

DAF HASHAVUA

פינחס | PINCHAS

יז.ד

SHABBAT ENDS:

- London 10.08pm
- Birmingham 10.21pm
- Bournemouth 10.16pm
- Cardiff 10.26pm
- Dublin 10.45pm
- Edinburgh 10.58pm
- Glasgow 11.04pm
- Hull 10.34pm
- Leeds 10.30pm
- Liverpool 10.40pm
- Manchester 10.34pm
- Nottingham 10.30pm
- Sheffield 10.35pm
- Southend 10.04pm
- Southport 10.44pm
- Jerusalem 8.25pm

Shabbat Mevarechim

Rosh Chodesh Av is
next Shabbat



*“God said to Moshe, ‘Go up to Mount Avarim and see the Land that I have given to the Israelites”
(Bemidbar 27:12)*

SIDRA
BREAKDOWN

פינחס
PINCHAS

8th Sidra in:

במדבר
BEMIDBAR

By Numbers:
168 VERSES
1,887 WORDS
7,853 LETTERS

Headlines:
**YEHOSHUA'S
(JOSHUA'S)
APPOINTMENT AS
LEADER**

PINCHAS:
Artscroll p.876
Hertz p.686
Soncino p.932

**HAFTARAH
(MATOT):**
Artscroll p.1192
Hertz p.710
Soncino p.968

Sidra Summary

1ST ALIYA (KOHEN) – BEMIDBAR 25:10-26:4

God tells Moshe that Pinchas, Aharon's grandson, is to become a Kohen in recognition of his righteous actions in stopping the public display of immorality described at the end of last week's sidra. The names of the two offenders are given – Zimri from the tribe of Shimon and Kozbi, a Midianite princess. God commands Moshe to smite the Midianites as retribution for luring the Israelites into idol worship and immorality. Moshe and Elazar, the Kohen Gadol, are told to take a census of men above the age of 20.

Point to Consider: *Why was Pinchas not already considered a Kohen if he was a grandson of Aharon? (see Rashi to 25:13)*

2ND ALIYA (LEVI) – 26:5-51

The main descendants of each tribe are listed, as well as the overall number within each tribe, as counted in the census. When detailing the tribe of Reuven, the Torah recalls that Datan and Aviram were from this tribe and that the ground swallowed them in Korach's rebellion. The overall census number is 601,730.

3RD ALIYA (SHLISHI) – 26:52-27:5

God tells Moshe to apportion the Land to those counted in the census. The tribes with more people will receive proportionally more land area. Although this distribution was calculated mathematically, it was carried out through Elazar drawing lots, guided by Divine inspiration (Rashi). The main Levite families, who were not included in the census, are listed. They number 23,000 males above the age of one month. No one who was included in the first census when the Israelites left Egypt is included in this census, as they had died in the desert, apart from Yehoshua (Joshua) and Calev. The five daughters of Tzelofchad, a descendant of Menashe, ask Moshe to be given their deceased father's share

in the Land, as they have no brothers to inherit him. Moshe consults God about their request.

4TH ALIYA (REVI'I) – 27:6-23

God declares that Tzelofchad's daughters are justified in their request and that, in the absence of sons, daughters are to inherit their father. Other hierarchical inheritance rights are stated. God tells Moshe to ascend Mount Avarim and look at the Land of Canaan from afar, reminding him that he will not come into the Land because of his mistake of hitting the rock (see Bemidbar 20:9-12). Moshe asks God to appoint a new leader. God tells him to appoint Yehoshua, which Moshe does, in the presence of Elazar and the Sanhedrin (Rashi).

5TH ALIYA (CHAMISHI) – 28:1-15

God instructs Moshe to tell the Israelites to bring the twice-daily *tamid* (continual) offering, consisting of a male lamb, together with a flour offering mixed with oil and a wine libation. The additional Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh offerings are detailed.

6TH ALIYA (SHISHI) – 28:16-29:11

The special offerings for Pesach, Shavuot, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are also detailed.

