

meaningful way as the all-wise, all-knowing, Master of the world.

Through challenging times, it is important to appreciate the things we often take for granted. Putting on the right Spiritual Glasses, helps us realize that everything is from Hashem, designed for a particular purpose, for our ultimate benefit. (By Norman D. Levy, based on Rabbi Miller's teachings with permission from Simchas Hachaim Gedola Bais Yisrael.)

### The Rebbe's Coin

Excitement in the Old City of Jerusalem was high. The Gerrer Rebbe, known as the *Imrei Emet*, was visiting the Holy Land. In a city full of *sadikim* and *talmidei hachamim*, this visit of the leader of thousands of Polish *Hasidim* still managed to stir the people's hearts. Among the crowds of people stood a 10-year-old boy. It would not be easy to get into the room where the Rebbe was meeting people, but this youngster knew that he simply had to have an audience with this great man. At an age when other children collect stamps or coins, this boy collected *berachot*, blessings from *sadikim*.

Finally, after what seemed to be an endless wait, the youngster was shown into the room. The Rebbe looked at the pure, innocent face of the Sephardic youth and smiled.

"So tell me, child, what are you learning?" the Rebbe asked in a kindly voice.

"*Mishnayot Shabbat*."

"And do you know how many chapters there are in the *Mishnah*?"

The boy answered without hesitation. "Twenty-four."

"That's right. Do you know why there are 24 chapters?"

The boy looked down at his shoes. "No, Rebbe, I don't." Then he brightened. "But if the Rebbe will give me a few minutes, I can go and find out."

"Come back with the answer, my child, and I will give you a blessing."

The boy raced through the quiet, dark streets of the Old City. It was late, but he knew where he could find someone who could give him an answer. He walked into the *bet Midrash* where the *kabbalist*, the *Kaf Hachayim*, spent his nights immersed in Torah study, and without hesitating, asked the great man his question.

The *Kaf Hachayim* showed no surprise at being approached by a mere boy in the middle of the night. He thought for a minute and then spoke. "There are many reasons, and I will give you two of them. First, in days of old, a bride would be adorned with 24 kinds of jewelry. Shabbat is called our bride, and thus is given 24 chapters in the *Mishnah*. In addition, there are 24 books in *Tanach*, and one who keeps Shabbat properly, it is as if he kept the entire Torah."

His eyes alight, the boy thanked the Sage and ran back to the *Imrei Emet*.

This time the wait was shorter – after all, it was the middle of the night and people had to get to sleep – and soon the youngster was standing before the Rebbe, proudly giving him both explanations.

Delighted, the Rebbe pulled a half-*grush* coin out of his wallet and handed it to the boy. "This coin is a reward for your effort. Keep it, and may you be blessed with success and greatness in your studies."

When he returned home, too happy to be tired, the boy's mother was thrilled to see the coin, which she regarded as a *segulah*, a talisman for success in learning. She carefully made a hole in the coin and threaded a string through it. He then wore it beneath his shirt, and it became his most treasured possession.

The coin accompanied the boy for many years, until it was unfortunately lost. But though the coin eventually disappeared, the blessing for greatness did not. The Jerusalem youth did, indeed, achieve Torah greatness: for he was none other than R' Yehudah Sadka, the great Sage and venerated *Rosh Yeshivah* of *Porat Yosef*! (Stories of Spirit and Faith)

*The Lorraine Gammal A"H Edition*

לְעִילּוֹי נְשֻׁמַּת לְאָה בֵּת בְּהִיָּה

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SHABBAT PINHAS ☆ שַׁבַּת פִּינְחָס

Haftarah: Yirmiyahu 1:1-2:3

**JULY 10-11, 2020 19 TAMUZ 5780**

Candlelighting: **8:09 pm**

Morning Shema by: **8:22 am**

Evening Shema after: **9:07 pm**

Shabbat ends: **9:07 pm (R"Y 9:39 pm)**

**Watch for an email for full Shabbat schedule of minyanim**

**The Fast of the 17<sup>th</sup> of Tamuz will be observed on Thursday, July 9. Fast begins at 4:05 am and ends at 8:58 pm.**

