

# Putting the Heart Back Together Again – Parshat Pinchas

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***Shame and disgrace can break a person's heart. What do you do when your heart is broken to pieces? How do you manage to enliven the heart with renewed love? And how does this relate to this week's parsha? This is the topic of the following discourse.***

This week's Torah portion is *parshat "Pinchas."* There are a few different events that are related in the *parsha*. Firstly, Pinchas merited to the eternal priesthood, making him and his offspring Kohanim as a reward for his jealousy for G-d's honor

when he killed Zimri (as described at the end of the *parshat "Balak"*). Then, the Nation of Israel was counted, and the commandment to divide the land of Israel according to the tribes by lot was given. And then, Moses requested that a leader of the Nation be appointed for after he passed away. The *Tamid* and *Musaf* sacrifices for the festivals are then related. What is the connection between all these topics, which at first glance seem to have no connection to one another?

We will learn a wonderful concept, through which the connection between the topics will be clarified with G-d's help.

Rabbi Nachman teaches that when King David, may he rest in peace, was persecuted by his enemies, he exclaimed: "Humiliation has broken my heart" (Psalms 69:21), meaning that, humiliation (shame) and disgrace breaks a person's heart. The remedy for this is to bind one's heart to the point that it is connected to at that time. These things will be explained further on.

There are three points (channels) where it is possible to draw down a new illumination to a broken heart which has suffered disgrace and humiliation: the point of the tzaddik, the point of one's friend, and the point of the person himself. The main point is the "point of the tzaddik." On the verse, "the tzaddik rules in fear of God" (from Samuel II, 23:3) our sages explained, "Who rules over Me? The tzaddik. I [G-d] decree, and the Tzaddik cancels it." That is to say that *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* gives the tzaddikim the power to run the world, and the main power is to enlighten and arouse the heart to serve G-d.

The second point is the point of one's friend. In every Jew there exists a relative point of "*tzaddik moshel*" ("the tzaddik rules"). The Talmud relates that Abayeh and Abba Umna would receive a heavenly greeting. Abayeh was one of the

greatest of the Amoraim and the head of the famous Nehardea Yeshiva, and Abba Umna was a doctor who specialized in bloodletting for healing. While a *bat kol* (voice from Heaven) would bless Abayeh each Erev Shabbat, Abba Umna merited to this every day. Abayeh was upset by this, and he received a reply from Heaven about this. "You cannot do what Abba Umna does." Abayeh was much greater than Abba Umna, yet he still had to receive from the good point from his friend Abba Umna (Ta'anit 21b). This is the good point of one's friend where each person needs to receive a point from his friend, a form of enlightenment, in which his friend is greater than him.

The third point is the inner point that every person has inside himself. This is when a person has a conversation between himself and the Creator in such a way that he awakens his own heart and rectifies it from the humiliation and abuse which break one's heart.

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We will now learn a bit of Kabbalah in the context of these three points. Regarding the point of the Tzaddik, this corresponds to the *Sefira* of *Yesod*, the ninth of the ten *Sefirot*. As is known, there are ten *Sefirot* (Divine Emanations) and each *Sefira* has a different vowelization for the name of G-d. (The name of G-d is א-ל-ה-י. It is forbidden to pronounce this name of G-d. One may only pronounce the name during one's prayers using the name א-ל-ה-י.) For example, in the first *Sefira* which is *Keter* ("the Crown"), the name א-ל-ה-י is punctuated with the vowel *kamatz* (אָ-לֵ-הֵ-יִ). In the *Sefira* of *Yesod*, it is punctuated with the vowel *malapum*, which is sometimes also called "*shuruk*" (אוּ), as (-אוּאוּ-אוּאוּ-אוּאוּ אוּאוּ). The letters of the word "*malapum*" are composed of the words "*maleh pum*" which literally translates as "a complete

speech.” Since blessing and abundance are in accordance with man’s speech, as in the verse: “And He shall bless you as He spoke concerning you” (Deuteronomy 1:11), therefore the tzaddik, who guards the covenant (which is an enlightenment of the *Sefira* of *Yesod*), has complete speech, meaning it is completely rectified and can draw down a comprehensive abundance and enlighten the heart.

