



A Taste of Torah War and Peace

By Rabbi Mordechai E. Fleisher

Peace is a very popular cause these days. Just check a batch of bumper stickers and you'll see that lots of people think that all our problems will be solved if we'd just stop fighting with our enemies. Let's have a look at what the Torah has to say about peace.

At the close of last week's parsha, Pinchas kills Zimri, who was engaged in a sinful act, thus bringing an end to a devastating plague that claimed the lives of 24,000 Jews. Zimri was no small fry. In fact, he was a nasi, a prince of the tribe of Shimon. Pinchas' spontaneous zealotry earned him the ire of many Jews, who felt he hadn't the right to attack such a prestigious member of the Jewish People.

H-shem, however, said otherwise. And, as a reward for Pinchas' actions, H-shem declared that he is making a covenant with Pinchas - a covenant of peace. A rather strange reward for zealot. A necessary act of zealotry it was, to be sure, motivated purely by a desire to do what's right and proper. But why reward one who is devoted to zealotry for G-d's sake with a covenant of peace?

There are a number of explanations for this conundrum, but I'd like to share Rabbi Aharon Kotler's approach.

Sometimes, says R' Aharon, war is the truest peace. Take Avraham Avinu and Lot, for instance. Avraham and Lot had some differences. Instead of trying to resolve their differences, Avraham told Lot that they must go their separate ways. Avraham realized that staying with Lot would only lead to more trouble, not to ultimate reconciliation. The best way to avoid further discord, he decided, was to separate.

Here, as well, Pinchas wasn't a person looking for opportunities of zealotry. On the contrary, Pinchas wanted nothing more than peace. But he realized that peace would only come to the Jewish People when the root of their problem was destroyed and eradicated. "Peacemaking" in its classical sense would not bring an end to the plague. Only the swift execution of Zimri would yield the desired results. Nonetheless, after peace was restored, some people questioned Pinchas' motives. Who did he think he was, killing a prince of Bnai Yisroel? They thought he had stepped out-of-bounds. A zealot looking for trouble, some said. But H-shem had the final word. By granting Pinchas a covenant of peace, He clearly displayed to all that Pinchas' intentions were for peace - true peace, not illusory peace.

Ask the Rabbi Kaddish Without a Minyan

Gary from NYC wrote:

Dear Rabbi,

My mother died three months ago. I am not affiliated with a synagogue. I go

to synagogue on Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. My children were bar-mitzvahed and I have a deep feeling of Jewish identity. I have been saying kaddish for my mother in the morning and evening

Stories For The Soul

Faith and Fate

Noa was a young lady who, with great courage and conviction, moved to Israel from San Diego. She was living in Tzfat, which she loved, struggling to make ends meet, all the while praying to meet her *bashert* and begin a Jewish family. But she couldn't manage financially and was faced with possibility of having to leave Israel. She consulted a Rabbi who advised her to stay in Tzfat. With great faith, she accepted that advice even though on the surface, it didn't seem to make sense.

Yosef was living in Ashdod, working and devoting himself to daily Torah study. He was at a crossroads, not sure what path to take in terms of his future. He consulted a Rabbi who told him to return to Tzfat where his family lived. Everyone thought it was crazy; Ashdod had a booming economy, while Tzfat had little to offer. But the Rabbi said go to Tzfat, so off to Tzfat he went.

After Yosef arrived in Tzfat, his mother mentioned a wonderful girl named Noa, whom she had met a year ago but had lost touch with. If only she could find her again.

That same day Noa went to the famous gravesite of Shem V'Ever and prayed to Hashem for a *shidduch*. There was a big Torah lecture being given that night, so she went straight from the gravesite to the lecture. The hall was crowded and there were not many seats. Noa found a seat but then saw her good friend Gila on the other side of the hall. She went to join Gila, when she heard a voice calling her. It was Yosef's mother, Miriam, who

Kollel Happenings

CHERRY CREEK MUNCH AND LEARN, MON., JULY 25

The next Cherry Creek Munch and Learn for men, led by Rabbi Yehuda Amsel, will be held on Mon., July 25 at 12:30 p.m. at Colorado Capital Bank, 55 Madison Ave. The class focuses on Pirkei Avos. For information, contact Rabbi Amsel at 303-820-2855 or at rya@denverkollel



TUESDAY NIGHT TORAH AT AISH KODESH IN BOULDER

Join the Kollel for a dynamic one-on-one and small groups Torah encounter. Maariv will be held at 8:15 followed by Torah study at 8:30. Program will be held at Aish Kodesh, 1805 Balsam Ave. For information, contact Rabbi Moshe Heyman at 303-820-2855 or rmh@denverkollel.org or Charles Fried at 917-499-4307 or charlesfried@gmail.com.



DERECH HASHEM SERIES MON. NIGHTS

Join Rabbi Mordechai Fleisher for "Derech Hashem: Understanding G-d's World", a series for women based on Derech Hashem by Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzato. The classes will be held on Mondays at 7:45 p.m., locations to vary. For info, call 303-257-1089 or email pit@denverkollel.org

Interpersonal Issues Making it Work Part II

The obligation of bal tolin (paying on time) applies to the wages of any worker, be he a salaried employee, a service provider, or charges as a craftsman.

It can apply to one who was hired for an hour, a day, or a single task.

It can apply to rentals of movable

goods, such as a car or tables, and according to many authorities, even to rentals of real estate.

Adapted with permission from "The Halachos of Other People's Money" by Rabbi Pinchas Bodner (Feldheim Publishers)

Ask the Rabbi

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alone in my house. Recently, some Torah-observant colleagues have explained to me that kaddish should be said in the presence of a minyan and I understand the reason for that. However, I am not able to make the commitment to go to synagogue every day for a year, and feel awkward and uncomfortable walking into a synagogue as a stranger. Therefore I intend to continue to say kaddish for my mother in my house. My question is this: Is saying kaddish without a minyan, meaningless? Thank you.

Dear Gary,

Kaddish is the public sanctification of G-d's Name. If kaddish is said in private, then by definition it is not kaddish.

You say you are unable to attend synagogue every day for a year. Can you go every other day? There is great value to kaddish even if it is not said every day. You also mentioned that you have Torah-observant colleagues. Can you

gather ten such people at your home or work-place? If so, then you can say kaddish without going to synagogue.

On the days that you can't say kaddish with a minyan, you should ask someone who attends a minyan to say it instead of you. You should tell him your mother's Hebrew name.

Saying kaddish for a parent is a fulfillment of the commandment "Honor your father and your mother." The soul of the parent is rewarded for having reared a son or daughter who continues in the proper path. Other commandments, too, are a merit for the departed parent. So rather than recite kaddish in private, do a mitzvah; for example, say the daily Shema, give charity or do acts of kindness in her name. These will serve as a merit for your departed mother's soul. May the Almighty One comfort you among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

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Stories for the Soul

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took the opportunity to tell Noa all about her son. It wasn't long before Yosef and Noa met, and they soon married.

Had Noa not stayed in Tzfat, had Yosef not gone to Tzfat, had Noa not noticed Gila, and had Miriam not noticed Noa - had so many things not

happened precisely as they did - Yosef and Noa never would have met.

When something is meant to be, Hashem will move heaven and earth to make it happen.

Adapted with permission from ShulWeek by Rabbi Boruch Lederman.