



# Good Shabbos SYDENHAM!

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7 Jul 2018 Parshas Pinchas 24 Tammuz 5778

## Destiny Beckons by: Rabbi Yossy Goldman

How did an unseeded youngster suddenly rise to stardom? Pinchas, the hero of this week's Parsha, was previously unheard of. Though as a grandson of Aaron he belonged to the "royal family," he was an unknown young man, who, with a single act of bravery was catapulted to prominence.

The Talmud (Sanhedrin 82a) tells the behind the scenes story. Zimri, a prince of the tribe of Shimon, publicly flaunts his intimate relationship with a heathen Midianite princess. Moses is momentarily stymied. Pinchas respectfully reminds Moses that he himself taught the principle that one who behaves as Zimri did may be executed by the zealous. Moses responds that since Pinchas remembered this, he, Pinchas, should be the one to carry it out. Pinchas duly does just that and the terrible plague that had taken the lives of thousands is stilled. G-d blesses Pinchas with His Covenant of Peace and he goes down in history as the hero who saved the day.

But why did Moses forget what he himself had taught? Apparently, Divine Providence saw fit that the great prophet should suffer a temporary memory lapse in order that young Pinchas assume his destined status.

Now Pinchas could have made a simple calculation. Here stand Moses and Aaron, other prominent elders and leaders and they are all silent. In the face of such brazen moral travesty all these great men stand back. Who, then, am I to step forward? How can I, little old me, a new kid on the block, stand up and say what I believe in their au-

gust presence? Surely, I must keep quiet and hold my peace.

But Pinchas did not say that. And thank G-d he didn't. Had he kept his silence, the plague might not have been averted and Pinchas would have remained a non-entity. This, says the Lubavitcher Rebbe, serves a powerful lesson to all of us. If you witness a situation where you feel that you can make a difference, then you must. And the fact that greater people than you seem paralyzed should not necessarily mean that you too should remain idle. Perhaps this is your unique chance to do something historic. Perhaps you are earmarked for greatness and G-d is opening your window of opportunity. Deny yourself this moment and you deny destiny.

Sometimes the moment is yours. Sometimes greater people may vacillate and the responsibility and opportunity rest with you and you alone. Each of us has so much unlocked potential. Rare and precious are those crossroads of life when the chance to unleash that inner calling presents itself. This is your baby, your moment of glory, your own personal calling and you dare not desist from it.

Such was the case with Pinchas and such may be the scenario that every one of us may find ourselves playing out one day.

In the story of Purim, the Megillah records how Queen Esther is asked by Mordechai to intercede with King Ahasuerus on behalf of her people. She explains that she fears this may be nothing less than suicidal for her. Mordechai responds with rather strong words, *Relief and deliverance will*

**The Secret is Out.  
Shhhhh.....  
Shwekey!!!  
Carnival City....  
28 August!  
Bookings open soon.  
Watch this space!**

**Calendar**  
*Shabbos Mevorchim Av*  
*Molad: Friday 06:49:08*

- ◆ Shacharis: 8:30 am; Shtibl 8:45 am
- ◆ Brocha in the Seeff Hall sponsored by **Steven Herring** in honour of a Siyum.
- ◆ **Sushi & Black Label Farbrengen.**
- ◆ Mincha: 4:50 pm
- ◆ Pirkei Avos: Chapter 1
- ◆ Shabbos Ends: 6:03 pm
- ◆ Mincha next week: 5:20 pm
- ◆ **Rosh Chodesh: Friday 13 July**

**Guest Chazan:**  
**Rabbi Yossy Goldman**

**Guest Speaker:**  
**Rabbi Asher Deren**

- ◆ **Nathan Fine** of Ideal Furnishers at Midway Mall, Bramley Gardens wishes all congregants a Good Shabbos. Call 011-887-5456/082-854-5706. **Furniture, Bedding & Appliances.**
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the honor of making wicks for the Temple menorah.

