

פִּינְחָס

PINCHAS/PHINEHAS Bemidbar/Numbers 25:10-30:1

At the end of our Torah portion last week, the children of Israel had once more gotten themselves into some **trouble**. Upon the advice of Balaam, **Moabite and Midianite** women were successfully **enticing** the men of Israel. These women were luring them into **Ba'al worship**, and יהוה (Yahwey) was **furious!** We read how **Pinchas/Phinehas**, the grandson of Aaron, responded to an incident of **immorality** between a **son of Israel and a Midianite woman**, blatantly being performed in front of the **Tabernacle**:

***Bemidbar 25:6** And indeed, one of the children of Israel came and presented to his brethren a Midianite woman in the sight of Moses and in the sight of all the congregation of the children of Israel, who were weeping at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. ⁷ Now when Pinchas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose from among the congregation and took a javelin in his hand; ⁸ and he went after the man of Israel into the tent and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her body. So the plague was stopped among the children of Israel.*

It is significant that this couple were **not ordinary citizens** from their respective nations:

***Bemidbar 25:14** Now the name of the Israelite who was killed with the Midianite woman, was Zimri the son of Salu, a leader of a father's house among the Simeonites. ¹⁵ And the name of the Midianite woman who was killed was Cozbi the daughter of Zur; he was head of the people of a father's house in Midian.*

Zimri, was a leader of the tribe of **Simeon**. His name means “**my music**.” Instead of seeking the heavenly harmony of worship and obedience to יהוה, Zimri was **dancing to his own melody**. His father’s name was **Salu**, meaning “**weighed**.” That reminds me of a verse in **Daniel**:

***Daniel 5:27**You have been weighed in the balances, and found deficient;*

Cozbi was the daughter of a **leader in Midian**. Her name means “**my lie**,” and her father’s name means “**rock**.” **Yeshua** is referred to as a **rock**, but this “**rock**” had a daughter who was “**a lie**.” She was a **false bride and a harlot**.

How did this happen to Israel? It was the goal of the Midianites to open the floodgates for **intermarriage, assimilation** and eventually to the most destructive of all...**the erasing of all boundaries between the holy and the profane.... i.e. the elimination of Torah**. Israelite men probably **succumbed to the beautiful women** who invited them to a **big barbecue party**:

***Bemidbar 25:2** They invited the people (Israel) to the sacrifices of their gods (Ba'al), and the people ate and bowed down to their gods. ³ So Israel was joined to Ba'al of Peor, and the anger of יהוה was aroused against Israel.*

יהוה was **furious!** This was not only **idolatry**, but **Israel is His bride!** This was also **adultery!**

Cozbi probably had a **clear conscience**. The **worship of Ba'al** included **temple prostitution**. She may have even **considered herself a missionary** among a foreign people. **Temple prostitution** was only **for the upper classes** and the **elite**. There is even **archeological evidence** of this **mixing**, as **artifacts** have been found which are inscribed with “**To יהוה and His Asherah**” (goddess of fertility).

Cozbi and Zimri **purposely** chose the **Tent of Meeting** as the location for their **sex act**. It was to be a **public display** of outright **rebellion**. They were **leaders**, and they were attempting to **teach** the Israelites **how to be freed from the rituals and the holiness that was a part of the teaching of Moses**.

In an act of **zeal** and **revenge**, **Pinchas kills the couple**. Is **Zimri, the Simeonite**, any less of a **zealot** for his **public display of sex in front of the Tabernacle**? Rabbi Ari Kahn **connects** this incident between **Pinchas (tribe of Levi)** and **Zimri (tribe of Simeon)** with a **previous event** in Bereshith:

Bereshith/Genesis 49:5 "Simeon and Levi are brothers; Instruments of cruelty are in their dwelling place.

Do you remember what this is referring to? **Simeon and Levi** (sons of Jacob) had a sister named **Dinah** who had ventured out of the camp **to visit the daughters of the land** in Shechem. When the **son of the prince** of the land saw her, he was attracted to her and **took her by force**. The men of Shechem tried to work out a marriage agreement, but **acting as zealots in rage and revenge**, **Simeon and Levi** entered the town and **killed all the men**. Jacob was angry with his sons and rebuked them for putting their family in a precarious position with the neighboring tribes. This is the **brothers' response**:

Bereshith 34:31 But they said, "Should he treat our sister like a harlot?"

