

Final Request

Before coming to America, Rav Moshe Feinstein led a small community in Eastern Europe. There was a “moser” [an individual who made it his practice to slander fellow Jews to the communist government] in town. The man left a Will and Testament: “I was such a terrible person in my lifetime that I want to do *Teshubah* after my death. Therefore, I want my body to be mutilated and treated with utter disrespect, as one would treat a donkey! I want to be buried away from the Jewish section of the cemetery and I want all this to be an atonement for my sins and for all the trouble I caused the Jewish community during my lifetime.”

The Burial Society came to their Rabbi and showed him the Will, asking for his advice as to how to proceed. Rav Moshe Feinstein ruled: You must bury him like you bury every other Jew – with respect and with dignity. He ruled that a person does not have control even over his own body after he dies and the *Halachah* forbids desecrating a dead body. The *Chevra Kaddisha* argued with Rav Moshe, “But look, he said he wanted to do *Teshubah*. This would be his atonement!” Rav Moshe responded, “The law is the law. We cannot superimpose our own thoughts or emotions onto it!” The Burial Society reluctantly listened to their Rabbi and buried this Jew like all other members of the community.

Three weeks later, a delegation came from the government and presented a government order to the caretaker of the cemetery demanding to exhume the body. They exhumed the body, opened the coffin, examined the body and saw that his body has not been desecrated. They further confirmed that he was buried in the regular part of the Jewish cemetery. They then reburied the body.

The caretaker asked what this whole investigation was about. They explained that before the man died, he sent a letter to the Russian Government. The letter stated that the Jews hate the government and they mistreat anyone who had any connection with the government. He claimed that he would prove this claim by his “prediction” that the Jews would desecrate his body and bury him in a separate portion of the cemetery! In other words, repentance and atonement was the farthest thing from the man’s mind. He intended to give a parting shot to the community from the grave and “trap them” into committing an incriminating “crime and insult” against the government.

Anyone who hears this story states “Rav Moshe Feinstein had *ruach haKodesh* [Divine intuition]. How else was he able to smell this rat?” Rav Moshe Feinstein may well have had *ruach haKodesh*, but this story is not proof of that. This story is not about Rav Moshe Feinstein, the possessor of Divine Intuition. This story is about Rav Moshe Feinstein, the *posek* [decider of Jewish law]. Because of his fealty to *Halachah*, he saved himself and his community from untold troubles. (Rabbi Yissocher Frand)

The Lorraine Gammal A"K Edition

לְעִילּוֹי נְשָׁמַת לְאָה בַּת בְּהִיָּה

בס"ד
Congregation Magen Abraham

479 Monmouth Road - P.O. Box 444

West Long Branch, New Jersey 07764

(732) 870-2225



SHABBAT PINHAS ☆ שַׁבַּת פִּינְחָס

Haftarah: Yirmiyahu 1:1-2:3

JULY 22-23, 2022 24 TAMUZ 5782

Shir Hashirim/Minhah:	Shaharit: 4:45, 6:45, 7:45, 8:25, 9:00 am
6:22, 6:45, 6:55, 7:20, 7:50 pm	Morning Shema by: 8:27 am
Candlelighting: 8:01 pm	Shabbat Class: 6:30 pm
Evening Shema after: 8:59 pm	Shabbat Minhah: 1:30, 7:20 & 7:40 pm
	Shabbat Ends: 8:58, R”T 9:30 pm

These times are applicable only for the Deal area. Weekday Minhah: 7:00 pm

Rosh Hodesh Ab will be celebrated on Friday, July 29. No meat meals are permitted (except for Shabbat) from Saturday night, July 30 until Sunday night, August 7. It is also forbidden to buy or wear new clothing on these days.

Mabrook to Jack & Grace Marcus on the birth of a granddaughter.

Mabrook to Choter and Julia Yishai on the birth of a granddaughter. Mabrook to the great-grandparents, Mr. & Mrs. Yosef Yishai.

A Message from our Rabbi

"וַיִּקַּח רִמְח בְּיָדוֹ!"

“And he took a spear in his hand.” (Bemidbar 25:7)

Pinhas was confronted with an awesome decision. People were dying, and a leader of Israel was causing it. He took a spear and killed Zimri. The Torah praises him that he saved the Jewish people. Why didn't Moshe react? *Rashi* explains that Moshe forgot the *halachah* that what Zimri did requires that he be put to death, but Pinhas remembered the *halachah*.

Rabbi Yaakov Bender asks, if Moshe saw so many people dying, why not infer from the fact that there was Divine anger that Zimri had to be put to death?

The answer is powerful. The *halachah* was hidden from Moshe. So while he understood that logic dictated that Zimri be stopped, and he recognized the value in the act of zealousness, he did not have a *halachic* source at the moment. And Moshe *Rabenu* wanted to establish that without *halachah* there is no place for action.

Emotion and passion have a place, but only within the framework of *halachah*. He forgot the *halachah*, so he did not act.

Moshe *Rabenu* was the teacher of Israel, our eternal teacher. In his every word and action, and also in his reluctance to act, he was teaching Torah. Only with *halachah* can you build. If the *halachah* is hidden, then it is not time to act.

Shabbat Shalom.

Rabbi Reuven Semah

Self-Worship

This week's *perashah* begins with the reward Pinhas receives for a deed he did in last week's *perashah*. He took responsibility to avenge G-d's honor from a couple who were involved in immoral behavior and idol worship.

The Torah calls the idol *Ba'al Pe'or*. It was served by the Moabites, and a large group from the tribe of Shimon got involved in immoral behavior with the Moabite women, and then began to worship *Ba'al Pe'or*. The Sages tell us that *Ba'al Pe'or* was served by defecating on the idol, a most unusual way of serving a deity.