Furthermore, let us look at the vowel “*malapum*.” It consists of a dot inside the letter vav (וּ). The dot resembles the smallest of the letters which is the letter yud (י), and it symbolizes wisdom which starts out very small, as it is written: “the beginning (foundation) is wisdom” (Psalms 111:10). Only later, in the heart, the place of understanding, does it expand and develop. The combination of “wisdom” and “understanding,” represented by the letters *yud* and *vav* correspondingly, are expressed in many ways on the general level such as: the Ten Commandments and the tablets, the Torah and the world, and the tzaddik and the people of Israel. And also, on the individual level of each person, they represent the relationship between the mouth and the heart. Speech corresponds to wisdom, to the letter *yud*. And the heart, which is understanding, corresponds to the “Tablets of the covenant” and to the letter *vav*, as in the verse, “My mouth shall speak wisdom, and the thoughts of my heart are understanding” (Psalms 49:4). “My mouth” symbolizes “wisdom,” and the heart, “understanding.” The heart represents the “Tablets of the Covenant” as in the verse, “Inscribe them upon the tablet of your heart” (Proverbs 3:3), because the tablets had the length and width of six which is the number represented by the letter *vav*. (For a further and more detailed explanation of this concept, see *Likutei Moharan* I, 34.)

We will now discuss the final stage and then summarize in simple and practical words the principles we have learned and show how they relate to our *parsha* in light of the wonderful explanations we have brought:

When a person falls into sin, it means that his heart been taken over by base desires. This condition is defined as "*orlat halev*," an uncircumcised heart. When Dina the daughter of Jacob was violated by Shechem the son of Chamor because of his base desires, and he asked her to marry him, Dina's brothers replied: "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to a man who is uncircumcised, for that is a disgrace to us" (Genesis 34:14). Shechem had committed a loathsome act, and uncircumcised and disgusting behavior, the greatest possible shame.

When a person's heart is filled with base desires, the result is a broken heart. The heart is sealed off from spiritual love. It breaks a person's heart, in the same way that the tablets were broken when Moses came down from the mountain and saw the Sin of the Golden Calf, which was a form of evil love, and he threw down the tablets and they broke. And likewise, the heart of a Jew who has fallen into evil lusts, is a "broken heart," similar to the broken tablets.

The base desires in the heart originate from the "Shattering of the Vessels" which was a stage in the creation of the world. As we know, there are four worlds, in descending order: *Atzilut* (Emanation), *Briyah* (Creation), *Yitzirah* (Formation) and *Asiyah* (Action). When *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* wanted to create the world, the Divine Light was too great for the vessels He had created, and the vessels of Divine Grace in the upper world of *Atzliut* shattered and fell into the world of *Briyah* which are below the *Sefira* of *Binah*. *Chesed* (kindness) symbolizes love, so when the vessel for *Chesed* fell, it meant that love had fallen from the upper world of *Atzilut* to the lower world of *Briyah*, into the *Sefira* of *Binah* which symbolizes the heart. This is the source of "the broken heart," mentioned above. Yet even though the vessels of *Chesed* had fallen and been broken, the light of the vessels of *Chesed* remained in the *Sefirah* of *Yesod* of the World of *Atzilut* which was on a higher level.

How can this breakage be fixed?

To nullify the uncircumcised heart, the humiliating and base desires, one must draw down the light of the holy love which is found in the *Sefira* of *Yesod* of the World of *Atzilut*. This is done through the point of the tzaddik which corresponds to the *Sefira* of *Yesod*, as it is written, "the tzaddik is the foundation of the World." The Tzaddik (corresponding to the letter *yud*) illuminates the holy love which is in the *Sefirah* of *Yesod* of the World of *Atzilut* to the *Sefira* of *Binah* in the World of *Briyah*, meaning "the heart," which corresponds to the letter *vav*.

