

PARSHA PINCHAS | JULY 6 - 13 | TAMMUZ 17 - 24

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INSIDE:

- Rabbi Frand on Tzelafchad's daughters
- The Gift of Peace... and Secrets of the Ner Tamid
- The Chofetz Chaim on How to Daven



The Haftarah: Eliyahu Hanavi

The Haftara speaks of Eliyahu defending the honor of Hashem just as Pinchas defended the honor of Hashem in this week's Parasha. In fact, Chazal states that Pinchas is Eliyahu.

Eliyahu lived in the year 3000 and he was the Navi in the time of King Achav ben Amari and Aciheza ben Achav. His teacher was Achiya Hasheloni, and he battles and challenges King Achav and his wife Eizavel for bringing Avoda Zarah to the nation. King Achav rebuilt the city of Yericho and therefore the curse of Yehoshua came true; Achav lost all of his children.

Upon meeting with Eliyahu, Achav asked him can it be that the curse of the student can come true but not the curse of the master? He was referring to what Moshe Rabainu said, that if the Jewish people will violate the Torah with the sin of Avoda Zarah then Hashem will stop the Heavens from giving rain. At that point in time there was so much abundance in the land that a famine was not conceivable.

Eliyahu davened to Hashem to protect the honor of the Torah, and instantly there was a famine. Three years later Eliyahu gathers the entire nation by Mount Carmel for a showdown between himself and the Naviim of the Avodah Zarah called Ba'al. The result was that everyone did teshuva.

Eliyahu left a legacy of many miracles and did not actually pass away but went to heaven as a living person. May he return speedily and bring with him the messiah, amen.

In the haftarah, Eliyahu is victorious against the Naviim of the Ba'al and this causes Queen Eizevel to threaten his life. Eliyahu runs to Be'er Shevah towards his disciple Ovadia. As he is running in the desert he finds a tree to rest under, and depleted of food and energy, he requests from Hashem to take his soul so he can rest in peace. Exhausted from escaping those who hunt him, he felt that he was too old and no longer useful to do Hashem's work. While under the

tree a miracle appears and a second tree appears so that now he can lie down with enough shade. He has a vision, a dream, that an angel wakes him up and presents Eliyahu with freshly baked bread on hot coals, and water. The angel directs him to eat and drink so he can regain his strength for the journey ahead. After eating and drinking Eliyahu walks for 40 days and nights until he reaches Mount Sinai and the cave where Moshe Rabainu entered to receive the Torah from Hashem. Hashem speaks softly to him asking; "what are you doing here"?

Eliyahu responds I have avenged the honor of Hashem and killed the false prophets of the Ba'al. I also instigated the famine because the nation has left the way of Hashem. I am the only remaining Navi left in the nation, and they wish to kill me. I came to the holy place to daven to you that you should punish the idol worshippers and protect me.

Hashem told Eliyahu to step out of the cave and Hashem presented before him three types of the most powerful angels, in great multitudes. The first group was from wind, the second was from noise, and the third from fire. Each group was extremely powerful in their own way. However, there was a fourth group present too, and they were from the sound of silence. This referred to the attribute of kindness. Hashem said that the only way I will deal with the nation is with the attribute of chesed.

Eliyahu tries to clarify his actions by explaining that his desire was only to defend the honor of Hashem. Hashem responds that He knows the intentions of Eliyahu, nevertheless, the attribute of kindness will always prevail.

Eliyahu is instructed to return from where he came from and anoint a new king and the future leaders of the nation.

Good Shabbos,
Rabbi Aaron Lankry



FOR EARLY SHABBOS ZMANIM, REFER TO PAGE 6

LATE MAARIV MOTZEI SHABBOS EVERY 15 MINUTES!

10:00 PM - 12:00 AM
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SHABBOS ZMANIM

CANDLE LIGHTING	8:13PM
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SHKIYA	8:31PM
SHACHRIS ^{VASKIN- DAF YOMI SHIUR}	4:52AM
SHACHRIS ^{ASHKENAZ 18 MAIN}	8:00AM
SHACHRIS MAIN MINYAN ^{18 TENT}	9:15AM
SHACHRIS ^{20 FORSHAY BAIS CHABAD}	10:00AM
NEW SHACHRIS ^{18 FORSHAY}	NEW 10:15AM
PIRCHEI	2:00PM
PIRKEI AVOS PEREK VAV	
MINCHA SHALOSH SEUDOS	8:00PM
SHKIYA	8:30PM
MARRIV	9:10PM ^{18 TENT} , 9:15PM

