

THE COMMUNITY PARSHA SHEET



PARSHAT PINCHAS

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RABBI JONATHAN TAWIL
TAL Founder & Director

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The daughters of Tselofchad were very righteous and wise.

The Midrash (Otzar Midrashim p474) lists them among the 23 most righteous Jewish women in history.

Their father had died in the wilderness and left five girls behind. He had no sons. Now that the Bnei Yisrael were deciding on dividing the land of Israel, they realised that they would not receive a portion. This disturbed them tremendously. None of Tselofchads daughters were married and thus they would not inherit any land. They felt an injustice, their love for Eretz Yisrael was great, their father had left Egypt just like everyone else yet they as women would not be able to inherit a portion in the land. They presented their case to the judges of tens, who referred it up to the judges of hundreds who again referred it up to the judges of thousands, until they to referred it on to none other then Moshe Rabenu.

How did the Bnot Tselofchad present their case to Moshe?

Our Sages (Bava Batra 119b) explain that they brought their case modestly in front of Moshe.

Rather than venting their frustration out at Moshe and the judicial system, they approached Moshe with the following question.

There is a law called Yibum. This refers to a man who marries a woman, and unfortunately dies without his wife having given birth to any children. The Torah teaches us that the brother of the deceased now has a mitzvah called Yibum to marry his brother's wife and thus (with Hashem's help) have children, which will enable the name of the deceased to

continue in this world.

The Bnot Tselofchad asked Moshe; what happens if the man and his wife have a girl and then the man dies? Is there still a mitzvah of Yibum? Does the fact that the girl has been born represent a continuation of the deceased in this world and thus Yibum does not need to be performed or is the girl not considered as proper inheritance and thus the wife should now remarry to the deceased's brother.

To this Moshe answered that there is no law of Yibum in this case.

Once the man had a child, then there is no longer a law of Yibum.

The Bnot Tselofchad continued, saying, if so then why with regards to the mitzvah of Yibum are daughters called an inheritance, yet by the division of the land of Israel the daughters of the deceased are not?

This Kasha (question) was so awesome that Moshe had to turn to Hashem for guidance.

The episode is fascinating, and we can learn a great deal from both the Bnot Tselofchad and from Moshe.

The Bnot Tselofchad brought their claim in a righteous manner; they desired the land with great love. (Rashi points out an interesting juxtaposition. The Torah says (Bamidbar 26:64) that the men of the "Desert Generation" died in the desert, because they did not love Israel. The next section tells of the daughters of Tselofchad and their request, to show the great difference between them. The men said "Nitnah Rosh veNashuvah Mitzraymah -Let us turn our heads and go back to Egypt," and the women said "Tenah Lanu Achuzah - Give us a share.")

Moshe for his part as a great leader is not afraid to show that he is uncertain of the Halacha, he is happy and proactive in bringing their case to Hashem.

In fact our Sages note that the Torah

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relates - Vayakrev Moshe – Moshe brought close – he didn't just go and ask, rather it was a Hakrava – bringing near to Hashem.

What is the meaning of this Hakrava? After the passing of the previous Satmar Rebbe, Rabbi Yoel Teitlebaum, his successor the Sigeter Rebbe, came to Monsey to pay his respects to Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetzky, of blessed memory, who at the time was the oldest Rosh Yeshiva of the Lithuanian Yeshiva world. Along with the Rebbe came a significant group of his Chassidim who clung to the newly appointed seer and were very curious to experience this first encounter between the Chassidic leader and the renowned Lithuanian sage. The Chassidim piled into the house

and began pushing to the front of the table Rav Yaakov, who was accustomed to orderly conduct, asked that the Chassidim be seated as well. He mentioned that there were folding chairs in his basement.

One by one, each of the Chasidim brought up a chair from the basement, unfolded it, and sat down. After watching this scene repeat itself, Rav Yaakov could not contain himself.

