



Ohr Yerushalayim News

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News This Week

Start Your SEDER Preparations Early

Join the Rov's Gemoro Shiur which commences the last Perek of Pesochim **בס"ד** this Wednesday at 8.20pm in the Beis HaMedrash.

Rov's Shabbos Shiur

The Rov's Shiur on Shabbos afternoon will be on Halachos relevant to holidays such as Kashering holiday homes etc.

Who Is Worthy of A Miracle? Rabbi Yosef Kalatsky (Torah.org)

The Torah tells us that Zimri, the Prince of the Tribe of Shimon, publicly desecrated G'd's Name by cohabiting with Cozbi, a Midianite Princess. Pinchas acted zealously to avenge G'd's Honor by killing Zimri and Cozbi. He pierced them both with a spear while they were engaged in their disgraceful sexual act. The Torah states, "Pinchas, son of Elazar, son of Aaron the Kohen, turned back My (G'd) wrath from upon the Children of Israel, when he zealously avenged Me among them, so I did not consume the Children of Israel with My vengeance." Rashi explains that since Pinchas had expended his wrath upon the desecrators of G'd through his zealotry, G'd did not need to expend His Wrath to destroy the Jewish people. It was only because Pinchas had acted zealously as a result of internalizing the unconscionable desecration of G'd's Name that He spared the Jewish people. Because of his selfless dedication for G'd he acted as he had done. The Midrash tells us that Pinchas was only able to succeed in his zealotry because of the many miracles that G'd had performed on his behalf.

The Torah states when Bilaam went to curse the Jewish people, "Bilaam arose in the morning and saddled his donkey..." Rashi cites Chazal who state, "From here we learn, hate disrupts protocol." Although Bilaam was a self-centered and egotistical person with an insatiable desire for material and honor, he nevertheless saddled his own donkey. One would think that a man of Bilaam's demeanor and temperament would not allow himself to act so disgracefully to saddle his own donkey, which was an act that was befitting for one of his servants. However, because he was driven by rabid hatred for the Jewish people, he chose to demean himself without hesitation.

The Torah states regarding Avraham, our Patriarch, "Avraham arose in the morning and saddled his donkey..." Despite the fact that Avraham was world-renowned (father of all nations) and possessed great wealth, he personally saddled his own donkey to take his most beloved only son to be brought as a sacrifice. Avraham, although he was 137 years old and could have had one of his servants saddle his donkey for his journey, he chose to do it himself based on the principle, "Love disrupts protocol."

When one loves or hates on an all-consuming level, all that exists at that moment for that individual is to achieve the objective of his love or hate. When Avraham was told by G'd to bring his son Yitzchak as a sacrifice, despite his special love for his son who was born to him in his old age of 100 years, he acted with zeal to selflessly carry out the Will of G'd. Because of Avraham's all-consuming love for G'd, he as an individual was negated. All that existed for Avraham

was the execution of G'd's Will. Therefore, the inappropriateness of Avraham saddling his own donkey was not an issue. Identically, Bilaam, because of his all-consuming hatred for the Jewish people, was negated as a person despite his pompous and self-absorbed personality. At that moment, all that existed was the objective to annihilate the Jewish people through his curse. There was no Bilaam at that moment.

Pinchas at that moment possessed an unequalled level of love for G'd. He was thus driven to act as a zealot to avenge G'd's honor. If he would have considered for a moment the impossibility of his task to succeed, he would have not attempted to take the initiative. It was only because he was all-consumed with his love for G'd that he could not tolerate the desecration of His Name. Thus, he acted as a zealot without thinking of the consequences of his behavior. Because of his all-consuming love for G'd, He performed on his behalf multiple miracles so that he should succeed in his objective to reinstate G'd's Glory.