Rabbi Chaim Shmuelevitz asks how it is possible to pay homage to a god in such a disrespectful fashion. In addition to that, how did the Children of Israel sink so far? The answer he gives is extremely relevant to us today.

The depth of this form of worship is that everything goes. One can even defecate on one's god. The *Talmud* relates that a certain fellow actually wiped himself on the idol's nose, and the priests lauded him for his excellence and originality! In other words, there is no accountability! This is the highest level of service of *Ba'al Pe'or*. One can do anything he wishes, and never need to regret it. Now we can understand what the draw was to join the growing membership of these particular congregations of idol worshippers. Once they went over the line of immorality in regard to the Moabite women, it snowballed quickly to manifest itself in the most lewd form of behavior.

Rabbi Chaim Shmuelevitz also explains that the view of these idol worshippers is really a slight perversion of a proper world view. That is, that mankind is very great and superior. The attitude that we have greatness can bring a person to a lack of accountability – that he has no one to answer to. In direct contrast – the Torah perspective – is also that we are above all other aspects of the creation. Even angels, come from a lower spiritual source than does the human soul. Consequently, it is an immense responsibility to be on that lofty plain. The accountability is manifold times more when so much more can be expected, and accomplished.

We see from here how easily a person lacking objectivity can err. Only with intellectual integrity and objectivity will a person be willing to draw correct conclusions from facts available to him. If a person is not interested in doing the right thing, and he wishes to follow his eyes and his heart – about him the prophet writes “For the ways of G-d are straight; the righteous go with them, and the negligent will trip over them.” (Rabbi Dovid Green)

Been There, Done That

Parashat Pinhas contains a long list of sacrifices that are brought on various occasions. The first offering that the Torah discusses is the *Korban Tamid* – the Daily Sacrifice. When the *Bet Hamikdash* is standing, there is a Biblical command to offer a *Tamid* Offering, every single day of the year: “One Lamb is to be offered in the morning and one Lamb is to be brought toward the evening.”

There is something beautiful about consistency. But consistency does have one major pitfall, which is hinted to by an incongruous *pasuk*. For no apparent reason, the Torah inserts a *pasuk* into the middle of the description of the *Korban Tamid*: “The continual Burnt Offering, which was made at Mt. Sinai for a pleasant aroma.”

What does the *Olah* that was brought on Mt. Sinai have to do with this section about the Daily Sacrifice? That which happened on Mt. Sinai is history! Why is it mentioned in the middle of the section of the *Korban Tamid*?

Rav Yosef Salant says that there is a very important point that we derive from this *pasuk*. When something is done day in day out, as wonderful as it may be, it eventually becomes done by rote. It becomes stale. It becomes automatic, without thought.

On any ordinary day, we might arrive at *Shaharit* late and quickly put on our *Tefillin* in the time between *Yishtabach* and *Barechu* and still have time to answer ‘*Yehei Shmei Rabba*’. That is the amount of time it takes us to put on *Tefillin*!

However, a person only needs to have the *nachat* of seeing a son put on *Tefillin* for the first time, to recall a very different process. Watch a *Bar Mitzvah* boy put on *Tefillin*, making sure they are straight and making sure they are tight enough and that every strap is in order. What is the difference? The difference is that we may have been putting on *Tefillin* for forty years. On the one hand that is great — it is ‘*Tamid*’. We can look back and say, we never missed a day! But that ‘*Tamid*’ becomes ‘old hat’ and sometimes lacks the true meaning of the *mitzvah*. That is the pitfall of *Tamid*.

Therefore, the Torah inserts, “The Continuous Burnt Offering that was offered on Mt. Sinai for a pleasant Aroma, a Fire Offering before Hashem,” in the middle of the *perashah* of the *Korban Tamid* that applies for all generations.

Remember that first *Tamid*! Remember that the *Tamid* that was brought on *Har Sinai* with tremendous enthusiasm, newness and excitement. Remember that! There should always be a little of that *Tamid* in the *Tamid* that is brought every single day.

That is the way it should be with our *Tefillin* and with our *Keriat Shema* and with our *Amidahs*. We cannot lose the whole benefit of consistency by letting that very benefit become a pitfall.

David *Hamelech* says in *Tehillim*, “I asked one thing from G-d, that is my request; to dwell in the House of G-d all the days of my life, and to visit His Palace.” The commentaries ask what David *Hamelech* is saying. First he asks to dwell in G-d's House his entire life, and then he asks to be a visitor? Which is it - a Resident or a Visitor?

David's request is to have it both ways. He wants to be one who dwells every day in G-d's house, but he wants to feel as if he is only a visitor. He always wants it to feel special and new. This is a difficult request, because these two qualities are almost mutually exclusive. When one has ‘*Tamid*’ he does not have ‘*Chiddush*’ and when one has ‘*Chiddush*’ he does not have ‘*Tamid*’.

But this is the goal and this is the lesson of the *Korban Tamid*. It needs to be “One every morning and one every evening” but it also must be “like the first one which was ever offered, on Mt. Sinai.” (Rabbi Yisrocher Frand)

Poor Man/ Rich Man

It is easier for a poor man to have trust in Hashem because he has no other means, but a wealthy man is inclined to trust his power and influence. We are all wealthy to a certain extent because we have access to shop with clothing. We naturally think that if Hashem won't help us, we will just buy what we need.

We are living in an abundant society, where all we need is at our fingertips. With prayer and Hashem's blessings, every Poor Man, can end up a Pray Man. (Norman D. Levy, based on Rabbi Miller's teachings with permission from Simchas Hachaim Gedola Bais Yisrael)