

SHABBAT PARSHAT PINCHAS · 16 TAMMUZ 5765 · JULY 23, 2005 · VOL. 12 NO. 42

PARSHA INSIGHTS

ONLY ONE JOB

"Pinchas, the son of Elazar, the son of Aharon, the Kohen..." (25:11)

Atrue story. A number of years ago a unique manuscript came to light in the Cairo Museum of Antiquities. The manuscript was a previously unknown work by one of the *Rishonim* (earlier commentators). Its existence came to the attention of a certain Jew whom we shall call Reb Shalom. Reb Shalom made it his business to track down and publish such manuscripts.

Reb Shalom made overtures to the Egyptians. They were unresponsive. Undeterred, Reb Shalom went to work. He galvanized every source of pressure he could bring to bear. He lobbied Senators in Washington, Members of Parliament in Westminster. Eventually, the Egyptians were prepared to listen. To the Jewish People, the manuscript was priceless. To the Egyptians it was worth three-quarters of a million dollars.

Three-quarters of a million dollars is not a paltry sum by anyone's estimation. Reb Shalom did not flinch, and in due course the money was paid and the manuscript delivered. With great eagerness Reb Shalom and his team of experts gathered around as the manuscript was opened. Silence fell upon the room as, for the first time in centuries, the holy words of the manuscript greeted the eyes of those who truly knew their meaning and significance. And then, one of Reb Shalom's colleagues leaned forward to examine a certain line, and in so doing his coat brushed against a large Styrofoam cup which held a full cup of hot coffee. The material of the coat barely grazed the cup, but it was enough. The entire contents of the cup spilled over the delicate manuscript. Within seconds the entire manuscript became a sodden un-decipherable mess. The man who had spilled the coffee slumped into his chair with his head

between his hands. The room filled with a deafening silence. After a few moments Reb Shalom walked over to the man, put his hand on his shoulder and said:

"Don't worry. We'll get you another cup of coffee."

A Jew only has one job in life – to do the will of G-d. Up until the moment that the coffee spilled, Reb Shalom's job was to publish the manuscript. After it spilled his job was to not get angry. The job doesn't change, only the context.

When people would ask Reb Shalom how the work on the manuscript was coming along, he would reply that it was going to be a very long job. In fact, the story of what happened to the manuscript didn't emerge until many years later, when, after Reb Shalom's death, the person who had spilled the coffee revealed the fate of the manuscript.

At the end of last week's Torah Portion, Pinchas takes a spear in his hand and slays Salu, a prince of the tribe of Shimon, together with a Midianite princess called Kozbi. At the beginning of this week's *parsha*, the Torah refers to Pinchas as "the son of Elazar, the son of Aharon the Kohen." The Torah specifically links Pinchas to Aharon, his grandfather. The job of Aharon and of every kohen is to create *shalom* — "peace" — between the Jewish People and G-d. Actually *shalom* is not adequately translated by the word peace. *Shalom* means a state of wholeness, of completion. Sometimes we create *shalom* through gentle acts of kindness and mercy, and sometimes *shalom* can only come, as in this case, through intransigence and apparent cruelty. However, the common denominator is that our entire job in life is to do the will of G-d, whether that may be through gentleness or zealotry — or by offering another cup of coffee.

• Adapted from a story told by Rabbi Zvi Myer Zylberberg as heard from Rabbi Reuven Levitt

PARSHA 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*.

ISRAEL Forever

AVOID RELIVING HISTORY

Those who refuse to learn from history, it has been said, are condemned to relive it. As we stand on the threshold of the "three weeks of mourning" beginning with the Fast of the 17th of Tammuz and culminating with the Fast of the 9th of Av, it is important for us to reflect on the significance of this sad period of the year for us today.

The purpose of the fast days recalling the destruction of Yerushalayim and the *Beit Hamikdash*, writes Rambam, is "to arouse the hearts, to open the way to repentance, and

to serve as a reminder of our evil ways and those of our ancestors, which were similar to ours now, and which brought upon them and us those tragedies."

Destruction and exile, it must always be borne in mind, are not mere historical milestones. They are the products of Jews abandoning their G-d, Who in turn abandons them. It is to be hoped that even those who do not mourn the destruction and exile which took place during these three weeks thousands of years ago will learn the lesson of how to safeguard Israel forever.