WEEKDAY ZMANIM

Zmanim for the week of Sun Jul 9 - Shabbos Jul 15

SHACHARIS STARTS 20 MINS BEFORE NEITZ
MINCHA & MARIV STARTS 12 MINS BEFORE PLAG AND SHKIA

NEITZ	S 5:33 M 5:33 T 5:34 W 5:35 T 5:36 F 5:36 S 5:37
SHEMA - MAGEN AV.	S 8:22 M 8:23 T 8:24 W 8:24 T 8:25 F 8:25 S 8:26
SHEMA - GRA	S 9:16 M 9:17 T 9:17 W 9:18 T 9:18 F 9:18 S 9:19
SOF ZMAN TEFILA	S 10:31 M 10:31 T 10:32 W 10:32 T 10:32 F 10:33 S 10:33
CHATZOS	S 1:01 M 1:01 T 1:01 W 1:01 T 1:01 F 1:02 S 1:02
PLAG	S 6:56 M 6:56 T 6:56 W 6:55 T 6:55 F 6:55 S 6:54
SHKIA	S 8:30 M 8:30 T 8:29 W 8:29 T 8:28 F 8:28 S 8:27

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RABBI COREN

PARSHAS PINCHAS AND THE SECRET OF THE NER TAMID

Parshas Pinchas refers to the mitzva of sacrificing the Korban Tamid which was brought to the Temple twice a day every day including Shabbos. No day went by without first sacrificing the Korban Tamid in the morning and ending the day with the afternoon Tamid. What do these two sacrificed sheep represent?

In the first siman, the Mishna Brura discusses the five things that happened on the 17th of Tamuz: The breach in the wall of Yerushalayim took place; the luchos were broken by Moshe Rabeinu; a Greek General, Apostimus, burned a Sefer Torah and erected a pagan idol in the Beit HaMikdash and lastly the Korban Tamid was stopped. What is the common thread between all these events and how does it connect to the 17th of Tamuz and the start of the three weeks?

I will share with you a story that I heard personally from a friend. He was scheduled to be in court, and on the day of his hearing he visited one of the tzadikim in Israel for a bracha and some advice. The tzadik told him not to worry and to keep Shivisi Hashem in front of his eyes — especially when the judge is about to make his decision. Although the judge's facial expression was not very promising, my friend remembered what he had been told and he followed this advice — he envisioned the name of Hashem spelled out on the face of the judge and thought to himself, "Shivisi Hashem lenegdi tamid." Suddenly, without any prior warning, the judge dismissed the entire case. My friend was the only one who could possibly deduce what had taken place.

What is the secret of Shivisi Hashem? Does it apply to only great kabbalists? Or to every one of us?

Surprisingly, this Shivisi Hashem concept is in the first siman of Mishna Brura. The Chafetz Chayim wrote about this concept because he felt it was the most important conviction in Judaism, one that we must acknowledge when we wake up and keep in mind throughout the day. In the first siman emphasizes the existence of a Hashem, master of the universe and king of the world, an omnipotent Hashem who loves me and all His children and only wants what is best for us.

This is the secret of Shivisi Hashem, which focuses on placing Hashem in front of you all the time. This is not an easy concept to internalize and takes much training but it should be a life goal. The underlying principle that Shivisi Hashem represents is our unbreakable and constant connection with Hashem and as the holy books tell us, when you are connected to Hashem nothing can harm you (see Nefesh Hachayim on אין עוד מלבדו).

Now let's go back to the 17th of Tammuz and how we can use the next three weeks to bring changes to our lives. The first step should be to analyze our relationship and locate where there is a break of some sort. Just like a crack in a house calls for serious analysis in order to fix the problem before the whole structure caves in, when dealing with a relationship, and certainly a spiritual one, a person needs to find the cause of the problem and then try to find the solution to it.

So what do the five things that usher in the three weeks have in common? They all represent the rupture in our constant connection, a breach in the wall. The luchos and the sefer torah represent our covenant with Hashem; the korban Tamid was a constant korban that cleansed the Jews every day and the placing of an image represents our detachment from our creator.

I hope these weeks turn into days of joy and the appreciation of our connection with Hashem.



RABBI FRAND

TZELAFCHAD'S DAUGHTERS

Were Motivated by the Land. Not the Money

The daughters of Tzelafchad came to Moshe to ask for their deceased father's portion in the Land of Israel, since their father had died without sons to inherit his portion.

