



From the desk of
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Office of the Rabbinate of Elad, Rosh HaAyin and Herzelia

עיר התורה שקרובה אליך

Religious Court of Elad * Batei Hora'ah * Religious Services * Marriage Licensing * Kashrut * Mikvaot * Eiruvim

TORAT

Parashat Pinchas

HAMELECH

Two Who Chase

Pinchas ben Elazar did an act of *kanaut* – zealotry. He saw someone sinning in a severe manner. He picked up a spear and stabbed him. People began murmuring that he did something wrong. Hashem told Moshe that He approved of Pinchas' zealotry and Pinchas will be rewarded.

Zealotry is not always good. Sometimes it is good and sometimes it is not. Reb Chaim Brisker said that there are two who chase mice: the cat and the housewife. What is the difference between the two? The housewife would prefer that there be no mice in her home. If there are mice, she chases them away. The cat, on the other hand, wants there to be mice, so he has what to chase!

So too, said Reb Chaim, there are two types of zealots. Some are like the housewife – they would prefer not to have to chase anyone. But if mice make trouble, they have no choice but to do away with them. Then there are the cats – always looking for something to complain about, someone to pursue.

For the Right Reasons

Korach was upset at Moshe Rabbeinu. He was very jealous of him. But he made it sound like he was standing up for equal rights. "The entire congregation is holy," he said. "Why do you

exercise authority upon the congregation of Hashem?"

Sometimes people make themselves out to be *Lesheim Shomayim*, but they really only have their own interests in mind.

Shmuel HaKatan was chosen to author a brachah against heretics. Why was he chosen? Because he is the one who used to say, "When your enemy falls, do not rejoice."

Shmuel HaKatan cared about others and their dignity. So he could compose a blessing against heretics and no one will suspect him of having ulterior motives.

Gehenom for Tzaddikim

Sefer Ateret Chachamim tells a story of a chacham who asked to be shown *gehenom*. He was shown two different sections: *Gehenom* for *Reshaim* and *Gehenom* for *Tzaddikim*. He was curious as to why *tzaddikim* went to *gehenom*. He was shown three instances: a) a man who had compassion for a widow. b) a man who learned loudly in shul between *mincha* and *maariv*. c) a man who kept *Shabbat*.

The chacham couldn't believe it! Why are they getting *gehenom* for doing *mitzvot*? A *mekubal* explained to him: a) The man who had compassion for the widow – that widow was involved in a court case and *Beit Din* declared



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that she had to pay. This man came along and disparaged Beit Din. b) The man who learned loudly in the shul – well, the Rav was giving a drasha and this man was disturbing! He gets gehenom for that! c) The man who kept Shabbat – there was a deathly ill patient in his family and he refused to do melacha in order to save the patient's life. He's getting gehenom for such Shemirat Shabbat!

The Replaced Chazzan

On Chol Hamoed Sukkot 5727 (1967), people came to visit the Baba Sali. It came time for mincha and they made a minyan in the Suka. A certain fellow asked if he could be shaliach tzibbur. Baba Sali consented. This man proceeded to exhibit all sorts of extreme chazzanut and during his silent Amidah, he shook like a lulav.

Before the repetition, Baba Sali instructed a different man to take over.

After the prayers, the first chazzan asked why he had been replaced. Baba Sali told him, "You shake too much! You must realize that when you pray, you are standing before the Almighty. It is not a time to show off!"

Close the Sefer

One Bein Hazemanim, a certain bachur spent a good deal of time in the home of the Baba Sali.

He would do all sorts of things, but he rarely opened up a sefer to learn.

One day, guests came to dine with Baba. This bachur was there, too. In between courses, the bachur pulled a sefer of the shelf and began learning. Baba Sali told him, "You didn't find a better time to learn? We're eating now."

Afterwards, (privately) Baba Sali spoke to him for more than half an hour on the severity of bitul Torah and admonished him for only learning when others were watching.

[This was more than fifty years ago. Mechanchim today would probably say to compliment any limud Torah, even if done just to make a good impression!]

In Public and in Private

We spoke last week of how everyone is here on a mission. The mission is to complete Hashem's Will, not to impress our surroundings. When in public, we should ask ourselves: Would I do this if no one else were looking? And when in private, we should ask ourselves: would I do this if I were on stage in full view of multitudes?

We should realize that Hashem is always watching and ultimately, He is the Only One we have to answer to.

Shabbat Shalom,
Mordechai Malka