

Parashas

PINCHAS

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P

inchas was a hero. Who knows how many souls he saved the day he "saw, arose, and took his spear in his hand" and avenged God.

It is interesting how we didn't hear much about him before that time. His name is mentioned several times in the Torah, but we don't hear about anything he did. He didn't even get to be a *kohen* at first because he was born before the giving of Torah.

But then he literally exploded onto the scene and never looked back. It just got better and better for him, going from obscurity to becoming one of the most important *prophets* in history to one of the most important *angels* ever. He will be the one after three millennia to announce the final redemption.

The question is, was Pinchas a hero in waiting, or did he become one in the moment? Had he not risen to spiritual fame through the incident with Zimri, would he have anyhow through some other crisis? In other words, is there something we can learn from Pinchas about being a hero, or do we just sit back and admire from a distance what he did?

Clearly, the level of soul makes a difference. Usually, the bigger

the hero, the “bigger” the soul. The soul of Pinchas had great *yichus*, coming from both Yosef *HaTzaddik* and Yisro, giving him the wherewithal to accomplish great things, things that the average person perhaps cannot.

Yes, greatness of soul *does* make a difference. No one is expected to accomplish more than their soul will allow. But that doesn't mean that they can't get outside help to make up the difference when a person's willingness to sacrifice for God is greater than their spiritual capacity to do so. As Chazal said, “Someone who comes to purify themselves Heaven helps them,” a metaphorical way of saying, “make the effort you can and Heaven will make the effort you can't.”

But a step is still missing. There were many people standing around watching Zimri profane the name of God with a Midianite princess, and they did nothing. What was unique about Pinchas that allowed him to respond to the call while others barely heard it? Why was Pinchas inspired to act and others were not?

His pilot light. It's not a physical flame per se, but it is a flame nonetheless. It's a continuous sense of spiritual sensitivity that stays on even during the uninspiring times for those rare moments in life when we need to be inspired to respond correctly to a situation. If a person doesn't have it at such times, they will freeze and do nothing even though they know they're supposed to do something.

What is it, and how do you get one? When the Torah introduces Pinchas as the son of Elazar *HaKohen* and grandson of Aharon *Kohen Gadol*, it isn't just to give *shadchanim* a report about his *yichus*. It is to let us know what Pinchas knew, how he thought, and where he got it from. He had not been a *kohen* until that time, but he certainly lived like one anyhow.

So while others in the Jewish camp lived their own personal

lives and served God as part of them, Pinchas lived to serve God. That was his mentality. That was his life. That was the way he approached every moment, holy or mundane. That was the pilot light that quietly burned in the heart of Pinchas from moment-to-moment, from year-to-year.

Pinchas was internally pushed to do whatever was necessary at whatever cost to step up and avenge God. Looking the other way wasn't even an option for him like it had been for others. It made him a conduit for the light of God and resulted in all the necessary miracles to complete the job. And not just once, but several times in the future as well, sometimes as Pinchas and later on as Eliyahu *HaNavi*, like at *Har Carmel*, for instance.

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<https://www.shaarnunproductions.org/Shar-HaGilgulim-Course.html>.

Have a great Shabbos,
Pinchas Winston