On his death bed, **Jacob** expresses how he feels about his sons' actions:

Bereshith 49:7 Cursed be their anger, for it is fierce; And their wrath, for it is cruel! I will divide them (Simeon and Levi) in Jacob and scatter them in Israel.

Jacob curses their anger and prophesies that their descendants (**Simeon and Levi**) **will be divided**. He points out that when they are **together**, their rage becomes **fierce and dangerous!** The sages teach that the **conspiracy against Joseph** was also **spearheaded by Simeon and Levi**.

Well, over the years, it can be shown that the **descendents of Simeon and Levi take different directions in how they handle their zeal**. When the Israelites worshipped the Golden Calf, Moses (**from Levi**) cries out and it is the **Levites who respond**:

Shemot/Exodus 32:26 then Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, "Whoever is on יהוה's side -- come to me." And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to

him. ²⁷ And he said to them, "Thus says יהוה Elohim of Israel: '**Let every man put his sword on his side, and go in and out from entrance to entrance throughout the camp, and let every man kill his brother, every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.**' " ²⁸ So the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses. And about three thousand men of the people fell that day. ²⁹ Then Moses said, "**Consecrate yourselves today to יהוה, that He may bestow on you a blessing this day, for every man has opposed his son and his brother.**"

Notice the **common elements** with the Pinchas episode...**idolatry/adultery**, the **sword**, and the **blessing for executing their brothers**. Once more this is **zeal** on the part of Levi. This time, however, it is **properly channeled** as it is **directed by יהוה** and **against those who rebelled**. Notice that the tribe of Simeon is **silent**. History speaks of the same thing hundreds of years later, as it was the **descendants of Levi**, the **Maccabbes**, who led a successful rebellion against the Greek empire.

It is not as easy to trace the behavior of the **descendants of Simeon**. We do have some clues, however. The result of the **mixing of the Israelites with the daughters of Moab** was the **death of 24,000 Israelites** by the plague. Bemidbar 26 gives us the current census **number of Simeonites** and Bemidbar 1 gives us the census **number from the beginning of the exodus**:

Bemidbar 26:14 These are the families of the Simeonites: **twenty-two thousand two hundred.**

Bemidbar 1:23 those who were numbered of the tribe of Simeon were **fifty-nine thousand three hundred.**

59,300 beginning census number
22,200 less ending census number
37,100 decrease in number of Simeonites

The tribe of Simeon has lost 37,100 people, and it is easy to conclude that perhaps nearly all of **the 24,000 who died from the plague were from the tribe of Simeon** (Rashi). Thus we could also conclude that **Zimri was a powerful leader of the Simeonites** and personally **responsible for their deaths** as he led them in **rebellion against Moses and יהוה**.

Therefore we can make the conclusion that after the prophecy of Jacob over his sons, **the tribes of Levi and Simeon proceed in opposite directions** with their choices on how to handle **zeal**. So what made the **behavior** of Pinchas the **zealot appropriate** and **deserving of being blessed**? First, who was Pinchas? **Pinchas was the son of Eleazar and the grandson of Aaron.**

1 Chronicles 9:17 ... These were the gatekeepers belonging to the camp of the Levites.... In earlier times **Pinchas son of Eleazar was in charge of the gatekeepers, and יהוה** was with him.

Pinchas was in a position of authority as **chief over the sanctuary guards**. He would have been **armed** and it would have been **his job to act as protector of the holiness of יהוה**. When Pinchas speared the couple, his **zealous behavior** was **channeled in single-minded dedication** to the

Almighty. In fact, Pinchas is **rewarded for his behavior with the same blessing that Abraham**, the Father of our faith (Romans 4:16) received in Bereshith 15:6:

Bereshith 15:6** And he (Abraham) believed in אלהים, and **He accounted it to him for righteousness.

