



# Ohr Yerushalayim News

פינחס - י"ט תמוז תשפ"ו - 4th July 2026 - Volume 19 - Issue 1

## News This Week

### Kiddush

There will be a Kiddush following Davening, sponsored by Jonny Berkovitz in honour of the Yahrzeit of his mother this week

### Chaim Aruchim

We wish Chaim Aruchim to the following who have Yahrzeit this week:

- Shabbos, 19th Tammuz - Charles Khan for his brother
- Thurs, 24th Tammuz - Jonny Berkovitz for his mother

### Loyal Leadership

**Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky (Torah.org)**

At the end of Parshas Pinchos, Hashem tell Moshe Rabbeinu about the forthcoming end of his life, and the passing of the leadership to the next generation. Moshe, concerned about the future of his people, asks a request, "Hashem should choose a leader who will go and come in front of them, (the Jewish Nation) and the congregation of Israel should not be like a flock that does not have to them a shepherd."

Seemingly, Moshe Rabbeinu uses a few extra words. Instead of simply saying that the Jews should not be like "a flock without a shepherd," he adds the words "asher ein lahem roeh" that does not have to them a shepherd." Why the extra words?

Rabbi Paysach Krohn, in his book, "Around the Maggid's Table" (Artscroll, 1989) tells the following story. At the outbreak of World War One, A young man came to the great Gaon and leader of European Jewery, Rav Chaim Ozer Grodzinsky for a blessing not to be inducted into the Russian army. The hazards of war wee terrifying, and the army usually kept soldiers in their ranks for decades. After conversing with the teen for a bit, the Rav asked, "Do you wear tzitzis." "No." came the reply.

"Do your put on tefillin every day."

"No."

"Do you observe the Shabbos." The boy, looking down, embarrassed, and in a whisper he answered again, "No."

Silence permeated the room and the boy stood in fear of what the holy tzaddik would tell him. Instead, after a few moments, Rav Grodzinsky looked up at him, and in a calming, loving voice, he said, "I bless you that the Soviet authorities should be just as disappointed in you as I am."

Only a few weeks later, the boy came back to the Rav and told him, "Rebbe, your bracha worked! I was rejected by the Soviet army!" He them lifted his shirt to show the Rav his tzitzis. Needless to say, he returned to the path of observance.

My grandfather, Rav Binyamin Kamenetzky zt"l would explain based upon a passage in the Sefer Kehilos Yitzchok. Rav Jacob Joseph, a great orator, was appointed as the maggid of the city of Vilna in 1883, five years before coming to the United States to assume the position of chief Rabbi of the city of New York. In his inaugural address, he answered the question as follows.

One who tends to his own sheep does not care about the sheep per se, rather he worries about his bottom line. His concern for an injured sheep would be more for his bottom line than for the welfare of is animal.

But one who is watching sheep for someone else, doesn't care much about the bottom line. The sheep are not his, and he has no vested interest in them. His tending to the sheep is more idealistic, as he is concerned about the actual health and well-being of the sheep.

The same, explained Rav Joseph, is with leaders of people. There are many nations in the world – each one with a different leader. Some do their job well, but they ultimately care about their bottom line. The individual needs of the many citizens don't concern that all that much – as long as their position is secure and they win the next election.

Moshe wasn't worried that the Jews would be left without someone taking charge. He knew that knew that there will be a leader. He wanted to ensure that the leader was a leader "of them." The new leader had to take into account the plight of every single Jew, each personal situation, and every individual's struggles and challenges. He wanted the leader to celebrate with them and revel with joy in their accomplishments. Therefore, he implored Hashem, "Let the Jews not be like a flock that does not have to them a leader." Moshe insisted that the leader be a leader "for them." Moshe, the ultimate leader of the Jewish Nation, knew to instill this important trait in the future of our leaders for generations to come.

### The Double Vov

**Rabbi Yissocher Frand (Torah.org)**

Parshas Pinchas begins with the conclusion of the incident that occurred at the end of Parshas Balak: "Kanaim pog'im bo." In an act of zealous jealousy for Hashem, Pinchas simultaneously killed both a nasi (Jewish tribal leader) and a Midianite princess while they were publicly engaged in an act of sexual immorality.

In the beginning of this week's parsha, Hashem grants Pinchas "es Brisi shalom" (My covenant of peace) as a reward for his action. The letter "vov" (the sixth letter of the Hebrew alphabet) in the word shalom is a vov k'tiah (split), as if there are two vovs, one on top of the other. What is the symbolism behind this unique vov?

Throughout the description of creation, the Torah concludes each day with the comment, "And Hashemsaw that it was good." Chazal note, however, that at the conclusion of the second day of creation, when Hashem split the waters (Genesis 1:6) – between the waters above and below the rakhia (firmament), the Torah omits that comment. Chazal explain that the reason for this omission is that the splitting of the waters marked the first time in history that there was machlokes (division or argument). Prior to this act, there was unity in the world. Now there was division. Regarding machlokes, we can never say, "It was good."