The Gemara in Tractate Berachos tells us that there was a time when it had not rained over an extended period of time. The Rabbis had instituted all the measures (fasting and supplicating G'd) to evoke G'd's Mercy to bring about rain and it did not happen. The Gemara asks why in the time of Reb Yehudah, although they were not proficient in all six sections of the Talmud, when he would remove only one of his shoes in preparation for prayer, it was a sufficient initiative to cause it to rain? However, in our time, when we are proficient in all six sections of the Talmud, despite taking all of the initiatives it does not rain. What was so special about Reb Yehudah? The Gemara explains that it was because "he was willing to sacrifice himself for the sanctification of G'd's Name." The incident through which Reb Yehudah demonstrated his self-sacrifice for the sake of G'd's Name was regarding a woman, who had dressed in an immodest manner. He had believed that she was a Jewish woman. When Reb Yehudah noticed her, he reacted to her lack of modesty. He had considered her attire to be unacceptable for a Jewish woman. His reaction to her

The Week Ahead

שבת פרשת פינחס

Mincha	7.30pm
Candle Lighting	7.48pm-7.55pm
Seder HaLimud	8.40am
Shacharis	9.00am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.06am
1st Mincha	2.00pm
Ovos uBonim	5.00pm
2nd Mincha	6.00pm
3rd Mincha	9.36pm
Rov's Shiur	Following
Maariv & Motzei Shabbos	10.41pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am
Mon / Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tue / Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	7.45pm
Late Maariv	10.30pm

immodesty did not take into account the dire consequences of his behavior because at that moment G'd's Honor was at stake. He had totally negated himself for G'd's Glory. Therefore, when he would take the slightest initiative to bring about rain, G'd would perform a miracle on his behalf. If one negates himself because of his love for G'd and does not consider himself or his needs, G'd will provide for him, despite the fact that the natural order must be superseded.

Finding Ourselves – It's The Rage

Rabbi Eliyahu Hoffmann (Torah.org)

And Hashem spoke to Moshe, saying, "Pinchas, son of Elazar, son of Aaron the Kohen removed My anger from the Children of Israel, when he zealously avenged My wrath from upon the Children of Israel, so that I did not consume the Children of Israel in My wrath." (25:10-11) Why does Torah choose to trace the ancestry of Pinchas at this point? Rashi quotes a Midrash (see Tanchuma 1; Sanhedrin 82b):

Because the [men of] the tribes were humiliating him, saying, "Have you seen this son of Puti, whose mother's-father fattened calves for idol-worship, and he comes along and kills a Jewish tribal prince?! Therefore Scripture comes and traces his ancestry to Aaron."

They called Pinchas "ben Puti" in reference to the fact that he was a maternal grandson of Yisro, who, before meeting Moshe, had been a priest in the service of idolatry. Yisro had seven names, one of which was Putiel – Puti for short. This, the tribes were quick to point out, was because he had fattened (pitem in Hebrew) animals to sacrifice to idolatry. By evoking this ancestral anomaly, they seemingly hoped to cast aspersions on Pinchas' zealously.

The question is, how? Regardless of Pinchas' lineage, it is hard to deny that what he had done here could be seen as nothing short of praiseworthy. A "tribal prince" had had the audacity to perform the gravest of sins (idol worship and gilui arayos (adultery) – see above 25:6-8) publicly, in the holiest of places (inside the Mishkan/Tabernacle). Were his actions befitting of a prince? Did he not deserve to die? What difference did it make at this juncture whom Pinchas' zeidys were?

Also, Rashi (Shemos/Exodus 6:25) quotes the Gemara (Bava Basra 109b) that Pinchas' grandfather was called Putiel after two of his ancestors, Yisro who had fattened calves for avodah zara (idolatry), and Yosef, who had made a mockery (pitpet) of his yetzer hara (his "evil side") by resisting the adulterous overtures of Potiphar's wife (see Bereishis/Genesis 39:10-15). So even by invoking this name, they were associating Pinchas not only with Yisro, who had at one time served idols, but also the holy zeide Yosef ha-tzaddik. Who's to say which inference would in fact dominate, especially considering the undeniably meritorious nature of the deed?

Find someone you truly hate, it is said, and you will have found a little bit of yourself. Someone who by nature is inclined towards arrogance will be absolutely revolted by a peer's vanity. (Have you ever seen the spectacle of two really arrogant people that have crossed paths? They inevitably attempt to outdo one another in demonstrating each other's vanity, completely failing to see how arrogant they are being by doing so.) Even one who has overcome the baser aspects of his nature (or thinks so) will still become annoyed when seeing others who have not.