In tracing the lineage of the daughters of Tzelafchad, the Torah seems to provide redundant information. The pasuk says that they were "the daughters of Tzelafchad, son of Chefer, son of Gilead, son of Machir, son of Menashe," and then that they were "from the family of Menashe son of Yosef" [Why was it necessary to twice emphasize the fact that they descended from Menashe son of Yosef?]

Rashi asks this question, and answers that the emphasis indicates that love of Eretz Yisrael is genetic. Yosef loved the Land of Israel and insisted that his bones be returned there. This love for Eretz Yisrael ran in his family, such that his descendants (Tzelafchad's daughters) insisted that they be given their fair portion in the Land.

The wife of the Sefas Emes asked her son (the Imrei Emes) a question on this Rashi: What is the proof that the daughters of Tzelafchad loved the Land of Israel? Perhaps they were just interested in their inheritance as a monetary matter.

The Imrei Emes gave his mother a very interesting answer. There are two opinions regarding the identity of Tzelafchad. One opinion is that he was mekoshesh eitzim, the chopper of wood (Bamidbar 15). Another opinion is that he was one of the maafilim, the group who tried to force their way into Eretz Yisrael after the decree of the spies (Bamidbar 14). Either way, Tzelafchad died in Parshas Shlach, prior to the beginning of the decreed 40 years of wandering. His death occurred some 38 years prior to the events in Parshas Pinchas. If Tzelafchad's daughters were interested in their father's estate from a strictly financial perspective, why would they have waited 38 years to ask for it? Inheritance is not limited to land. What about his cattle? What about his other property?

Apparently, they were not interested in that. It was only now, when they were on the doorstep of Eretz Yisrael, that they came pressing their claim for inheritance of their father's portion. This is the demonstration of their love for the Land. They were silent regarding the cash and moveable property. However, their inheritance in the Land of Israel mattered greatly to them. They inherited this affinity to the Land from their great grandfather, Menashe, son of Yosef.



RABBI NACHUM SCHEINER
ROSH KOLLEL

MEZUZAH IN A WALK-IN CLOSET

SIZE OF THE ROOM

In order for a room to be required to have a mezuzah it must be at least 4 by 4 amos, approximately 6 by 6 feet, according to Rav Chaim Na'eh, or approximately 8 by 8 feet, according to the Chazon Ish. Even if a room is relatively small, it requires a mezuzah with a brocha as long as it meets the minimum requirement.

WALK-IN CLOSET

A walk-in closet of this size will require a mezuzah. However, the minimum amount must be the actual area of walking space. Consequently, if the actual closet is the minimum size, but it has built-in cabinets, it would not require a mezuzah. But, if a big chunk of the room is allocated for hanging space or for storage, one should put up a mezuzah without a brocha. Since this area can technically be used, there is a halachic uncertainty whether it is counted as part of the shiur.

If a room is not 6 by 6 feet (or, according to the Chazon Ish, 8 by 8 feet), but does have 36 (or 64) square feet, it is subject to a halachic dispute if it qualifies, and one should put up a mezuzah without a brocha.

The Chamudei Daniel suggests that the aforementioned minimum size is only true for a regular room. Since the normal size of a room is 4 by 4 amos, less than that size does not qualify as a halachic room. But a walk-in closet, which is by definition meant to be small — and can serve its purpose even when small — even less than this size closet requires a mezuzah. According to the Chamudei Daniel, even a small walk-in closet will require a mezuzah. However, most poskim do not follow his ruling and therefore the above mentioned size for a walk-in closet to require a mezuzah is accepted by most poskim.

Interestingly, Rabbi Akiva Eiger has a

ruling that is the exact opposite of the Chamudei Daniel. Rabbi Akiva Eiger rules that when a walk-in closet is exempt from a mezuzah because it is too small, one is not exempt. Rather he should affix a mezuzah on the left side of the door! Why should a person put the mezuzah on the left side of the door? Says Rabbi Akiva Eiger, although this door does not require a mezuzah as an entrance to the room, this door also serves as an entrance back into the bedroom. Eventually (even if you have a big closet and it takes you a long time to decide what to wear!), you will hopefully return to the bedroom and the rest of society.

Hence, this doorway has a dual purpose. It serves as an entrance to the closet, but it also serves as an entrance to the bedroom, which requires a mezuzah. Not all agree with this innovation. Rav Moshe Feinstein, as well as others, take issue with this ruling. Therefore many poskim rule that on a small walk-in closet one should put a mezuzah on the left side of the door, going back into the bedroom, but without reciting a brocha.

