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778

Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

# Pachad David

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Under the auspices of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita

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



MASKIL LEDAVID

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

«There is neither wisdom...nor counsel against Hashem»

**"Yosef said to them on the third day, 'Do this and live; I fear G-d'"** (Bereishit 42:18)

It is important to reach the right perception of how the holy shevatim, known as "The tribes of G-d, a testimony for Israel" (Tehillim 122:4), could behave in such a 'cruel' manner towards their flesh and blood- their own brother Yosef. This kind of act is not fitting to be carried out even to a stranger, and certainly not to a close relative. We will try to gain insight into where this strong, intense hatred came from.

Our difficulty becomes even more problematical in light of the words of the Midrash that when the brothers threw Yosef into the pit and then realised that he hadn't been harmed, they wished to throw stones at him. It was Yehuda who turned to them and said, "What gain will there be if we kill our brother and cover up his blood? Come, let us sell him to the Yishma'elim – but let our hand not be upon him" (Bereishit 37:26-27). How do we understand that the brothers felt they could harm Yosef despite seeing that Hashem was watching over him and had prevented him from being harmed by the snakes and scorpions? Was this not a sign that Yosef was desired by Hashem and considered a tzaddik, otherwise he would not have merited this special protection?

In addition, on the verse "For I will go down to the grave mourning for my son" (ibid 35), the Midrash says that a heavenly message was revealed to Ya'akov, that if none of his children will die during his lifetime, he is promised that he will not see gehinom. If so, it is hard to understand why the brothers, with their actions, were not concerned about the future of their father? Were they not troubled that they will be the cause of the promise not being fulfilled and because of them Ya'akov might have to experience some form of gehinom? In general, we need to clarify how the brothers were not worried about causing their father pain and distress.

Without a doubt the shevatim were on an extremely high level of holiness and piety. However, they sat down together, as a beit din, and came to the conclusion that according to Torah law their brother Yosef deserved to be killed, therefore they were responsible to carry out this sentence and were not permitted to prevent it from occurring.

Why did the shevatim believe that their brother was deserving of this harsh sentence? They knew that Yehuda was destined to reign over all of them, since Hashem's name is inscribed in his name. If so, Yehuda was supposed to be appointed as king over the shevatim, as is hinted to in the verse "He sent Yehuda ahead of him to Yosef, to prepare ahead of him" (Bereishit 46:28).

When the brothers heard Yosef telling over his dreams, they felt that he was expressing the desire to take the kingship from Yehuda and thereby go against the will of Hashem. Because of this, the brothers said to Yosef "Would you reign over us? Would you then dominate

us?" (Bereishit 37:8). Meaning, do you wish to take the kingship from Yehuda and to lay the crown on your own head when this act is against the will of Hashem? Know that with this you are rebelling against Hashem's sovereignty and as a result you deserve to be put to death. "Would you reign over us" - against the will of Hashem.

The brothers fulfilled the verse "There is neither wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against Hashem" (Mishlei 21:30). Nothing avails to nullify G-d's will. Where there is chilul Hashem, (at the expense of an aveirah), one doesn't consider respect for a Rav. Since there is disgrace to Hashem and His Torah, one must stand up in protest and put aside all other considerations.

When the brothers noticed that the snakes and scorpions did not harm Yosef, they wished to stone him in order to carry out the verdict which he deserved, since he rebelled against Hashem. The holy Ari z"t tells us that there are twelve gates in Heaven through which prayers are admitted, according to the number of shevatim. This makes it hard to understand: When the brothers decided to kill Yosef, were they not concerned about terminating Yosef's gate of prayer? The answer is as we have explained; the brothers' intention was to fulfil the command of Hashem and to ascertain the kingship of Yehuda, without letting any foreign desire stand in their way, even on account of heaven revoking one of the gates of prayer.