MY FACE TURNED RED a postscript to "No to Civil War"

I had mixed reactions when I took note of the number and tone of responses to our *Parshat Korach* "Israel Forever" column titled "No to Civil War".

On the one hand it was encouraging to see that so many intelligent and idealistic people read our material and care enough to criticize it when they deem it necessary.

But I must admit that my face turned red (or orange!) with shame at my carelessness in the use of certain terms which so deeply offended some of our subscribers. Please allow me to offer some explanation for my slips. The term "areas being returned to the Palestinians" is one borrowed from the media and I was guilty of imitating that slanted terminology (although I find it difficult to differentiate between Egyptians or Palestinians as the receivers of the territory).

In regard to the compliment I paid to the police and army "doing their utmost to carry out this evacuation in the most sensitive way", I was referring to the announcement made by the security forces that they would show

such concern by having women soldiers evacuate the women settlers and would have psychologists and social workers on hand to handle emotional situations. Some subscribers have pointed out that there has already been an excessive use of force against anti-disengagement demonstrators and this is indeed to be regretted and condemned. If the movement against disengagement fails, Heaven forbid, to force the government to change its mind about evacuation, it is to be hoped that there will indeed be sensitivity in implementing it.

Allow me to conclude that the hearts of all of us here at **Ohrnet** bleed for those courageous people who went to Gaza as idealistic pioneers for the government and must now suffer the loss of their homes and livelihoods. But we reiterate our call for refraining from violence which includes blocking roads in the major cities. History is filled with situations of verbal violence and not-so-peaceful demonstrations degenerating into civil war, which is something none of us wish to see in Israel forever.

PARSHA Q&A ?

1. Why was Pinchas not originally a *kohen*?
2. Why was Moav spared the fate of Midian?
3. What does the *yud* and *heh* added to the family names testify?
4. Korach and his congregation became a “sign.” What do they signify?
5. Why did Korach’s children survive?
6. Name six families in this Parsha whose names are changed.
7. Who was Yaakov’s only living granddaughter at the time of the census?
8. How many years did it take to conquer the Land? How long to divide the Land?
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?
10. What do Yocheved, Ard and Na’aman all have in common?
11. Why did the decree to die in the desert not apply to the women?
12. What trait did Tzlofchad’s daughters exhibit that their ancestor Yosef also exhibited?
13. Why does the Torah change the order of Tzlofchad’s daughters’ names?
14. Tzlofchad died for what transgression?
15. Why did Moshe use the phrase “G-d of the spirits of all flesh”?
16. Moshe “put some of his glory” upon Yehoshua. What does this mean?
17. Where were the daily offerings slaughtered?
18. Goats are brought as *musaf* sin-offerings. For what sin do they atone?
19. Why is Shavuot called *Yom Habikkurim*?
20. What do the 70 bulls offered on Succot symbolize?

PARSHA Q&A!

Answers to this Week’s Questions!

All references are to the verses and Rashi’s commentary unless otherwise stated.

1. 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. 25:18 - For the sake of Ruth, a future descendant of Moav.
3. 26:5 - That the families were truly children of their tribe.
4. 26:10 - That *kehuna* was given forever to Aharon and his sons, and that no one should ever dispute this.
5. 26:11 - Because they repented.
6. 26:13,16,24,38,39,42 - Zerach, Ozni, Yashuv, Achiram, Shufam, Shucham.
7. 26:46 - Serach bat Asher
8. 26:53 - Seven years. Seven years.
9. 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. 26:24,56 - They came down to Mitzrayim in their mothers’ wombs.

11. 26:64 - In the incident of the *meraglim*, only the men wished to return to Egypt. The women wanted to enter *Eretz Yisrael*.
12. 27:1 - Love for *Eretz Yisrael*.
13. 27:1 - To teach that they were equal in greatness.
14. 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. 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. 27:20 - That Yehoshua’s face beamed like the moon.
17. 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. 28:15 - For unnoticed ritual impurity of the Sanctuary or its vessels.
19. 28:26 - The Shavuot double-bread offering was the first wheat-offering made from the new crop.
20. 29:18 - The seventy nations.