7TH ALIYA (SHEVI'I) – 29:12-30:1

The Torah details the many extra offerings brought during Succot, including 70 bulls. Shemini Atzeret, the day after Succot, has its own set of offerings.

HAFTARAH (YIRMIYAHU 1:1-2:3)

Taken from the start of the book of Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah), this haftarah is the first of the three 'haftarot of tribulation' read in the build-up to Tisha B'Av. The prophet is told by God that an invader will come 'from the north' to attack Jerusalem, as happened at the time of the destruction of the First Temple, because of the sinfulness of its inhabitants.



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United Synagogue Daf Hashavua

Produced by US Education & Events together with the Rabbinical Council of the United Synagogue

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"Sorry – I forgot one thing"



**RABBI MOSHE
CHAIM LISTER**

Barnet United
Synagogue

For several years as a teenager, I would help at a local shop in the build-up to Pesach. For weeks it was a whirlwind of stock management, shelf stacking and heavy lifting. However, when staffing was short, I would work the tills. I soon learned that, as gruelling as warehouse work was, customers could be much more challenging. One recurring phenomenon became the bane of my till work: as a queue of stacked trolleys and stressed customers snaked around the shop, invariably there would be someone who, after checking out their mountain of shopping, would utter the dreaded phrase: "Oops, sorry – I forgot one thing". They would then vanish into the recesses of the shop to retrieve their forgotten item, leaving me to face an ever-growing, and ever more disgruntled, queue of Pesach shoppers.

The memory of these interminable, anxious waits was always accompanied by a sense of frustration: couldn't you get all your shopping and then check out? However, one day I started to suspect that I may be no better. The *Amidah* prayer

contains what one could crudely describe as a shopping list: we ask for everything from wisdom and health, to blessings and the Messiah. At the end of a long list of requests, we say *Modim*, where we thank God for all these blessings, and then, after saying thank you for our 'shopping', we ask for *shalom*, peace. Shouldn't we be asking for this before we check out? Do we say to God every day: "Sorry – I forgot one thing"?

Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (1808-1888) explains the positioning of this request for peace beautifully. To borrow the shopping analogy, in every *Amidah* we go shopping with God. Having said "thank you" for our bags bursting with blessings, God "stands with us outside the shop" and asks: "You have got what you asked for – now what are you going to do with it?" And this is when we then turn to God and ask not for peace as a blessing, but peace as a mission. We ask that we merit to use our gifts to guide the world to a more harmonious and unified place, with equality and serenity for all. Too often in history, the blessings bestowed on individuals have been used to torment and fracture society; our request for peace sets our sights on becoming not just recipients of peace but champions for it.

This new approach to the

blessing we say three times day is played out beautifully at the beginning of this week's sidra. Pinchas' zeal had led him to kill Zimri and Cozbi for their outrageous immorality. His seemingly questionable act is rewarded with God's "covenant of peace" (Bemidbar 25:12). Many commentators puzzle over why this act of aggression is directly rewarded with a pacifist's ideal. But perhaps with our new perspective this makes perfect sense. Pinchas' zeal was directed for the sake of bringing peace. God's blessing to Pinchas was the same thing we ask for every day: with our unique talents, strengths and blessings, we should unite under the banner of peace – not just as recipients, but champions of it!

Happy shopping!



In loving memory of David Yochanan ben Moshe z"l

Hallel: The joy of living



**SHIRA
JACKSON**

US Education

In this series, we focus on the meanings and relevance of our prayers and how they offer us opportunities to connect with God at any time, not just during formal services.

I am sure you all know the classic Jewish joke – ‘how do you summarise every Jewish festival? They tried to kill us, we won – let’s eat.’ We recite Hallel every Rosh Chodesh and Yom Tov, and it takes the form of musical psalms that we sing in celebration of our special occasions. But many of these psalms, 113-118 specifically, express very mixed emotions; perhaps as the joke implies, as Jews we choose to celebrate life and praise God for the good, particularly at times when we have been faced with death and feared for the worst.

