurim are my sons. How can I leave them?" The Rosh Hayeshivah had decided that it was his moral obligation and duty to return to Poland, despite the imminent danger - even at the expense of his life. He would not listen to the many arguments that encouraged him to stay - for America's sake.

His rejoinder was simple, "I am a soldier; I have to go to the front." He changed planes in England, where the great sage Horav Elyahu Lopian, zl, futilely attempted to convince him to stay in England. Even as he was boarding the plane, Rav Elyah begged Rav Elchanan to stay. Rav Elchanan answered with resolve, "We shall all have to endure chibut hakever, buffeting the grave. I want to suffer this together with my students."

The account of Rav Elchanan's last moments and that of the Baranovitch community have become the paradigm for mesiras nefesh, self-sacrifice. The Lithuanian terrorists entered the house where Rav Elchanan was hiding, searching for the rabbis who were "collaborating with the communists." Rav Elchanan was engrossed in learning together with his chavrusa, study partner. The terrorists then searched and humiliated him. Rav Elchanan was fully aware of what was in store for him. Instead of fear and anxiety, his face brightened, exhibiting what could best be described as an angelic expression. The Jews who saw him then were later to describe his countenance and demeanor as that of a great Torah leader preparing to give up his life Al Kiddush Hashem, to sanctify Hashem's Name. Even the two savage Lithuanians who were his guards were struck by his visage and were inspired with dread and awe. One of them was prepared to release the Rosh Hayeshivah. His partner, regrettably, refused, insisting that he be taken to the seventh fort together with the others.

While he was being led away, Rav Elchanan told his fellow captives, "Apparently they consider us tzaddikim, righteous people, in Heaven, for we have been selected to atone for Klal Yisrael with our lives. If so, we must repent completely, here and now. We must realize that our sacrifices will be more pleasing if accompanied by teshuvah, repentance, and we shall thereby save the lives of our brothers and sisters in America."

He then exhorted them that martyrs must, in their last moments expunge any impure thoughts from their minds, lest the sacrifice which they represent become invalidated. Hence, he focused on repentance and total devotion to Hashem. Twenty-four hours later, the entire group was machine-gunned to death. It was a holy brotherhood - a community with its yeshivah - led by their beloved Rosh Hayeshivah, who would not leave them. As he lived with them - he died with them, exemplifying a leader who goes out before them and comes in before them. As he cared for them in this world, Rav Elchanan accompanied his community into the World to Come.

You shall place some of your majesty upon him. (27:20)

In the Talmud Bava Basra 75a, Chazal derive from the word meihodcha, some of your majesty, that only a portion of Moshe Rabbeinu's majesty was being transferred to Yehoshua, but not all of it. They relate that when the zekeinim, elders, of that generation contemplated the difference between Moshe and Yehoshua, they would say that the face of Moshe was like the sun, while Yehoshua's face was like the moon. Chazal conclude with the statement, "Woe, for that shame! Woe for that disgrace!" What is the meaning of "that" shame and "that" disgrace? To what are Chazal referring?

The Chida, zl, gives a practical and timely answer to this question. Yehoshua merited to become Moshe's heir apparent and the next leader of Klal Yisrael, because he would arise early every morning and organize the benches in the bais hamedrash. He would place the mats in their proper place in the morning and do this once again at the end of the day. He was the first to arrive and last to leave, making sure that the menial labor involved in presenting a clean, organized bais hamedrash was carried out personally by him. The elders, who probably were not prepared to do this menial labor at the time because it was not dignified, now regretted their earlier decision. What they then thought was humiliating, they now realized was a source of distinction. They now regretted "that" shame and "that" disgrace which they had refused to exhibit.

The Tanna in Pirkei Avos 4: says: "Whoever honors the Torah, will himself be honored by people." Otzros HaTorah infers from here that one who disgraces his honor, who is willing to humiliate himself for the sake of the Torah, will, in turn, achieve honor and esteem in the eyes of his fellow man. Indeed, Chazal teach us that King Achav merited to reign over Klal Yisrael for twenty- two years, because he accorded honor

to the Torah which was given to Klal Yisrael through the medium of the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

It is related that Rashi's grandfather merited to have such a grandson that would light up the world with his commentary on Torah, because he used his beard to wipe off the dust in front of the Aron Hakodesh, Holy Ark. The Tashbatz would always make a point to dust off the seforim in the bais hamedrash. It is told over that it was revealed to him from Heaven that the seforim which he himself had authored, would never decay. Indeed, Horav Chaim Kanievski, Shlita, attested that he once found an original copy of the Tashbatz, and it was in perfect condition.

