



Parshas Pinchas 2019, actions speak louder than words

This week's Parsha Perspective is sponsored by the Birman family in memory of Efraim Ben Shaul. May his soul be uplifted and his memory a blessing.

Our Parsha begins with Pinchas, the grandchild of Aaron, receiving a reward for killing Zimri, the head of the tribe of Shimon. Zimri was publicly consorting with a Midianite princess, so Pinchas took a spear and ended both of their lives.

The reward Pinchas received was the Kehunah, priesthood. The Talmud in Zevachim (101b) explains that when G-d anointed Aaron and his four sons to the priesthood, He said that this appointment was for Aaron, his sons, and the future generations. Since Pinchas was alive when they were anointed, he did not receive the priesthood.

As punishment for consorting with the Midianite girls, Jewish Supreme Court killed over 160,000 people. G-d then commanded Moshe to go to war and destroy the nation of Midian for sending their woman to trick the Jewish people into serving idols.

However, a question comes to mind: The Kohanim were naturally kind, as it says about Aaron, *“That he loved peace and ran after peace.”* This is why the Kehunah is also called the covenant of **peace**. Their inherent love for the Jewish nation means they can diagnose leprosy, for they will make their diagnosis empathetically. So how could the Kehunah be given as a reward for killing another Jewish person?!

Furthermore, what is the connection between the Kehunah and killing Zimri? Why was he given that specific reward?

Parshas Yisro (20:22) speaks about the building of the Mizbeach; the Torah says that they may not use metal during its construction. Rashi explains this rule because the Mizbeach is meant to make peace between Jewish people and their Father in Heaven. Therefore, metal, which can destroy, can not be used in its construction.

That is what Pinchas accomplished when he killed Zimri. The Jewish people angered G-d by serving idols and frolicking with Midianite women. So G-d killed almost two hundred thousand people. But when Pinchas killed Zimri, the disease stopped, saving them from further destruction. He restored the peace between the Jewish people and G-d.

Pinchas showed his immense love for G-d and the Jewish people by killing Zimri to his detriment. The Talmud in Sanhedrin (72a) writes about self-defense, **“That if someone comes to kill you, you must rise and kill him first.”** According to Jewish law, Zimri had every right to kill Pinchas even though he was committing a sinful and reprehensible act. Pinchas was ready to give up his life for the sake of the Jewish people.

Pinchas restored the peace between G-d and His people when he carried out his act. Therefore, merited the priesthood, and an eternal place in the Covenant of peace, for he exemplified the mindset and spirit of the Kehunah.

In our daily lives, we must understand that to be successful in any aspect of life; you must take the first step. It does not matter how insignificant or minor the act might feel; It will lead you on a path of action. It will change your mindset to become more productive, bringing you one step closer to accomplishing your goals, dreams, and, ultimately, your potential.

**“Words may show a man’s wit.
However, his actions show his meaning.”**

-Benjamin Franklin

*Have a meaningful Shabbos,
Rabbi Sholom Yemini*