



# פרשת פנחס

# CIRCLE TIME

AT YOUR  
Shabbos Table

... FOR A Meaningful and Entertaining SHABBOS WITH YOUR CHILDREN ...

TELL ME A MASHAL >  
A dvar Torah with a story.

## BETTER THAN A REWARD

אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא בדין הוא שִׁיטל שְׂכָרוֹ  
(במדבר רבה כא:א)

Hashem said, "He [Pinchas] deserves a reward!" (Bamidbar Rabbah 21:1)

**Every mitzvah deserves a reward! Why does the midrash stress that Pinchas deserved one here?**

**T**he poor orphan boy approached the door fearfully. Was this a crazy idea?

He hadn't eaten in days. His clothing, no more than dirty rags, hung loosely around his skinny body. It was time to try crazy ideas! He lifted his hand and knocked weakly on the tall, stately, ornate door.

No answer.

He knocked again, as hard and as loudly as he could.

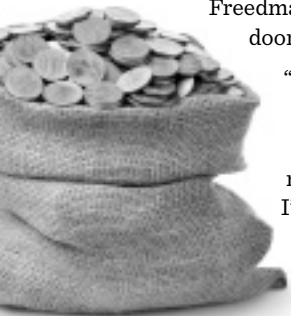
At long last, footsteps were heard. The door swung open. Mr. Freedman stood in the doorway. "Yes? *Tzedakah*? Just a moment." Mr. Freedman was a wealthy and kind man. He retreated down the hallway of the large house to get some cash for the poor boy.

"Please, sir!" the boy called. "I don't want *tzedakah*." Mr. Freedman stopped and retraced his steps to the door.

"You don't?"

"No, sir. Charity will only help me for a day or so, sir. Please, could you give me a job? I'll work for you at your store; I'll pack the boxes and deliver them and whatever else you need."

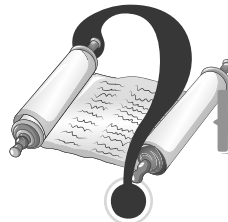
"I don't really need any more workers



CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 >>

## CONTENTS

- # 1 TELL ME A MASHAL
- # 1 PARSHAH RIDDLES
- # 2 CHOLENT STORY
- # 2 HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MIDRASH
- # 3 PARSHAH RHYME
- # 3 ANSWERS TO RIDDLES
- # 4 HAFTORAH: YOU KNOW NAVI
- # 5 TREATS FROM TARGUM
- # 5 GEMATRIA
- # 5 THIS DATE IN JEWISH HISTORY
- # 6 HALACHAH
- # 6 THE LAST WORD



## PARSHAH RIDDLES

Answers to this week's riddles appear on page 3.

- 1 Which three people mentioned in the *parshah* never died?
- 2 Can you find eleven names in one *pasuk*?
- 3 Which five times did Moshe not seem to know the *halachah*?
- 4 Which *pasuk* is made up of the words "וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לְאַחַר" but in a different order?
- 5 Which two *korbanos* must be brought "בְּחוֹעֵדוֹ"?

# CHOLENT STORY

A story told in parts, designed to get children to come back to the table for the main course!

Recap: Reb Shimon enjoys the help of his mysterious benefactor, but the other paupers are suspicious that he is hiding a secret source of money. They decide to tail him.

**T**he next morning, Reb Shimon headed for his assigned collection spot with a light heart. He had a long day ahead of him, but he knew that when it was over, he would share a good meal and stimulating *divrei Torah* with his new friend. He did not notice the two other paupers hiding at opposite ends of the block on which he stood, furtively watching him.

When Reb Shimon collected that day, he had a bigger smile on his face than usual, which may have made some people want to give more. Whatever the reason, he had a good day, and the hidden watchers noticed.

“He seems to be making quite a bit of money there,” each muttered to himself. “Good, because I’m not making anything, sitting here and watching him. There will need to be a lot to share!”

The long day finally ended. Reb Shimon headed straight for the paupers’ lodgings. He was not going to make the same mistake he’d made the day before. He would give in his collections first and then go to his host. The two spies followed him all the way back, keeping a safe distance.