She conveyed G-d's message to General Barak that he should go to war against the Canaanites, who had been oppressing the people of Israel. Barak agreed to go to war only if Deborah would go with him. She obliged, the Israelites won (with the help of Yael, another brave woman), and Deborah sang a song to thank G-d for His deliverance. The land was then tranquil for 40 years.

**9. Samuel**  
Samuel was the miracle baby who was born to Chanah and Elkanah. When he was weaned, his mother brought him to the Tabernacle to be raised in holiness by Eli the High Priest, as per her promise to G-d. One night, G-d called to Samuel, and thus began a lifetime of devotion. Samuel would regularly travel throughout the Land of Israel to judge the people and guide them.

When the people, suffering at the hands of Philistine enemies, requested a king to lead them, Samuel heeded their wish and anointed Saul. After Saul failed to remain faithful to G-d, Samuel anointed David to succeed him. Even after he appointed the kings, Samuel continued to judge, guide and teach the people. He wrote several books of the Bible, including the book that bears his name. He lived a rich and busy life until he passed away at the age of 52.

The sages say that Samuel was equal in stature to Moses, but there was a difference. While Moses needed to go to the Tent of Meeting to hear G-d's voice, G-d came to Samuel wherever he was. This reflected their leadership styles. Moses would remain in his place, and the people would come seek is counsel. Samuel, on the other hand, would travel to the people, meeting them wherever they were.

### Live & Laugh Weight Watchers

Following his motivational talk at a Weight Watchers meeting, my father noticed one client's small son climbing onto a scale.

"Don't go on that, Joey," warned the boy's slightly older brother. "It makes people cry."

come for the Jews from elsewhere and you and your father's house will perish. What Mordechai was telling Esther was that the chance to single handedly save one's entire nation doesn't present itself every day. It is a unique moment and ought to be seized. If you won't do it, someone else will; but this once in a lifetime opportunity may be lost to you forever.

Pinchas reminds us that when opportunity knocks we should open the door quickly. Do not hesitate. Destiny may be beckoning.

## Parsha Pointers

*Pinchas: Artscroll Chumash pg 876;  
Living Torah pg 799*

Aaron's grandson, Pinchas, is rewarded for his act of zealotry in killing the Simeonite prince Zimri and the Midianite princess who was his paramour: G-d grants him a covenant of peace and the priesthood.

A census of the people counts 601,730 men between the ages of twenty and sixty. Moses is instructed on how the Land is to be divided by lottery among the tribes and families of Israel. The five daughters of Zelophead petition Moses that they be granted the portion of the land belonging to their father, who died without sons; G-d accepts their claim and incorporates it into the Torah's laws of inheritance.

Moses empowers Joshua to succeed him and lead the people into the Land of Israel.

The Parshah concludes with a detailed list of the daily offerings, and the additional offerings brought on Shabbat, Rosh Chodesh (first of the month), and the festivals of Passover, Shavuot, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret.

## Practicing Unilateral Virtue in the Face of Evil

*By Hanna Perlberger*

*"If you don't stand for something, you will fall for anything."*

– Gordon A. Eadie

My husband was shaking his head as he scrolled down the text on his cell phone.

"Who do you think Greece blames for the collapse of its economy?" "I dunno ... " I replied offhandedly, "must be the Jews." I thought I was being sarcastic. My husband then read out loud the vilest invectives spewed by political and "religious" Greek leaders, laying the blame not just for Greece's financial woes, but pretty much all of the problems of the world—since time immemorial—at our Jewish feet.

"Who do you think is getting the blame for the shooting of police officers in various States?" I shot back. Israel, of course. In twisted minds, dots connect in bizarre and irrational ways.

These days, the news, in general, seems pretty bad; the news related to Jews, however, is once again reaching unimaginable lows.

The previous Torah portion, Balak, is named after a paranoid anti-Semite. This week's Torah portion, Pinchas, is named after the Jewish hero who foiled Balak's attempt to destroy the Jews in the desert. Pinchas was not originally included in the priestly class, but as a result of his zealous courage, he was elevated into the priesthood and bestowed with an eternal covenant of peace.