Chazal elaborate: If this original machlokes, which enabled establishment of the world, could not be described as "Ki tov" (it was good), then certainly regular disputes, even with the noblest of motives, cannot be described as "tov."

However, there appears to be a contradiction to this Chazal from the very same parsha in Bereishis. Hashem divided between light and darkness, but still the pasuk (verse) there immediately comments, "And Hashemsaw that it was good" (Genesis 1:18). Why was the division between light and darkness good?

Rav Shlomo Breuer resolves this contradiction with a beautiful insight: He quotes the pasuk "...Truth and peace you shall love" (Zechariah 8:19). We must love shalom (peace). However, there is something that comes before shalom, and that is emes (truth). As much as we emphasize the importance of shalom, in the final analysis, shalom is important up to a certain point. That is the point of emes. A person should not make shalom if making

## Davening Times

Mincha & Kabbolas Shabbos	7.30pm
Candle Lighting	7.55pm-8.00pm
Shacharis	7.25am / 9.15am
סוף זמן ק"ש	9.00am
Ovos uBonim	5.00pm
Mincha	6.00pm / 9.50pm
Motzei Shabbos	10.55pm
Sun	7.15am / 8.20am / 9.30am
Mon / Thurs	6.45am / 7.10am / 8.00am
Tues / Wed / Fri	6.45am / 7.20am / 8.00am
Mincha & Maariv	7.45pm
Late Maariv	10.45pm

shalom is going to compromise the emes, by causing him to throw out principles and values that he knows to be emes.

The Mishna (Uktzin 3:12) says, "Hashem did not find any vessel to hold blessing, other than the vessel of peace." Shalom is the receptacle. It is the kli (vessel) that holds everything. However, a person sometimes needs to look and ask himself, "What am I left holding?" If I compromise everything in the name of shalom, then what is this kli of shalom left holding? It is holding nothing. Yes, shalom, is very important but remember the sequence of the pasuk: Emes and shalom you shall love.

Now we can understand the difference between the separation of "the waters and the waters" (above and below the rakiah) and the separation of "light and darkness." In the case of the rakiah, there was no real difference between the waters above and the waters below. The division was merely for the sake of division. While the division was necessary for the welfare of the world, inherently, it had no purpose. Therefore, the pasuk does not say "Ki tov." However, separation between light and darkness – between something that represents good and something that represents bad, between something that is right and something that is wrong, that is a division about which we can indeed say "Ki tov."

Pinchas did not seek out compromise with Zimri and Kozbi in the name of shalom. Pinchas knew that there is a point at which a person must draw the line and say "Here, and no further!" That is an example of division "between light and darkness."

Now we can understand why the vov of shalom is split: Yes, shalom is important, but there are two kinds of shalom. At times, the vov is a "vov hachibur" – a vov that connects (the vov used as a conjunctive "and"), but at other times, the vov is used for distinction, as a letter that divides, a vov of machlokes, of division.

That is why the vov of shalom is split. When pursuing the cause of shalom, a person must remember that there are two vovs. Sometimes the "vov hachibur" is appropriate and it is worthwhile to compromise. However, sometimes the vov of chiluk – of separation – is appropriate. Sometimes in the name of shalom, a person must say "No, machlokes is better than shalom at any price."

The Chasam Sofer takes note of the fact that the language of the Mishna (Avos 1:12) is "Loving shalom and rodef (pursuing) shalom." Usually, the connotation of the word rodef means one who pursues (for the sake of harming). The Chasam Sofer notes that sometimes, in the name of shalom, we must be a rodef (pursuer of) shalom. When Pinchas was trying to kill Zimri, he was indeed a rodef, but sometimes that is in fact necessary, in the name of shalom.

## Glass House Real Estate

Rabbi Yisroel Ciner (Torah.org)

This week we read the parsha of Pinchas. Bil'am, upon seeing that he was unable to harm Bnei Yisroel (the Children of Israel) through cursing, suggested a different option to Moav. Bil'am knew that Hashem despises immorality – it causes Him to distance Himself from Bnei Yisroel. He told Moav to send their daughters to Bnei Yisroel to try to seduce them. The nation of Midian joined Moav and sent their own daughters to also try to seduce Bnei Yisroel. The successful implementation of this advice caused a heavenly plague which left twenty four thousand of Bnei Yisroel dead.

"Pinchas ben Elazar...haishiv es chamasi... v'lo chillisi es Bnei Yisroel (Pinchas, the son of Elazar, the son of Aharon the Kohen turned away My anger... and I didn't destroy Bnei Yisroel) [25:11]."

Pinchas had acted courageously and zealously to stop the immorality that was going on around him. This caused the cessation of the plague. Hashem therefore rewarded him with Kehunah – priesthood.

"And Hashem spoke to Moshe saying: Harass the Midianites and kill them [25:17]", to avenge that which they did to you.