A digest of the topics covered in the seven weekly pages of the Talmud studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle along with an insight from them

TALMUDigest

SHABBAT 79 - 85

- Carrying leather and parchment on Shabbat
- On what are *tefillin* and *mezuzot* written
- Piecemeal carrying of ink or food
- Cosmetics, depilatories and tales of beauty treatments
- Building materials, bones and stone
- Hygienic advice relating to waste relief
- Stones as toilet cleaners
- Contaminating spiritual impurity of idols
- Pocket-sized idols
- The status of a boat in regard to spiritual impurity
- Planting to avoid forbidden mixture of crops

AGRICULTURE AND HISTORY

Do not infringe on the boundary of your neighbor." (*Devarim* 19:14) Although the literal meaning of the passage is a prohibition against stealing property, it is applied by Rabbi Chiya bar Abba in the

name of Rabbi Yochanan to the boundary that must be established in order to avoid the mixture of crops known as *kilayim*.

This application is based on the succeeding words of this passage which speak of "the boundaries set by the original occupants." The original occupants are identified by the Sages as those nations who cultivated *Eretz Yisrael* before it was settled by the Israelites. They were expert agriculturists who could determine, on the basis of smelling or tasting the earth, which crops were best suited for any particular plot of land. Their expertise enabled them to also calculate how far each plant's nourishment from the earth extended.

It was that expertise, hinted at in a passage of the Torah which discusses those nations (*Bereishet* 36:20), which serves as a basis for the scientific knowledge of the Sages which they applied to ruling how much of a separation must be made between two different crops in order to avoid the prohibition regarding *kilayim*.

• *Shabbat 85a*

WHAT THE Sages SAY

"One should never withhold himself from the *Beit Midrash* hall of study nor should he be without Torah study even at the time of death. This is hinted at in the words of the Torah: 'This is the Torah, should a man die in a dwelling' (*Bamidbar* 19:14), which connects Torah study with departure from the world."

• *Shabbat 83b*

LOVE OF THE LAND - THE LEGENDS

Selections from classical Torah sources which express the special relationship between the People of Israel and *Eretz Yisrael*

THE SPECIAL SIYUM

The great celebration which surrounded the *Siyum HaShas* of the Daf Yomi cycle a few months ago recalled a very special *Siyum HaShas* made by the rav of Yerushalayim a couple of generations ago.

Rabbi Reuven Zelig Bengis was renowned not only for his vast Torah knowledge but also for using every available moment that was free from his communal duties to study Torah. He had made many *siyumim* on the entire Talmud so it struck his



admirers as unusual that he was so excited about a particular *siyum* he made in his late years.

Rabbi Bengis explained that this was a special *siyum* because it was made possible by the learning he did over all the years while waiting for a wedding or other event to begin. He used each of those precious minutes to learn another page of *gemara* until he finally completed the entire Talmud from those fragments of time.

CONFUSED CANARY

From: Devorah Hagar

Dear Rabbi,

My last name is Hagar. I am buying a bird and have named him Ishmael. Ishmael ben Hagar. Though I am Jewish, Sephardic, (my real father is an Arab-American), I figured the bird could be Muslim. Can a Jew own and care for a Muslim bird? I'm not joking. I bought him the Mosque-style birdcage sold at Petco and decorated it in Mediterranean style. I know that bird food would have to be different because I cannot have chametz in MY possession during Pesach. But can a Jew owe and care for a pet non-Jewish style? Non-kosher? I know that he has to be fed before I feed myself. During Ramadan, I was planning on feeding him only after sun-down. After reading the article Kosher Keeping Pets, I still don't understand why it first says that a pet does not have to keep kosher, then it says that we can't feed pets a mixture of meat and milk. Please explain.

From: Avi

Dear Rabbi,

I read the article Kosher Keeping Pets. I was wondering if the dog food was glatt kosher, can a

Jewish person partake in the eating of this highly nourishing delight, or does it just mean that there is no milk and meat in the process. Thank you.