"When somebody carries a chair from the basement and then sits on it, all he is is a Shlepper. But if each of you would bring a chair for someone else, then you become elevated. Instead of shleppers you become ba'alei chessed, kind-hearted men who are helping each other! With almost the same action, you are transformed

from chair-haulers into holy people who sweat on behalf of their friend! Let us bring our actions away from ourselves and closer to Hashem!"

When Moshe heard the request of the Bnot Tselofchad, not only was he not worried at showing he did not know the rule in such a case, but when he did ask Hashem, he asked as if it was personal to him. Thus, Vayakrev - he brought their claim close to Hashem.

This episode in the Torah, teaches us that we should always endeavour higher and higher in our spiritual requests, always be prepared to ask. And on the other side of the coin, we should be prepared to say we don't know when we are unsure and always try and view the other position as close to us.



RABBI DAVID BAADANI
Director - TAL Chazanut Program

PARSHAT PINCHAS

The daughters of Tselofchad come to Moshe with an argument, 'why should our father's share in the division of the land of Israel be reduced, as our father died due to his sin and did not participate in Korach's dispute against Moshe. Is it because he left no inheritors (sons) but only daughters that he would lose his share in the land of Eretz Yisrael? וַיִּקְרַב מֹשֶׁה אֶת מִשְׁפָּחָן לִפְנֵי ה'. Give us a piece of land in the portion of land allocated to our father's brothers'.

So, Moshe brought their case before 'ה'. Why did Moshe Rabbeinu not use his Torah knowledge and his 40 years of experience in leading the nation to judge this case?

From this Parasha we learn to what extent personal affiliation with a case can affect judgement, how much it can blind the eyes of the judge and distort their inner wisdom and how much a person should be aware of the power of physical touch and the lack of objectivity that exists in every situation in his life.

The daughters of Tselofchad bring their case before Moses. Moses, who learned

the whole Torah, could probably have judged them in the same way that all the sages of Israel would have judged throughout the ages. The point is that the daughters of Tselofchad in their claim added a sentence that brought up fear in Moshe Rabbeinu that his opinion would no longer be objective.

אָבִינוּ מֵת בַּמִּדְבָּר וְהוּא לֹא הָיָה בְּתוֹךְ הָעֵדָה הַנוֹעֲדִים עַל ה' בַּעֲדַת קֹרַח כִּי בָחֲטְאוּ מֵת וּבָנִים לֹא הָיוּ לוֹ -

Our father died in the wilderness. He was not one of the faction, Korah's faction, which banded together against 'ה', but died for his own sin; and he has left no sons.

Bringing up the incident of Korach's self-seeking request for greatness, which took place in the wilderness nearly thirty-eight years ago, leads to Moshe Rabbeinu recusing himself from adjudicating their current case. Despite the case being a past event, and despite Moshe's lack of involvement in the original dispute. He has proven loyalty to God and he voluntarily steps aside. בְּכָל בֵּיתִי נֶאֱמָן הוּא. He is trusted throughout My household, knowing human nature, Moshe was afraid that his personal affiliation will cause his judgement to lean towards their favour.

Our sages have stated that אדם קרוב

'a person is close to themselves', and as a result his choices will never be objective and clean of biased opinion. Once a person is aware of the natural tendency that exists in them as a human being they are already in a more real and more faithful place, but to this self-awareness we should add the advice we received from the sages in Pirkei Avot.

יְהוֹשֻעַ בֶּן פְּרִיְחָיָה אוֹמֵר: עֲשֵׂה לָךְ רֵב, וְקִנְיָן לָךְ חֵבֶר; וְהָיָה דִן אֶת כָּל הָאָדָם לְכַף זְכוּת.

Joshua ben Perahiah used to say: 'appoint for thyself a teacher, and acquire for thyself a companion and judge all men with the scale weighted in his favor.'

The ability to be free of a biased opinion as much as possible and to judge each person or case favourably will come 'by appointing thyself a teacher and acquiring thyself a companion'. A Rabbi, a mentor, a guide, a person without any biased opinion in the matter, with whom it will be possible to share, consult and get a different, external opinion. This will give him the tools to make a decision based on another, new and different point of view.