IN SUMMARY

A room must have a bare minimum size of 4x4 amos (6x6 or 8x8 feet) to be required to have a mezuzah. If a room is shaped like a rectangle and measures 36 (or 64) square feet, one should put up a mezuzah without a brocha. A walk-in closet less than these measurements, is also a big machlokes. Some say to put for going into the room, and some say to put for coming out of the room, and others rule that no mezuzah is necessary.

Comments and questions are welcome and can be sent to: RabbiScheiner@18forshay.com.

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Rabbi Scheiner

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RABBI YY JACOBSON

ARE YOU A HYPOCRITE?

On the Essence of Education

One Heart

The Talmud relates the following episode: When our father Jacob was on his deathbed, surrounded by all of his children, he suddenly felt the Divine presence, the Shechinah, depart from him. He was overtaken by dread and fear that one of his children present in the room was living an immoral life, and that is why the Shechinah has left him. The old father confronted his children asking if perhaps one of them has corrupted his ways, betraying the values he, Jacob, had attempted to inculcate within them.

His sons responded with the most famous Jewish declaration: "Shema Yisrael Hashem Elokenu Hashem Echad. Listen Israel – Jacob's name was Israel -- the Lord is Our G-d, the Lord is One. Kishem Sh'ein B'libcha Ela Echad, Kach Ein B'libeinu Ela Echad. Just as in YOUR heart there is only One, so too, in OUR heart there is only One."

At that moment Jacob responded and said, "Boruch Shem Kevod Malchuto Le'olam Va'ed. Blessed be the honorable name of His kingdom forever and ever." (Talmud Pesachim 56a).

Their response raises a question. Let us listen to their words carefully: "Just as in YOUR heart there is only One, so too, in OUR heart there is only One." The first half of their statement seems superfluous. We know that in Jacob's heart there was only One G-d. That was not up for discussion; no one was suspecting Jacob's heart and faith. The question was what was going on in THEIR heart. All they needed to say was, "Listen father, in OUR heart there is only One!?"

A Mirror

The answer is that in this very expression they have encapsulated one of the great themes of education. The first half of their sentence was not superfluous. Jacob's children were explaining why their father need not fear about his children's moral destiny. "Jacob our father, if there is One in your heart," the children told their father, "you can be assured that in our hearts, too, there is only One." Children are the mirror of their parents' hearts, not of their words. Since in your heart there was one, our heart too is saturated with the one

living G-d.

All too often, parents think that they can impart values to their children without internalizing these values in their own daily lives. They teach their children about integrity, faith, love and discipline, but they do not necessarily embody these principles themselves. They preach of one G-d, but that one G-d does not challenge them in their personal lives. They will speak up against anger, animosity, envy and selfishness, but they themselves fall prey to these traits.

This usually does not do the trick. Children do not respond to what the parents say as much as to who they are. Values are like colds: they are caught, not taught. If in your heart there is One – in his heart there will also be One. When your child experiences consciously and subconsciously your purity and integrity, it is likely that the values that shaped the parents will continue in the lives of their children. It may take some years or sometimes decades, but the seeds planted by your heart in the heart of your children, will produce the results.

Political scientists have long found that four out of five people with a party preference grow up to vote the way their parents voted. In fact, while many people experience a temporary rejection of their parents' politics in very early adulthood, virtually nothing is more predictive of your political ideology than that of your parents—it's more of a determining factor than income, education or any other societal yardstick.

Hypocrisy

When asked about the greatest challenge he faces today, the principal of one of the largest Jewish high schools in the United States related this thought: Parents spend thousands of dollars a year in tuition to send their children to our school where, along with calculus and chemistry, we are expected to teach some basic ethics. Then, on Sunday, the parents take their child to an amusement park and lie about his age in order to save five dollars on the admission fee. To save five bucks they destroy a \$15,000 education.

Most parents and teachers realize that values and perspectives must be planted by personal example. However, in practice we sometimes try to build into our children

and students behavioral routines that we personally have not yet mastered. We insist that our children eat properly, even though we survive on coffee and donuts. We insist that they don't sit by the TV for hours, while we fall short of these expectations. In short, we find it easier to work on our children than on ourselves, and so that is sometimes what we do.

This hypocrisy has disastrous results: Too many children legitimately view their parents and teachers as insincere. Disrespect burgeons slowly until, around ages 12-15, it shreds the parent-child or teacher-student trust and relationship. Then children reject the moral authority of the adults in their lives. They isolate themselves emotionally from parents and teachers, and begin making their own (often self-destructive) decisions.

In a famous study regarding the transmission of values from parents to children the following question was asked of many children: What do your parents want you to be when you grow up—rich, smart, famous or good? Most of the children -from a variety of demographic and cultural sectors- ranked rich, smart or famous as most important. And the characteristic that ranked lowest was being 'good.' Ironically, parents across the same sectors responded that they favored 'good' as the preferred characteristic for their child.