Reb Shimon gave in his money along with all the other collectors. He noticed that the other men made sure to count his money separately, keeping track of how much he had brought in. *Oh well*, he thought, *I guess they still don’t trust me*.

The men counted his money and found an amount that seemed to make sense. They all waited for Reb Shimon to leave so that they could get a full report from the spies.

After he went off to bed, the other men huddled together. The spies reported that Reb Shimon had collected a lot of money, but it all seemed to have been given to the collection pot. They had no suspicious behavior to report.

The leader wanted to declare him trustworthy, but some of the other men protested.

“He was on his best behavior today,” one claimed, “because he knows we’re on to him. We need to follow him for a few more days to figure out the truth.”

Others argued that they couldn’t afford to waste their resources on wild goose chases. It was time to admit they had been wrong. The argument went back and forth for a while. Suddenly, a man who had gone to bed early came running into the meeting.

“He left! He went somewhere!” he panted.

“Who left? To where? What are you talking about?” Everyone was clamoring at once.

“Shimon!” the man gasped. “We thought he was going to bed, but he didn’t! He snuck out of the room and headed out somewhere and he doesn’t want us to know about it!”

An uproar followed the man’s words. “Quiet, everyone!” the leader finally shouted. He turned to the man who had brought the report. “How long ago did he leave?” he asked.

“Just now!” the man said. “We can still catch him if we hurry!”

The leader turned to the two spies. “You know what to do,” he said. “Go find him and follow him. Don’t leave him unwatched until he is in bed. Maybe there is an innocent explanation, and maybe there isn’t.”

The men hurried through the dark streets, searching for the form of Reb Shimon. Soon enough, they spotted him walking quickly down the street with long, purposeful strides. Falling in behind him, they followed.

Reb Shimon seemed to be heading for the wealthier part of town. After a long walk, he stopped in front of a stately house. They watched from across the street as he knocked on the door and a smartly dressed man opened it.

“Hey! Isn’t that the owner of the store on Fifth Street, where he stood yesterday?” one spy whispered.

The other just nodded and muttered one word.

“Gotcha.”

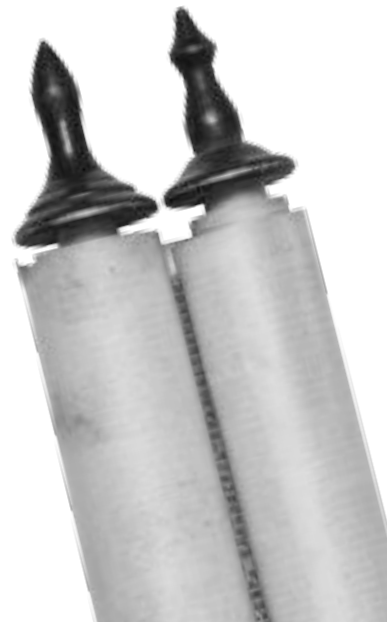
# HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MIDRASH

## The Extra Letter

- One of the children of יִשְׁשַׁכָּר listed in the *parshah* (26:24) is יִשׁוּב. In the list of people that came down to Mitzrayim in *Parshas Vayigash* (46:13), there is no יִשׁוּב but there is a יוֹב. Rashi tells us that they were the same person. How did he get a ש added to his name and why?
- The *Da’as Zekeinim* (*Bereishis* 30:18) writes that Yov complained to his father that his name was inappropriate. (*Divrei Dovid* explains that it had become the name of an *avodah zarah*, and Yov was embarrassed by it.) Yisaschar responded that his own name had an extra ש, which he gave to his son, making his name Yashuv!
- How is the name יִשְׁשַׁכָּר pronounced — with one ש or two? There is a famous *machlokes* about it, and still today, there are differing *minhagim*. But based on this *Da’as Zekeinim*, the *Teshuvos Beis Efraim* rules that it depends which *pasuk* in Chumash you are reading! Until *Parshas Pinchas*, it should be read with two, because Yisaschar still had both. But after this *parshah* it should be read “Yissachar,” because one of the letters had been given away!

TO BE CONTINUED...