***Psalm 106:28** They (Israelites) joined themselves also to Baal of Peor, And ate sacrifices made to the dead.²⁹ Thus they provoked Him to anger with their deeds, And the plague broke out among them.³⁰ Then Pinchas stood up and intervened, And the plague was stopped.³¹ And that was **accounted to him for righteousness** to all generations forevermore.*

On the other hand, **Zimri's zealous behavior** had to be **stopped**. His energy was **not dedicated to the Almighty**. In fact, he had his own **personal agenda**.

Two tribes....two directions. **One moved toward the Father....one moved toward self**. One tribe's **zeal** merited **blessing** and **honor**....one tribe **disappeared from the radar**. In Devarim, Moses gives his final blessing to the tribes. **Levi** receives a beautiful **blessing**:

Devarim/Deuteronomy 33:8** And of **Levi** he said: -- Your Thummim and thy Urim are for your **pious one

Simeon receives **no blessing whatsoever**. No mention of his name. Only **silence**. It is so sad. Yet we serve an **Elohim of restoration!** Let's see if we can find the **resurfacing of Simeon**.

Simeon's inheritance was within the midst of **Judah** and it seems that you find them **under Judah's wings** off and on throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. Perhaps you also remember that there was **a man named Simeon** who was there **in the temple in Jerusalem** when Miriam (Mary) and Yosef (Joseph) went there on the 8th day for Yeshua's circumcision. Moved by the Spirit, it says that **Simeon took the baby Yeshua in his arms and praised Yah**:

***Luke 2:29** "Adonai, now You are letting **Your servant depart in peace**, According to Your word;³⁰ For my eyes have seen Your **salvation (Yeshua)**³¹ Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,³² A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel."*

Remember it was **Pinchas, of the tribe of Levi**, who had been given the **covenant of peace**. Now **Simeon**, most likely from the **tribe of Simeon**, praises Yah for allowing him to depart in **peace**....**the peace that was so elusive to the tribe of Simeon**. He discovered that **peace was to be found in the baby Yeshua**. But there's more. **Simeon** also had some **words for Miriam** (Mary):

***Luke 2:34** "Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against³⁵ "(yes, **a sword will pierce through your own soul also**), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."*

I imagine that this is one of those times that **Miriam meditated on these words**. **A sword will pierce through your own soul**....this could have many levels of meaning. Being a **witness** of all that Yeshua would endure would **pierce the soul of any mother**. But what else could the **sword piercing the soul** represent? Hebrews puts it like this:

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of Yah is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Yes, the sword will pierce the souls of each of us as it is the discerner of our hearts. In our story in Bemidbar, the sword killed as a result of **blatant rebellion and idolatry**. But the sword will touch us all and Simeon knew that. I think the man **Simeon**, in Luke, represents the **restored tribe of Simeon**. The **final restoration** of the tribe is seen in **Revelation** as **Simeon** once again stands side by side with **Levi**:

*Revelation 7:4 And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:...of the tribe of **Simeon** twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of **Levi** twelve thousand were sealed....*

Now let's zero in a bit more on **zeal** (זֵאֵל):

*Bemidbar 25:11 "Pinchas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was **zealous** (זֵאֵל) with My zeal (זֵאֵל) among them, so that I did not **consume the children of Israel in My zeal** (זֵאֵל).*

Zeal is repeated **three times** in this verse. Check your translation. It may say that Pinchas was "jealous for my sake." It is much more literal to translate "**zealous with my zeal**." Pinchas was **displaying an attribute** of the **Almighty**. Because Pinchas was **zealous with "His" zeal**, הֵזֵאֵל **did not consume the children of Israel in His zeal!**

Strong's Concordance defines **zeal**:

7065 זֵאֵל qana' {kaw-naw'}

Meaning: 1) to envy, be jealous, be envious, be zealous

Usage: AV - jealous 10, envy 9, jealousy 5, envious 4, zealous 2, very 2, zeal 1; 33

Zeal can be shown to be **negative** or **positive** depending on **motive and loyalties**. Let's analyze its usage:

Zeal – also translated as **jealousy or envy**

- Used from a **negative** perspective, **associated with hostility or disruptive passions**
- **Envy** for another's property or position:
 - *Bereshith 37:11 And his brothers **envied** him, but his father kept the matter in mind.*
 - *Bereshith 30:1 Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel **envied** her sister, and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die!"*
- **Appropriate zeal**, also expressing **love** for **one's own property**, often translated as **jealousy**