The Midrash tells us (Tanchuma Vayigash 5), that when Yosef revealed himself to his brothers and said to them, "I am Yosef your brother – it is me, whom you sold into Egypt" (Bereishit 45:4), the brothers wished to get up and kill him, but the angel Gavriel came and pushed them back. Even when they finally stood before Yosef their brother, they still wished to kill him in order to carry out the punishment of one who rebels against Hashem, for they saw that he had not yet been punished. With his act, the angel Gavriel was hinting to them that this is the will of Hashem; that at this present time Yosef should be the ruler.

Now we can understand why Hashem followed the brothers' way of thinking and throughout the years made sure Ya'akov would not find out that his son was alive and well and living in Mitzrayim, despite the deep sorrow with which he was enveloped which caused his ruach hakodesh to disappear. It seems that since Hashem realised that the shevatim had pure intentions and knew that they desired to make a Kiddush Hashem, even Yitzchak was prevented from revealing to his son Yakov that Yosef was actually alive, since He knew that the brothers were motivated by the truth and were acting only according to the Torah law and not out of personal interest. On the one hand, Hashem was with them in their ban not to reveal what actually happened, but on the other hand, Hashem waited for Yosef to be taken out of prison and then he was appointed as the ruler.



Paris • Orh 'Haïm Ve Moché

32, rue du Plateau • 75019 Paris • France  
Tel: 01 42 08 25 40 • Fax: 01 42 06 00 33  
hevratpinto@aol.com

Jérusalem • Prineï David

Rehov Bayit Va Gan 8 • Jérusalem • Israël  
Tel: +972 2643 3605 • Fax: +972 2643 3570  
p@hpinto.org.il

Ashdod • Orh 'Haïm Ve Moshe

Rehov Ha-Admour Mi-Belz 43 • Ashod • Israël  
Tel: +972 88 566 233 • Fax: +972 88 521 527  
orothaim@gmail.com

Ra'anana • Kol 'Haïm

Rehov Ha'ahouza 98 • Ra'anana • Israël  
Tel: +972 98 828 078 • +972 58 792 9003  
kolhaim@hpinto.org.il



Hilula

30 - Rabbi David Oppenheim

1 - Rabbi Yair Chaim Bachrach, author of 'Chavat Yair'

3 - Rabbi Chaim Shmulevitz

4 - Rabbi Shaul Duwek HaKohen

5 - Rabbi Avraham Yakov of Sadigurah

6 - Rabbi Yehoshua Amram

6 - Rabbi Yechezkel of Shinovah



## Walking in their Ways

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

### True Gains

I once knew a successful businessman who used to turn over millions of dollars. One day, his fortune took a turn for the worse, and he lost every last penny. He was reduced to poverty overnight.

In his deep distress, he came to see me. For many long moments, he cried bitterly over his lot. He was upset that he had to depend on public funds in order to keep himself alive. But he had nothing at all left of his former wealth, not even a slice of bread.

After he unburdened himself, he calmed down somewhat and said that something positive had happened in his life, due to his financial decline: He merited returning to his Heavenly Father.

"If you view repentance as a merit," I asked, "Why did you have to wait for such a calamity before repenting? Had you returned to Hashem while yet rich, you would have merited having physical wealth, as well as spiritual wealth!"

"When I was a world-class mogul, I had no time for Hashem. Then, when I lost all my assets, I suddenly realized that I had no business to run to. I now had time on my hands. I sought occupation, and found myself drawn to the Beit Hamidrash, where I was awakened to return to my Heavenly Father," he replied.

I encouraged this man on his new path. I emphasized, over and over, how much he had gained from the loss of his money. He merited recognizing his Creator and acquiring a portion of Torah and mitzvot. As long as he was wealthy, he had the attitude that everything was in his hands. Now that he was without work, he could employ his time and energy toward Torah.

## The Haftarah

The haftarah of the week: "Sing and be glad" (Zechariah 2:14)

We add two verses from the haftarah of "The heaven is my throne" (Yeshaya 66:1) and "Tomorrow is the new moon" (Shmuel II, 20:18).