2



# PARSHAH RHYME



Review the main points of the parshah with younger children, while challenging your family to complete the rhymes (use the "grammen" tune). Answers on the side!

- L
1. Pinchas was a *kana'i* for the honor of Hashem.
  2. People did a terrible *aveirah*, so he killed \_\_\_\_\_.
- L
3. Moshe forgot the halachah, oh no!
  4. Pinchas remembered, it's "*kana'im pogin* \_\_\_\_\_."
- L
5. Klal Yisrael were very angry with him,
  6. But Hashem saved him with ten \_\_\_\_\_.
- H
7. Pinchas was able to go safely home,
  8. And Hashem blessed him with the *bris* of \_\_\_\_\_.

## Chorus

- L
9. There was a plague and many people were lost.
  10. Hashem said, "Count the rest, let's see what was the \_\_\_\_\_."
- L
11. Tzefachad's daughters asked if it was fair,
  12. That a man without sons wouldn't get any \_\_\_\_\_
- L
13. Of the land for which they were waiting so long -
  14. Their father died in the *Midbar* but did not truly do \_\_\_\_\_.
- H
15. Hashem explained the inheritance order:
  16. If there are no sons, then it goes to the \_\_\_\_\_.

## Chorus

- L
17. Moshe's time to die was drawing near,
  18. There was one thing about which he did \_\_\_\_\_.
- L
19. He wanted to make sure that after he died,
  20. Klal Yisrael would have a leader and \_\_\_\_\_.
- L
21. He suggested perhaps it should be his own son,
  22. But Hashem said Yehoshua would be the \_\_\_\_\_.
- H
23. Moshe put his hands on his head before his final hour
  24. And gave Yehoshua responsibility and \_\_\_\_\_.

## Chorus

- L
25. *Yiddishkeit* has lots of holy days,
  26. Each with its own special mitzvos and \_\_\_\_\_.
- L
27. Extra *korbanos* for each special day;
  28. We can no longer bring them, instead we can \_\_\_\_\_.
- L
29. Right now, life might be challenging or rough,
  30. We *daven* for Mashiach and the *Korban* \_\_\_\_\_.
- H
31. *Kohanim* will return to *avodah*; the *levi'im* will sing,
  32. Till then we *lein* about the *korbanos* we'll \_\_\_\_\_.

Answers: 2. them 4. bo 6. *missim* 8. shalom 10. cost 12. share 14. wrong 16. daughter 18. care 20. guide 22. one 24. power 26. ways 28. pray 30. *Mussaf*/32. bring

## RIDDLE ANSWERS:

1. The *parshah* (26:46) mentions Serach, daughter of Asher, whom *Targum Yonasan* says never died. According to some midrashim (see *Pirkei d'Rabi Eliezer* 28), Pinchas is Eliyahu Hanavi, who also never died. Korach is also mentioned in the *parshah*, and he went down to Gehinnom while still alive.
2. (כז:א) ותקרבנה בנות זלפחד בן חפר בן גלעד בן מכיר בן מנשה למשפחת מנשה בן יוסף ואלה שמות בנותיו מחלה נעה וזגלה ומלקה ותרח
3. Moshe did not know:
  - a. Who inherits a person with daughters but no sons.
  - b. The proper reaction when someone marries an Aramis.
  - c. Pesach Sheini.
  - d. The punishment of the *mekoshesh*.
  - e. The punishment of the *mekallel*.
4. (כז:טו) וידבר משה אל ה' לאמר
5. The word *במועדו* is used in this *parshah* (28:2) about the *Korban Tamid* and in *Parshas Beha'aloscha* (9:2) about the *Korban Pesach*.

You may be surprised to find something familiar in every haftorah.

# HAFTORAH: YOU KNOW NAVI

## FIRST HAFTORAH OF TRAGEDY

The next twelve haftaros are not directly related to the parshiyos hashavua. The haftaros of the Three Weeks are warnings for Klal Yisrael in advance of Tishah B'Av, the following seven are consolation for the nation, and the final two before Rosh Hashanah exhort us to do teshuvah. This week, we read the haftorah of Mattos, because the Three Weeks have already begun. It is not surprising, however, that the haftorah still has much in common with the parshah.

