

Nitzavim

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Weekly Bulletin on the Parsha

Pachad David

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Son of the tzaddik and miracle-worker Rabbi **Moshe Ahron Pinto**, zt"l, and grandson of the holy tzaddik and miracle-worker Rabbi **Chaim Pinto**, zy"o



Maskil LéDavid

Weekly talk on the Parsha given by Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita

"Today is the Birthday of the World"

Parashat Nitzavim always falls in close proximity to Rosh Hashana. This shows us that there is a distinct connection between this parsha and Rosh Hashana, the day when all the Jewish people stand in judgment before Hashem. We know that Hashem started creating the world on the twenty-fifth of Elul, and on Rosh Hashana G-d created man – the crown of creation.

On the same day that G-d created Adam, he put him in Gan Eden and warned him not to eat from the tree of knowledge. Despite this warning, Adam did not withstand the allurements of his wife who was tempted by the snake, and he sinned by eating from the tree of knowledge. Originally G-d wanted to judge Adam immediately following his sin, but since Shabbat had already begun, G-d judged him and banished him from Gan Eden only after Shabbat.

The wording of the prayer – "Today is the birthday of the world", needs to be understood. If the first day of creation was the twenty-fifth of Elul, not Rosh Hashana, why do we consider Rosh Hashana to be the birthday and creation of the world?

On Rosh Hashana, man, who is the crowning glory of creation, was created and since the entire purpose of creation was for his sake, we therefore consider this day to be the birthday of the world.

Hashem took the Jewish people out of Mitzrayim so that they could receive the Torah. Had Hashem not known if Am Yisrael would be willing to accept the Torah, He would not have redeemed them and we and our children would still be enslaved in Mitzrayim. It is clear from this that the merit of Torah is what enabled Am Yisrael to be redeemed from Mitzrayim (Shemot Rashi 3,4). So too, the purpose of creating the world was for mankind, and if not for him the world would have no reason to be created. Since mankind is the crown and essence of creation, therefore the day that he was created (Rosh Hashana) – is considered the birthday of the world.

The Ohev Yisrael (Nitzavim) questions why Moshe Rabbeinu said (Devarim 29:9) "You are standing today, all of you", and after that men-

tions in detail "the heads of your tribes, your elders" etc. Does the choice of wording 'all of you' not include all the different ranks? Why did Moshe Rabbeinu feel a need to detail all the positions of the people when he already included them in 'all of you'?

We can explain this by understanding that on Rosh Hashana Hashem does not only judge the Jewish people but the entire world - all living things, plants, inanimate objects, Jews and non-Jews. What is the determining factor for the fate of the world for the coming year? The spiritual state of the Jewish people. If the Jewish people are connected to Torah and are particular to listen to G-d's voice, then Hashem will judge the world for good, but if G-d forbid the Jewish people turn their backs on Hashem and His Torah, then Hashem is harsh with His judgment for the entire world, and all are stricken because of the sins of Am Yisrael.

If so, the words 'all of you' hint to the entire creation which is judged on Rosh Hashana and the description that Moshe Rabbeinu added – the heads of your tribes, your elders..., is referring to the spiritual level of the Jewish people at that time which influences the decision to be judged for death or kindness for the whole world.

We must take these words to heart and stand ready before Hashem throughout the year, not only during the days of judgment. When Hashem sees that His children are constantly doing His will and not leaving it for the days of mercy and forgiveness, then G-d's trait of mercy will be used to determine the decree for the entire world and for the Jewish people in particular, for a positive verdict, for salvation and for solace.



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Hillulah of Tzaddikim

28 - Rabbi Yitzchak Ackrish

29 - Rabbi Shlomo Amarleo

1 - Rabbi Yehuda A'yish

2 - Rabbi Yosef Rozovski

3 - Rabbi Yosef Vital

4 - Rabbi Avraham Ben Yechiel

5 - Rabbi Baruch Sholom HaLevi
Ashlag



Walking in their Ways

*Tidbits of faith and trust penned by Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon
Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita*

A Condition for Life

A certain young man was eons away from a life of Torah and mitzvot. Although his brother lived in Lyon, my hometown, this boy had never heard of me. That is, until his life took a 180-degree turn. This is how it happened:

