

## A LESSON FROM THE PARASHA

### Peace

*Parshas Pinchas* tells us about the *korbanos*, the animals that were offered in the *Beis Hamikdash*, for each *Yom Tov*. On *Sukkos* we bring a total of seventy bulls, which correspond to the seventy nations of the world. Each bull is brought for one of the nations. On the eighth day we bring one bull as a special private offering to Hashem just for the Jewish nation. The last day of *Yom Tov* is the Jews' special time with Hashem after spending so much time on the rest of the world.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein asks a fundamental question on this idea. Why is it so necessary to bring *korbanos* for the seventy nations of the world? Why do we spend the whole *Sukkos* on every other nation and just barely remember to think about ourselves until the end of *Yom Tov*? Why can't we spend *Yom Tov* focusing on our relationship with Hashem?

Rav Moshe answers that Hashem created the world in a way that every person and every nation is dependent on another. How many countries are needed to make all the many parts of a car? How many countries are needed to make all of the many parts of an airplane? How many countries do we import produce from? We get much of our oil from the countries of the Middle East. When we think about this, we realize how important peace is. Every nation relies on another and without peace, how would the world manage?

Yet, sometimes we forget this. When personal pride, wealth, and power become priorities, peace gets neglected. However, if we remember that this world is not the final destination, but rather the journey, then the values that threaten peace lose their priority.

We bring *korbanos* throughout the *Yom Tov* of *Succos* as a merit for all of the nations of the world. However, if we would not spend some time on the ultimate goal of getting close to Hashem, we would not be able to care about the other nations. We would start to feel that this world is the real goal and anti-peace values would become the priority. Only when we serve Hashem will we be able to overlook the small problems and retain true peace. Thus,

we balance both things during the *Yom Tov* of *Sukkos*.

I saw a story with Rav Moshe that I feel illustrates this idea of perspective to keep the peace. During the summer, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein would spend many weeks in the Catskill mountains with one of the summer camps for *yeshiva* students there. At one point he was writing down some of his novel Torah thoughts, using a fountain pen with a bottle of ink next to him on the table. Rav Moshe got up to take care of something and left his papers drying on the table. Some of the *yeshiva* students wanted to take a peek at what Rav Moshe was writing about and bent over his papers. While leaning over, one of them inadvertently knocked over the bottle of ink, causing it to spill all over Rav Moshe's papers. The boys were terrified and quickly began to flee the scene. The *mashgiach* (spiritual supervisor) happened to catch what had happened and sent the boys back to apologize to Rav Moshe. Frozen with fear they mumbled apologies to Rav Moshe when he returned, expecting to be lambasted for their mistake. Instead, Rav Moshe smiled sweetly and told the boys not to worry about it. The *mashgiach*, watching this exchange, could not help but be astounded by what he saw. Rav Moshe had not shown the slightest bit of aggravation at the loss of his hard work. He could not help asking Rav Moshe how he was able to do it. Rav Moshe answered, "I've been working my whole life not to become angry." Rav Moshe's understanding of the importance of peace and another's feelings helped him treat everyone with such respect and sensitivity. 🕊️



## THE RABBI WAS ASKED ON THE PARASHA

THIS WEEK WITH  
RABBI CHAIM HEINEMANN

This week's *parasha*:

Q) On *Motzei Shabbos* (Saturday night) we seem to sing all sorts of *zemiros* (songs) which make mention of *Eliyahu Hanavi* (Elijah the Prophet). The most well-known is the *zemer* which begins with the words "*Eliyahu Hanavi, Eliyahu Hatishbi*." The song, which is sourced in a *Medresh* (*Yalkut Shimon*), lists many characteristics of *Eliyahu* and follows the *Aleph-Beis*. The first four lines, in describing *Eliyahu*, are referring to the identity of *Pinchas* in our *parasha*, namely: the one who was a *knaoi* (zealot) and received the peace prize, and whose actions atoned for the sins of *Yisroel*. He was also one who lived through twelve generations

Why are these *Piyutim* sung specifically on *Motzei Shabbos*?

A) There are many answers out there. Let's touch upon three of them.

1) *Havdalah*, the prayer that demarcates the end of *Shabbat* and the start of the work week, means "separation." Indeed, its text praises Hashem who "separates between the holy and the mundane, between light and dark, between Israel and the nations, between the seventh day and the six days of activity." The *Avudraham* suggests that this connects to *Eliyahu* who, according to some opinions, will be tasked with differentiating and clarifying the lineage of Jewish families.

2) According to tradition, if all Jews keep just one *Shabbat*, *Moshiach* will come. Thus, at the conclusion of *Shabbat*, we turn to Hashem saying: We kept *Shabbat*, now please send *Eliyahu* to herald the redemption.

3) The *Tur/Shulchan Aruch* (O.C. 295:1) gives a different explanation. *Chazal* (the sages) teach us that *Eliyahu* will not

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## THE RABBI WAS ASKED ON THE PARASHA

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come with *Moshiach* on Friday, as then everyone is preoccupied with making Shabbos. He also will not come on Shabbos because *Tachum Shabbos* [the prohibition against traveling beyond a certain limit (2,000 *amos* outside of the city) on Shabbos] may present a *halachic* problem, when Eliyahu traverses the great distance from the heavens to Earth. On *Motzei Shabbos* the above problems are resolved. We hope to be able to welcome him and we express this yearning in the form of this song.

