

PARSHAT PINCHAS  
NUMBERS 25:10-30:1  
21 TAMUZ 5781/1 JULY 2020



*The Daughters of Zelophehad*  
Painting, acrylic dots on primed canvass, by Oluwaseyi Alade

### THE REVIVAL OF PROCREATIVE SPEECH

1. “The daughters of Zelophehad, son of Hopher son of Gilead son of...The names of the daughters were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. They stood before Moses, before Eleazar the priest, and before the princes...” (Numbers 27:1-2)
2. “They approached/drew near...They stood...” (Numbers 27:1)
3. “Give us land by right of inheritance (אֲחֻזָּה)...” (Numbers 27:4)
4. “They approached/drew near...” In that generation the women built up the fences which the men broke down...(the calf, the scouts)...The women, however, drew near to ask for an inheritance in the Land. (Midrash Rabbah 21:10)
5. “God said to Moses, saying, ‘The daughters of Zelophehad **speak** (דַּבְּרוּ) *ken* (כֵּן).’” (Numbers 27:6-7)
6. “Moses brought their case before God. And God said to Moses, ‘The plea of Zelophehad’s daughters is just...’” (Numbers 27:5-7). The law was concealed (נִתְעַלְמָה) to him. Here he was punished for having taken a crown....Another reading: This passage should have been written by Moses but the daughters of Zelophehad merited to have it written by them. (Rashi)

Their eye saw that which the eye of Moses did not see. (Rashi)

7. Everyone has a world (*olam*) that is theirs alone. Every person has a specific form of obscurity, of resistance, that he or she is challenged to confront. “These are the struggles of human beings all their days in this world.” The world that one creates is primarily constituted by one’s confrontation with *he’alem*, that which eludes and baffles one in this world. Eternal life is created by the way in which one struggles to engage with this internal dark layer. (Based on Sefat Emet)