

Pinchas

“Therefore say, behold, I give to him My covenant of peace.”
(25:12)

Usually G-d does not reward one for the observance of a Mitzvah in this world but rather in the next world. However, Pinchas was different, our Commentaries inform us, for his act also served to aid others and enabled others to perform more Mitzvochs since they were now saved from death. Thus we see the great value attached to an act which also helps others.

Peace is a very special blessing not easily achieved. Our Sages tell us that the Talmudic scholars help create peace on this world, for through their study and practice they are more at peace with themselves and so can be at peace with others. Unfortunately, we are living in a generation where people are very insecure with themselves and even so-called responsible leaders are engaged in degrading battle and even name calling. Jewish leaders are supposed to be firm when necessary but only for the sake of G-d without letting any personal biases get mixed in. They are supposed to balance their firmness with human concern for the people they lead. Pinchas, after rising to commit this tough act of killing Zimri, was immediately blessed with peace to counter-balance his personality at that moment. Thus, in our daily prayers, the blessing of peace is recited after the blessing of the priests for this same reason, since the *Kohanim* were the leaders and as such were endowed with an extra amount of firmness, it was also necessary for them to know that a leadership based solely on firmness without peace is not a proper one. Therefore, we also find later in the Parsha (22:16) that Moshe asks G-d to choose as his successor one who will be able to bear every individual according to his mind and he is informed that Joshua is the natural choice for he is a man of such spirit.

This is the time when we usually begin the traditional three-week mourning period for the destruction of both Temples and so we must be especially cognizant of the above. The first one was destroyed

because they did not adhere to the entire Torah whereas the second one was destroyed because of unwarranted hatred (see Yuma 9b).

Desire without knowledge is meaningless. At the same time we must also seek to eradicate hatred amongst our people and instead spread a feeling of love and togetherness amongst ourselves. At a time when the entire world is united against us we ourselves must be united internally so that we can withstand all external pressures.

Remember, concentrate on kindling the fuel of your inner soul.
GAS – *Go And Study*.