Horav Michel Yehudah Lefkowitz, Shlita, relates that he once went to be menachem aveil, comfort the bereaved, at a home where an elderly father passed away and left over a family of sons who all were great talmidei chachamin, Torah scholars. He queried the sons concerning to what they attributed their father's incredible zchus, merit, to leave over such distinguished offspring. They replied that their father was a simple carpenter, who would go to the bais hamedrash and fix whatever benches or furniture needed repair, during his free time. Apparently, this man was no simple craftsman. His appreciation of Torah earned him the ultimate Torah nachas.

I'zechar nishmas R' Yissachar Dov ben haRav Yisroel a'h Hertzberg niftar 7 Av 5745 t.n.tz.b.h.

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SALT!! ("Surf A Little Torah")

Friday, 20 Tammuz 5764 – July 9, 2004

SHLOMO DOV ROSEN

The latter part of Parashat Pinchas deals with the sacrifices that were offered at regular times, daily, weekly, monthly, and on festivals. Every day two sacrifices were offered up, one in the morning, and one in the afternoon. Today, there is no temple in Jerusalem, and we therefore cannot bring sacrifices. However, we pray by the same regulated times, and on occasions that an additional sacrifice was brought (such as Shabbat) we recite an additional prayer (musaf). Prayers take the place of sacrifices, as our form of service.

There is a dispute in the Gemara (Berakhot 26b) whether the daily prayers were instituted parallel to the daily sacrifices (and their nocturnal continuation), or are connected to the forms of prayer our forefathers created in their innovative service of G-d. According to this latter position, Abraham formed the idea to pray in the morning, Isaac invented the idea of an afternoon prayer, and Jacob prayed at night. While the specific times of the prayers parallel the laws of the sacrifices, they were originally innovations of our forefathers.

The Rambam and the Ramban dispute the original source of the obligation to pray. The Rambam holds that we are commanded in the Torah to pray at least once a day. This is the meaning of the command to serve Him with all our heart. The Ramban argues, pointing to the many indications in the Gemara that prayer is a Rabbinic institution. If we consider the dispute of the Gemara, concerning the origin of the idea of three daily prayers, in light of this disagreement concerning the source of the obligation to pray at all, we may appreciate completely different ways of looking at the concept of regular prayer.

If we accept the opinion of the Ramban, and consider the position that argues that our forefathers instituted regular prayer, we can conclude that these three daily prayers are the earliest cases of Rabbinic institution. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob instituted Rabbinic commandments even before the Torah was given! If so, praying three times a day is almost the only ritual mitzva that we have in tradition from the earliest times of Judaism, even before the giving of the Torah. Such an understanding

centralizes the importance both of Rabbinic institution as an integral part of Judaism (from its earliest times), and of prayer, as being the earliest case of such innovation. One could argue that prayer by definition must be a Rabbinic institution, as it is a turning toward one's creator. While this is meaningful only because G-d did not command it, it is so central that its institution dates to the dawn of our religion.

However, according to the opinion that prayer was instituted as paralleling the daily sacrifices, the Ramban can consider the whole idea of daily prayer as merely a way of making up what we miss by not having a temple (or, being far away from it, in ancient times). Because the Ramban is of the opinion that daily prayer is not an obligation from the Torah itself, the difference between whether it dates from the times of our forefathers, or is a later parallel of the laws of the sacrifices, makes a phenomenal difference.

The Rambam holds that the Torah commands us to pray daily. Therefore, even if the three daily prayers were innovations of our forefathers, the source of the obligation of daily prayer is from G-d, irrelevant of whether they had ever prayed. Similarly, if the times of the prayers correspond only to the sacrifices, this changes little in the centrality of prayer, as it is obligatory anyway, as a commandment from G-d. But, as we considered above, according to the Ramban, the question whether the times of the daily prayers were institutions of our forefathers, or parallel the sacrificial service, has great ramifications for how we should understand prayer.

