

## Parashah Pinchas

The one where Pinchas, the grandson of Aaron, acts against the people who've been led astray; rights of daughters to inherit land when there is no male heir is established; and Moses transfers some authority to Joshua.

**Parashah Pinchas focuses on the actions of Pinchas**, the son of Eleazar and grandson of Aaron, the high priest. It covers various events during the Israelites' time in the desert.

**The parashah starts with the aftermath of an incident at Baal-Peor.** Israelite men were lured by Moabite women, leading to the worship of the idol Baal-Peor and immoral behavior. A plague broke out as punishment. Pinchas, a priest, acted by killing an Israelite man and a Moabite woman engaged in idolatry and immorality. His actions stopped the plague, and he received commendation.

**The parashah also follows the story into the division of the land of Canaan among the Israelite tribes** and provides instructions for sharing land and cities for the Levites. It includes a recounting of the various offerings and sacrifices to be made on specific holidays and special occasions, emphasizing the importance of maintaining religious traditions and rituals.

**There is also the story of Zelophehad's daughters.** As the Israelites were preparing to enter the Promised Land, there was a concern about how the inheritance of land would be allocated among the tribes. Traditionally, land was passed down through male descendants, and since Zelophehad had no sons, his daughters were worried that they would be left without an inheritance. The daughters - Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah - decided to approach Moses to make their case. They argued their father's name and inheritance should not be lost just because he had no sons. Moses sought divine guidance on whether the daughters should indeed inherit their father's portion of land. God told him to declare that the daughters of Zelophehad were right and should inherit their father's land, setting a precedent for inheritance rights for women.

**Moses sought a successor to lead the Israelites after his time.** He was instructed to appoint Joshua as his successor, transferring some of his authority to him. Detailed instructions were given regarding daily and festival offerings, such as those for Passover, Shavuot, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot. Rules and regulations were provided regarding vows and oaths, particularly those made by women. Vows were to be upheld, and procedures for annulment were outlined for unfulfilled vows. Moses led a campaign against the Midianites in response to their role in leading the Israelites into idolatry and immorality. The campaign resulted in victory.

**Parashah Pinchas contains a mix of stories and rules, information on leadership succession, and guidance on the observance of religious rituals and vows within the Israelite community.** It also highlights the principle of taking responsibility for one's actions and the consequences of violating commandments.

## Teen Takeaways from Parashah Pinchas

1. **Stand up for what's right:** Pinchas' courage to stop wrongdoing teaches us to stand up for our values and do what's right, even when it's tough. Pinchas used violence, driving a spear into the couple committing the violation. Is violence ever justified in order to accomplish greater good?
2. **Doing good has rewards:** Pinchas was rewarded for his bravery. Remember that doing good deeds can bring positive outcomes and blessings. Judaism teaches, however, that the reward for doing good is felt in the act of doing good. The Mishnah teaches, "Do not be like servants who serve the master in the expectation of receiving a reward."
3. **Fairness and justice:** The land distribution among tribes teaches us the importance of fairness and justice in our actions. Sharing is a great way to create good relationships.
4. **Prepare for the future:** Moses' appointing Joshua reminds us to plan for the future and ensure a smooth transition in leadership.
5. **Celebrate traditions:** Parashah Pinchas highlights the importance of religious traditions and rituals in Jewish life. Similarly, celebrating your culture and traditions can be meaningful. How does this relate to your celebrating your B'nai Mitzvah as a Jewish ritual?
6. **Equality matters:** The story of Zelophehad's daughters shows that everyone, regardless of gender, should have equal rights and opportunities. In a world where women had few rights and were often treated as property, this parashah's story of Zelophehad's daughters is revolutionary. The fact that God is the one who sanctions this decision is even more remarkable.
7. **Consistency is key:** Just like daily sacrifices, having regular routines and habits, such as studying or exercising, can be essential for personal growth.
8. **Seek guidance:** Moses looked for help making important decisions. Don't hesitate to seek advice or guidance when facing important choices in your life. From whom do you seek guidance? Why?
9. **Remember your history:** The parashah emphasizes the importance of knowing and preserving your cultural and family history. It's valuable to learn about your roots and heritage.

## Summary

**Parashah Pinchas** teaches us about **courage, integrity, fairness**, and the **importance of traditions and equality**. These lessons can guide you as you navigate your teenage years and beyond, helping you make good choices and grow as a person.