The connection to the Parsha: the Haftarah mentions the lights and the menorah that the navi Zecharya saw, which is connected to this time of the year: the kindling of the lights on Chanuka.



## Guard Your Tongue

### The Tongue and the Pen

Even lashon hara that is not spoken, but instead is written or hinted at or anything similar, is forbidden. The Remah (siman 11) brings that lashon hara through writing is worse than lashon hara that is spoken, for writing strengthens the impression. Similarly, the Chafetz Chaim zt"l writes that to read a letter that contains lashon hara, is included in the prohibition of accepting lashon hara.



## Words of our Sages

### A Piece of Paper Averted Death

We sometimes have a hard time with the perception that Hashem is capable of bringing salvation in an instant, and is able to rescue anyone who finds himself trapped in a difficult situation. The reason for this is that the hardship and misfortune seem so insurmountable, that it is hard to believe that there is a means through which one could be saved and it seems most unlikely that salvation can come about at any moment.

This wonderful story will illustrate the path to faith in Hashem's salvation.

The Yalkut Lekach Tov writes that he heard this story from HaGaon Rabbi Tzvi Greenhaus shlita, who heard it directly from the son of the one to whom it happened. This individual, already from his youth, was accustomed to saying about every occurrence: "Hashem's salvation can emerge in an instant".

One day this man was unfortunately taken away by the Nazis and sent to a concentration camp. On the way his friends asked him: "Are you also now saying 'Hashem's salvation can emerge in an instant'?" He answered them, "Indeed this is so".

Deep in the concentration camp with the threat of death hanging over them, they once again asked him this question, to which he replied with great faith: "Yes, I believe in this with all my heart."

After a time he was led to the gas chambers together with his friends. This was the last time that they asked him, "Do you still believe that we can be saved from our imminent death?" Everything was in place to execute the cruel plan, when they once again turned to him and asked: "Right now, are you prepared to repeat the words that you have been uttering your whole life?" He immediately answered, "Without a doubt; Hashem's salvation can come in an instant!"

At that moment, the officer who was in charge of carrying out the decree, noticed a small piece of paper lying on the floor of the gas chamber. He turned to the one who possessed exceptional faith in Hashem and barked at him: "Pick up this piece of paper immediately and throw it outside!" The man hurried to do so, and as he left the room the doors closed behind him. Whoever was left inside met their cruel death, while he was saved.

The lesson that is evident from this powerful story is that often it seems to us that in this particular situation there is no chance of being saved in a natural way. According to the way we are accustomed to thinking, something very remarkable has to happen in order to be rescued from these circumstances. Since one needs special merit to

experience an open miracle, we assume that for the regular individual there is no chance of him being saved. Due to this one despairs, even though one is familiar with the Chazal that says "Even when a sharp sword is placed upon one's neck, one should not withhold himself from mercy" (Berachot 10a). However, when actually faced with a desperate situation, it is difficult to stand up to the test and one despairs.

But the truth is, that faith in Hashem's salvation includes the need to set aside the difficulty of how relief can come about when there doesn't seem to be any natural way of being rescued. One must believe that since the Almighty is all-powerful, He can liberate a person from any situation even in a simple and natural way.

This is the absolute faith with which this holy Jew in the concentration camps believed. He declared in front of all his friends that even in this extreme situation he believes that Hashem's salvation can come swiftly. And indeed, Hashem immediately showed them that even through a piece of paper He can bring salvation.



## Pearls of the Parshah

### The King Serves the Public

*“Now Yosef - he was the viceroy over the land” (Bereishit 42:6)*

The Torah goes into detail of the commerce in Mitzrayim, in order to teach us a wonderful lesson, as the ‘Sifsei Kohen’ explains:

Even though Yosef had many officers and assistants, nevertheless he did not appoint any of them with apportioning the produce. He himself was the provider, and this was in order that no injustice should be done to anyone and also to serve as an example to the people of the extent to which one must exert oneself in the trait of mercy in order to save people from hunger.

