



TORAH WEEKLY

A project of the Denver Community Kollel



Parshas Pinchas

July 2, 2021

A Taste of Torah

Eternal Teachings

by Rabbi Aharon Wilen

“*Tayku*” (lit., let it stand), the one-word response to the unanswered question. Even the novice Talmud student knows that the word “*tayku*” stands for *Tishbi yitaretz kushyos vi’abayos* (the final letter *vav*, pronounced as a “u” within the word, becomes a “v” when on its own), which means that Eliyahu the Tishbi - better known as Eliyahu Hanavi, Elijah the Prophet - will answer all unresolved questions when he comes to herald the Final Redemption.

If we are waiting for Hashem to send a prophet to answer our questions, why is Eliyahu the one selected for this role? There were many other prophets throughout our history to whom, following *techiyas hameisim* (the resurrection) of the Messianic Era, we will be able to turn. Better yet, why not send Moshe, the father of all prophets and the conveyor of the Torah from Heaven to Earth?

Perhaps a bigger problem is that the Talmud (Temurah 17a) says that a prophet cannot provide a halachic ruling based upon prophecy. How, then, do we expect to turn to Eliyahu Hanavi to answer all our questions?

The Talmud (Sanhedrin 82a) tells that when Zimri, a prince of the tribe of Shimon, brought Kozbi, a Midianite princess, before Moshe with intent to commit a sin with her and challenged Moshe regarding the permissibility of such behavior, Moshe and the Sanhedrin were at a loss as to how to deal with the situation. When Pinchas saw what was happening, he remembered the halacha. Pinchas approached Moshe and reminded

him that the consequence for Zimri’s egregious public behavior was that a *kana’i*, a zealot concerned only with the honor of Hashem, may attack the perpetrators. Moshe replied to Pinchas, “Let the one who remembered the halacha be the one to carry it out.” And thus Pinchas, at great personal risk, executed Zimri and Kozbi as they engaged in their sinful behavior.

Pinchas did not act of his own accord. Remembering what Moshe taught, he stood up to carry out and preserve those teachings.

The Medrash teaches us that Pinchas and Eliyahu are the same person, although Eliyahu lived many centuries later. This Medrash is generally understood as saying that as a reward for putting himself in harm’s way to protect the honor of Heaven, Pinchas was gifted with eternal life. This needs some explanation, as the vast majority of humanity, even very great and righteous people, do not receive eternal life as a reward for their good deeds.

Rabbi Matisyahu Salomon suggests that this reward is actually a result of Pinchas’ actions. Pinchas did not merely stand up for the honor of Heaven, he also stood up to preserve the teachings of Moshe. At the moment when disaster loomed due to a lack of clarity as to what the Torah instructed for this abysmal situation, Pinchas recalled what Moshe had taught and saved the day. From that moment on, he accepted the responsibility of preserving the original teachings of Moshe as he heard them. He lives forever to stand guard over these

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Stories for the Soul

Name Recognition

The Tosher Rebbe, Rabbi Meshulam Feish Lowy (1921-2015), was renowned for the great love he possessed toward all Jews and the great lengths to which he went to help them. Rabbi Lowy was the leader of his community in Quebec for decades, which included the Tosher Yeshiva, attended by the children of the community.

The leadership of the school once approached Rabbi Lowy regarding a particular unruly student. The school leadership explained that they had tried everything in their power to rein the boy in, to no avail. At this point, they were concerned his behavior would adversely affect other students; they had come to request permission to expel the boy from the school.

The Rebbe analyzed the situation from every angle, asking the administration members to try this and that, but they replied that they had already tried everything and had not succeeded. It was time, they concluded, to remove the student from the school.

At this point, Rabbi Lowy became very emotional, and he asked the men there, “If this student’s last name was Lowy, would you also throw him out of the yeshiva?”

In this week’s parsha, Moshe asks Hashem to appoint as his successor an individual who would be able to relate to every individual under his care. A good leader is the one who recognizes the importance of every person and each person’s unique circumstances.

