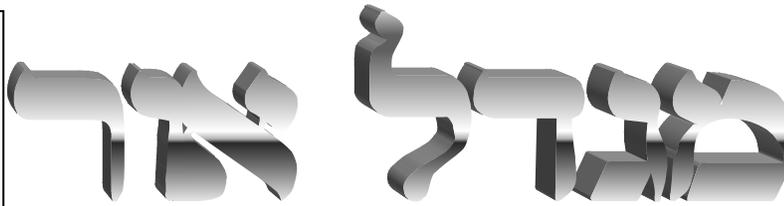


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A publication dedicated to Harbotzas Torah

לע"נ This issue sponsored

נפתלי מאיר
בן הר' חיים ארי' ע"ה
Friedman

Tully had many friends who already miss him dearly.

Zmanim for שבת

Wesley Hills, NY

- 8:11 - הדלקת נרות
- 8:29 - שקיעה
- 8:24 - זק"ש מ"א
- 9:18 - זק"ש גר"א
- 10:32 - סוף זמן תפילה
- 8:29 - שקיעה
- 9:19* - צאת הכוכבים
- 9:42 - צאת 72

* Based on Emergence of 3 Stars
Times Courtesy of MyZmanim.com

Did You Know?

In the Sefer Torah, certain sections are broken up by blank spaces that are either small or large. In the chumash, a small break is indicated by the letter פ, while the larger ones are indicated by a פ.

Last week's Parsha, Parshas Balak, had no breaks until the very end when it recounts the act of Pinchas, and the Chofetz Chaim explains why. He quotes Rashi in Vayikra (1:10) who says that these spaces were pauses given to allow Moshe Rabbeinu time to internalize the teachings he was receiving. Likewise, these breaks are conveyed throughout history for all students of Torah to have time for contemplation as well.

Therefore, says the Chofetz Chaim, when HaShem spoke to Bilaam, who was merely a conduit through whom HaShem's word flowed, but who would not actually reflect on what he was being told nor integrate it into himself, HaShem did not give these moments of pause.

At the beginning of this week's Parsha, we find an unusual break in the middle of a verse. It says, "And it was after the plague [large break] and HaShem spoke to Moshe and Aharon the Kohain saying:" Perhaps we can follow the Chofetz Chaim's reasoning that time is given for consideration and say that in this case the time was given to consider the plague that befell the Jews.

In other words, when bad things happen we should pause and reflect on what they mean and what messages they hold for us. They, like the Torah, are meant to become part of our being and change us.

Thought of the week:

There is nothing noble in being superior to someone else. Nobility lies in being superior to your former self.

"והיתה לו ולזרעו אחריו ברית כהונת עולם תחת אשר קנא לאלקיו ויכפר על בני ישראל."

"And it shall be for him and his offspring after him, a covenant of eternal priesthood for he took vengeance for his G-d and atoned for the Children of Israel." (Num. 25:13)

In case you've just joined us, Pinchas saw Zimri, a prince of the Tribe of Shimon, publicly consorting with a Midianite princess. Pinchas took a spear and ran it through the two of them as one. By killing them, he defended G-d's honor and assuaged His wrath.

Though Pinchas was a grandchild of Aharon, he was born before Aharon was appointed Kohain so he did not inherit the priestly status. Through his actions, however, Pinchas earned a gift from HaShem and he and his descendants were given Kehuna.

What was so unique about his actions that they earned him not only the priesthood, but a heavenly covenant of peace, in which no one would argue about Pinchas's claim to this role, as well as a heritage to pass down to his children?

Perhaps the answer lies within the very words of our posuk. While Pinchas took vengeance for G-d, he still atoned for the Jewish People.

It is not uncommon for people to suffer righteous indignation when someone else sins against HaShem. However, for them to be entirely focused on G-d's honor, without any personal motivations is a much more difficult thing. While Pinchas did what he had to for the sake of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, he did not condemn anyone else nor pat himself on the back for his high moral standards. He understood that temptation exists and did exactly what was necessary at the moment without using it as a soapbox to decry Jewish sin.

Because of this, he and his descendants merited the Kehuna, through which they would atone for the Jews generation after generation. In essence, this covenant was not so much a gift, the reward for an unrelated act, as it was recognition that Pinchas was the man who belonged in this position.

To lead and guide Jews, one must love them selflessly and seek to purify them without destroying them. In fact, Pinchas and his descendants were given the Kehuna Gedola, the status of High Priest. While other Kohanim come and go, serving only at specific times and ages, the Kohain Gadol is always there.

His children, by dint of having grown up in a home that looked for the best in others and didn't degrade people, were themselves worthy of serving as Kohanim Gedolim. That is why it says, "His children after him," for if the children emulate their father they are worthy successors to him.

It is said that Pinchas is Eliyahu, the Navi who will herald the arrival of Moshiach. Though we might be unworthy of it, and covered in the filth of sin, he will not abandon us, and will vigorously defend us, leading us to purity. May it be so speedily in our days, with HaShem's dome of protection spread over our entire nation.

R' Levi Yitzchok of Berdichev was known for his love of fellow Jews and his ability to always see the best in them.

Once, he saw a man standing outside the shul greasing the wheels of his wagon while wearing his talis and tefillin!

Instead of becoming angry at this sacrilege, he raised his eyes towards Heaven and said, "Ribono Shel Olam, see how holy Your people are! Even when he is busy greasing his wheels, this fine Jew remembers to pray to you!"