The young man was involved in a tragic car accident and was in critical condition. In spite of numerous operations and various procedures, he remained unconscious. His medical condition was so severe that his doctors despaired of his ever recovering. His brother, who lives in Lyon, contacted our yeshiva there. He urgently asked the secretary, R' Shimon Halimi, z"l, to connect him with me. At the time, I was with my family in Nice. My devoted secretary told the man that it was impossible to reach me. But he would not give up. He asked the secretary to grant him a personal favor. His brother was lying in a hospital in Marseille, between two worlds. The secretary took down his brother's name. He then phoned me and asked that I pray for him in the merit of my holy ancestors, that he be completely cured.

The very next day, the young man opened his eyes and completely regained consciousness. His first words were, "Where is Rabbi David Pinto?"

At this sight, his family members themselves almost went into a state of shock. Besides for his return to life, they were taken aback at his question. He

had never met me or known about me. But they hurried to reply, "Rabbi David Pinto is not here just now. He is in Nice."

The boy accepted this answer. Then he asked them to provide him with tzitzit and tefillin, items which he had never touched. His dazed family rushed to fulfill his order. Then they asked what this was all about. The boy turned to everyone gathered and explained:

"When I was in a coma, I felt myself being lifted heavenward. There I was greeted by the souls of my departed ancestors. They had come to accompany me on my Final Journey, for I was about to leave the lower world. I was deathly afraid and refused to join them. Suddenly, I heard the words, 'Leave him be and allow him to return to the living. Harav David Pinto is praying on his behalf in the merit of his holy ancestors.' Before allowing me to return, I was given an ultimatum. I must undertake to wear tzitzit and tefillin every single day. Then my neshamah returned to my body, and I opened my eyes." This was the boy's hair-raising story.

Baruch Hashem, the boy made steady improvement, both physically and spiritually. He merited reinforcing his knowledge of Judaism and acceptance of Hashem. To this day, he is scrupulous about wearing tzitzit and tefillin every day. He has merited marrying and is building a true Jewish home, sanctifying Hashem's Name in the world.



Words of our Sages

The Day of Allocation

We are left with only limited hours, only several days, until the defining day- the most important day in the life of every person on earth, when his fate for every minute of the coming year will be determined, the year 5779 which should approach us for the good.

"I went into a taxi before Rosh Hashana", relates Harav Stein shlita, "and the driver said to me, 'I don't understand what all the intimidations of you rabbanim are about? Throughout the year I was a good Jew, I didn't harm anyone and most hours of the day I was occupied with my business. I feel that I am all set for Rosh Hashana. I have organized a place in the Beit Haknesset next to the air-conditioning, and have even bought the fish.'"

"I listened to him", says Rav Shtein, "and I was shaken. To this degree there are people who don't understand what Rosh Hashana is all about? How every person is judged if he fulfilled the Torah obligations, not to insult another, to guard his eyes, was he particular with the laws of the Shabbat etc. He should open the newspaper every day and see that G-d does not rest for a minute. Who doesn't cry when reaching the paragraph in the prayers, "On Rosh Hashana will be inscribed and on Yom Kippur will be sealed how many will pass from this earth and how many will be created..."

On Rosh Hashana they draw up a list in heaven and begin to announce: "Who will enjoy tranquility?" Which person will merit peace and tranquility this year? On the other hand, which person will always be stressed and worried chas v'shalom. "Who will be degraded and who will be exalted"? Who will lose their job or be downgraded and feel humiliated? On the other hand, who will merit a raise and receive a more impressive and important position in his workplace? Which woman will receive consideration and attentiveness from her husband and children and who chas v'shalom won't merit this. All this is included! All this will be proclaimed on Monday morning at the time of the prayers! Therefore, writes Rabbi Yisrael Salanter zt"l, a person is obligated to beg and plead on Rosh Hashana for every single thing in his life: tranquility, health, success, income, happiness, peace in the home etc.