Shabbat Shalom.



RABBI YEHONATAN SALEM

PIECES OF THE JIGSAW

When Moshe Rabbenu realised that he was not going to be granted entry to the Promised Land, he understood that he must request a suitable substitute to bear the leadership mantle after his passing. Moshe asked G-d for a candidate who would be able to understand and tolerate the character and needs of every individual member of the people. G-d replied that this candidate would be Yehoshua, Moshe's prize pupil. Our Sages tell us that he merited this because, besides being an assiduous student, he was the one who organised the seats in the Bet Hamidrash, the place where the people came to learn from Moshe Rabbenu. He would organise seats for everyone and do the necessary chores so that every individual would be cared for.

We find that many of the great leaders of Israel were shepherds, as the caring and guiding involved is an appropriate preparation for their future task. Our greatest leader, Moshe Rabbenu, proved his leadership qualities by the way he cared for his father-in-law, Yitro's, sheep. One day, while tending the sheep, a young one started to run away. Moshe, concerned for its welfare, followed it. It continued

to run until, out of breath, it came to a pool of water, where it began drinking thirstily. Moshe exclaimed that he had not realised that it was so thirsty. Assuming that it must be tired after running such a long way, he put it on his shoulders and carried it back to the flock. When G-d saw the concern and care Moshe Rabbenu showed for even the smallest animal, He decided that Moshe was truly fitting to be a leader of His flock.

Sometimes, people think that only the "big" mitzvot or aveirot – sins are important enough to be concerned with, whereas the seemingly "smaller" duties are trivial and are not worth bothering over. They may say: "My time is too precious to teach that young child," "I only do big business deals!" "I only come a few minutes late to synagogue!" However, it is a great virtue to realise and understand that the small details and the seemingly-irrelevant things are just as important as the big things. If we get into the habit of taking every "minor" situation and opportunity seriously, we will be granted the ability to perform correctly when "big" opportunities arise, hence affording us the chance to reach greatness.

Like a jigsaw may comprise of thousands of pieces, so too, our lives are made up of millions of possible

opportunities for growth. Each opportunity, like a piece in a jigsaw, completes the picture. However, only a person who understands that the lack of one piece will cause the entire jigsaw to be incomplete, has a chance of ending up with a complete picture. Similarly, in order to make the most of our life's experiences, we must be aware that ignoring seemingly insignificant opportunities for growth will cause the makeup and perfection of our personalities to be incomplete. A person may marvel at the vastness of our Torah, its length, breadth and depth, which are far past our comprehension. Yet, the clever person understands that if he starts learning a few halachot – laws every day, eventually he will become learned. Those few coins, which we received as weekly pocket-money when we were children, seemed worthless. Yet, my father said: "Don't just spend it on sweets. If you save, you will see that with time it will come to a sizeable sum!"

When the next seemingly unimportant situation arises, do not forget that you are also being tested on trivialities. By giving it the proper consideration, you could be on your way to becoming a great person, as we see from the dignitaries of our history.



OUR CHAHAMIM

Rabbi Nathan David Rabinowitz – The Rebbe of Pertzova

The Rebbe Rabbi Nathan David Rabinowitz, from the Polish city of Pertzova, was a gaon in Torah and famous in his time. He was the son of the tzaddik Rabbi Yitzchak Yaakov of Biala (from whom emerged the famous Biala dynasty, which exists to the present day), as well as the grandson of Rabbi Nathan David of Shidlovtza and the great-grandson of Rabbi Yerachmiel. He in turn was the firstborn son of the saintly Rabbi Yaakov Yitzchak, the Yid HaKodesh

(Holy Jew) of Pshischa, may his merit protect us all.

People could see that Rabbi Nathan David was from a noble line. From very early on in life, he spent many hours each day diligently studying Torah and Chassidut, completely separated from the vanities of this world. In fact it was said that he didn't even know what a coin looked like.

