



## The Community

12550 Biscayne Boulevard · Suite 310 · North Miami, Florida 33181

(305) 892-1234 · Chabadniami@gmail.com

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Boruch Hashem

Rabbi Avrohom Lipszyc

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## Rabbi's Article

### Let's Get Physical!

Even when a *haftorah* (-[Link](#)) is read due to the events commemorated on a specific Shabbat, and hence, is not connected to the theme of the Shabbat's parsha, and nevertheless, it is. And so it is with this Shabbat, the first Shabbat of the *Three Weeks* (-[Link](#)), which has the first *haftorah* of the, "*The Three (haftarot) of Retribution*," which is the opening of Jeremiah, the *midrash* (-Psikta D'Kahana, Portion 13) tell us: Both Phinehas (-[Link](#)) and Jeremiah (-[Link](#)) are the offspring of gentile ancestors, Phinehas from the, "*Daughter of Putial* (Jethro; -[Link](#))," and Jeremiah from Rachab (-[Link](#)). And because of this, the Israelites belittled them<sup>1</sup>. Hence, the verse specifically states, "*Phinehas, the son Elazar, the son of Aharon the (High) Priest* (-[Link](#))," and, "*Jeremiah son of Hilkiyah* (-[Link](#)), *from the priests*." However, there must be something greater than the, "*Israelites belittled them*," that is being hinted to us through this common distinction between Phinehas and Jeremiah.

Both Phinehas and Jeremiah lived in a time when the Jews were in a lowly spiritual state. Phinehas was when the Jewish people were sinning with the *Daughters of Moab* and the idol *Ba'al*, and so too, in Jeremiah's times the Jewish people were serving the idol *Ba'al*. Both Phinehas and Jeremiah brought the Jewish people to repentance, Phinehas through killing *Zimri and Cozbi* (-[Link](#)), and Jeremiah through giving words of rebuke. However, being that there were others who brought the Jewish people to repentance, what is specifically common between Phinehas' and Jeremiah's form of bring repentance to the Jewish people?

Our sages teach us (-Baba Basra 14b): "*Jeremiah*(s prophesies) *are all of the destruction... And Isaiah*(s prophesies) *are all of condolence*." Their very names, *Yirmiyahu* (Jeremiah) is connected with the word *mar* (bitter), and *Yishayohu* (Isaiah; -[Link](#)) with the word *yeshuah* (salvation). Hence, we see that Jeremiah's form of bringing the Jewish people to repentance was through, "*concealment and pushing* (with rebuking and foreboding)," rather than through, "(Divine) *revelations of* (greatness, kindness and compassion)." And so too it was with Phinehas.

Concerning Phinehas we are told, "*Phinehas the son of Eleazar the son of Aaron the kohain has turned My anger away from the children of Israel... Therefore, say, 'I hereby give him My covenant of peace...'*" meaning, "*it shall be for him and for his descendants after him [as] an eternal covenant of kehunah* (priesthood; -[Link](#))." The question begs to be asked: Moses (-[Link](#)) numerous times, "*has turned My anger away from the children of Israel*," and not only was Moses not given an, "*eternal covenant*," but rather, his lineage of being the leader was not given to his offspring, but to his student Joshua (-[Link](#))?! The difference is that Moses (i) saved the Jews through prayer (spiritual) soliciting from *Above* (heaven), and (ii) his self-sacrifice was concerning his soul (spiritual; -Exodus 32:32), "*And if not* (G-d won't forgive the Jews) *then erase me from your book* (Torah)." While Phinehas, (i) "*by his zealously avenging Me among them* (from *Below*)," dealing directly with the sinners, and bringing, "*atoned for the children of Israel*," and (ii) his self-sacrifice was physical, as our sages teach (-Sanhedrin 82b), that the Tribe of Shimon wanted to kill Phinehas, but he was saved by a miracle. This is why, Moses, who brought the repentance by a *revelation from Above*, even though this brought about the, "*The filth of sin stopped*," however, it didn't last, as the Jews returned to sin (the golden calf), because the *Above* shines upon and imposes itself upon the *Below*, but does not transform it, and hence, he did not receive the *eternal covenant*, within his *physical* lineage (offspring vs student (spiritual lineage)). While Phinehas, who by working with the *Below* brought about a permanent transformation, received the physical *eternal covenant* of priesthood for himself and for his offspring.

So too, Isaiah was working from *Above*, condoling the Jewish people with a vision of the future Holy Temple (*revelation*), while Jeremiah was working from *Below*, with the destruction and the effect of the sin, ("*concealment and pushing*"), bringing about the *physical* transformation within the sinners, from *Below*. And this is the deeper mystical meaning of, "*Israel belittled them*," meaning that both Phinehas and Jeremiah worked on the Jewish people from *Below*, in where Israel was experiencing *belittlement*.

The Lesson: (i) Our service to G-d cannot be just spiritual, but must also be physical, and (ii) cannot just be with ourselves, but must also be, "*among them*."

1. This was a direct response to (a) Phinehas killing Zimri, Prince of Shimon in order to end a plague, and (b) Jeremiah continuously prophesizing of the imminent destruction of the Holy Temple if the Jews will not repent.

FRIDAY, JULY 15, 2022 ★ תמוז תשפ"ב

Shabbat Candle Lighting: North Miami: 7:57 PM · Mincha: 7:45 PM

SATURDAY, JULY 16, 2022 ★ י' תמוז תשפ"ב

TORAH READING: [Pinchas](#) (Numbers 25:10-30:1) · HAFTORAH: [Jeremiah](#) 1:1-2:3  
[Blessing of New Month](#) · Shacharit: 9:30 AM · Shabbat Ends: North Miami: 8:52 PM

**This Week...**