**Mabrook to Myer and Madlyn Sitton on the engagement of their daughter, Marsella, to Jonathan Abigzor.**

### A Message from our Rabbi

וַיִּרָא פִּינְחָס...וַיִּקָּם מִתּוֹךְ הָעֵדָה וַיִּקַּח רֶמֶחַ"

"Pinhas saw...and rose up from the midst of the people and took a spear." (Bemidbar 25:7)

What are we to make of the focus on Pinhas having risen up from among the people? Rabbi Zvi Kushelevsky explains: Some people "do their own thing" because they are natural non-conformists. They enjoy being different from everyone else. And some people are different because they don't care about others - following the crowd was never a consideration for them. Pinhas was not so. The *pasuk* emphasizes that he was the son of Elazar and Aharon *Hakohen*. He was descended from people who very much felt that they were part of the community, individuals who contributed to the nation in great ways. His standing up alone, undeterred, was momentous and meaningful.

The *pasuk* says about Pinhas, "when he zealously avenged My vengeance." *Rashi* explains that it means "when he expressed the rage with which I should have been enraged." Rabbi Moshe Feinstein explains that this means Pinhas did something that Hashem was supposed to do and he did it for Him. This is a lesson for many *misvot*.

Take the *misvah* of *sedakah*, for instance. The wicked Turnusrufus asked Rabbi Akiva, "If Hashem loves the poor people, why doesn't He support them?" The Rabbi answered, "So we should get the merit of supporting them and be saved from the suffering of *Gehinam*." The answer was that for sure it is upon Hashem to support them, but he left mankind to do what is incumbent upon Him to do, and for this there is

great reward for us. Even though it is certain that He will feed them, for He is the One Who gives bread to all and feeds and supports. But, if man wants to do it instead, it shows great love to Hashem.

Rabbi Feinstein gives a parable of a mother who comes home with a car full of groceries and her small child wants to help her. So she gives him a small bag to bring in, even though she doesn't need his help, and it would be easy for her to bring it. But, the desire of the child to help his Mommy, even though she can do it, shows his love for her. This is a great pleasure for the Mommy. This is the greatness of us doing a *misvah* Hashem would do himself, such as the demonstration of *sedakah*, and this was the great demonstration of Pinhas. Shabbat Shalom. Rabbi Reuven Semah

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## A New Man

A *pasuk* in *Tehillim* says, “*Vaya'mod Pinhas vaYefalel, va'Teasar haMagefa*” [*Tehillim* 106:30]. This is commonly translated “And Pinhas stood and prayed and the plague stopped.” However, the *Talmud* questions this translation of the *pasuk*: “Rav Eliezer says the *pasuk* does not say ‘*vaYitpalel*’ [he prayed], but rather ‘*vaYefalel*’” [*Sanhedrin* 44a]. The nuance of this unique form of the root word, according to Rav Eliezer, teaches that Pinhas argued a case before the Almighty (translating the word *vaYefalel* from the word *pelilim*, which connotes judges and judgment). *VaYefalel* does not mean Pinhas prayed, but rather Pinhas presented a compelling case before the Master of the Universe; he contended with Him.

The *Gemara* presents Pinhas' argument according to Rav Eliezer: “Because of these two people (Zimri and Kozbi), twenty-four thousand people should die? (And even more people were going to be killed before Pinhas ‘intervened’). It is not right!”

We can add an interesting observation. The *Sefer Halkarim* from Rav Yosef Albo discusses a very fundamental question: How and why does prayer help? If a person is sick, Heaven forbid, that means that the Almighty ruled regarding this person that he should be sick. How then is prayer supposed to help? Is our intention to change Hashem's Mind? Is the expectation that after we pray, the Almighty will say, “Do you know what? I never thought of that! I will change my decree regarding this person?” Obviously, when the Almighty does something, it is Perfect and Righteous. So what is the whole point of praying?

