

THE WEISS EDITION

פנחס

*Pinchas*



An Eternal Reward

A Breach of Nature

Just a Thought

Don't Forget Your Father

# Light points

FROM THE TEACHINGS OF  
THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE ON THE  
WEEKLY TORAH PORTION

# *Lightpoints*

לזכרון ולעילוי נשמת  
הרה"ח הרה"ת הרה"ג ישעיהו זושא  
ב"ר אברהם דוד ע"ה ווילהעלם  
נלב"ע ביום ד' שבט התשפ"ב  
תנצב"ה

לזכות

הת' שמואל אייזיק שי'  
לרגל הכנסו לעול המצוות בשעטו"מ  
ביום כ"ד תמוז ה'תשפ"ו  
יה"ר שיגדל להיות חסיד, ירא שמים ולמדן  
לנח"ר הוריו וכל משפחתו שיחיו  
•  
נדפס ע"י הוריו  
הרה"ת אברהם וזוגתו מרת חיה מושקא שיחיו רסקין

# פנחס

# Pinchas

---

25:11 | כה:יא

פִּינְחָס בֶּן אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן אַהֲרֹן הִפְתִּיחַ אֶת הַחֵמַתִּי מֵעַל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל  
בְּקִנְאוֹ אֶת קִנְאוֹתַי בְּתוֹכְכֶם וְלֹא כִלִּיתִי אֶת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִנְאוֹתַי

*Pinchas, the son of Elazar, the son of Aharon the Kohen,  
has turned My anger away from Bnei Yisrael by  
zealously avenging Me among them, so that I did not  
destroy Bnei Yisrael because of My zeal.*

## *An Eternal Reward*

Pinchas's heroic actions averted G-d's anger from Bnei Yisrael. In reward, G-d granted Pinchas *kehunah* (priesthood) "for him and his descendants after him."<sup>1</sup>

Moshe, too, protected Bnei Yisrael from G-d's wrath on numerous occasions, but we do not find that Moshe was rewarded with any similar "hereditary" reward. In fact, even when Moshe requested that his children inherit his position, he was explicitly refused by G-d.<sup>2</sup> Why, then, was Pinchas's reward so great? What was so unique about his actions?

---

1. Bamidbar 25:13.

2. See Rashi, Bamidbar 27:16.

Moshe saved the Jewish people by beseeching G-d to forgive their sins and to retract the harsh punishments that they faced. In contrast, Pinchas saved the Jewish people through his actions. He heroically killed the sinful prince of Shimon, and by sanctifying G-d's name before all of Israel (and inspiring them to repent), he stopped the deadly plague. Whereas Moshe saved the Jewish people by intervening on high, Pinchas saved them through his efforts to elevate them "from below."

In the same vein, Moshe put his spiritual life on the line to save the Jewish people: he challenged G-d to forgive the people, and "if not, erase me now from Your book which You have written."<sup>3</sup> Pinchas, however, risked his physical life in order to stop the plague. He exposed himself to mortal risk, entering the encampment of the tribe of Shimon and killing their beloved leader.

The underlying uniqueness of Pinchas's efforts was his focus not on assistance and illumination "from above," but on transforming and elevating the darkness itself—in himself, by harnessing even his physical body as a "chariot" to the Divine will; and in others, by inspiring them to transform their lives and return to G-d in repentance. In this way, Pinchas not only saved the Jewish people in that moment of wrath, he brought about permanent and lasting change in the Jewish people and their relationship with G-d.

Accordingly, since his efforts were uniquely "grounded" in their nature and in their effects, his reward too was an *eternal* covenant, firmly established "for him and his descendants after him" for all time.

—*Likkutei Sichos*, vol. 18, pp. 344-347

---

3. Shemos 32:32.

---

 כה:יג | 25:13
 

---

וְהִיְתָה לּוֹ וּלְזַרְעוֹ אַחֲרָיו בְּרִית כְּהֻנָּה  
 עוֹלָם תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר קָנָא יְיָ לְאַלְקָיו

*An eternal covenant of kehunah (priesthood) shall be for him and for his descendants after him, because he was zealous for his G-d.*

## A Breach of Nature

Zimri, the leader of the tribe of Shimon, sinned with a Midianite princess. Pinchas, knowing the law that Moshe had taught regarding such a situation, courageously entered Zimri’s tent and killed him. G-d rewarded Pinchas with *kehunah* (priesthood) for himself and his future descendants.

The Torah states that Pinchas was rewarded so greatly “because he was zealous for his G-d.” As Rashi explains, this means that “he raged G-d’s rage and avenged G-d’s vengeance.”<sup>4</sup> This implies that the sin Pinchas avenged is considered an affront to G-d Himself—more so than any other transgression. Why?