## SUMMARY

The haftorah is from the opening chapters of *Sefer Yirmiyahu*. It introduces us to Yirmiyahu, whose entire *sefer* is devoted to warnings of the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash and Yerushalayim.

The haftorah opens with Hashem's appointment of Yirmiyahu to speak to the people, His encouragement to him not to fear them and His promise to protect him. The *navi* is shown two private visions and then given his first message to give over to the people.

The first private vision is of a stick of wood that Yirmiyahu correctly identifies as almond (טָשׁוּ). This symbolizes that Hashem is rushing (טָשׁוּ) to punish the Jews. There is also a message of hope, because Hashem is rushing so that the nation does not sink to too low a level. The branch also hints to the ultimate sprouting and rebirth of the people. Hashem tells the *navi*, "I am appointing you over destruction... and replanting."

Yirmiyahu's next vision is of a boiling pot with steam escaping northward. The pot is the city of Yerushalayim, which is strong and fortified, but the contents will burn anyway when it is besieged by fire. The message conveyed is that Hashem will bring nations from the north who will surround Yerushalayim and wait to pick it apart like a pot of food.

Yirmiyahu's first public message to the Jews is then relayed, and it is one of consolation and love. Hashem remembers the love the Jews showed in the *Midbar*, during the "good old days," and promises to eventually punish the nations who destroy them.

## CONNECTION TO THE PARSHAH

The primary message of the haftorah relates to the Three Weeks. It teaches that the tragedies were brought by Hashem, none other, and that the fault lies in the sins of the Jewish people.

The haftorah also teaches that Hashem loves and defends the Jews even though they sin. Similarly, in the *parshah*, Hashem expresses love for the people despite their sins with Bnos Moav and subsequent punishment when He lovingly counts them again to see how many survived.

## YOU KNOW NAVI

Hashem's first words to Klal Yisrael via Yirmiyahu are part of our Yamim Nora'im *tefillos* and have been made into several famous songs: "Ko Amar Hashem..."

>> CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

now, but..." Mr. Freedman was wavering. His heart went out to the poor kid. "You won't regret it, sir, I promise! I'll do whatever work is needed, and you won't need to pay me at all! Just give me a place to live and food to eat, and we have a deal!"

"Okay, let's try it," Mr. Freedman said. "Come inside. Let's get you cleaned up and fed. You can take the downstairs guest room. Tomorrow, we'll get you started at the store. What's your name?"

"Thank you! My name is Meshulam, sir!"

The arrangement worked out very well. Meshulam proved to be a hard worker. He took orders, arranged them, packed boxes, unpacked deliveries, cleaned and mopped... He worked hard each day. In exchange, he lived in Mr. Freedman's house, eating dinner with his family and sleeping in the downstairs guest room. Mr. Freedman gave him clothing to wear and eventually began to think of him like an adopted son.

On Purim, Mr. Freedman made a big *seudah*. Guests, relatives and friends came from all over. It was a great party.

In the middle of the *seudah*, the doorbell rang. "Who could be ringing the bell on Purim?" Mr. Freedman wondered. "Everyone knows you just walk in on Purim around here!" The butler went to the door and returned with a stranger, someone who had clearly never heard of Purim. It was a non-Jewish customer.

"I'm sorry to disturb, but I have a very big order I need filled right now," the man said. "Can you do it?"

"I'm sorry. As you can see, we are in the middle of a big celebration," Mr. Freedman answered. "Please come back tomorrow."

"Tomorrow will be too late! I need it today or I will have to go somewhere else."

"That's okay. You can go. This is not a good time."

But Meshulam interrupted, "Sir, give me the keys to the store. I'll go take care of him!" "Sit down, Meshulam. We are at the Purim *seudah*! It will be fine."

"It's a shame to lose a big order and maybe a good customer. Let me take care of him. I'll be back shortly!"

Mr. Freedman gave the boy the keys, and he went to serve the customer.

The next day, Mr. Freedman had a strange question for Meshulam. "Tell me," he said. "How much should I pay you for your work?"