Rav Yosef Albo's answer to this question is that something happens to the person who prays. When a person prays, he becomes a different person. The law or the decree that the Almighty issued regarding ‘*Ploni* son of *Ploni*’ was for a different person. Because of the person's prayers and his drawing closer to the Almighty, he changes into a different person upon whom the decree was never issued.

This explains something else, which with some understanding of a bit of the rules of Hebrew grammar, is most enlightening. The Hebrew verb for praying is *mitpallel*, which is a reflexive grammatical tense. For example, it becomes similar to the expression *Ani mitlabesh* – I am dressing myself – which is also a reflexive verb. However, why in conjunction with prayer is the verb reflexive?

The answer is because the person who prays undergoes a metamorphosis of sorts. He becomes a different person. This is one of the theories of how prayer helps – it is because through your prayers and your intense communication with Hashem, **you** change! If that is the case, it is very appropriate that over here the verb form is not reflexive (*Vayitpallel*) but it is *vaYefallel*. Pinhas did not need to change. He was a *Sadik* [righteous person]. Pinhas did not engage in prayer in order to change himself. Rather, he engaged in dispute and argumentation with the Almighty, as *vaYefallel* connotes the idea of *Pelilut*[seeking justice before Judges]. (Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

## Forgiven

”תחת אשר קנא לא-לקיו ויכפר על בני ישראל”

”Because he was jealous for his G-d, he atoned for the Children of Israel.” (*Bemidbar* 25:13)

According to the *Midrash*, Pinhas and Eliyahu *Hanabi* were the same person. When Eliyahu complained to Hashem that the nation of Israel was not keeping the covenant of the *Berit Milah*, Hashem decreed that from that day on, Eliyahu would be present at every *Berit Milah* to testify on their behalf. When Eliyahu heard this, he objected and said, “Hashem, You know how I am jealous on your behalf. If the father of the baby is a sinner, I will not be able to stand being there.”

Hashem then promised him that He would forgive all of the father's sins at each *Berit Milah* so that Eliyahu would not be troubled.

Eliyahu continued, “What if the *Mohel* is not a righteous person?”

Hashem guaranteed that all of the *Mohel's* sins would also be wiped out.

Eliyahu then said, “What about all the guests? There are bound to be some sinners among them.” Hashem promised that all the sins of the entire congregation would be forgiven to spare Eliyahu the distress.

This is all hinted to in the above *pasuk*. Since Eliyahu, who is Pinhas, is jealous for Hashem's honor and cannot bear to see a sinner in his midst, and since he must be at every *Berit Milah*, he brings atonement to the entire nation of Israel. (*Yalkut Hamishai*)

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## False Impression

People were created with an inborn sense of curiosity, which drives them to seek information about everything around them. The gift of curiosity has produced inventions and discoveries that add up to a life of comfort and convenience for modern man, unparalleled in ancient times.

Unfortunately, the need to know has also produced a media genre that displays the lifestyles of the rich and famous to the masses of less high-profile denizens of planet Earth. The spotlight on the luxury and surface beauty with which these celebrities surround themselves arouses feelings of envy and dissatisfaction in the minds of their admirers.

A superficial observation creates false impressions. Failure to delve deeply into a situation makes viewers feel that the external smiles of the “beautiful people” express internal joy. Nothing could be further from the truth. A closer look at the lives of celebrities reveal that they – like everyone else – have ups and downs, joy and sadness, in their lives. Many of their problems even stem directly from the wealth and fame commoners envy.

When you gaze out at the world through a clear glass, you see all the things that others possess and that you may lack. Comparison shopping creates unhappiness. One way to avoid the trap of envy is to look in the mirror rather than through the window. Look back at yourself and see and appreciate all the gifts that you truly possess.

Unhappy people tend to feel that everyone else in the world is satisfied, and only they are missing the perfect life. It is a false impression created by envy. (One Minute With Yourself – Rabbi Raymond Beyda)

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## Spiritual Glasses

Hashem gives nourishment to all flesh, He gives snow like wool, He gives rain upon the face of the earth. As we realize these things, we think of Hashem, in a