- *Shemot 20:5* you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, יהוה your Elohim, **am a jealous Elohim**, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,
- *Joel 2:18* Then יהוה will be **zealous** for His land, and pity His people.
- The intimate meaning of the word relates to the **marriage relationship**. Because by marriage **two become one flesh**, **adultery was a severing of the unified body...a form of murder**. Adultery, like murder, was thereby punishable by **death**.
 - *Bemidbar 5:30* 'or when the spirit of **jealousy** comes upon a man, and he becomes **jealous** of his wife; then he shall stand the woman before יהוה, and the priest shall execute all this law upon her.
 - יהוה is depicted as **Israel's husband**. Pinchas displayed the **zeal of the faithful lover** (יהוה) by killing a man and his foreign wife (this couple represented the **unfaithful bride**), consequently stopping the **wrath of the Almighty**.
 - *2 Corinthians 11:2* For I am **jealous** for you with **godly jealousy**. For I have **betrothed you to one husband**, that I may present you as a **chaste virgin to Messiah**.
 - **Prophetic** warnings against **spiritual adultery** were ignored, thus the people received **justice**:
 - *Ezekiel 16:38* "And I will judge you as women who break wedlock or shed blood are judged; **I will bring blood upon you in fury and jealousy**."

The New Covenant Scriptures also have verses on **zeal**. Here is the word defined in Greek:

2205 ζήλος *zelos*

Meaning: 1) excitement of mind, ardour, fervour of spirit 1a) zeal, ardour in embracing, pursuing, defending anything 1a1) zeal in behalf of, for a person or thing 1a2) the fierceness of indignation, punitive zeal 1b) an envious and contentious rivalry, jealousy

Usage: AV - zeal 6, envying 5, indignation 2, envy 1, fervent mind 1, jealousy 1, emulation 1; 17

Like Pinchas, **Yeshua** also had **zeal for His Father's House**:

John 2:13 Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Yeshua went up to Jerusalem.¹⁴ And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the moneychangers doing business.¹⁵ When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables.¹⁶ And He said to those who sold doves, "**Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!**"¹⁷ Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "**Zeal (2205 ζήλος) for Your house has eaten Me up.**"

Zeal must be coupled with **knowledge**:

***Romans 10:2** For I bear them witness that they have a zeal (2205 ζήλος) for Yah, but not according to **knowledge**.*

If after **knowledge** there is **not repentance**, **zeal brings about destruction**:

***Hebrews 10:26** For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,²⁷ but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery (2205 ζήλος) indignation which will devour the adversaries.*

Positive **zealousness** brings about **repentance**:

***Revelation 3:19** "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be **zealous** (2205 ζήλος) and repent.*

Pinchas' **zeal** led to the "**covenant of peace**." Let's take another look at this entire scenario:

***Bemidbar 25:7** Now when Pinchas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, saw it, he rose from among the congregation and took a javelin in his hand;⁸ and he went after the man of Israel into the tent and thrust both of them through, the man of Israel, and the woman through her body. So the plague was stopped among the children of Israel.⁹ And those who died in the plague were twenty-four thousand.¹⁰ Then אלהים spoke to Moses, saying:¹¹ "Pinchas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the priest, has turned back My wrath from the children of Israel, because he was **zealous** with My **zeal** among them, so that I did not consume the children of Israel in My **zeal**.¹² "Therefore say, '**Behold, I give to him My covenant of peace**;¹³ 'and it shall be to him and his descendants after him a covenant of an everlasting priesthood, because he was zealous for his Elohim, and made atonement for the children of Israel.' "*

What is the "**covenant of peace**?" We know who the "**prince of peace**" is:

***Isaiah 9:6** For unto us a **Child is born**, unto us a **Son is given**; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty Elohim, Everlasting Father, **Prince of Peace**.⁷ Of the increase of His government and **peace** there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of אלהים of hosts will perform this.*

And we are told who will have **peace**:

***Psalms 119:165** Great peace have those who love Your Torah, And nothing causes them to stumble.*

***Psalms 37:37** Mark the **blameless man**, and behold the **upright**; for the future of that man will be peace.*

We are told to proclaim the **Good News of peace** and it is about **Yeshua!**

Isaiah 52:7 How beautiful upon the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who proclaims **peace**, Who brings glad tidings of good things, Who proclaims salvation (**Yeshua**), Who says to Zion, "Your Elohim reigns!"

