

## ❖ PARSHAT PINCHAS

This week's Torah portion, Pinchas, details the manner in which the land of Israel was to be apportioned between the Twelve Tribes. The Torah states: "According to the mouth of the lot shall the inheritance of each be divided." The lot determined which section of the Land of Israel each tribe would inhabit. It was not a rational process, but a method of dividing the land in which no logical reasoning was apparent.

According to Chasidic philosophy, the physical plane of existence is a reflection of its higher spiritual source. It follows, therefore, that just as the division of the Land of Israel was accomplished by means of a lot, so too are certain aspects of a Jew's spiritual service determined in a super-rational manner. To explain: Every Jew is obligated to keep all of the Torah's mitzvot. However, certain commandments are more pertinent to some individuals than to others.

We are told of various Sages of long ago who were especially scrupulous in their performance of one mitzva. Of course, being Tzadikim, they observed all the Torah's commandments. But one mitzva was more personally relevant than all the rest. How do we explain this? That a particular mitzva has special significance for a given individual is not something that can be explained rationally; the person himself doesn't necessarily perceive that this is so, either. In truth, it is a matter that transcends intellectual understanding, just like the process of choosing by lot. Indeed, the particular mitzva that is most relevant to each of us is determined from Above.

The Jew's function in life is to be especially careful in that one area, and to observe that mitzva to the best of his ability. The simplest way to determine which mitzva is the most vital to us personally is by examining the relative ease or difficulty we encounter in observing it. As a general rule, the mitzva we find the most difficult to fulfill is the one that is most imperative on a personal level. In fact, the hardship we experience is proof of this, as the evil inclination, recognizing the mitzva's special significance, will spare no effort in trying to deter us. The machinations of the evil inclination increase in direct proportion to the mitzva's importance.

The lesson to be learned is tremendous. Whenever we find it exceptionally difficult to do a certain mitzva, or it seems that the effort required of us is greater than that required of other people, it is forbidden to throw up our hands in defeat. On the contrary, we must try even harder in that one area, as it is most relevant to us personally. Indeed, the mitzva for which we must overcome the greatest number of obstacles is the one which can be said to have fallen to our lot. (From L'Chaim 5757, #478, Adapted for Maayan Chai from Likutei Sichot, Vol. 2)

**"Pinchas the son of Elazar the son of Aaron." (25:10)** Why does G-d refer to Pinchas as the "son of Elazar the son of Aaron"? Because the tribes of Israel were mocking him, saying, "Have you seen this son of the fattener, whose mother's father (Jethro) fattened calves for idolatrous sacrifices, and now he goes and kills a prince in Israel?" Therefore, G-d traces his lineage to Aaron. (Talmud, Sanhedrin 82b)

Few professions are as cruel and inhumane as the fattening of calves for slaughter. So when Pinchas slew Zimri, many said: "Look at this holy zealot! He acts as if motivated by the desire to avenge the honor of G-d and save the people, but, in truth, he has merely found a holy outlet for his cruel and violent nature. After all, it's in his blood--just look at his maternal grandfather..." So G-d described him as "Pinchas the son of Elazar the son of Aaron" in order to attest that in character and temperament he actually took after his paternal grandfather--the compassionate and peace-loving

Aaron. The true greatness of Pinchas lay in that he acted in complete opposition to his nature, transcending his inborn instincts to bring peace between G-d and Israel. (The Lubavitcher Rebbe, Chabad online.com)

**"My offering, My bread" (28:2)** The people of Israel provide nourishment for their Father in Heaven (Zohar) The Talmud (Berachot 10a) points to the relationship between the soul and the body as a model for the nature of G-d's relationship with the world. The soul cannot be perceived by the senses, yet its presence and effect is keenly felt in every part of the body; so too, G-d, though He transcends our reality and is utterly beyond its perception, vitalizes the entirety of creation and is fully present in its every part.

This explains the amazing statement by the Zohar that "The people of Israel provide nourishment for their Father in Heaven." Food is the glue that keeps soul and body together, sustaining the embodiment of the spirit within its material shell. By the same token, our service of G-d is what sustains G-d's involvement with His creation, "feeding" His desire to continue to infuse it with existence and life.