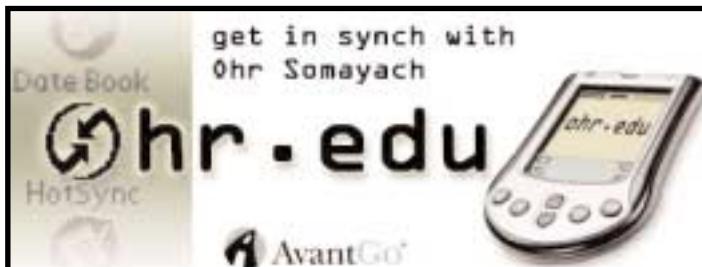
Dear Devorah and Avi,

Identity crisis issues aside, the point of the article was that pets of Jews are not "Jewish" pets. This means that while a Jew may not eat non-kosher food, he may feed most non-kosher foods to his pets.

The few exceptions are those foods that are not only non-kosher, but are also prohibited for a Jew to derive any benefit from. Since the Jewish pet owner benefits by, and enjoys keeping his pet alive through feeding it, the pet food must be something that the owner, as a Jew, is allowed to derive benefit from.

Two such exceptions of foods which are not only not kosher, but are also forbidden to derive benefit from, are mixtures of meat and milk during the entire year, and chametz during Passover. A Jew is prohibited from feeding these foods to his pets at those times not because they can't eat them, but because he can't give it to them.

Therefore, glatt kosher pet food would only ensure that the owner can feed it to his pet, but not that it's kosher for a Jew to eat. Unfortunately you'll have to stick with chopped liver and cholent. "Kosher" pet food only means with no meat and milk, or chometz on Passover.



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THE HUMAN SIDE OF THE STORY

WHY HE MISSED THE BUS

As the bus to Bnei Brak approached the young man at the Beit Shemesh stop, he put his hand in his pocket to take out the 13 shekels he had prepared for paying the fare. He was shocked to find only three shekels and decided to forgo that bus and go home to get the rest of the money.

No sooner had the bus pulled out than a neighbor pulled up in his car and asked him why he didn't get on the bus. Upon hearing his explanation he informed him that

he was driving to Bnei Brak and would be glad to give him a lift. They rode for a while behind the missed bus and suddenly saw it swerve off the road and fall into a deep gorge, an accident which resulted in injuries to many passengers.

Realizing that he had almost been on that bus the young man began to weep. He put his hand in his pocket to get a handkerchief to wipe his tears and what did he find hiding in it? The missing ten shekels!

WHAT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO?

REAL-LIFE QUESTIONS OF SOCIAL AND BUSINESS ETHICS

THE LATECOMER LOSES OUT

Question: I recently attended a *brit mila* at which everybody stood around for a long time waiting for the *mohel* to arrive. In desperation the father of the child to be circumcised asked another *mohel* who lived nearby to do the *mila*. Just as he was about to begin, the first *mohel* showed up. What is the right thing to do in such a case?

Answer: There are several variations of this situation which are discussed by the halachic authorities:

The father ordered another *mohel* because he assumed that the one he originally ordered was out of town and would not arrive on time. The original *mohel* was in fact in town and arrived on time.

In such a case the first one should do the *mila* because the father never retracted his original order. (*Rama* in *Shulchan Aruch Yoreh Deah* 264:1)

The father ordered another *mohel* because the first one

failed to arrive on time.

He did arrive after the *mila* was done and complained to the father and *mohel* about his mitzvah being taken from him.

In this case he is the victim of his own tardiness and has no claim on the father and the other *mohel*. (*Zocher Habrit*) The case you mentioned in which the late-coming *mohel* does arrive before the other *mohel* begins:

If the second *mohel* already has begun to prepare the baby for the *brit* he should be allowed to complete the *mila*. If not, it would be preferable to allow the first to do the *mila* to save him from great embarrassment and to compensate the second one with some payment or by giving him some honor such as saying the blessings following the *brit*. (Rabbi Yitzchak Zilberstein, in his "Aleinu Leshabeich" who adds that there is no need to wait more than half an hour for the first *mohel*.)

לע"ג

ר' דוד בן ר' אהרון ז"ל
ונրת לאה בת ר' טמואל ע"ה

ת.ג.צ.ב.ה.