

## PARSHAS PINCHAS – MICHAEL BASS

The Torah describes Pinchas as having what on the surface seem to be two incompatible middos.

On the one hand he is the fearless zealot who was so incensed by the behaviour of Zimri and Cosbi that he killed them on the spot. On the other hand his lineage is traced back to Aaron Hacoheh who was " ohev shalom v'rodeif shalom".

We find a similiar situation with Avraham Avinu. When Hashem told him to send Yishmael away he sent him with no hesitation and only with the minimal provisions. Rashi explains that Avraham hated him for his wayward behaviour. Yet, in the build up to the Akeidah, Avraham says that he has two sons, both the only son of their mother, that he loves equally.

Avraham's emotions were governed by his sense of right and wrong and he could use both feelings of love and hate even towards the same person (unlike most people who have either love or hate and consider the two emotions to be exclusive). Avraham was capable of paternal love and disgust at Yishmael's behaviour and that it was only because of his love that he allowed himself to punish him.

The Torah is teaching us that one who punishes must be filled, not with hatred or malice, but with love for the one being punished. Pinchas could only punish Zimri because he was the grandson of Aaron Hacoheh.

We see the same message from the churban of the Beis Hamikdash. The Gemorrah in Yuma tells us that when the Babylonians entered the Heichal they found the Keruvim embracing each other. We know that the Keruvim embrace as an expression of Hashem's love for Bnei Yisrael. So why, at this time of destruction, were they embracing? The answer of course is that the destruction of the Temple was itself a manifestation of Hashem's love for us as He poured out His anger on the wood and stones and spared Bnei Yisrael.

In our efforts to emulate the ways of Hashem, should the situation arise when we are required to rebuke, it must, as when a father punishes his son, stem from love,

From Sichos Mussar of Rav Chaim Shmulevitch

**L'iluy nishmas avi mori R' Sholom ben R' Pinchas**

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