Why was there this disconnect between the desire of the parents and the perception of their children?

The answer may be that preaching to children demands parallel practice by parents. True goodness is not taught in books, it is transmitted by living example. Parents may tell their children that they want them to be good people above all, but what are the children experiencing from their parents? Are they—the parents—placing goodness above all other comforts?

If you want to touch the heart of your child, make sure that your own heart was touched. And work not just on your conscious, but also on your unconscious identity. Children often respond to the unconscious of their parents even more than to their parents' conscious selves.

This was the message of Jacob's children to their father: The reason there is in our heart only One, is because our hearts reflect and mirror YOUR heart, and in your heart there is only One. This is true concerning every parent and teacher.

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- 2:00
- 2:15
- 2:30
- 2:45
- 3:00
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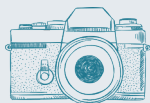
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Ha Rav Reuvein Scheiner ztl. Yahrzeit this Shabbas



The TAG mobile at Scheiner's on the Fourth of July



Out-of-town comes to Monsey: Rabi Ariel Shoshan (Scottsdale, AZ) speaking at Ohr Chaim on the Fourth of July



Rabi Ariel Shoshan after the Shuir



Rabbi Bergers shiur at the night kollel

PARSHAS PINCHAS

THE INEXPERIENCED SAVES THE DAY

פינחס בן אלעזר בן אהרן הכהן" 25:11
"השיב את חמתו"

The Torah tells us that Pinchos was the son of Elazar, who was the son of Aharon Hakohen. His father and grandfather were Kohanim, and had no experience or know-how in battle. Pinchos did not inherit this spirit of a warrior from his father or grandfather. Perhaps one could say that it was not something he inherited from his father, but nonetheless he himself was a natural warrior.

The Torah says, "ויקם מתוך העדה" — "Pinchos got up from amid the assembly" — to tell us that Pinchos was part of the, "עדה" which refers to the Chachomim of Sanhedrin. We see from here that Pinchos was not a warrior, rather he was an איש תם — he was sitting in the Bais Hamedrash toiling in Torah. We learn from this that Pinchos acted in this manner not because it was natural for him, but on the contrary, he went out of his comfort zone and what he knew because of the fire burning within him to do the Ratzon Hashem.

Moshol: A band of armed robbers came to attack the king. One of the king's bodyguards jumped into action, and killed all of the armed robbers. Nothing was done for the bodyguard. A few days later, the king went out again. However, this time he did not take his bodyguard, but just took a plain and simple attendant, one who had no experience in warfare. A powerful

group of bandits came to attack the king. The attendant took the king's sword from his hand, and fought the bandits. He acted with great courage, and despite him not having any experience, and being outnumbered and outpowered, with great determination to save the king, he killed all of the bandits. When the king returned to the palace, he gave great reward and honor to this attendant.

The king's servants asked him, why did this attendant get so much honor, while the bodyguard who saved the king recently received nothing? The king responded that it is the job of the bodyguard to protect him, and he was well prepared for such a situation. So, while the king appreciated what he did, he did not do something out of the ordinary. Conversely, the attendant had no experience in fighting, and did not truly have the ability to fight others. It was not his job to do so. The attendant showed great courage and loyalty to the king, by risking his life for the sake of the king, and going to battle in a place that was not familiar to him in any way. Therefore, he deserved a great reward.

The Torah is telling us that Pinchos was not a warrior of any sort, and he was like the attendant who acted all for the sake of his King, despite it being very difficult for him since it was not something that he ever did. We must seek to go out of our comfort zone in our pursuit of Avodas Hashem.

The Chofetz Chaim on How to Daven

And their meal-offering and their libations for the bulls, the rams, and the lambs, in their proper numbers, as required. (29:18)

By very carefully analyzing the exact spelling of the words in the parsha of the sacrifices on Succos in parshas Pinchas, Chazal (Taanis 2b) find three "superfluous" letters: mem, yud, mem, which together spell the word mayim, water. This provides, say Chazal, proof that nisuach ha'mayim (pouring water on the altar) on Succos is min haTorah, a Biblically ordained mitzvah.

Harav Chaim Chaikin, zt"l (Rosh Yeshivah Aix Les Bains, France), who was a close student of the saintly Chafetz Chaim, quotes Chazal (Berachos 32b), who state that after the destruction of the Bais Hamikdash, the Shaarei Tefillah, Gates of Prayer, were sealed. The Shaarei Dimah, Gates of Tears, however, were not. What should a person do (since the Gates of Prayer are sealed)? He should weep during his prayers. Thus, his prayers will find access to Heaven via the tears that accompany his prayers.