From: Yeshivat Har Etzion Office [office@etzion.org.il] To: yeh-sichot@etzion.org.il

Yeshivat Har Etzion Israel Koschitzky Virtual Beit Midrash (Vbm) Student Summaries Of Sichot By The Roshei Yeshiva PARASHAT PINCHAS

SICHA OF HARAV YEHUDA AMITAL SHLIT"A

This shiur is dedicated to the memory of Rabbi Aaron Wise z"l (whose yearzeit is Tamuz 21), by the Wise and Etshalom families. Yehi Zikhro Barukh.

Nature and Goodness

Summarized by Marc Weinberg

"Pinchas, the son of Elazar, the son of Aharon the Cohen, has turned back My wrath on Bnei Yisrael, in that he was zealous for My sake among them... Wherefore say, Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace; and he shall have it and his seed after him, the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his G-d, and made atonement for Bnei Yisrael." (Bamidbar 25:11-13)

Rashi, quoting the Midrash, tells us that the tribes mocked Pinchas because his mother's father (Yitro) fattened calves for idolatrous sacrifices, and yet he dared to kill a prince of a tribe of Israel (during the sin of Ba'al Pe'or). Therefore, the verse comes and connects his genealogy with Aharon: "Pinchas the son of Elazar the son of Aharon the Cohen."

What do Chazal mean by this? At first glance, one might think that Pinchas' zealous actions were rooted in foreign sources, that his impulsiveness was something he learned from the idolatrous side of the family. Chazal are coming to tell us that his zealousness came specifically from Aharon, his other grandfather, the person who loved peace and pursued it. Pinchas cared about the welfare of the people and was willing to act on this, even to the extent of invading individual privacy, which to us nowadays is a foreign concept.

What was the culture of the worshippers of Pe'or, which Pinchas combated so zealously? Rashi explains that their manner of worship was to defecate in front of the idol. This shows us an underlying principle in the ideology of Pe'or: everything natural is beautiful; the world and man are perfect. These values appear intuitive and appealing,

but it leads to the kind of immorality which the daughters of Moav demonstrated.

There is a well-known story in the Midrash Tanchuma at the beginning of Parshat Tazria. Turnus Rufus asked Rabbi Akiva, "Which actions are better, those of G-d or those of man?" Rabbi Akiva replied, "Those of man." Again he asked, "But surely man is not able to create heavens and earth?" Rabbi Akiva replied, "Don't ask questions about things that humans have no control over, ask questions regarding things we do have control over." So he asked, "Why is man circumcised?" Rabbi Akiva replied, "I knew you had this in mind and therefore I said man's actions are better. The proof is that a grain of wheat is not edible but a loaf of bread is."

Turnus Rufus was asking why, if G-d wanted circumcision, did He not create man already circumcised? Clearly, his assumption is that everything in nature is perfect. Rabbi Akiva replied that nature is far from perfect. G-d expects man to complete the act of creation by perfecting nature. Rabbi Akiva's ideology is the antithesis of the culture of Pe'or. Nature contains ugliness and brutality as well; it is up to man to be a partner with G-d in perfecting the world.

Invasion of privacy seems to be immoral, but the zealous act which Pinchas performed was a way of fighting the liberal, pluralistic culture in which everything natural is good. Pinchas is coming to show us that there are absolute values which come above a person's right to privacy.

In our day and age where indiscriminating liberalism is rampant, we should remember the zealousness of our ancestor Pinchas.

(Originally delivered on leil Shabbat Parashat Pinchas 5755 [1995].)
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From: newsletterserver@aish.com
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KOL YAAKOV
By RABBI BARUCH LEFF

Parsha Insights based on and inspired by the teachings of Rav Yaakov Weinberg of blessed memory

Pinchas (Numbers 25:10-30:1) Give War a Chance
"War is a crime against humanity." "There is no such thing as a justified war."

These are statements from pacifists. "Pacifism: Opposition to the use of force under any circumstances; refusal for reasons of conscience to participate in war or military action." (Webster's New World Dictionary) What is the Jewish view of pacifism? What does peace really mean? This week's Torah portion, Pinchas, instructs us concerning all of these issues. Since Parshat Pinchas begins in the middle of a story, let's re-cap events from last week's portion, Balak. Many Jewish men were seduced by Moabite women and acted promiscuously with them. These women also influenced their victims to worship idols. One of the leaders of the men who were seduced, Zimri, of the tribe of Shimon, desired to publicly declare his support for involvement with the Moabite women. He brazenly committed his lewd, sexual acts in full view of Moshe and the Jewish people. G-d sent a plague, and 24,000 Jewish men, who were seduced, died. Pinchas could not tolerate Zimri's brazenness and promptly killed Zimri and his partner in sin, Kozbi, a Moabite princess. After Pinchas' zealous act, the plague ceased.

