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**Parshah about Pinchas**  
**by Julie Zhuk on 2022-04-23**

Numbers 28:16-25

The chapter in this parsha and the verses relate to Passover. They are all about the different types of animals Jews gave to G-d as korbans (sacrifices). Since I do all of these writings for myself and I didn't find these verses interesting I didn't have much to say. Unrelated to Passover, the Parsha is about Pinchas. That I had found something of interest for myself and value. That I chose to write about, so that is what I will share. In a previous parshah of Bamidbar we learn that the Jewish people were counted.

Over the years the reasoning behind this for some Rabbi's has been that it was like a person counting their money. They love money and always want to know how much they have. G-d loved the Jewish people so much that He was always reminding Moses to keep count of them. There was a tally of some sort when they left Egypt and then they had to recalculate how many Jews were left after G-d had split the sea.

Midrash states that it wasn't so important to count the women. On the other hand, the Jewish men from ages 20 to 60 were counted because they would be serving in the army. The Torah gives us a count of how many Jews were in each of the four different camps. If one tries to imagine how the Jewish people lived back then, there were four different camps set up on all sides of the land.

Right in the middle of the land was where the tabernacle had been kept. I think it was set up this way so everyone from the four different camps would always have access to the tabernacle. The Jewish people were trying to connect with G-d in a different way than people many thousands of years later. For the Jews coming outside of their camps and seeing the tabernacle in front of them was very important.

Aaron's grandson who was Pinchas. Pinchas killed a Samsonite prince by the name of Zimri and his lover, a Midianite princess. This Samsonite tribe may not have been acting in any noble way according to G-d, yet he was still a Jew. By doing this, Pinchas stops a plague before it could rage as a result of G-d's wrath against the people. On the one hand the Jews were happy with what Pinchas did. He got rid of people who were not following in the path that G-d had set up for the Jewish people.

What Pinchas actions did is prevent continuation of promiscuity. In Numbers 25, we learn that the wicked prophet named Baalam had failed to undermine the special relationship the Jews had with G-d. There were Jews who continued to sin. Baalam had an idea and shared it with Balak who was the Moabite King at the time, G-d abhorred promiscuity. Balak hired Baalam to place a curse on Israel, to corrupt them with the daughters of Balak's realm.

This way it would provoke G-d's wrath upon the Jewish people. Baalam's trickery worked and it was why many Jews from the Simeonite tribe were easily seduced by the Midianite women. Right in front of Moses took one of these Midianite women into his tent. Moses didn't know what to do, there were no rules of how to go about punishing someone like Zimri.

Pinchas came to the rescue and remembered what G-d said about Jews committing such acts. That was why Pinchas killed him.

On the other hand, many Jews didn't like what Pinchas did because in the end he did ACTUALLY KILL two people. Despite what people thought of Pinchas, G-d thought of him as a zealot. Pinchas was known to be the most peace-loving man out of all the Jewish people back then. G-d gives Pinchas a covenant of priesthood and having peace.

G-d tells Moses how to split up the land between all of the Jews, there were 601,730 men. After Pinchas killed Zimri, the Simeonite tribe had grown smaller. It went from having 22,200 Jews down to 59,300. One of Yosef's sons was Menashe and he had a tribe that were part of the Jewish people as well. They were known as the Manasseh. By this time when Moses was counting the Jews, he realized that the numbers in that tribe of Manasseh had dropped. At one point it was 52,700 and went down to 20,500. Since they did not count the women in this group, I am assuming that number was probably the amount of men.

The one quality that G-d was looking for every time he reminded Moses to count the Jews was, they were all individual human beings. G-d gave everyone life because He saw the soul of a man has a spark of their own fire. He created man to have a spark with the potential to reflect infinite goodness and perfection of their source.

Pinchas was often compared to the prophet Eliyahu. Not so much the prophet as a person, but having his spirit. As much as what he did was seen as a criminal act, in the eyes of G-d Pinchas did a very good deed. G-d saw Pinchas as an utterly selfless individual. G-d saw that Pinchas was only concerned with the relationship with the people of Israel and G-d Himself.

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