One who is naturally ungreedy and gladly makes do with a bare minimum has a hard time understanding the greed and selfishness of others, but it will not get him angry. If anything, he feels pity when observing how low man can stoop when driven by base desires he fails to truly comprehend. But a greedy man – or even a person who is naturally greedy, yet has battled with this greed and to some extent overcome it – might find himself incensed when he sees the greed of others. It awakens within the deepest feelings of (self?) loathing and contempt.

This psychological curiosity can, in my opinion, help understand the controversial phenomenon (particularly in Israel) of the irreligious Jew's animosity towards his religious brethren, and conversely the lack of hatred/anger flowing in the opposite direction. (Perhaps this runs contrary to popular belief, but those who live among orthodox

Jews know that this is the case.) Within the soul of every Jew, whether they admit it (to themselves) or not, a Jewish flame burns. When a Jew sees others who have done something with that flame, where they have not, it awakens within him the strongest of emotions. He feels, yet fails to admit, a deep connection to what he sees. He must either change, or condemn. Since changing is hard, sadly the latter choice is the one most often chosen. The observant Jew, conversely, has no burning desire (one hopes) to abandon his religion, and is not incensed by the irreverence of others, but if anything feels the desire to reach out.

A hasidic Jew once stood on a bus, dressed as usual in the traditional hasidic garb – long coat, fur hat, tzitzis, etc. Standing next to a secular Jew, he found himself the subject of an abusive tirade. "Where do you think you are – in Europe? This is America! You dress like the alte-Zeides! You probably can't even speak the language properly. How big is your family? You probably take money from the government. And your wife? She's probably at home slaving in sub-poverty! You refuse to expose your children to our beautiful North-American culture, imprisoning them instead both intellectually and physically – assuming you don't abuse them as well..."

Eventually, he tired of the abuse and turned towards his assailant. "I'm sorry, were you talking to me? You must have mistaken me for Jewish – I'm Amish."

"Oh, I'm so sorry. I have the greatest respect for you people. Your traditions, your integrity, your family values – they're fascinating!"

Whether this story ever took place or not – it could have. As long as it doesn't awaken uncomfortable feelings, it's easy to remain civil. Rage is only ignited by something with which we associate and feel a deep connection.

Perhaps this was the basis of the detractors' criticism: Pinchas had undeniably done a daring and courageous deed, but what gave him the initiative to do so amidst the silence of so many others? "Take a look," they said, "at his Zeidys." On the one side, Yisro, who had served avodah zara. Evidently, they contended, Pinchas must have inherited some pent-up feelings towards idolatry. This is why he was so annoyed when he saw that others had given in to that desire – it was a mirror of himself. On the other side, he was a descendent of Yosef, who had indeed avoided sinning with Potiphar's wife, yet according to Chazal (the Sages), had not done so with ease. Yosef was almost overcome with the desire to sin, and according to some (see Sotah 36b), had actually come that day to commit adultery, but recoiled at the last moment. Pinchas, they argued, must have inherited this latent yearning to sin, which is why he was so intensely enraged when seeing Zimri sinning with Kozbi. Yes he did the right thing, but what does all this anger and rage say about Pinchas' personality?

Therefore, says Rashi, Scripture comes and traces his lineage back to Aaron. It's as if to say the vengeful act of Pinchas was pure and altruistic in its intent. It was not the result of some dormant self-loathing, but was truly a kin'as Hashem – a vengeance borne purely from Pinchas' inability to stand by and witness the desecration of Hashem's name. While we too should strive, like Pinchas, to act with the purest of intentions, the battle against human nature is an uphill one. If we at least recognize that when we are most aroused to anger, it may be a sign of some unaddressed issues within, we will have taken a firm step towards self-understanding and analysis, and tikkun ha-middos.

Make Your Presence Known

Rabbi Chaim Flom (Torah.org)

Whenever my kids get wild, I always try to imagine what your daughter would do. They never fight when she's here."

When Aharon died at Hor Hahar and Bnai Yisrael lost the "protective clouds", they were attacked by Canaan (Bimidbar 20:28-21:1). Rashi in our Parsha (Bimidbar 26:13) tells us that, based on Divorim 10:6, many Jews ran away and that created a civil war in Moserah. The Torah states that Aharon died there in Moserah. Rav Shimon Schwab zt"l, explains that since Aharon was a great peace-maker, there had never been a civil war before. Therefore, although he died in Hor Hahar, his death was actually "felt" in Moserah.

What type of atmosphere do you create??