The Rosh Yeshivah Harav Chaikin relates that a Jew came to the Chafetz Chaim and said that he was in dire straits and was in need of the tzaddik's blessing. Would the Chafetz Chaim daven for him? The Chafetz Chaim asked the man if he had personally davened to Hashem. The Jew replied in the affirmative; he had prayed, but he had received no response. The Chafetz Chaim asked him to show him the sefer Tehillim from which he had been praying. The sage leafed through the pages and said, "Your Tehillim looks good: no stains; no worn-out pages; no indication that you wept during Tehillim recital. This is not appropriate davening. Wait a moment, and let me show you how to pray."

The Chafetz Chaim brought a ladder, climbed up to the top of his sefarim shank, bookcase, and retrieved an old, worn-out, pages-swollen Tehillim. He opened it and showed the man the tearstains throughout the Tehillim. He said, "This is my late mother's Tehillim, from which she prayed constantly. Every one of her tefillos were accompanied by passionate weeping. This, my friend, is the meaning of davening."

— pninim.org



EVERYTHING HAS A TIME AND PLACE

... Just like there is a serious time of Bein Hametzarim and the Nine days of Mish-

enichnas Av... the days that were designated by the Torah... in the same way, there is no permission to insert concepts that negate joy in the holidays that are times of Simcha... except for what Torah puts in.

Igros Kodesh V32 P164

A letter to an author of a Haggadah Shel Pesach with inserts of the Holocaust

UFARATZTA



THE DAUGHTERS OF TZELOFCHAD

Were Experts in Common Sense

RABBI SHMUEL CHOUKA

***"The daughters of Tzelafchad drew near."
(Bamidbar 27:1)***

Before the Jews entered the land of Israel, Moshe had the task of dividing up the land amongst the tribes and families of B'nei Yisrael. The daughters of Tzelofchad, who were not yet married, were not given a portion of land, since Tzelofchad had died without any sons. The daughters sought out Moshe to present their case and found him teaching Torah. They waited until he began teaching the topic of inheritance, and then they made their claim to Moshe. Their claim was upheld and they were granted the land.

The Midrash Highlights One Particular Virtue The daughters of Tzelofchad were praiseworthy for many reasons. They demonstrated a clear grasp of Jewish law, and they had a sincere love for the land of Israel. The Midrash, however, highlights one virtue in particular – their timing. They waited for the most opportune time to approach Moshe –when the laws of inheritance were given –and only then did they present their case. What is so special about this trait that the Midrash treats it as their greatest virtue?

This Midrash teaches us that the crowning virtue of a great person is common sense. Without this, a person can be intellectually brilliant, be packed with knowledge and have beautiful intentions, yet fail in his endeavors.

The daughters of Tzelofchad knew that they must approach Moshe at the right time, and they knew exactly when the best time for their presentation was. Timing is crucial.

It has been noted that common sense is very uncommon. A man can master the complexities of a supercomputer, yet not be able to interface with his fellow man. Through the study of Torah, with the analysis and honest introspection of mussar, we can deepen our understanding of human nature, and increase our common sense.



RABBI BEN ZION SNEH

THE GIFTS OF PEACE

After witnessing a rebellious act — a display of outward contempt for everything holy and pure, from one of the leaders of Israel, no less — Pinchas takes matters into his own hands and halts the display of impropriety by spearing the participants. For this he is given the promise of peace and all the goodness that flows through it.

A study in contrasts: kanaus, radically pushing through an agenda, brings a gift of peace. Perhaps on a meta-physical level it does make sense. By bringing purity to the world Hashem has created, we calm things down from a temporary state of restlessness. We see this in our own world. Less arguments in a house make it easier to live in. Less fighting in society makes it more G-dly. But what exactly is the gift of peace? Is it a covenant for generations?

The Mishna in Avos explains in "Hashem has not found a better vehicle by which to bless us with than Peace." Is it possible for us to go without arguing... without taking sides and fighting amongst ourselves for any significant length of time? Or do we thrive on one-upping each other? Can we sometimes be stubborn to the point of no return, engaging in the art of character assassination? Most importantly: is peace just the absence of fighting? Or is it really shalom, true closeness, love and concern for one another? If we take the time to repair and reflect, what blessings can we expect?