Chassidus explains that when a Jew transgresses any of the Torah’s commandments, the soul-faculties that he employs in committing that sin are in a state of “exile,” vested against their will in an act defying G-d’s will. This exile of the soul is even greater when one sins with his reproductive abilities, since reproduction draws from the very fabric of human life and the essence of the living soul. Even so, the sinner remains a Jew, and his G-dly energies remain holy—albeit in a state

---

4. Bamidbar 25:11.

of exile and captivity until he repents. Even if a child is born from that prohibited union, the illegitimate child (whose soul draws its life from the souls of those who conceived it) is still Jewish—provided the child’s mother is Jewish.

A child born from a non-Jewish woman, however, is not a Jew. Hence, a sin such as Zimri’s causes the essential material of a Jewish body and soul to lose its Jewishness entirely, breaching the inherent distinction that G-d created between Jew and gentile.

This explains why G-d rewarded Pinchas with *kehunah* (priesthood). *Kehunah* is a reality of nature; Rashi compares it elsewhere to the unchangeable realities of day and night.<sup>5</sup> Because Pinchas was zealous for G-d, avenging Zimri’s attempt to breach nature’s distinction between Jew and gentile, G-d rewarded him commensurately with a breach of nature as well—He granted him *kehunah*.

—*Likkutei Sichos, vol. 8, pp. 153-157*

---

5. See Rashi, Bamidbar 16:5.

---

 26:9-11 | כו:ט-יא
 

---

הוּא דָתָן וְאַבִּירָם קְרִיאֵי הָעֵדָה אֲשֶׁר הִצִּי עַל מֹשֶׁה וְעַל  
 אַהֲרֹן בְּעֵדַת קִרְחַ בְּהִצְתָּם עַל ה': וַתִּפְתַּח הָאָרֶץ אֶת  
 פִּיהָ וַתִּבְלַע אֹתָם וְאֶת קִרְחַ... וּבְנֵי קִרְחַ לֹא מָתוּ

*They were Dasan and Aviram, the chosen of the congregation who incited against Moshe and Aharon in the assembly of Korach, when they incited against G-d. The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them and Korach... but Korach's sons did not die.*

## Just a Thought

After naming the families of the tribe of Reuven that would enter the Land of Israel, the Torah mentions that Dasan and Aviram (who were also from the tribe of Reuven) perished along with Korach when they incited the rebellion against Moshe. The Torah then notes (seemingly incidentally) that the sons of Korach did not die in that episode. As Rashi explains, although the earth swallowed Korach's sons together with him, "an elevated area was set apart for them underground, and they stayed there."<sup>6</sup> Eventually, they were allowed to leave and rejoin the community.<sup>7</sup>

Rashi adds that while Korach's sons had in fact been among the original instigators of the rebellion, they were spared from death because during the conflict they inwardly regretted what they had done—"they contemplated repentance in their hearts."

How do we know that Korach's sons were so involved in the

---

6. Bamidbar 26:11.

7. See Rashi, Bamidbar 16:7.

conflict? Because it would seem logical for the Torah to note that they survived when it names the descendants of Korach among the *Levi'im* who would enter the Land.<sup>8</sup> But instead the Torah comments “Korach’s sons did not die” immediately alongside the account of Dasan and Aviram’s leading role in the rebellion, thereby indicating that Korach’s sons, too, played a crucial role in inciting the conflict.

Nevertheless, the Torah states that the sons of Korach were not punished like the others, because they ultimately repented—at least internally.

This illustrates the remarkable power of *teshuvah* (repentance). Korach’s sons not only took part in his dispute, they were among its original conspirators. Even upon acknowledging their wrongdoing, they did not openly abandon the rebellion—they merely “contemplated repentance in their hearts.” Yet their thoughts of remorse alone were sufficient to save them from dying with the other instigators, and their families ultimately merited to enter the Land of Israel.

—*Likkutei Sichos, vol. 33, pp. 172–175*

---

8. See Bamidbar 26:58.

---

 27:8-9 | כז-ח:ט
 

---

אִישׁ כִּי יָמוּת וְבֵן אֵין לוֹ וְהֵעֲבַרְתֶּם אֶת נַחֲלָתוֹ לְבָתוֹ:  
וְאִם אֵין לוֹ בֵּית וּנְתַתֶּם אֶת נַחֲלָתוֹ לְאָחָיו

*If a man dies and has no son, you shall transfer his inheritance to his daughter. If he has no daughter, you shall give his inheritance to his brothers.*

## *Don't Forget Your Father*

If a person dies with no children, the next in line to inherit his estate is his father. If his father predeceased him, then his estate goes to his brothers. Yet when the Torah outlines the laws of inheritance, the verse ignores the possibility of a living father, and simply states, “If he has no daughter, you shall give his inheritance to his brothers.”

According to the Talmud, “The wicked, even in their lifetime, are called dead.”<sup>9</sup> The Zohar takes this a step further and says, “One who falls from his rung in Divine service is called dead.”<sup>10</sup> Accordingly, the Torah’s omission of a scenario where a person died during his father’s lifetime can also be interpreted as an insight into the nature of spiritual death.