Kollel Happenings

LEGAL HOLIDAY LEARNING ON JULY 4TH & 5TH

The Kollel's in-person Legal Holiday Learning returns on July 4th! Breakfast following 7:30 shacharis at the West Denver Kollel Torah Center and at EDOS. Special July 5th program at Aish of the Rockies; shacharis at 8 am followed by breakfast and learning. For more info and sponsorship opportunities, email info@denverkollel.org.

MOTZOEI SHABBOS NACHAMU KUMZITZ

The Kollel's annual Motzoei Shabbos Nachamu Kumzitz will take place on Motzoei Shabbos, July 24th, at 10 pm, location TBD. Live music, inspirational singing, refreshments and divrei Torah. Stay tuned for more info!

SPRING-SUMMER AVOS UBANIM ON SHABBOS AFTERNOON

The Kollel's spring-summer Avos Ubanim program continues this Shabbos afternoon at the Kollel Torah Centers in West Denver and Southeast Denver. Learning begins one hour before mincha, followed by nosh and prizes. The month of Tammuz is sponsored by Reb Moshe Berkowitz in memory of his father, Reb Shlomo ben Reb Aryeh Leib. Thank you, as well, to Denver Human Services for their partnership in this program. For sponsorships and more info, email info@denverkollel.org.

Halacha Riddles

Last week's question: When would the need to repeat *Birkas Hamazon* vary based on one's gender?

Answer: If a man omitted *ya'ale viyavo* in *Birkas Hamazon* on Yom Tov (not *Chol Hamo'ed*), he would need to repeat *Birkas Hamazon*. A woman, however, would not need to do so. The reasoning is because *Birkas Hamazon* is only repeated due to such an omission if one is obligated to eat that particular Shabbos or Yom Tov bread meal. While there is an obligation to eat a night and day bread meal on Yom Tov, there is a dispute whether this obligation extends to women or is limited to

men. Practically, women must eat these meals, but due to the uncertainty of the actual obligation, they would not repeat *Birkas Hamazon* due to the general idea of *safeik brachos lihakeil*, that we rule leniently regarding an uncertainty of a *bracha* obligation. The exception would be the Pesach Seder, where women, like men, must eat matzah, and so they are obligated in eating this bread (in this case matzah) meal (Shu"t Rabbi Akiva Eiger 1:1).

This week's question: When would one possibly skip *ritzei* in *Birkas Hamazon* following the Third Meal?

Lives of Our Torah Leaders

Rabbi Meir Shapiro - Part VI

In short, Meir, still a teenager, was recognized by many Torah leaders of the era as a young Torah scholar with great promise, both for his erudition and his charisma.

Despite his brilliance, it is said that the young Meir suffered from dyslexia and could not recognize individual letters. He overcame this challenge by training himself to recognize whole words. Later, he once commented to his students, "You have a rebbi who never learned to read *alef-bais*."

In addition to his great Torah scholarship, Meir was very intellectually curious, and he taught himself astronomy and mathematics.

Meir's grandfather introduced him to Rabbi Yisroel Friedman, the Tchartkover Rebbe. Meir grew close to the Rebbe, and became a lifelong chassid.

At age nineteen, Meir married and moved to Tarnopol, a major Jewish area in Galicia. His talents quickly came to the fore in his new community, and he became a major educational force in Tarnopol. During his time in Tarnopol, he wrote a Torah commentary titled *Imrei Da'as*. The work was innovative and brilliant. Unfortunately, it never became widely distributed because most of the printed copies were destroyed by Russian shellfire (along with his large private library) during World War I.

A Taste of Torah

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When Eliyahu/Pinchas comes to answer our questions at the End of Days, it will not be by means of prophecy. The Talmud's unanswered questions are due to the fact that we don't possess sufficient information upon which to base an answer. Some of the finer points of the Torah were lost in the

many generations of transmission from teacher to student, usually due to the persecutions and upheaval prevalent in the Jewish world. For these lost details, we turn to Eliyahu, not in his role as prophet, but rather as a Torah scholar who was present at the original lectures when that Torah was taught by Moshe.