Thus G-d refers to the korbanot--the animal and meal offerings brought in the Holy Temple--as "My bread." The korbanot (and their present-day substitute, prayer) are the highest expression of our striving to serve G-d and come close to Him; as such, they are the "food" which sustains the life of the universe, the fuel that keeps the Divine soul "alive" within the body of creation. (Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, ibid)

## ❖ THOUGHTS: Brief glimpses of the Rebbe's unique insights.

**Childhood:** "A person is obligated to say: The entire world was created for my sake." (Talmud, Sanhedrin 37a). To a child, this is obvious fact. He or she is, and is the center and focus of all. Father and mother and the rest of the universe exist merely to cater to his needs. The undesirable aspects of such an attitude are self-evident, and weeding out the negative in man's base instincts is what education is all about. But the egocentric instinct that the child exemplifies has a positive side as well. A child has no problem dealing with an insignificance of self in face of humanity's billions and the vastness of the universe. He is utterly convinced that his existence has meaning and his deeds have consequence.

This is the child in ourselves that we must learn to cultivate: the conviction that our every thought and deed is of real, even global, significance. We know that a sneeze in New Jersey can cause a thunderstorm in China. Can we say the same of the social universe? Can a single act, word or thought on your part resound in billions of lives? Ask your child. Or the child in you. (From: therebbe.org)

## ❖ LAWS OF SHABBAT - 39 Melachot: Tochain (Grinding)

**Ain Tochain Achar Tochain ( There is no Melocho of grinding after grinding):** It is permitted to crush or grind foods or substances that were previously crushed or ground, because nothing new or significant is being accomplished with the grinding. What is being done presently to this substance was basically achieved once before. EX: 1) It is permissible to crush a cookie (e.g. for a cake topping) or matzah into matzah meal, because the main ingredient in these foods (flour) was ground once before. 2) One may crush a medicine tablet (to cause it to dissolve into a spoonful of water and sugar) for a child who is permitted to take this medicine on Shabbos. 3) One may crush granulated sugar or salt that has hardened into lumps (e.g. due to humidity) .(From: The 39 Melocho's by Dovid Ribiat)

A PRACTICE OF MY FATHER'S:  
 WHEN TRAVELLING, EVEN WHEN SPENDING MONTHS IN ONE PLACE, HE WOULD RECITE T'FILAT  
 HADERECH, THE PRAYER FOR TRAVELLERS (P. 86) DAILY AFTER DAVENING, OMITTING G-D'S NAME IN THE  
 CONCLUSION. (FROM REBBE'S HAYOM YOM TAMMUZ 19)

*Great things are not what is demanded from our generation. The previous generations did all that for us. We need only do the small things -- but in a more difficult time. For us, self sacrifice could mean nothing more than a simple change of habit.* - From: "Bringing Heaven Down to Earth"

**PARTICIPATE IN WEEKLY CLASSES**

<b><u>Sunday</u></b>	<b>8:00 AM</b>	<b>Gemara-Tractate Berachot (men)</b>
<b><u>Monday</u></b>	<b>8:00 PM</b>	<b>Chumash (men and women)</b>
<b><u>Tuesday</u></b>	<b>8:00 PM</b>	<b>Gemara-Tractate Sukkha (men)</b>
<b><u>Wednesda y</u></b>	<b>8:30 PM</b>	<b>Halacha and Tanya (women)</b>
<b><u>Thursday</u></b>	<b>10:00 AM</b>	<b>Chassidus (women)</b>
	<b>8:00 PM</b>	<b>Class for Beverly Hills Highschool Students</b>
<b><u>Daily</u></b>	<b>6:45 to 7:15 AM</b>	<b>Chasiddus</b>

**SHABBAT PARSHAT PINCHAS**  
  
*July 21, 2000*  
  
**Candlelighting: 7:43 PM**  
**Friday Mincha: 7:55 PM**  
**Early Minyan 6:25 PM**

**LATEST TIME FOR SHEMA: 9:28 AM**

**SHABBAT MORNING**

- Tanya 8:45 AM
- Shacharit 9:30 AM followed by Kiddush & Cholent.
- Pirkei Avos 6:45 PM
- Mincha 7:30 PM followed by Seuda Shlishit
- Shabbat ends 8:43 PM

**K** There will be no class on Monday through Thursday, July 24 - 27.

*Kiddush* this week is being sponsored by Albert Sarraf - Kashani in memory of his father's yartzheit.

f*Yartzheits*: Avraham Eshel (Varda Rav - Noy's father) - Tammuz 19

*Happy Birthday* to Isaac Gershon Mintz, Yoseph Illulian

**DAILY MINYONIM:**  
**Shacharit: Mon-Fri: 6:00 AM & 7:30 AM**  
**Sunday: 9:00 AM**  
**Mincha/Maariv: 7:55 PM**

**GOOD SHABBOS!**