Is there a connection between Pinchas and Balak? I never noticed this before, and now I am wondering whether these two Torah portions are best understood as being a pair—that somehow "evil" and "peace" are package deals. Like "growth" through "adversity," Balak's plot to destroy the Jewish people gave Pinchas the opportunity to rise to the occasion; in so doing, Pinchas changed the fate of the Jewish people, as well as his own destiny.

### **Practicing Unilateral Virtue**

When the news brings us daily reports of implacable hatred and inhuman brutality, how do we react? Is there a way not just to retain our humanity in the face of an evil that wants to seduce us away from it, but to use that very evil to bring out our personal best?

Rick Hanson, a psychologist famous for using neuroplasticity to create positivity in people's

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lives, says that "one of the hardest things to do is to remain reasonable, responsible and ethical ourselves when others don't."

In a challenging situation, how do you want to be? Can you live by your personal code, even when it's hard? What is your own code? What is your integrity system? What kind of honorable person are you moved to be from the inside out?

### **Personal Power**

When we blame someone or something else for our perceived problems, then we are outsourcing the solution as well. For example, if it were Balak's fault that the Jews in the desert were suffering, then only Balak could change the situation. This belief creates the disempowerment of the victim mentality. Pinchas, on the other hand, didn't waste any time on the "blame game." Instead, he took action where he could and focused on remedying the negative behavior he was witnessing in the Jewish people.

What is perhaps even more amazing is that he went against his nature to do what he did. It would be easy to think, "Well, I am no Pinchas. I'm not bold like that, daring and courageous." But neither was he! The text explains that he took after his grandfather, Aaron, whose temperament was compassionate and peace-loving. And yet Pinchas killed, acting in complete opposition to his nature. And in so doing, he did what needed to be done. As explained by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, "he transcended his inborn instincts to bring peace between G-d and Israel."

Pinchas fought an external enemy by correcting an internal fault in the Jewish people.

The very purpose of negativity is for us to change it. We change "it," however, when we change ourselves. Just like the slogan, "Think globally, act locally." When you work on yourself, you are affecting the world. If you stop feeding negativity anywhere, it will starve everywhere.

For example, when Jacob was preparing for his famous encounter with his brother, Esau—whom Jacob feared could still want to kill him—Jacob prepared in three ways: He brought gifts, he prayed, and he equipped him-

self for war. And so dealing with evil is never a "one solution fits all" kind of approach. While politics and military operations may be necessary, at the same time, we must also regard the spiritual realm as every bit as real and powerful, if not more so.

Realistically, isn't that the realm that most of us can access anyway? The daily dose of bad news can depress you, enervate you and leave you trembling with fear waiting for horror to strike. That is, however, precisely when we need to rise to the occasion and actualize our potential of unilateral virtue, integrity and courage. We can all change not only our own fate, but also the destiny of the world.

### **Internalize & Actualize:**

1. Think about a situation in your life where you began with a "Balak" situation and ended with a "Pinchas" one (something that started negative and ended positive). Looking back, do you think you appreciated the outcome even more because of the hard start?

2. When have you gone against your nature and done what was needed in the moment? What did you learn from the situation? Have you tapped into this part of yourself more often because you now know it is within you?

3. We all deal with situations that we are convinced are the fault of another. What is something that you blame someone (or something) else for? What will change if you can take responsibility for it? Even if you can't control what is happening or has happened, you can control how you respond and react to it. Write down three things you can do differently in this situation.

## 3 More Jewish Prophets Everyone Should Know

*By Rabbi Menachem Posner*

### **7. Deborah**

Deborah the Prophetess ruled Israel from under a date tree (*tomar Devorah*) in the land of Ephraim. One reason for this open-air office was that she was wary of being alone with men who came to seek her counsel, and therefore chose to meet them in plain sight. Scripture describes her as "a woman of flames (*lapidot*)."  
The sages understood this to mean that she had