

Parshas Pinchos – Can a Zealot Really Bring Peace to the World?

1. **Bamidbar 25, 7:** Pinchos , son of Elazar son of Aharon the Kohen saw, and he stood up amid the assembly and took a spear in his hand....
2. **Bamidbar 25,10-13:** Hashem spoke to Moshe, Saying, "Pinchos the son of Elazar son of Aharon 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. Therefore, say: Behold! I give him My covenant of peace. And it shall be for him and his offspring after him a covenant of eternal priesthood, because he took vengeance for his G-d, and he atoned for the children of Israel."
3. **Rashi:** For although the priesthood had already been given to Aharon's descendants, it was only given to Aharon and his sons who had been anointed together with him and to their offspring whom they might beget after they had been anointed, But Pinchos, who had been born previous to that and had not been anointed, had not as yet attained the status of priesthood until now. So too, do we read in Zevachim 101b: "Pinchos did not become a priest until he had slain Zimri."
4. **Midrash:** He seized her by her plait of hair and brought her to Moshe, He said to him. "O son of Amram! Is this woman permitted in marriage or forbidden?" He answered him: "She is forbidden to you?" Said Zimri to him, "Yet the woman who you married was a Midianitess!" Thereupon Moshe felt powerless and the law slipped from his mind.
5. **Talmud Sanhedrin 82a:** If you see a person acting intimately with a non-Jew, a zealous person may kill him; however, we do not instruct him to do so..... Pinchos saw what was happening and remembered the law, and said, "O great-uncle! Did you not teach us that he who cohabits with a non-Jew is punished by zealots?" He replied, "He who reads the letter, let him be the agent."
6. **Rashi:** Because the tribes spoke disparagingly of him, saying, "Have you seen this grandson of Puti the father of whose mother used to fatten calves for idolatrous practices [i.e. that Elazar his father had married a daughter of Yisro] and he has dared to slay a prince of one of Israel's tribes!" , therefore the Torah connects his genealogy with Aharon.
7. **Duties of the Heart:** There is a higher level where the house is filled with people, but is like it is not filled. For the person is so attached to Hashem, where he is so bond up and yearning to fulfill the will of Hashem, that it leaves no room for any ulterior motives. This is how scripture praises King David, when it says, ""And David blessed Hashem before the entire congregation," as Rashi explains that the text means to say that even though he acted in front of the eyes of the entire congregation, his intention was only to bless Hashem , and only Hashem by Himself...
8. **Arvai Nachal:** When a person does a mitzvah with any ulterior motives, his Mitzvah will not be accepted before Hashem, and he will first be punished in the next world for the ulterior motive, and then the mitzvah alone remains, and he is rewarded. Someone who does a Mitzvah and needs Hashem to assist him via a miracle, Hashem will not perform miracles for falsehood. If the Mitzvah is not totally clean, a miracle will not happen to him.