The grown siblings were all gifted businessmen. And no wonder, the patriarch of the clan himself was beyond successful, accumulating tremendous wealth in his lifetime. The children had competitive natures, but their behavior went way beyond normal competition. They quarreled constantly, trying to outdo each other, with the express intention of "getting ahead" in order to show their father how capable they were, thus gaining his approval and respect. Nothing stood in their way, showing their father how expert they were, but yet, their assets did not grow as much as they wanted.

A wise man pointed out the folly of their ways: "Your father's wealth is enormous, capable of supporting you and future generations. By fighting with each other, you are depriving him of the only thing that gives him joy. If you cease your competitive strife and come together in love, all your needs will be taken care of. You will have everything you desire."

So too, we, children of our Father in Heaven, must realize that He wants us to live in harmony with each other. If we make it a point to relate to everyone we deal with with respect and love instead of arguing, fighting and being condescending, if we make sure to be honest in business, even when it appears that we might "lose" in the process, our Father will surely give us all we need.

Hashem controls all the blessings in the world. Let us show our Father that we truly love His children and taste the gifts of peace.

JOKES

Q.What's the difference between a rainstorm and a lion with a toothache?

A.One pours with rain and the other roars with pain.

He who laughs last thinks slowest.

Depression is merely anger without enthusiasm.
The early bird may get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.
I drive way too fast to worry about cholesterol.
Support bacteria. They're the only culture some people have. Monday is an awful way to spend 1/7 of your week.
Change is inevitable, except from vending machines.
Plan to be spontaneous tomorrow.

An Apple A Day

They say that an apple a day will keep the doctor away...
Why stop there?
An onion a day will keep everybody away!

Fairy Tale Beginnings

How do you start a fairy tale in the modern era?

"If elected, I promise..."

Surrounded by Nitwits

I was signing the receipt for my credit card purchase when the clerk noticed that I had never signed my name on the back of the credit card. She informed me that she could not complete the transaction unless the card was signed.

When I asked why, she explained that it was necessary to compare the signature on the credit card with the signature I just signed on the receipt.

So I signed the credit card in front of her. She carefully compared that signature to the one I signed on the receipt. As luck would have it, they matched.

NITWIT SIGHTINGS

Sighting #1:

I was at the airport, checking in at the gate, when the airport employee asked, 'Has anyone put anything in your baggage without your knowledge?'

I said, 'If it was without my knowledge, how would I know?' He smiled and nodded knowingly, 'That's why we ask.'

Nitwit Sighting #2:

When my husband and I arrived at an automobile dealership to pick up our car, we were told that the keys had been accidentally locked in it. We went to the service department and found a mechanic working feverishly to unlock the driver's side door

As I watched from the passenger's side, I instinctively tried the door handle and discovered it was open. 'Hey,' I announced to the technician, 'It's open!' 'I know,' answered the young man. 'I already got that side.'

CAR

Man who run in front of car get tired, and man who run in back of car get exhausted.

ARK

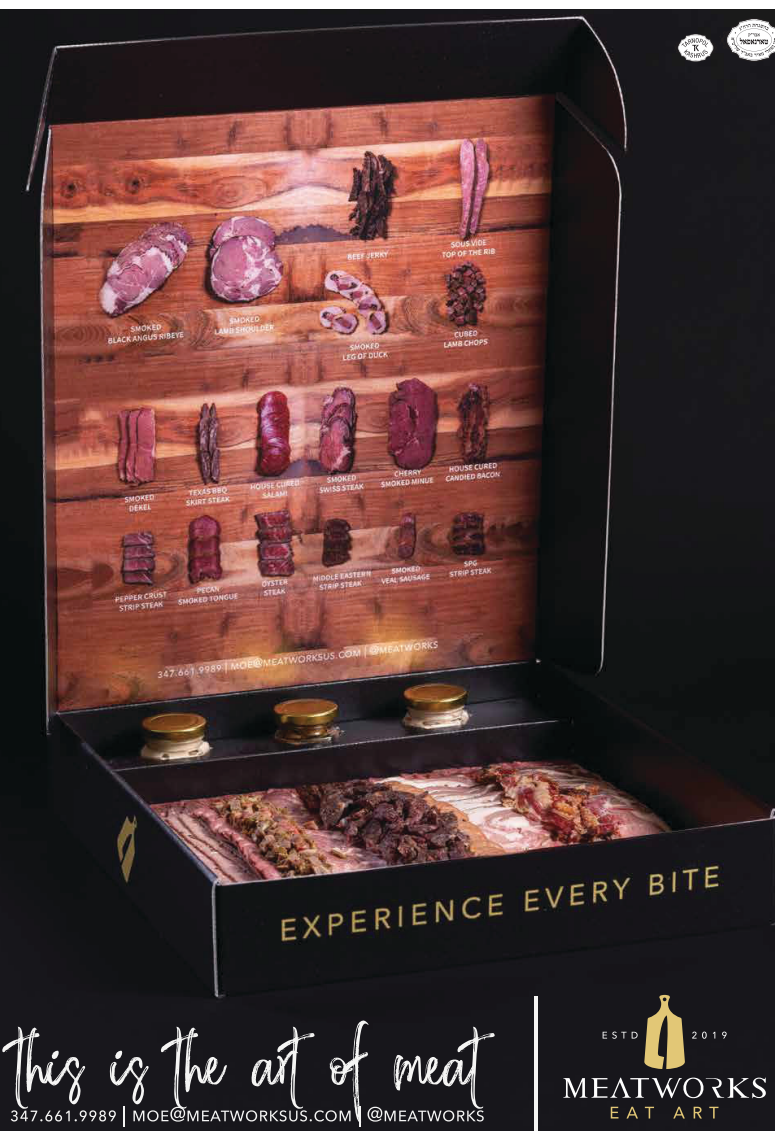
Need an ark to save two of every animal? I noah guy