Let me end off with a question for you! We all know that Eliyahu is also known as the *Malach Habris* (Angel of the Covenant) and is present at every *Bris Milah* (circumcision). In his honor we designate a special chair, the *Kisei Shel Eliyahu* at the *bris*, and the *mohel* asks Eliyahu to stand at his right side and help him before the *bris*. All the references to Eliyahu at a *bris* are made on Shabbos, as well as during the week. If so, why is it that Eliyahu has no problem coming to a *Bris Milah* on Shabbos while traveling to herald the coming of *Moshiach* poses *Techum* issues? 🕒

Something always bugged you about the upcoming parasha (or last week's)? Ask! If you would like to submit a question on the parasha, please email it to [parasha@cincynkollel.org](mailto:parasha@cincynkollel.org). Questions will be selected to address at the discretion of the Rabbi who is answering that week. Questions may be edited for brevity/clarity.

## A SHINING EXAMPLE

Lifsha was sent to America by her parents in the early 20th century with the hope that she, as the oldest sibling in the family, would establish herself there and then help the rest of the family come over. Lifsha worked for many years, settling in Baltimore, with the hope that one day she would see her family again. By the time she sent the letters to Europe telling her family she was ready to bring them, World War I was raging and her letters received no reply. She waited and sent more letters, but she received nothing. Determined woman that she was, her heartbreak at losing contact with her own family drove her to begin anew and raise her own Jewish family. She soon met a young man who shared her drive to create a Jewish family. However, things did not seem to be going according to plan. After waiting several years, Lifsha went to a doctor who confidently told her she was not capable of bearing children. Crushed, Lifsha and her husband decided to try adopting. Contacting the Jewish Agency, they were told that there was a baby in New York City up for adoption. Hopping on the first train to New York their hopes were raised only to be dashed again when they were told that a relative had decided to adopt the baby. "We traveled all this way for nothing!?" exclaimed Lifsha to the Jewish Agency representative who had shared the news. "Well, there is an orphan refugee up for adoption as well. Her name is Miriam and she is very sweet," said the representative. Lifsha acquiesced, but when she saw that Miriam was already eight years old, she said she needed time to think it over. After several weeks of deliberation, Lifsha called the Jewish Agency and asked if the girl named Miriam was still available for adoption. "Yes she is," said a woman on the

## A BA'AL HATURIM FOR YOU

In the beginning of the *parasha*, G-d tells Moshe to tell Pinchas of the blessings he will receive for his act of vengeance on G-d's behalf. One is "*B'risi shalom*," My covenant of peace. In the word *shalom* the letter *vav* is cut in the middle. Ba'al Haturim brings two reasons for this break in the *vav*. One is from the Talmud in *Kiddushin* which learns that the word can be expounded as if the word is read with a *yud* instead of a *vav* and is therefore read as the word "*Shaleim*," which means whole, and is the source that a Kohen be free from blemish in order to serve in the temple. 🕒

other end, "but we have now located a brother and they refuse to be parted so you would need to adopt both of them." Lifsha took a deep breath and told the woman that she and her husband would again come to New York in order to meet the brother. When she and her husband saw that Yaakov, Miriam's brother, was as sweet as Miriam was, they decided to adopt them. After finally arriving back in Baltimore, Miriam's attention was quickly drawn to the picture of Lifsha's mother on top of the mantle. "That's my Bubby," she cried! "What do you mean sweetheart?" asked Lifsha. Miriam quickly opened her bag to show that she had the same picture! "And these are my parents," Miriam said, showing another crumpled picture to Lifsha. Lifsha could not believe her eyes, but she was looking at a picture of her sister Sara and her husband that she had never met. She had adopted her own niece and nephew! 🕒

## THE FALSE MESSIAHS OF JEWISH HISTORY

RABBI NOSSON WIGGINS

### FALSE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST RAMCHAL (PART V)

Recap: After taking his first public oath in Padua in 1730, Ramchal lived in relative peace. During the next five years, Ramchal got married and published a few *seforim*, most famously his *Daas Tevunos*.

All this happened while Ramchal was being financially supported by his father who, as mentioned, was a successful businessman. However, in 1735, Jacob Vita Luzzatto lost his fortunes and Ramchal suddenly found himself on his own. As a result, in the fall of 1735, Ramchal set out for Amsterdam where he hoped to raise and support his family. Prior to his departure from Italy, Ramchal visited Venice. During this fateful visit, Ramchal's enemies accused him of planning to travel to Amsterdam to reprint his *kabbalistic seforim* which, under the oath of Padua in 1731, he was prohibited from disseminating. In addition, false evidence was brought before the rabbinate claiming that Ramchal had been involved in witchcraft. These charges, although entirely false and ridiculous in nature, irritated the already suspicious rabbinate of Venice. They appointed three rabbis to force Ramchal to take a second and far more stringent oath which would forbid Ramchal from: 1. teaching *kabbalah* to anyone and 2. printing any work until approved by the rabbinate of Venice. Ramchal responded that he had acted completely within the parameters of his first oath in Padua and therefore saw no reason to restrict himself to the guidelines set forth in the second oath.

Ramchal's refusal to cooperate infuriated the rabbis of Venice and they dispatched letters to the rabbinates of Western Europe warning of Ramchal's "evil plans." The accusations of the Venetian Rabbinate were accepted as truth, and when Ramchal arrived in Frankfurt en route to Amsterdam he was forced to sign a second document in which he promised not to engage in the study, teaching, or publication of *kabbalah*. Although the evidence which was presented to the Frankfurt Rabbinate was entirely false, for the sake of maintaining peace, Ramchal signed the document on the 17<sup>th</sup> of Teves 1735. 🕒