Rabbi Chaim Friedlander zt"l writes in his sefer 'Sifsei Chaim' in the name of the holy Ramchal zya"a, that on Rosh Hashana Hashem designates a task for each Jewish person in His kingdom for the coming year. For example: 'Ploni Almoni' will merit a year of tranquility in order that he can continue toiling in Torah undisturbed for many hours. Someone else might merit that this year will find him in good health, without even a slight cold, in order that he can do chessed and help needy people every week and donate to yeshivot. And 'Plonit Almonit' will have nachat from her children and satisfaction from her work so that she will be better able to honor her husband, causing the shechina to rest between them.

The Haftarah

"I will rejoice intensely with Hashem" (Yeshayau 61)

The connection to this Shabbat: This haftarah is the seventh and last of the seven consecutive haftarot of comfort read on the seven Shabbatot following Tishah B'Av.



Guard Your Tongue

Just a meritorious way of behavior?

One who sees bad traits in his friend, for example pride or anger, even though indeed it is forbidden to act in this manner, nevertheless one is not permitted to tell others about this, since most people assume that there is no real prohibition but rather it is just a loftier way of conducting oneself and one who transgresses in these areas is not considered a wicked person in their eyes.



Chazak U'Baruch

In the holy sefarim it is brought in the name of the Yerushalmi that on Rosh Hashana a person is not judged according to his past deeds, but according to his state on Rosh Hashana itself. What spiritual level is he on today? What deeds is he performing? What is he talking about and where are his thoughts taking him? If on Rosh Hashana his heart is found to be as it should, he is considered a pure tzaddik and is written and sealed immediately for life. Since at the moment he is in a positive place, even if he used to waste time or speak lashon hara and displayed bad middot, now that his middot have changed and he is behaving for an entire day as is appropriate, it is a sign that he has really changed and become a different person.

The mashgiach HaGaon HaTzaddik Rabbi Shlomo Wolbezt"l, related a story about someone whom people considered a great person. A certain individual wanted to confirm if this was really the case or not so he travelled to his home where he stayed for three days straight. He wanted to observe his greatness, but did not notice anything unique; everything was done simply without any special righteousness. He left disappointed that he had not perceived any special greatness.

When people asked him if he had noticed any act of pettiness, or anything that he could criticize, he said that he had no complaints, but that he behaves most normally and does not do strange or exceptional things. They replied, if so, this is proof of his greatness! If for three days you observed him and did not find him faulty in any way, this is the sign of a great person! According to what we explained about Rosh Hashana being an opportunity where even one day of this kind of behavior is enough, if every act is faultless and according to halacha, then one who stands up to this test for an entire day, his status is transformed and his nature changes in the merit of the holiness of the day. Habit becomes nature and he is already considered an absolute tzaddik who will merit a good year.

When we talk about the days of Rosh Hashana, the intent is the entire day and not just the time when we are praying. Who can know at which minute one is being judged? A person should take care not to transgress in his deeds, speech and thought, not to talk about unnecessary things, and all the more so forbidden speech.

In summary, the task of Rosh Hashana is to correct ones deeds already on the day of Rosh Hashana and not to wait for the days between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur or for after Yom Kippur, since we are told that on Rosh Hashana a person is not judged according to his past deeds, but according to his level on the day of Rosh Hashana itself.

Treasures

Based on the teachings of
Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik
Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita



Ever-lasting Delight

During the days of mercy and forgiveness it is customary to say chapter twenty-seven of Tehillim, "By David, Hashem is my light and my salvation", written by David Hamelech, the sweet singer of Israel.

David says, "One thing I asked of Hashem, that I shall seek: Would that I dwell in the house of Hashem all the days of my life, to behold the sweetness of Hashem and to contemplate in His Sanctuary."

David requested for himself neither honor nor dignity nor greatness, he had only one wish – to dwell in Hashem's house all the days of his life and feel excitement and enthusiasm in learning Torah and keeping the mitzvot, as if it was his very first visit to Hashem's dwelling. Not for nothing was this chapter chosen to be said during the days of mercy. The purpose is to awaken us that we should contemplate the purpose of man in this world which is to serve our creator in the most perfect way which means sitting in Hashem's house and toiling in Torah day and night. Only through learning Torah does a person merit protection for his limbs so that they should not be tempted to sin. The more a person takes care to guard himself, to that degree he will merit being saved from transgressing, enabling him to arrive at the Day of Judgment pure and clean.