Rabbi Nathan David devoted himself not only to the revealed Torah. He also possessed an extensive and clear understanding of the hidden Torah, and

many Kabbalists of his time came to study with him late at night. He wrote many books on Kabbalah, but unfortunately the world did not merit to see them. These books were lost forever, a fact that he bitterly regretted for his entire life. Rabbi Nathan David often described himself as being the root of the soul of the saintly Rabbi David of Lelov. As it turned out, Rabbi Nathan David passed away on Rabbi David's yahrtzeit, Shevat 7, dying in the prime of his life. May his merit protect us all.



HALACHOT BY RABBI ELI MANSOUR

IS IT PERMISSIBLE TO PLACE FOOD ITEMS SUCH AS A BEVERAGE BOTTLE BENEATH THE TABLE AT A MEAL

Ben Ish Chai (Rabbi Yosef Chayim of Baghdad, 1833-1909), in his work "Rav Pe'alim" (2:12), addresses the custom observed by many not to place any food or beverages underneath the table during a meal, such as if there is no room on the

table for all the serving platters. He writes that this custom is mentioned already by Rabbi Chayim Palachi (Turkey, 1788-1868), in his work "Chayim La'Rosh." Rabbi Palachi explained that "Chitzonim," impure spiritual forces, may be present under the table during a meal, and one should ensure not to expose food or beverages to these forces. Accordingly, the Ben Ish Chai ruled that this practice should, indeed, be followed. It should be noted that this Halacha applies only to meals that include bread, and only during the meal. If one eats a meal that does not include bread or sits at the table

after the meal has concluded, he may place food or beverages under the table. Furthermore, Chacham Ovadia Yosef, in his work Halichot Olam (vol. 7, p. 217), writes that if one did place a food or beverage under the table during a meal, it remains permissible for consumption.

Summary: One should not place food or beverages under the table during a meal in which bread is eaten. Nevertheless, if one did place a food or beverage under the table during such a meal, it is permissible for consumption.



WEEKLY PARSHA OVERVIEW

Parshat Pinchas

Hashem tells Moshe to inform Pinchas that he will receive Hashem's "covenant of peace" in reward for his bold action — executing Zimri and the Midianite princess Kozbi. Hashem commands Moshe to maintain a state of enmity with the Midianites, who lured the Jewish People into sin. Moshe and Elazar are told to count the Jewish People. The Torah lists the names of the families in each tribe. The total number of males eligible to serve in the army is 601,730. Hashem instructs Moshe how to allot the Land of

Israel to the Bnei Yisrael. The number of the Levites' families is recorded. Tzlofchad's daughters file a claim with Moshe. In the absence of a brother, they request their late father's portion in the Land. Moshe asks Hashem for the ruling, and Hashem tells Moshe that their claim is just. The Torah teaches the laws and priorities which determine the order of inheritance. Hashem tells Moshe that he will ascend a mountain and view the Land that the Jewish People will soon enter, although Moshe

himself will not enter it. Moshe asks Hashem to designate the subsequent leader, and Hashem selects Yehoshua bin Nun. Moshe ordains Yehoshua as his successor in the presence of the entire nation. This Torah portion concludes with special teachings of the service in the Beit Hamikdash.

Rabbi Sinclair,
Seasonsofthemoon.com



1

Why was Pinchas not originally a kohen?

Aharon's grandson, was born prior to the anointing, and his sons (not grandsons), and to any of their descendants born after they were anointed. Pinchas, 25:13 - Kehuna (priesthood) was given to Aharon

2

Why was Moav spared the fate of Midian?

25:18 - For the sake of Ruth, a future descendant of Moav.

3

What does the yud and hey added to the family names testify?

26:5 - That the families were truly children of their tribe. These two letters spell G-d's Name.



4

Korach and his congregation became a "sign." What do they signify?

26:10 - That kehuna was given forever to Aharon and his sons, and that no one should ever dispute this.

5

Why did Korach's children survive?

26:11 - Because they repented.

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