G-d begins this week's portion saying to Moshe, "Pinchas, the son of Elazar, the son of Ahron, the Priest, turned back my fury from the Jewish nation when he zealously avenged my vengeance among them. This is

why I did not consume the Jewish nation in My vengeance. Therefore, say: Behold, I give him (Pinchas) My covenant of peace." (Bamidbar 25:10-12)

We know that G-d administers reward and punishment with the device called 'measure for measure.' The punishment or reward must fit the crime or good deed. In this case, Pinchas' act of zealousness is rewarded with peace. Is that measure for measure? Do we usually associate a peaceful person with being a zealot?

G-d is teaching us a fundamental lesson about war and peace. Wars are necessary at times. There is such a thing as a justified war. As Kohelet 3:8 states, "There is a time for war."

G-d is saying to Moshe, "Tell Pinchas that his zealousness is peace." Peace does not mean a passive lack of war. If peace is a passive lack of war there is no way that through Pinchas' violent act of killing he achieves peace. Peace is a state of being in which there is a closeness, a relationship, a way of dealing with each other. It isn't just that I don't bother you and you don't bother me; that's not peace. It's that we live together and work together and have a unity, a commonality that all of us are part of a whole.

In Hebrew, the word for peace, shalom, is derived from the root shalem, which means whole or complete. Peace is a cooperative, symbiotic relationship, where both parties care for each other, help each other, and ultimately perfect each other. Two people who hate each other and never speak to each other, but never fight either, cannot be said to be at peace with each other. Marital harmony and domestic tranquility does not mean the simple lack of screaming and yelling in the house. It is a state of being in which your spouse genuinely shares in your triumphs, strengthens you when you are down, loves, adores, and cherishes you. (This is why it is a misnomer to refer to the 1979 Camp David agreement with Egypt as a 'peace' treaty. At most, it is a ceasefire. The rhetoric of hatred and contempt by Egypt for Israel, and anti-Semitism in the Egyptian press has never ceased. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has never even visited Israel, except to attend Yitzchak Rabin's funeral.)

Since peace is an active force rather than a passive lack of war, ultimately anything that disturbs and destroys this state of true peace must be removed in order for true shalom -- peace -- to exist. That is why Pinchas, through his zealous act, actually creates peace. Pinchas stops the plague against the Jewish people and through a violent act of war brings peace.

It is very often necessary to create peace only through what seems to be an act of violence. One must remove those things that disturb the harmony and that create tensions between peoples in order for peace to exist. And it is not always possible to remove the items that block peace through non-violent means.

Does anyone seriously think that the Nazis could have been dealt with non-violently? Can Osama bin Laden be dealt with non-violently? Ariel Sharon has always said that the path to peace in the Middle East must begin with decisive military action against the terrorist infrastructure. Only once violence, as an option, is rooted out can peace be achieved. One can even argue similarly for Harry Truman's decision to drop the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki which brought peace in ending WWII. We have seen the famous picture of the mushroom cloud which killed approximately 400,000 people. Was Truman's act of war justified? Consider the following:

"In a meeting on 18 June the Joint War Plans Committee gave Truman projected death rates ranging from a low of 31,000 to a high of 50,000, and a projected American causality rate (deaths, injuries and missing) of 132,500. During fighting in the Pacific, from 1 March 1944 to 1 May 1945, the Japanese were killed at a ratio of 22 to 1. Thus, if we use an estimate of 40,000 American deaths, we can extrapolate 880,000 Japanese deaths -- for a combined total of 920,000 deaths. Although death rates for Hiroshima and Nagasaki vary widely, none are even half this high. Thus we can conclude that if an invasion of Kyushu had been necessary,

and the Japanese were killed at a rate comparable to previous fighting, then the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki actually SAVED lives."

(Barton J. Bernstein, "Understanding the Atomic Bomb and the Japanese Surrender: Missed Opportunities, Little-Known Near Disasters, and Modern Memory," Hiroshima in History and Memory, ed. Michael J. Hogan [New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996], p.45)

If all people in the world were committed to achieving a real peace, one which involves a cooperative, symbiotic relationship, perhaps pacifism could be a viable movement. Since this is not the case, we must often destroy violently those things that create tensions between peoples in order for peace to exist.

