

Pinchas 2013

1.

Why did Pinchas only become a Kohen after killing Zimri?

Nachlas Tzvi page 410

“it shall be for Pinchas and his offspring after him a covenant of eternal priesthood” (25, 13)

"והיתה לו ולזרעו אחריו ברית כהנת עולם."

Rashi quotes the Gemara in Zevachim (101) that relates that Pinchas only became a Kohen after he killed Cosbi and Zimri. The question arises; why wasn't Pinchas a Kohen at childbirth prior to killing them? Rashi answers that Elazar (father of Pinchas) underwent the anointing process of becoming a Kohen after Pinchas was born. However Pinchas himself was not there and therefore wasn't anointed. The question arises; where was Pinchas? Why wasn't he at this important anointing ceremony? The Gur Arya explains that Pinchas was excluded because he was a minor and unqualified. The Nachlas Tzvi explains that a Kohen who kills someone loses his status as a Kohen. Hashem knew that in the future Pinchas would kill them. Hashem therefore made sure that Pinchas wasn't anointed. This is why Pinchas became a Kohen after he killed them; this allowed Pinchas to be a Kohen rather than being excluded from being a Kohen. Another example of Hashem helping Kohanim is the following; Hashem commanded Aaron that Elazar, the father of Pinchas, should wear the special clothing of the Kohen Gadol even before Aaron died. Why was this done? Since a Kohen Gadol, can still bring sacrifices in the Beis Hamikdash even when he is an 'onen' (a mourner's status before burial of the deceased), unlike other Kohanim who are unable to bring sacrifices when in a state of 'anenus', therefore Hashem commanded that Elazar should wear the special clothing of the Kohen Gadol, even before Aaron died, for his own benefit. This was done in order that he would be able to perform the avoda (service) even when being in the state of anenus.

2.

Peace

Talelei Oros page 169

“Hashem spoke to Moshe saying ‘Pinchas son of Elazar son of Aaron the Kohen, turned back my wrath from upon the children of Israel, when he zealously avenged My vengeance among them, so I did not consume the children of Israel in My vengeance.’” (25, 10-11)

"וַיְדַבֵּר יְקֹנָק אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר. פִּינְחָס בֶּן־אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן־אַהֲרֹן הִכְהִין הַשֵּׁיב אֶת־חַמְתִּי מֵעַל בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִנְאָתוֹ אֶת־קִנְאָתִי בְּתוֹכָם וְלֹא־כִלִּיתִי אֶת־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּקִנְאָתִי."

Rashi explains that since the tribes would scorn and belittle Pinchas for killing the prince of a tribe of Israel, therefore the pasuk informs us that Pinchas was a descendant, grandchild of the great Aaron. The question arises; how would there knowing that Pinchas was a descendant of Aaron prevent them from belittling him? Rabbi Yaakov Kamenetsky (also in his sefer Emes

Leyaakov page 450) explains that they incorrectly thought that Pinchas killed Cosbi and Zimri out of anger and not for the sake of heaven. They thought that Pinchas performed actual murder. The Torah therefore informs us that the complete opposite is the truth. Pinchas is a descendant of Aaron. Aaron is the quintessential example of one who properly exemplifies pursuing peace. Pinchas performed this act for the sake of heaven. The following pasuk actually informs us that this act of Pinchas was done properly; “it shall be for Pinchas and his offspring after him a covenant of eternal priesthood” (25, 13)

A proof to this is the Mishna in Avos (perek alef) that states, be among the disciples of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace, loving people and bringing them closer to Torah. (הלל אומר הוי) (מתלמידיו של אהרן אוהב שלום ורודף שלום אוהב את הבריות ומקרבן לתורה). The Rambam explains that when Aaron would sense or when Aaron was told that someone was a sinner he would strive to help him. Aaron would befriend this sinner. Subsequently, this sinner would be embarrassed to act sinfully in front of Aaron. He would even be embarrassed to sin even when not in the presence of Aaron, lest Aaron find out. Eventually he would fully and sincerely repent. (כשהיה) מרגיש או כשהיו מספרים לו על אדם שתוכו רע, ושבידו עבירה, היה מקדים לו שלום, ומתחבר עמו, ומרבה לספר עמו. והיה ההוא מתבייש, ואומר אי לו, אילו ידע אהרן צפוניו ומה שיעשה, לא היה מתיר לעצמו להסתכל בו, כל שכן (לדבר עמי, ואמנם אני אצלו בדמות איש מעלה. הרי אני מצדיק את מחשבתו. ויחזור בתשובה, וישוב להיות מתלמידיו). Rashi explains how Aaron would strive to fix relationships amongst different people by using various tactics. When Aaron saw two people quarrelling, he would go to each quarreler individually and say that the other quarreler wanted me to tell you that he forgives you. Peace would successfully result. Rashi relates a fascinating story. One husband disgustingly told his wife I forbid you to derive any pleasure from me unless you spit in the eye of the Kohen Gadol. When Aaron heard of this, he went to that wife and said ‘I am sick and the saliva in your mouth will cure me. Please spit in my eye.’ She then spat in Aaron’s eye and peace was yet again made. (כשהיה רואה שנים מריבים זה עם זה היה הולך לכל או"א שלא מדעת חבריו ואומר לו פלוני ראה למה אתה מריב עם) פלוני הלא הוא נשתטח לפניי ופייסני לבא אצלך לדבר עמך עליו עד שתתרצה להתפייס עמו וכמו כן היה מדבר לחבירו ומתוך דברים הללו היה משים שלום ביניהם. אמר א' לאשתו קונם שאין נהנית לי עד שתרוק בעינו של כ"ג היה אהרן שומע היה הולך אצל אותה אשה והיה אומר פלוניתא חשתי בעיני ורוק שלך רפואה יש בו תרוק לי בעין והיתה (רוקקת). We clearly see that this act of Pinchas was in fact for the sake of heaven.