David Hamelech was born red which indicates that his inherent nature was to be drawn after desires. Since David was conscious of the nature that Hashem planted within him, he fought with all his strength against gratification by cleaving to the holy Torah which guards and protects a person from sinning.

After David Hamelech married Bat Sheva before he was supposed to, he was never at peace and said (Tehillim 51:5) "My sin is before me always". And even though Hashem said (Shabbat 51a) "Anyone who says David sinned is making a mistake", in spite of this David himself felt weighed down by a sin. And because of this he cried constantly and regretted this deed. Chazal tell us that the greater the person the greater his evil inclination, and therefore righteous people occupy themselves all their days in Torah and repentance in order to annul the bad influence of the evil inclination.

It is recommended to read this chapter of Tehillim with great concentration and not just as lip service. May it be His will that saying this chapter will have the ability to impact us with the power of the Torah and repentance of David Hamelech, who sole wish was to sit in the house of Hashem all his days and behold the sweetness of His Blessed Holiness, not only during the days of judgment but throughout his life.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

To extend ourselves for our children

“Gather together the people, the men, the women, and the small children” (Devarim 31:12)

Why is it necessary for a person to extend himself and totally devote his energies for his children’s Torah education since there is a clear promise in the Torah “It will not be forgotten from His children”!?

It is well known that even when there is a promise, there needs to be some awakening from down below, an act on the part of a person, in order to bring the promise from its latent potential to affect reality.

What is this act that we are supposed to do?

The Admor of Gur, the Sfas Emet, explains that first and foremost the father must teach his son Torah. But included in this idea are other acts whose direct influence cannot always be seen clearly. Any effort that is done in order to bring one’s son close to Torah, even if it doesn’t bear fruit, nevertheless possesses great purpose since it awakens the influence from Above, and through this the son merits to receive abundance of Torah.

This is the reward that is promised to parents who bring their young children to the gathering of Hakeil. Even though the child is still unable to understand, there is mesirat nefesh here on the part of the parents. The time will come when the child will reap the fruits of this mesirat nefesh and he will become great in Torah, and there is no greater reward for the parents than this!



Men of Faith

Excerpts from the book *Men of Faith on the lives and deeds of the House of Pinto*

Reconciling with Her Husband

R’ Ishua Deri came to Mogador in 1999 (5759), together with his wife, in order to join in the hilula of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Pinto Hagadol.

Before joining the hilula, R’ Deri decided to visit Moreinu v’Rabbeinu, in order to receive his blessings. However, he did not have money to offer the Rav for charity, as was customary. He only had some savings, which he had put away for his personal needs.

His wife sensed his hesitation and warned him, “Do not approach the Rav, since you do not have money to donate for charity.” However, R’ Deri did not agree with his wife and told her, “We do have savings, and I can offer them to the Rav.”

His wife argued against this plan, “If you give away all our savings to the Rav, from where will we have money for the approaching holidays of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot?”

He responded simply, “May Hashem have mercy on us.”

His wife attempted to dissuade him from going to speak to the Rav, but he walked into his office and placed an envelope on the table containing one thousand francs. When he left the room, his wife wailed, “How could you give the Rav all our savings?”

R’ Deri stood his ground, “How is it possible to go to the hilula of a tzaddik and not give his descendant money for tzedakah?”

“In that case, you could have donated a quarter of the amount and not given away all the money we had saved!” His wife continued to protest and grumble.

R’ Deri calmed her down and asserted, “In this merit, Hashem will perform miracles for us, so that we will be able to celebrate the holidays joyously.”

After the hilula, the couple returned to their home in Casablanca. On their way, a stranger approached them and asked R’ Deri, “Do you have money to buy provisions to celebrate the festivals properly?”

“No,” he answered. The man took out a sum of one thousand francs from his pocket and handed it to him.

Who was the strange Jew? Only Hashem knows. R’ Deri’s wife was flabbergasted. She saw the tremendous miracle with her own eyes: the entire sum which they had donated in honor of the tzaddik was returned to them. She made peace with her husband. The entire night they sat and discussed the holiness of the tzaddik, and how they had received all the money which they needed for the holiday expenses in his merit. In addition, they had given tzedakah, for which they would be rewarded eternally.