In the real world, wars usually bring ultimate peace

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Subject: Torah Weekly - Parshat Pinchas
Written and compiled by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair
TORAH WEEKLY - For the week ending 10 July 2004 / 21 Tammuz
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OVERVIEW G-d tells Moshe to inform Pinchas that Pinchas will receive G-d's "covenant of peace" as reward for his bold action - executing Zimri and the Midianite princess Kozbi. G-d commands Moshe to maintain a state of enmity with the Midianites who lured the Jewish People into sin. Moshe and Elazar are told to count the Jewish People. The Torah lists the names of the families in each tribe. The total number of males eligible to serve in the army is 601,730. G-d instructs Moshe how to allot the Land of Israel to Bnei Yisrael. The number of the Levites' families is recorded. Tzlofchad's daughters file a claim with Moshe: In the absence of a brother, they request their late father's portion in the Land. Moshe asks G-d for the ruling, and G-d tells Moshe that their claim is just. The Torah teaches the laws and priorities which determine the order of inheritance. G-d tells Moshe that he will ascend a mountain and view the Land that the Jewish People will soon enter, although Moshe himself will not enter. Moshe asks G-d to designate the subsequent leader, and G-d selects Yehoshua bin Nun. Moshe ordains Yehoshua as his successor in the presence of the entire nation. The Parsha concludes with special teachings of the service in the Beit Hamikdash.

INSIGHTS

Knowing What You Don't Know "The daughters of Tzelafchad..." (27:1)

I once asked my Rabbi an important and difficult personal question. When I finished the question, he looked at me with a puzzled look and said "What makes you think that I could answer such a question? You must go to Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach and ask him. This is a question that I am not qualified to answer."

A similar occurrence took place when someone I know took their son to a leading Israeli cardiologist with a rare heart complaint. He took one look at the child and told them that the problem was out of his league and they would have to take the child to The Boston Children's Hospital. Nothing inspires confidence more than someone saying they don't know. Because if they know what they don't know, then what they know - they know.

In this week's Torah portion, Tzelafchad passes away and leaves five daughters. They are all righteous, intelligent and learned. So much so that at the age of forty, none of them can find a spouse that is her intellectual equal.

When they hear Moshe say that Eretz Yisrael is to be divided according to the number of male children in the family, they realize that, under this

ruling, their father's name will be forgotten. They decide that they themselves will claim their father's inheritance so that his name will be perpetuated.

Moshe had instituted a system whereby there were judges appointed over ten people, judges over fifty, judges over a hundred, and judges over a thousand people.

The daughters approach the judges over ten people with their claim. The judges realize that this is an unprecedented case and immediately refer the daughters to the judges appointed over fifty. They too refer the case to those above them, and they in turn to the judges over a thousand people. These judges tell the daughters that only Moshe is qualified to address their claim.

Although reluctant to appear in public, they overcome their natural modesty and when Moshe starts to explain the laws of Yibum (Levirate Marriage), they enter the court and seek to present their claim.

They present their case in a clear and forceful fashion; however Moshe replies that according to Torah Law only the males can inherit. The daughters reply using the exact same law of Yibum that Moshe himself was in the middle of explicating, that if, as women, they are not considered to be their father's heirs, then their mother should marry one of the late father's brothers as mandated by the law of Yibum. For Yibum requires that when a man dies without issue, one of his brothers should marry his widow.

Moshe replies, "Once there are daughters, Yibum does not apply, and she is forbidden to marry one of her late husband's brothers."

"Moshe, our teacher," reply the daughters, "How can that be logical? If we are considered our father's progeny as far as the law of Yibum is concerned, why may we not be considered his heirs in regard to inheriting his portion in the Land?"

Seeing that their logic is impeccable, Moshe then turns to the Almighty and asks Him to confirm the claim of the daughters of Tzelafchad.

Why did Moshe rather than acknowledge the truth of their argument, defer his judgment to that of G-d? G-d taught Moshe all of the Torah, surely Moshe knew that their claim was a just one?

In truth, Moshe knew the correct ruling, but when he heard that every court from the judges of ten upward had deferred their judgment in favor of a higher authority, he too wanted to defer his judgment to the Ultimate Higher Authority.

Moshe wanted to teach every judge throughout the generations that, when necessary, one should never hesitate to consult a higher authority.

- Source: The Midrash

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