What is the source for this mitzva to recite Hallel? Every festival obligates us in the mitzva

of *simcha* (rejoicing), based on the verse, “*Ve’samachta be’chagecha*, And you shall rejoice in your festival” (Devarim 16:14). According to the Ramban (Rabbi Moshe ben Nachman, 1194-1270), an additional expression of *simcha* is the recitation of Hallel.

Another possible source appears in the Talmud (*Pesachim* 117a), which suggests that Moshe (Moses) and the Jewish people recited Hallel when they crossed the Sea of Reeds. The practice of reciting Hallel was then instituted, to be recited any time the Jewish people were saved from grave danger. Surviving the slavery of Egypt on Pesach, culminating in receiving the Torah on Shavuot, followed by our miraculous survival sojourning a desert for 40 years, celebrated at Succot time, defeating the mighty Greek army during the Second Temple era, on Chanukah, certainly qualify. More recently, Israel’s success during the War of Independence and the Six Day War in particular, fit the pattern of miraculous survival. They call for praise and thanks to God.

How does Hallel on Rosh Chodesh fit in? It was instituted by the rabbis living in Babylonia after the destruction of the Second Temple as a way of alerting people to the fact that the new month has begun. At that time, before the calendar was fixed, they were reliant on witnesses testifying to the Beth Din in Jerusalem that they had seen the new moon, and then word would spread that it was Rosh Chodesh. Perhaps there were times in Jewish history, both ancient and modern, that, merely living to herald in a new month was in itself a miracle and a cause for thanks and celebration.

Indeed, when former hostage Emily Damari visited Highgate Synagogue earlier this year, she shared with the community that she had recited *Mizmor le’Todah*, the Psalm of Thanks (Psalm 100), three times a day whilst in captivity. In the most horrific of circumstances, she recognised the miracle and thanked God that she was still alive, each morning, afternoon and night.

As we bring in the new month this week, and recite Hallel, let’s take a break from whatever worries us and dedicate a moment to focusing on everything we have to be thankful for. May we merit to see more miracles and peace this coming month.

Perhaps there were times in Jewish history, both ancient and modern, that, merely living to herald in a new month was in itself a miracle and a cause for thanks and celebration.

Rabbi Slotki's message: From tragedy to responsibility



**RABBI
BARUCH DAVIS**

Daf Hashavua
Editor-in-Chief

Rabbi Shmuel and Tali Slotki, married for 35 years with seven children, endured unthinkable tragedy on Simchat Torah, 7 October 2023. Their sons Noam (31) and Yishai (24), both married with a child, rushed from their homes in Be'er Sheva to defend Kibbutz Alumim near Gaza. They saved many lives but then went missing. Rabbi Slotki, a longstanding community rabbi in Jerusalem, was himself called up, stationed at the Shura base, where he witnessed the overwhelming number of fallen soldiers being identified. Five days later, the devastating news was confirmed: both Noam and Yishai had been killed in battle.

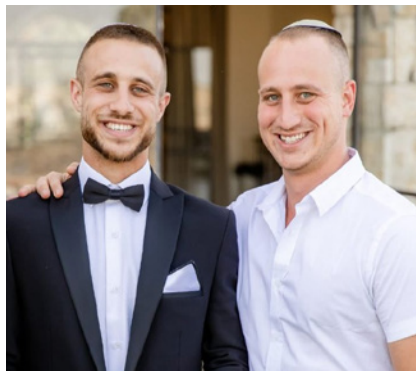
Even after such a loss, Rabbi Slotki returned to his unit to help identify victims and locate the missing. "I experienced the value of closure," he said. "How could I not help bring that to other families? Even when we suffer a devastating blow, we must get up and continue to act for the survival of *Am Yisrael*."

