



Pinchas 5769

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Parashat Pinchas: Fix Yourself and Then Fix Others

[Tal Chermon, p. 448 based on the book "Nivi Zahav" of Ha-Rav Zev Gold]

When Maran Ha-Rav Kook visited America to raise money for the yeshivot in Eretz Yisrael and Europe, one of the Rabbis asked during a reception: Why doesn't Ha-Rav follow the path of zealotry? Maran Ha-Rav Kook answered at length and told a story about a great Torah scholar and ethical person: "He once came to his Rabbi and said to him that he wants to perfect the world through the Almighty's kingdom. His Rabbi said to him: Go, my son and may Hashem help you. He went and tried, but was unsuccessful. The world remained as it was. He came to his Rabbi a second time to lament the lack of blessing in his actions. His Rabbi asked him: My son, have you already spiritually repaired your country and homeland that you are concerning about repairing the entire world? He took the hint and attempted to fix his country. But he also failed; no one listened to his voice. He returned to his Rabbi and related his new failure. His Rabbi said to him: My son, have you spiritually repaired your city? Why should you begin with a whole country? This wise man listened to him and turned to repairing his city, but the residents of his city also do not obey him. His Rabbi said to him: My son, have you already fixed your household? He realized that he was correct, and so he attempted to repair the members of his household. But they also did not listen to him. When he returned to lament before his Rabbi, the Rabbi said: My son, perhaps you did not fix yourself. Go and worry – first and foremost – about your soul, and after you are certain that you repaired everything that you could and you have no blemish – then the members of your household will see and learn from your ways, and they will be an example for the city, and the city for the country and the country for the entire world. This needs to be the path of a person who desires to spiritually repair others."



Text Message Responsa

Ha-Rav answers hundreds of text message questions a week. Some appear in the parashah sheets "Ma'ayanei Ha-Yeshu'ah" and "Olam Ha-Katan." Here's a sample:

Q: Is it forbidden to take a baby out of the house until he is forty days old?

A: There is no such Halachah. You can take out a baby whenever you want.

Q: Is there a problem of theft to download songs of non-Jews from the internet?

A: Yes. Stealing from a non-Jew is also forbidden and the laws of copyright also apply to him.

Q: Someone told me that my name "Miriam" is not good and I should change it in order to succeed in getting married. Is this correct?

A: It is a very good name and there is no connection.

Q: Is there a concern about learning the laws of mourning or Massechet Moed Katan (part of which discusses the laws of mourning)?

A: There is no concern. See Sefer Chasidim #271.

Q: Is it worthwhile to visit the Kivrei Tzaddikim (the graves of righteous people)?

A: It is preferable to give Tzedakah to the poor.

Q: If I do not know what Hashem wants me to do, is it permissible for me to look for a sign?

A: Even if the sign occurs, it does not mean that it is true. You may also violate the prohibition of divining.

Q: Is it permissible to daven in a shul where people sleep?

A: Yes, but obviously only if there is no bad smell.

Q: I stole something and want to return it. Can I return it without anyone knowing?

A: Yes. May Hashem bless you.

Q: Is it permissible to swim in a pool on Shabbat?

A: No based on an ancient custom which is based on various concerns.

Q: Is it permissible to make change from the Tzedakah box?

A: Yes. It is the same money.

Q: Is it permissible to borrow money from the Tzedakah box?

A: Yes, for a short time and you have to give back more.

Q: What should we do with a Tzedakah box if it is impossible to identify to whom it belongs?

A: Give the proceeds to a similar cause.

Q: What is the Halachah regarding an engagement ring? Does it need to be from silver? From gold?

A: There is no Halachah because there is no obligation to give an engagement ring. On the contrary, you must be careful not to become betrothed by mistake.

Q: A soldier claims that he remembers seeing during the War in Gaza – Operation Cast Lead – Rachel Imenu reveal herself without arms and legs. How should we relate to this?

A: F.M.S. (False Memory Syndrome).

Q: My finance does not want me to cover my hair when we get married. It is off-putting to him. What should I do?

A: A marriage must contain compromises. Sometime you give in to him and sometime he give in to you. In this case, he must give in to you. If he does not understand, you should go together to a marriage counselor.

Stories of Rabbenu — Our Rabbi, Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohain Kook

Ha-Rav Shlomo Aviner once asked our Rabbi what he should do with his life. Our Rabbi asked him: "What do **you** want to do?" His dedicated student responded: "I want to do what the Rav wants me to do." Our Rabbi repeated: "But what do you want to do?" Once again, Rav Aviner answered that he wanted to do whatever the Rosh Yeshiva advised. Patiently, our Rabbi asked him a third time, with a tone that demanded a more introspective response. Finally, the student revealed his heart's true desire. "Then do it!" Rav Tzvi Yehudah said. This was our Rabbi's way: to educate

each student according to his natural direction, according to his individual talent and leaning, to encourage creativity and the free healthy development of each person's potential (see Mishlei 22:6). (Torat Eretz Yisrael – The Teachings of Ha-Rav Tzvi Yehudah Ha-Cohen Kook, pp. 205-206)

*From Rav Aviner's Commentary on Birkat Ha-Mazon,
entitled Shir Ha-Ma'a lot*

Rise up and come - addition for festivals

On the festivals, our remembrances especially arise: remembrance of the Temple and the Messiah son of David. Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzato explained that if a spiritual deficiency was corrected in the world, when that time of the year arrives, a light - like the original - shines on us and the effect of the repair will be renewed in one who accepts it. The Netziv similarly wrote that anything that was created in the world, one of its fundamental features is the time in which it was created. Even after many generations, when this time of the year arrives, it strengthens and enhances the power of that creation (Ha-Emek Davar, Shemot 2:2).



*Family Matters - Ha-Rav writes weekly for
the parashah sheet "Rosh Yehudi" on family relationships*

The First Wedding

The marriage of Adam and Chava is the model for all of us. This is the blessing for the groom and bride under the chuppah: "Gladden the beloved friends as You gladdened Your creature in the Garden of Eden in the earlier times." And how do we know that they were happy? Because they were alone and there was no way to compare. The same should be with you: do not compare your spouse to others. S/he is in the only one in the world for you. Furthermore, without the sin, Adam and Chava would have lived forever. You are also married for eternity. When there are difficulties, do not even think about the possibility of separating, rather solve the problem. After all, do you know who matched you up? The same one who matched up Adam and Chava: The Master of the Universe. You are therefore certainly a good match. This means the Master of the Universe did a good job and don't try to change your spouse according to your character traits. You are good the way you are, and now build a shared existence together.

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