"Sir! What in the world do you mean? You took me into your house and feed me like a son. That's pay enough!"

"That's what I used to think!" Mr. Freedman said. "But yesterday, you gave up the Purim *seudah* to go work. Clearly, you are not doing the job for the food and being part of the family or you would not have given up the 'pay' in order to do the job! You obviously are working for another reason and must be paid with different wages!"

*For all our good deeds, it is payment enough that Hashem gives us life and health. Who says we deserve any other reward? But Pinchas put his life in grave danger for this mitzvah. Obviously, he was not doing mitzvos just for life — so he deserves a special reward, besides life and health! (Dubno Maggid)*



- The name Pinchas is spelled without a *yud* everywhere in the Torah except in the beginning of this week's *parshah*, where it is written פִּינְחָס. This is because the midrash lists ten miracles that happened to Pinchas when he killed Zimri. (Rabbeinu Chaim Paltiel)
- The letter *vav* in the word וְשָׁלוֹם, describing Pinchas's reward, is written with a crack in the middle. This is because Pinchas is Eliyahu Hanavi, and five times in the Torah his name is written אֵלִיָּהּ, without a *vav*.
- Yaakov Avinu's name is written five times as יַעֲקֹב, with a *vav*. This is because Yaakov took the five missing *vavs* from Eliyahu as a *mashkon*, collateral, until Mashiach comes.
- The letter *vav* was chosen for this because Mashiach is described as having six *middos* (in *Yeshayahu* 11:2).

# THIS DATE IN JEWISH HISTORY

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of Tammuz, 5597 (1837), the Rebbes of Ruzhin and Dyanevetz were put on trial by Czar Nikolai of Russia, accused of conspiracy to commit murder.

Some months earlier, two Jews named Oxman and Schwartzman were murdered in the province of Oshitz, Russia. The two were informers (*mosrim*) on the Jewish community to the Russian government, and suspicion immediately fell on the *rabbanim*. A detective name Graf Gureyev worked very hard to prove that the *rabbanim* had hired hit men to kill the two men. He arrested fifty Jews from the community and tortured them for a confession.

Based on the "confessions," Graf arrested Rav Yisrael Friedman of Ruzhin and Rav Michael Auerbach of Dyanevetz. On this day, Czar Nicholas put all the people accused on trial before a special military tribunal.

In a trial that lasted eighteen months, the Rebbes were acquitted of all charges, but others were found guilty of conspiracy. Six Jews were sentenced to 2,000 lashes, 500 beatings, and running the gauntlet. Some were sent to Siberia for the rest of their lives. Eight people were sentenced to 500 lashes each just for "knowing the story" and not telling it to police.

Most did not survive their sentences.



# TREATS FROM TARGUM

So much more than just translation – quick insights into Targum Onkelos!

וְשֵׁם בֵּת אֲשֶׁר שָׂרַח (כו:חזו)

And the name of the daughter of Asher is Serach. (26:46)

תרגום אונקלוס (גירסת הרמב"ן): וְשֵׁם בֵּת אֲשֶׁר שָׂרַח

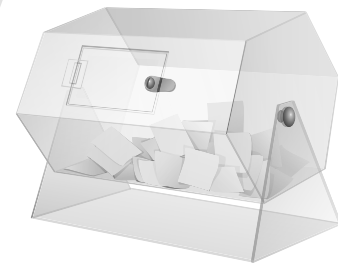
And the name of the daughter of Asher's wife is Serach.

- According to the version of Onkelos that the Ramban had, Serach was the daughter of Asher's wife from a previous marriage, not of Asher himself! The Ramban (and Chasam Sofer) learn *halachah l'maaseh* from this *Targum*, that an orphan raised in one's home has the halachic status of his child.
- Why is Serach mentioned here in the list of the sons of the *Shevatim* and their families? The Ramban writes that with this explanation of Serach being Asher's step-daughter, Onkelos is explaining why she is listed here. This was a list of those who were inheriting Eretz Yisrael, followed by the story of Bnos Tzela Chad, who also inherited because they were daughters of a man who had no sons. Serach, as the only daughter of her mother's first husband, fell in the same category, so she also belonged in the list of those who inherited Eretz Yisrael.