In a recent conversation I had with Rabbi Slotki in advance of the Three Weeks - a time of mourning for the destruction of the Temples - this remarkable man offered some powerful reflections born out of deep personal loss and unwavering faith.

To sit with him is to see the pain of loss etched into his face. Yet, alongside the sorrow, there is deep gratitude to God and pride in *Am Yisrael*. "On 7 October, we fell into a deep pit," he said, "but we also saw the hidden greatness of our people revealed - especially in our younger people. We saw the definition of "family" greatly broadened. Soldiers and civilians alike went out of their way to help people they didn't even know, regardless of political or religious affiliation."

Despite the horrors, Rabbi Slotki sees miracles and divine protection. "Hizbollah was preparing an invasion of the north, which would have been far worse than the horrors of 7 October. Think Syria, Iran and Judea and Samaria attacking at once - we would have been overwhelmed. We saw the hand of God."

Rabbi Slotki sees a profound awakening in the Jewish people. "We haven't seen such religious stirrings since the time of Yehoshua (Joshua). At conferences I attended across the world - in Mexico, New York, Saloniki - rabbis are reporting that people are coming to shul who hadn't previously attended even on Yom Kippur. *Aliyah* rates are rising. Conversion applications among non-Jews serving in the Israeli army are up 70%, with soldiers saying 7 October changed their lives and



Yishai and Noam Slotki Hy"d (Photo: Meir Lavi)

they want to be part of *Am Yisrael*."

"Before 7 October, many Israelis identified as human beings, Israelis and Jews, in that order. Now that order is reversed. This is a gift. Can we create a society that lives peacefully together, despite differences? We must try. That's our mission."

Even in small ways, he sees evidence of national unity. "Since 7 October, kidney donations to strangers are up 15%. This isn't just a silver lining in a cloud - it's more. We're living in the silver lining, with some dark patches. Look where we were 85 years ago: Holocaust, pogroms, no state, no army. With all today's challenges, we are in the best position since the Second Temple! We must preserve it! Our children died for this."

"Since 7 October, my wife and I have known tremendous pain - but also joy: our children's weddings, more grandchildren. The more we focus on the light, the more strength we find."

In loving memory of Reuven ben Avraham z"l

Texts of the Three Weeks

Yirmiyahu



**PNINA
SAVERY**

Ma'ayan and
US Educator

Yirmiyahu HaNavi (Jeremiah the Prophet) is perhaps the most tragic figure in the whole of *Tanach* (the Hebrew Bible). He spends his forty-year career as a prophet trying to prevent the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the people from the Land of Israel. The people ignore him, and he is ultimately forced to watch as his beloved city is burnt down and his people are marched off in chains. He wrote three different books of *Tanach*, each of which has a different focus and message: *Melachim* (Kings), *Yirmiyahu* and *Eicha* (Lamentations).

Yirmiyahu begins his role as a prophet in the year 627 BCE. His career overlaps with the reigns of the final kings of the southern kingdom of Yehuda (Judah), following the exile of the northern ten tribes by the Assyrian superpower. He directs his prophecies to the people of Jerusalem, desperately trying to get his message across. If only the people would do *teshuva* (repentance), further destruction would be avoided. Alas, his attempts are in vain. He is even

imprisoned on charges of being a false prophet. This is how determined the Jewish people are to prove him wrong.

It can be difficult to study the book of Yirmiyahu as it seems that it is all doom and gloom. However, at its centre are four chapters focused on consolation (chapters 30-33). Here the prophet gives a message of hope to the people: in the future there will be a redemption. It is in this section that we have the beautiful image of God comforting the weeping matriarch Rachel. She cries in heaven as her children go into exile. God comforts her: "restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears... there is hope for your future... your children will return to their border" (*Yirmiyahu* 31:15-16). Today, these words are sung to welcome new *olim* (immigrants) after they make *Aliyah* to Israel.