Why was Moshe commanded to avenge Midian and not to avenge Moav? Rashi [31:2] explains that the Moavites had a legitimate fear – Bnei Yisroel would be traveling right through their land. Midian, however, involved themselves in a battle that wasn't theirs. The Bnei Yisroel wouldn't have been traveling through their land and they had nothing to fear. Moshe was, therefore, commanded to battle against them.

"Vayishlach o'som Moshe... v'es Pinchas ben Elazar (And Moshe sent them... and Pinchas, the son of Elazar) [31:6]", to wage battle against Midian.

The Tosafos ask: 'If Hashem commanded Moshe to avenge, how could Moshe shun this responsibility and send Pinchas?'

He offers an amazing explanation: 'Since Moshe had spent many years in Midian when he had fled from Paroah, he felt it was improper for him to personally wage a war against a nation that had helped him. As the expression goes: Don't throw earth into a well that you drank from.'

The Ohr Yahel pursues this point further. Hashem told Moshe to avenge the Midianites! How could Moshe disobey Hashem's command, even if Midian had helped him?!

He explains that Moshe understood that, since he had grown up in

Midian and had benefited while there, Hashem's command to avenge Midian couldn't have been for him personally to do it. Moshe had been commanded on Sinai: "V'ha'lachta bid'ra'chav", to follow in the ways of Hashem! His personally avenging Midian would be acting contrary to the ways of Hashem! Don't throw earth into a well that you drank from...

It was clear to Moshe that the way to fulfill the command of Hashem was to have Midian avenged through someone else. Through someone who didn't owe them a debt of gratitude. He sent Pinchas. Pinchas who had begun the mitzvah of defeating Midian was summoned to complete that task.

This midah (attribute) of 'hakaras ha'tov' – recognizing and appreciating what others have done for you and giving back in return – is a midah of Hashem. Everything in this world is accounted for. Sometimes we get a glimpse of that accounting and other times we blindly miss or ignore it. But the account is always settled...

Rav Paysach Krohn (In the Footsteps of the Maggid) tells of Rav Yosef Reichner and his wife, Faigela, who lived with their eleven children in Pressburg, Hungary in the mid-1800's. Eight of the children were boys and were privileged to have been taught by an exceptional Rebbe, Rabbi Lazer HaKohen Katz, known as the tzadik of Pressburg. His impact on the boys was extraordinary and they endeavored to emulate him and his ways.

Years went by and Rav Lazer became weak and frail. Unable to continue teaching, he spent his days alone in his apartment, subsisting on a meager stipend given to him by a chessed (charitable) organization.

Mrs. Reichner, however, didn't forget the wonderful impact that Rav Lazer had on her sons. Every day she'd send a package of food for lunch to Rav Lazer's small apartment on a street known as Z'idvoska Ulitza (Jewish Street). This package also contained enough for supper. Additionally, before every Yom Tov (holiday) she would place some money in the package allowing Rav Lazer to purchase something extra for the holiday. This went on for more than twenty years!

Shortly after Pressburg became part of Czechoslovakia in 1925, Rav Lazer passed away. A few years later, Rav Yosef Reichner and his wife, Faigela, also passed away.

A generation later, on the night after Yom Kippur, 1944, the Nazis were furiously raiding every Jewish house in Pressburg, searching for Jews to deport to the concentration camps. All Jews that were found, regardless of the passports they carried, were dragged off to meet their bitter fate.

Two Nazis burst into the home of Ashi Reichner, one of Mrs. Faigela Reichner's eight sons. As they ordered him and his wife outside, Ashi turned to them.

"You should be ashamed of yourselves disturbing elderly people in their homes", he said with dignity. "What good can an old man like me be in a labor camp?!"

"Out, both of you", barked the Nazi.

Outside, the Nazis suddenly disappeared. Ashi and his wife, Miriam, could not figure out where they had gone but they knew that they must take advantage of this unexpected chance for freedom. He said that Jews were being hidden in a bunker somewhere on the left side of the city. She argued that there was a safer place on the right side of the city. Terrified, they argued in which direction they should run.

Ashi, in keeping with the Talmudic teaching that a woman is imbued with an extra sense of insight, listened to his wife. They ran as fast as they could to the right side of the city to the building where she had heard that the Jews had found shelter.

They came to Z'idvoska Ulitza, ran up to the second floor of the building and knocked violently on the door. A gentile woman, known as Aunt Anna, recognized them as Jews and ushered them in. This noble woman risked her life daily for eight months until the Russians came and liberated Czechoslovakia. She would purchase enough food from the grocer to sustain all of the people she was hiding in the apartment. She'd then cover the food with either wool or coal so as not to arouse the suspicion of the Nazis she'd pass in the street.

The Reichners were introduced to the other twelve people hiding in two rooms behind a large closet. Remarkably, they found amongst them other Reichner family members: their daughter, son-in-law and grandchild who had also secretly made their way there.

How did the Reichners merit to have so many family members saved in this one apartment?

This apartment, many years before, had belonged to Rav Lazer... The same apartment to which Mrs. Reichner had sent so many care packages to keep the tzadik of Pressburg alive was now sheltering her children, grandchildren and great-grandchild.

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