



## TORAH 4 TEENS

### BY TEENS

NCSY ISRAEL



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## The Story of Two Brothers

Throughout Sefer Bereishit Shimon and Levi often act as one unit. For example, in response to the story of Dina in Sh'chem where they devise a plan together to trick and destroy the entire city. Shimon and Levi were so much of a duo that Yaakov blesses them together at the end of his life, instead of giving them each an individual bracha like he did for the rest of the shevatim. Yaakov says:

“Shimon and Levi are brothers. Cursed be their wrath for it is mighty, and their anger because it is harsh. (B'reishit 49:5-7)

The harsh nature of this blessing is somewhat puzzling, as it sounds more like a curse than a blessing. However, what is significant for us at the moment is that Shimon and Levi were clearly united as brothers by their shared attribute of anger.

But as we come to this week's Parsha, Pinchas, the brotherhood of Shimon and Levi begins to split. The Moabite and Midianite women seduce the Jewish men and allure them to partake in idol worship. Zimri, a man from the tribe of Shimon, engages in relations with a Midianite woman in front of Moshe and all of Bnei

Yisrael as an act of rebellion. Pinchas, from the tribe of Levi, zealously kills Zimri and the Midianite woman. While Shimon and Levi both acted with the same trait of anger, here is the first time that we see them come head to head, instead of acting together. The two brothers take their common trait in two completely different directions. Shimon (Zimri) uses his anger to rebel, while Levi (Pinchas) uses his anger to fight zealously for G-d.

While Shimon and Levi started off as “brothers”, united by a common personality, the different paths they ended up taking paves two very different futures. Shimon is never given a blessing by Moshe at the end of his life, but Levi is blessed with the role of being the religious leaders and teachers of all of Bnei Yisrael.

“And of Levi he said: “Your Tummim and Urim belong to Your pious man ... They shall teach Your ordinances to Jacob, and Your Torah to Israel; they shall place incense before You, and burnt offerings upon Your altar. “ (Devarim 33: 8-11).

We learn from this week's parsha that no trait is objectively good or bad, but that every trait has the potential to be used for good or for bad. May we all be zoche to recognize all of the unique traits that we were given and to direct each one of them to the service of G-d. Shabbat Shalom! ■



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## True Leadership:

This week's Parsha is Parshat Pinchas. We read about Moshe's death, which is weird since Moshe doesn't die until the very last chapter in the Torah.

Sometimes the Torah tells a few stories that happen at different times and puts them together in order to highlight a common theme to teach us a valuable lesson.

**It seems that Moshe plays a dominant role in these stories but his own legacy is missing**

This week's Parsha has three stories that are on the same topic of receiving a legacy. The first one is when Pinchas receives an award for his act of bravery, in which he killed the two public sinners and ended the plague against the Children of Israel. The second story in the Parsha continues with the detailed count of all the tribes. The third is when the daughters of Tzafchad asked to receive their father's heritage since they had no brothers.

Immediately after these three stories, Hashem commands Moshe to go to the mountains where he will die. This seems entirely unrelated to these three stories since everyone is receiving a legacy and Moshe is not. It seems that Moshe plays a dominant role in these stories but his own

legacy is missing.

Moshe realizes that he will not receive a piece of land in Eretz Israel and asked Hashem that when he dies Am Israel should have a good leader.

The lesson that we learn from this Parsha is that sometimes we don't receive gifts but the reward is much bigger and more special.

Shabbat Shalom! ■

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