The Alter Rebbe explains in Tanya that a Jew who is conscious of his G-dly soul’s intrinsic desire to cleave to G-d would never willingly transgress any mitzvah whatsoever. For essentially, by breaching any of G-d’s commandments one is severing and denying his relationship with G-d. This is akin

---

9. Berachos 18b.

10. Zohar 3:135b.

to idol worship, which a Jew would go to any extent—even sacrificing his life—to avoid.<sup>11</sup>

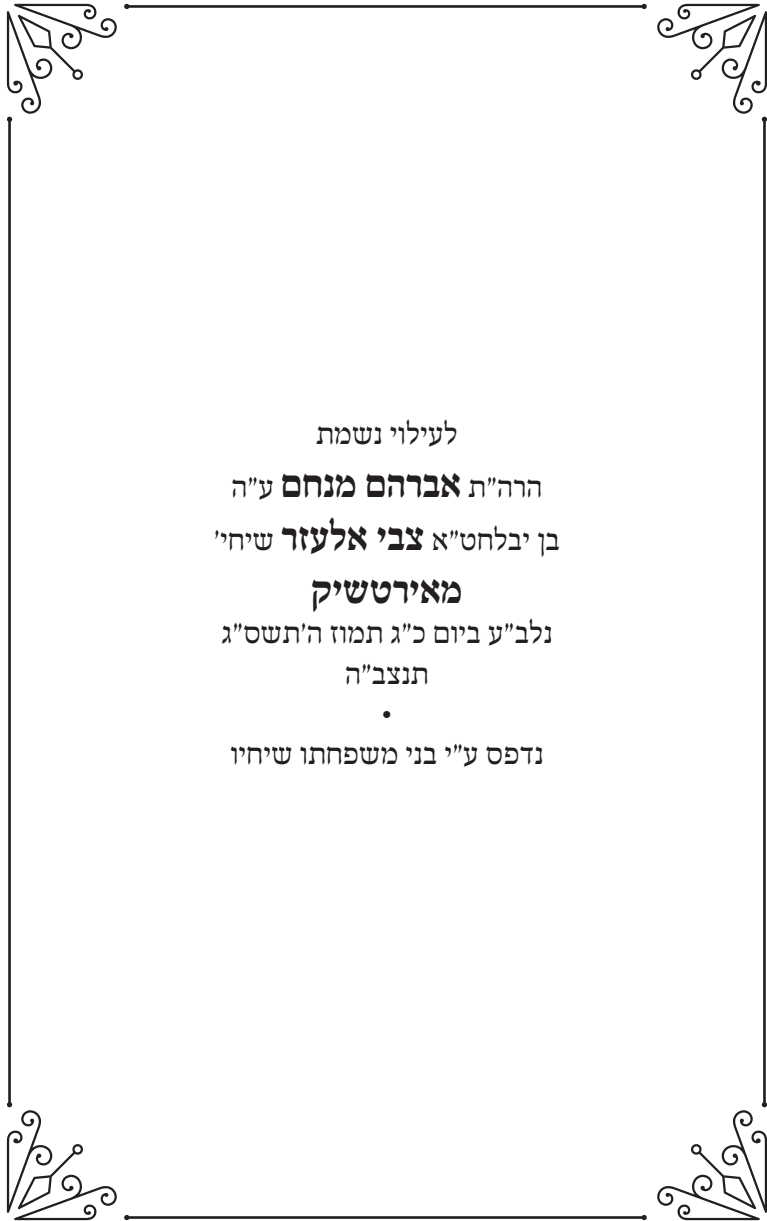
This suprarational attachment to our Father in heaven, and our inability to consider separating ourselves from Him, is the G-dly soul's highest faculty, from which all the other faculties of the G-dly soul evolve. It is therefore called the “father” of the soul's diverse capacities.

We can thus understand why the instances of death addressed by the Torah are scenarios in which the deceased's father has already passed away—i.e., he was no longer an active presence in his life. Because if not for the absence of one's “father”—meaning, if one would always remember his G-dly soul's fundamental and unwavering attachment to G-d—he would never allow himself to succumb to spiritual death.

—*Likkutei Sichos, vol. 17, pp. 297-299*

---

11. Tanya, chapter 19.



לעילוי נשמת  
הרה"ת **אברהם מנחם** ע"ה  
בן יבלחט"א **צבי אלעזר** שיחי'  
**מאירטשיק**  
נלב"ע ביום כ"ג תמוז ה'תשס"ג  
תנצב"ה  
•  
נדפס ע"י בני משפחתו שיחיו

לעילוי נשמת  
מרת אורה יוטל בת ר' שמעון ע"ה  
ווייס  
נפטרה בחג הפורים ה'תשפ"ו  
ולעילוי נשמת  
הרה"ת משולם דוב ב"ר יעקב יואל ע"ה  
ווייס  
נלב"ע ביום כ"ה תמוז ה'תשע"ד  
תנצב"ה  
•  
נדפס ע" בני משפחתו שיחיו



THE LIGHTPOINTS PROJECT WAS MADE POSSIBLE  
THROUGH THE GENEROUS SUPPORT of  
**Rabbi Moshe Aaron Tzvi and Mrs. Ruty Weiss**