

Pinchas 5782
Rabbi Ariel Rackovsky

- I. Who is the person most easily associated with the character trait of peace?
 - A. Aharon HaKohein- was the lover of peace and the pursuer of peace
 - B. But the Text of the Torah says nothing about this character trait in connection with Aharon.
 - 1. In fact, there is only one person in the Torah, at all, that the Torah describes as having any connection to peace- Pinchas.
 - 2. Read pesukim.
 - a) What is the connection between his actions and peace?
- II. Different approaches- Reassurance, Repair, Reward
 - A. Chizkuni- safe from his enemies
 - B. Netziv- peace was a necessary blessing, after having committed such a violent act. Even if it was necessary to do something drastic to repair a breach of morality, an **act** of violence leaves an **imprint** of violence.
 - 1. Blessing of peace was that even if he did something so violent, it didn't imprint on his psyche
 - 2. Story of Benjamin Chodosh z"l, of Bridgeport, CT- friend of grandparents and later got to know his son Irving and family at the Jewish Center.
 - a) He was really sweet, respectful, kind, hardworking person. His grandchildren described him as a teddy bear.
 - b) You would never know, from looking at him, that he was a Lithuanian partisan who spent the war years hiding out in the forests around Vilna, killing Nazis! It was what he did- what he had to do- but not who he was.

C. Based on a idea shared by Rabbi Dr. Jeffrey Woolf of Bar Ilan

1. Aharon is the *Rodef Shalom*, but ultimately, didn't *achieve* peace, because true peace can never be attained when it involves compromising your standards and crossing red lines.
 - a) Aharon was too conciliatory
 - b) Pinchas understood that there is a time when one needs to say no, and that there are standards that cannot be compromised.
 - c) Challenge of middle east peace is that everyone agrees there are red lines- but each side's version is mutually exclusive.
2. Instructive because in the world of Halacha as well, there are people who are prepared to do away with every siman in the Shulchan Aruch because holding strong on a halachic matter might offend someone, might inconvenience someone, might be less than palatable to someone.
 - a) What/where they eat, what they do on Shabbos, etc.
3. Conversely, In the realm of observance, there are people who are so consumed with the law that they forget the fifth Shulchan Aruch- how it actually works with people.
 - a) When it is appropriate to be lenient, to find ways to make things work, look at the bigger picture.
4. That's why Pinchas is given the blessing of peace- that even though he defended the Torah, he would still be able to get along with people.

Phineas and Perv
Rabbi Ariel Rackovsky
Parshat Pinchas 5782

במדבר כ"ה:י"ב

לָכֵן אָמַר ה'נִי נָתַן לוֹ אֶת־בְּרִיתִי שְׁלוֹם

Say, therefore, 'I grant him My pact of friendship.

את בְּרִיתִי שְׁלוֹם אֵין לוֹ לִירֵא מִקְרוֹבֵי זִמְרִי וְכוּבִי. את בְּרִיתִי שְׁלוֹם,“

Chizkiyahu ben Manoach, Chizkuni- 13th Century France

“My covenant of peace.” He has no reason to fear the vengeance of either the relatives of Zimri or of Cosbi, the Midianite princess.

Rav Naftali Tzvi Yehuda Berlin “Netziv”- (Lithuania, 1816-1893),
Haamek Davar on the Torah

את בְּרִיתִי שְׁלוֹם – בשֹׁכֵר שֶׁהֵנִיחַ כַּעֲסוֹ וְחַמְתּוֹ שֶׁל הַקִּבְיָה בִּרְכוּ בַּמִּדַּת הַשְּׁלוֹם – שֶׁלֹּא יִקְפִּיד וְלֹא יִרְגִּיז.
וּבִשְׁבִיל כִּי טָבַע הַמַּעֲשֶׂה שֶׁעָשָׂה פִּינְחָס לְהַרוֹג נֶפֶשׁ בִּידּוֹ הָיָה נוֹתֵן לְהַשְׁאִיר בִּלְבַב הָרֹגֶשׁ עַז גַּם אַחֵר כַּךְ, אֲבָל
בְּאִשֶּׁר הָיָה לְשֵׁם שָׁמַיִם מְשׁוּם הָכִי בָּאָה הַבְּרָכָה שִׁיְהֵא תָמִיד בִּנְחָת וּבַמִּדַּת הַשְּׁלוֹם, וְלֹא יִהְיֶה זֶה הָעֲנִין לְפִוְקַת לֵב
... וְעֵיין כִּיּוֹצֵא בִּזְהָרֵי דְּבָרִים (יג, יח) בְּהוֹרֵגֵי עִיר הַנִּדְחָת.

As a reward for quieting the anger and fury of God, He blessed Pinchas with the attribute of peace- that he should not become angry or insistent. This is because the nature of the action Pinchas took in killing a person with his hands could leave in his heart a feeling of power and might even afterward. However, since he acted for the sake of God, the blessing came that he should always have a pleasant disposition and act with the attribute of peace, so that this matter not leave a lasting and deleterious impression on him...a similar blessing is found in Deuteronomy 13:18 with regard to those who annihilate the population of a wholly idolatrous city.