Ten Years Bad Luck

A funeral service is being held in a synagogue for a woman who has just passed away. At the end of the service the pallbearers are carrying the casket out, when they accidentally bump into a wall, jarring the casket.

They hear a faint moan. They open the casket and find that the woman is actually alive. She lives for ten more years and then dies. A ceremony is again held at the same synagogue and at the end of the ceremony the pallbearers are again carrying the casket.

As they are walking out, the husband cries, "Watch out for the wall!"



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RABBI OZER ALPORT

As the end of Moshe's life approached, Hashem commanded him to appoint his disciple, Yehoshua, to succeed him. Why wasn't Pinchas, the righteous "hero" of the parsha, selected to take over the leadership after Moshe's death? In risking his life for the sake of the nation, didn't he display the extent of his dedication and commitment to them and to his beliefs, valuable traits for a successful leader to possess?

The following story will help us answer these questions. The Talmud records that because of disparaging comments he had made, the non-Jewish government decreed that Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai should be executed. He fled with his son, Rabbi Elazar, to hide in a cave. For 12 years, Hashem miraculously provided them with food and drink, and they spent the entire day engrossed in the study of Torah.

After 12 years, Hashem sent Elijah the Prophet to announce at the opening of the cave that the person who made the decree had died, and Rabbi Shimon's life was safe. Rabbi Shimon and his son emerged to see the light of day for the first time in more than a decade. While they spent this time climbing to great spiritual heights, the rest of the world continued in its more mundane fashion.

When Rabbi Shimon and Rabbi Elazar saw men "wasting" their time on what they viewed as frivolous non-spiritual pursuits such as plowing and planting, they looked at them with such anger and disdain that the farmers were immediately burned by a mystical fire. A Divine voice called out, "Have you left the cave to destroy My world?" Rabbi Shimon and his son returned to study Torah in the cave for another year.

At the end of the year, they left the cave. The results were similar, but with one crucial difference. When Rabbi Elazar saw people engaging in earthly matters, he again burned them with his wrath. This time, Rabbi Shimon looked at them and healed them, explaining to his son, "It's enough for the world that you and I exist." One Friday afternoon, they saw a man carrying two bundles of sweet-smelling myrtle in honor of Shabbos. Recognizing the devotion of Jews to mitzvot, Rabbi Shimon and Rabbi Elazar were pacified.

This episode is difficult to understand. If the initial 12 years in the cave placed such a divide between Rabbi Shimon and the rest of the world, how did an additional year in the cave solve the problem, when it should have only exacerbated it? The commentators explain that the additional year brought Rabbi Shimon to true greatness: the ability to understand and relate to those who aren't on his level, and to appreciate them for their good qualities, such as their dedication to honoring Shabbos.

In light of this explanation, we can appreciate the answer given by the Kotzker Rebbe to our original question. The very fervor and passion demonstrated by Pinchas, while appropriate at that time, rendered him ineligible to serve as the national leader. Rashi writes (Bamidbar 27:16) that Moshe requested a successor who would be able to understand that every person has his own individual foibles and needs, and who would be able to patiently bear the burden of interacting with each person and his idiosyncrasies. Pinchas' passionate devotion to truth and righteousness served him well, but would have made him an ineffective leader, one who was unable to understand and interact with each person on his own unique level.

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