Rabbi Nachman gives a beautiful allusion to this from the *Tanach*, "As we can see with our own eyes, 'love covers all transgressions' (Proverbs 10:12). Even if one sins against his friend, his friend will not humiliate him, because love covers all sins, and when the covenant of love between them is broken, which is the aspect of the Shattering of the Vessels of *Chesed* (the equivalent of "love"), then this will bring disgrace upon him, because the disgrace is from the Shattering of the Vessels of *Chesed*." Therefore, when the Tzaddik draws down the light of holy love, he rectifies and returns the holy love to its former status and then the disgrace is nullified.

As we have seen, the way to fix the heart is to draw down the power of the holy expression "*malapum*" to the heart, and this is how one rectifies disgrace which is a broken heart. When a person awakens his personal inner-point and speaks to the Creator from this place, he draws down rectification into his heart. This is also true when a person receives his friend's good point, the special point that only he has, and especially when he connects himself to the tzaddik whose main power and dominion is in drawing down the light of holy love into our hearts and awakening us to serve G-d.



*ten Sefirot* When a person's heart is filled with base desires,  
the result is a broken heart

Now we will return to our *parsha* and connect it to the different explanations we have presented.

Pinchas drew down *chesed* from the light of holy love, and this is why he was able to injure Zimri at the time of his act of lewdness, and to eradicate the power of his base desires, which is immorality (the aspect of the uncircumcised foreskin and disgrace). Not only that, in doing so he also managed to subdue the *klipah* (spiritual husk) of Balaam and his evil advice to cause Israel to sin with an evil and base desire. The *chesed* that he drew down stopped the plague. And therefore, he was granted the *kehuna* (priesthood) which is rooted in *chesed*.

Therefore, immediately afterwards G-d commanded the Nation of Israel to take revenge upon the people of Midian because it was their daughters that had enticed them to sin. For, the light of holy love has the power to eliminate the uncircumcised foreskin, which is the disgrace of "the heart." It would then be possible to eradicate the fallen desire for the women of Midian. Therefore, Pinchas, who merited to draw

down the light of holy love, went himself to this war and killed Balaam.

Then, the instruction was given to recount the people of Israel. This hints at the holy point that there is in each and every Jew, through which everyone can correct his own broken heart, be purified, and ascend back up to holiness. That is why it was necessary to individually count each and every person.

Afterwards, we were commanded to portion out the Land of Israel, because it is known that the sanctity of the Land of Israel is that every Jew has his root of holiness in the Land of Israel, according to his holy point.

Then the Torah briefly mentions the episode of "The Waters of Contention" which would eventually be the cause of Moses passing away, and then Moses asked G-d to appoint a new leader for the people who would know how to deal with each person according to his own individual disposition. Because, as we already mentioned, everyone has his role, both to receive from his friend and also to wake himself up and to merit to fix his own broken heart. "The Waters of Contention," which signify the controversy, prevent one from receiving from his friend's good point. The rectification for this is peace between the people of Israel, so that everyone can receive from his friend's good point. This requires an honorable and respected leader, "a man of spirit (understanding)" (Numbers 27:18) who knows how to deal with each person according to his own individual disposition.

And from then until the end of the *parsha*, the Torah deals with the *Tamid* and *Musaf* sacrifices. The sacrifices come to subdue animalistic lusts and the base desires, and to raise up the love back to its root in *chesed*. Therefore, they would bring it to the Kohen, to the Temple where the Holy Love shines the strongest, and through it they would merit to forgiveness from sin as it is written: "Love covers up all



transgressions" (Proverbs 10:12). And this is how the Shattering of the Vessels and the Breaking of the Tablets are rectified, along with all of the creation, and through this the redemption will come, speedily and in our days, Amen.

(Based on *Likutei Halachot, Nesiat Kapayim* 5:13-17)