This is an important message. Amongst all the tragedy and hardship, things will get better. Yirmiyahu also shares the prophecy that the Babylonian

exile will only last 70 years (25:11). Before the exile even took place, the prophet is already comforting us that we will return to our homeland. Our Sages teach us that God often provides the cure before the disease (*Megillah* 13b). Whilst Yirmiyahu's main aim is to get the people to repent to avoid the exile, he is also planting seeds of hope for the future in case he does not succeed.

A fundamental principle in *Tanach* study is that everything in the biblical canon holds important messages for all future generations, otherwise it would not have been included.¹ Thus, Yirmiyahu was not only providing hope for his generation and the suffering they were soon to endure, but also for all future generations.

During the Three Weeks, the annual period of mourning for the tragedies of our past, it is natural to focus on the suffering and hardships that the Jewish people are enduring today. Yirmiyahu's message of consolation still holds true: there is hope for our future.

**Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes
from tears... there is hope for your future...
your children will return to their border"
(Yirmiyahu 31:15-16)**

¹ Based on the Talmud *Megillah* 14a.

THE TRIBE WEEKLY

PARASHAT PINCHAS 18-19 JULY | 23 TAMUZ

Halachic heroism: Living as a hero



JOSH MARCOVITCH

Youth Director at Woodford Forest United Synagogue

Aharon was made a Kohen. His sons and the sons that *will* be born to them are made Kohanim. The one Kohen excluded from being a Kohen was Pinchas, Aharon's grandson (he was already born)!

Pinchas later became a Kohen by his own merit. He earned a stronger connection to *Kehuna* (priesthood) than anyone else had. In response to Pinchas's zealous defence of God's honour, God awarded him *Brit Kehunat Olam*, 'A covenant of eternal priesthood'.

We can calculate that Pinchas was 40 years old when he was awarded eternal priesthood, the same age as Rabbi Akiva was when he came to religion. But that's not the only significance of the number 40; we require 40 *seah* (a Biblical measurement) of rainwater to make a kosher *mikvah* (ritual bath). Many of the laws of the Kohanim and the Temple service require immersion in a *mikvah* in order to be in a state of purity.

We ask in our Shabbat *davening* "*ve'taher libeinu le'ovdecha be'emet*" – that our hearts be purified to serve God in truth. To be like the Kohanim and unleash our true potential. A life of purity, of fear of heaven and of love of God.

Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik (1903-

1993), in his essay, 'Catharsis', asks: what is strength? There is no glamour in withdrawal. From retreating from our instincts, from our *yetzer hara* (negative inclination). But that is the point! To conquer our *yetzer hara* we must be constantly aware. "The individual, instead of undertaking heroic action sporadically, lives constantly as a hero". We live a constant battle of choices to do good and choices to do bad. We have within us the strength to choose a life of goodness and purity, like Pinchas. It is in everything, the mundane, the thoughtless and the automatic. In our speech, in our actions and in our mind. We can make all of it holy.

Will you be a hero?

Parasha Wordsearch

Find these words in the grid. The words can go in any direction and can share letters as they cross over each other.

T	K	R	W	M	J	F	M	K	L	U	D
A	A	D	A	K	I	O	J	Q	T	C	L
C	V	B	X	O	O	K	I	M	S	A	X
S	K	I	B	H	A	H	V	L	S	Z	A
L	A	G	K	A	S	H	E	A	I	K	I
L	X	H	O	A	H	L	C	N	H	S	O
A	N	U	C	K	I	S	I	A	O	S	Z
O	Y	O	W	N	E	B	G	V	L	W	R
F	R	B	R	Z	I	D	B	E	Y	A	T
V	M	E	M	A	C	P	S	A	V	H	H
V	I	X	H	U	H	S	F	E	R	U	P
J	H	P	N	W	N	A	S	Y	D	L	P

- PINCHAS
- RABBI AKIVA
- SHABBAT
- HERO
- HOLY
- MIKVAH
- PURE
- HALACHA
- AHARON
- KOHEN





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