Acts 10:36 "The word which Yah sent to the children of Israel, preaching **peace** through the **Messiah Yeshua** -- He is Adonai of all --

Still, the words of Yeshua can be confusing:

Matthew 10:34 "Do not think that I came to bring **peace** on earth. **I did not come to bring peace but a sword.**

Did **Pinchas' action** give us a **picture** of what Yeshua meant? **Pinchas' zeal** in the form of what appears to be **violence**, is **rewarded with the covenant of peace**. **יהוה's** zeal will also **trigger violence**, but the end result will be the **regathering of the nations, that they might live in peace!**

Zephaniah 3:8 "Therefore wait for Me," says **יהוה**, "Until the day I rise up for plunder; **My determination is to gather the nations** To My assembly of kingdoms, To pour on them My indignation, All my fierce anger; **All the earth shall be devoured With the fire of My jealousy.**

The **regathering of the whole House of Israel** and the **resulting covenant of peace** is laid out for us beautifully in the **two stick prophecy of Ezekiel 37**. It's a little long, but friends this is our **future**, so take the time to read it and **praise the Almighty for His plan!**

Ezekiel 37:15 Again the word of **יהוה** came to me, saying, ¹⁶ "As for you, son of man, take a stick for yourself and write on it: '**For Judah** and for the children of Israel, his companions.' Then take another stick and write on it, '**For Joseph**, the stick of Ephraim, and for **all the house of Israel**, his companions.'¹⁷ "Then join **them one to another for yourself into one stick**, and they will become one in your hand."¹⁸ "And when the children of your people speak to you, saying, 'Will you not show us what you mean by these?' --¹⁹ "say to them, 'Thus says Adonai **יהוה**: "Surely I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and **I will join them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand.**"²⁰ "And the sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes."²¹ "Then say to them, 'Thus says Adonai **יהוה**: "Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land;²² "and **I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king over them all; they shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again.**²³ "They shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and **will cleanse them.**

*Then they shall be My people, and I will be their Elohim.²⁴ " David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd; they shall also walk in My judgments and observe My statutes, and do them.²⁵ "Then they shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and **they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children's children, forever**; and My servant David shall be their prince forever.²⁶ "Moreover **I will make a covenant of peace with them**, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; I will establish them and multiply them, and **I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore.**²⁷ "My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed **I will be their Elohim, and they shall be My people.**²⁸ "The nations also will know that I, יהוה, sanctify Israel, when **My sanctuary is in their midst forevermore.**" ' "*

Peace seems to be a buzzword in the land of Israel today. You hear of land for **peace**, prisoners for **peace**, **peace** deals...what are they after? You see **peace** is much more than the **absence of war**. **Peace**, or **shalom**, is a **wholeness, completeness** and a **fullness**. Being totally **filled with zeal** for יהוה and **serving Him through Yeshua**...no matter the cost...this is what makes a person **whole**. We see this concept pictured through the Hebrew letter **vav** in the Torah scrolls. Here is Bemidbar 25:12:

***Bemidbar 25:12** "Therefore say, 'Behold, I give to him My covenant of **peace**;*

The word **shalom** is written like this normally: שלום

However, in the Hebrew Torah scrolls, this is the only time in the Scriptures that the **vav** (ו) in this

word is **broken** and the letter appears like this: ו

The numerical equivalent of the **vav** (ו) is **six**. Six is the **Biblical number of man** who was created on the **6th day**. **Man** will spend **6 millenniums on earth** before the return of Messiah. Yeshua, the **Son of man**, was "**broken**" for us that we might have **peace**. Also, **each of us must be "broken"**... this is what brings us to **wholeness, shalom**... שלום ...when this is completed, we will be **sanctified** and **He will be in our midst forever! Baruch HaShem!**

Revelation 21:1** Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.² Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from Yah, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "**Behold, the tabernacle of Yah is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. Yah Himself will be with them and be their Elohim.

Shabbat Shalom,
Ardelle