# HALACHAH



## Raffles and Goralos



**The Torah tells us that Eretz Yisrael was divided by lottery. However, gambling with dice disqualifies a person from testimony. Are raffles and gambling permitted?**

### What is wrong with gambling for fun?

If a person is sure he will win at gambling, he doesn't really mean it when he says that he agrees to give up the money he is betting if he loses (even though he promises to do so). So, if he does lose, the other person is, in a sense, stealing from him. Sephardim hold it is always forbidden to gamble, but the Rema allows it under certain circumstances.

### When is gambling NOT stealing?

Gambling is not stealing when there is no concern that the gambler doesn't really mean that he will give up his money if he loses. There are two ways to tell: 1) There is no skill involved in winning, i.e., it is totally based on "luck" and no one can think he will certainly win. 2) The participants have *already* (and not just promised to) put their money in a pot (which does not belong to one of them) to be taken by the winner. BOTH of these factors must be present to make it *muttar*.

### What are some examples?

Playing poker for money and betting on

sports both involve some skill. It would be *assur* to bet another Jew on these things. Buying lottery tickets or raffle tickets would be permitted, because they are pure luck and when you buy the ticket, the money is already given away.

### Does this mean some types of betting are okay?

Even when permitted, one should never gamble. The Rivash says that gambling kills people and is disgusting, abominable, repulsive, and addictive. The *Biur Halachah* says that someone who is concerned for his soul should distance himself from gambling. Rav Moshe Feinstein said that it is a disgusting act and is like joining a gathering of *leitzanim*.

### How can tzedakah organizations make raffles and Chinese auctions? Isn't this gambling?

If the money goes to *tzedakah*, there is no *issur* because the participants give the money because it is going to *tzedakah*, not because they assume they are going to win. Either way, they are happy that the money is going for a good cause and fully commit to giving it. (Also, as mentioned, these things are pure luck and the money is paid in advance.)

### Is it permissible to make raffles on Shabbos?

It is forbidden to hold a *goral* on Shabbos, because people may measure their items against each other. Within one family, it is permitted to decide who gets what by making a raffle on Shabbos. Raffles for a mitzvah, *aliyah*, or other *zechus* are allowed even on Shabbos. Some allow raffles on Shabbos if it will benefit the shul.

### Is it okay to play dreidel and card games?

Kids' games like dreidel, played among close family and friends for insignificant sums, are okay. There are many *poskim* who are against some card games traditionally played on Chanukah. Today, many children play a game involving flipping trading cards and keeping them afterward. If these have value and are meaningful to the children, this may be forbidden. A *rav* must be consulted. Raffles in which tickets are *given* out, not paid for, are okay as well.

### What happens when there is an argument over a raffle?

If a raffle was not conducted 100% correctly, as advertised and *al pi halachah*, it is void. This is true even if the mistake *decreased* the winner's chance of winning. Nothing may be won or kept based on an invalid raffle.

## THE LAST WORD

A one-liner worth remembering

"SMART PEOPLE KNOW OF WHAT THEY SPEAK; FOOLS SPEAK OF WHAT THEY KNOW."

—Rav Yosef Chaim Kara, *Minchas Shabbos on Avos*



To sign up for a weekly email of *Circle Time: At Your Shabbos Table*, visit [www.circmag.com/shabbos](http://www.circmag.com/shabbos).

To dedicate or sponsor an issue, contact [circletime@circmag.com](mailto:circletime@circmag.com).

"AT YOUR SHABBOS TABLE" IS COMPILED BY RABBI YITZCHOK LANDA. COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS: [CIRCLETIME@CIRCMAG.COM](mailto:CIRCLETIME@CIRCMAG.COM)

No part of *Circle Time: At Your Shabbos Table* may be reproduced without permission and credit.



CALL . TEXT . © 732-592-5437 • EMAIL [SUBSCRIPTIONS@CIRCMAG.COM](mailto:SUBSCRIPTIONS@CIRCMAG.COM) • [WWW.CIRCMAG.COM](http://WWW.CIRCMAG.COM)