#### Clarifying the Way

*“He spoke with them harshly. He asked them, “From where do you come?” And they said, “From the land of Canaan to buy food.” (Bereishit 42:7)*

Yosef spoke harshly with his brothers and wanted to rebuke them, and this is why he asked them, “From where do you come?” He wished to point out to them: “In which manner did you come here, with the trait of kindness and desire to do good with others or with the same trait of cruelty with which you acted when you sold me twenty two years ago?”

The ‘Lekach Tov’ notes that they answered him, “From the land of Canaan to buy food”, meaning we have not yet been inspired to repent and we have not left behind the ways of Canaan, as it says concerning the sin of Sedom: “But she did not strengthen the hand of the poor and the needy” (Yechezkel 16:49) and “For three transgressions of Israel [I have looked away], but for four I will not pardon them – for their selling a righteous man for money, and a poor man for shoes”. (Amos 2:6) We are only concerned with ourselves and our wish to buy food.

#### Breaking one’s Desires

*“We had indeed come down originally to buy food” (Bereishit 43:20)*

The single reason for our coming down to this world, explains the ‘Torat Avot’, is in order to obliterate our lust for food. And what happens in the end?

After contemplating these verses, we realize that “Behold! each one’s money was in the mouth of his sack” (ibid 21), meaning all our longings and desires are still in the mouth of our sack. We did not manage to uproot the desires of olam hazeh.

## Treasures

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



### Continually Striving in Torah

Yosef Hatzaddik was living in a strange land, far from his father’s home and from any vestige of holiness. And right there in this impure and corrupted land, he was tempted with difficult challenges, in particular by the wife of Potiphar who tried to entice him to sin and get him to stumble. But despite the distance from his father’s home, he faced his challenges with strength.

Despite all these difficulties Yosef did not become arrogant because of his beauty and took great care not to come to sin. Where did Yosef get this strength from, to remain on his high spiritual level and not fall despite all the dirt and impurity that surrounded him?

The extent of Yosef’s steadfastness and devotion to Hashem can be explained according to what we are told about him, “Since he was a child of his old age” (Bereishit 37:3). Rashi translates these words according to Targum Unkelos, “He was his wise son, all that he learnt from Shem and Ever he passed on to him”. Ya’akov taught Yosef all the Torah that he acquired in the yeshiva of Shem and Ever. So we see that Yosef was a man of Torah, and one who has Torah can handle and overcome all challenges, even the most difficult and harsh. The Rambam in Hilchot De’ot (6:1) writes that the way of a person is to be influenced by his friends, in his ideas and behavior. But this is only if he is not occupied with toiling in Torah. When the head and heart of a person are involved in the words of the Torah and he considers the Torah as his bastion of light, this is what protects him and saves him from sin. Yosef maintained his father’s legacy with proficiency and kept up his Torah learning; due to this he was able to overcome the difficulties with which he was faced. The merit of the Torah is what guarded him in this foreign and filthy land.

It is essential to know that the Torah alone does not have the power to protect a person. It must be accompanied by constantly investing and toiling in Torah, to keep increasing and growing, just as we follow the ruling of Beit Hillel to add an additional light each day of Chanuka. This in fact hints to our avodat Hashem; it is not only a halachic ruling that Beit Hillel introduced, but it is an indicator to every Jew that he must constantly cultivate the eternal light and not feel content with his present spiritual level. He must always strive to progress and advance in his avodat Hashem. This is the lesson that we learn from Yosef who with his great insight realized that if he wouldn’t persistently expand on the Torah that he received from his father, he could chas v’shalom fall to the spiritual depths from which it is extremely hard to climb back up. Due to this he invested much effort in fulfilling the mitzvot and fearing Hashem, out of his desire to continue the legacy of his fathers. This is a reality which can only come to fruition through continually progressing and being diligent in avodat Hashem.

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT



## Never Relinquish the Opportunity of Learning in a Yeshiva

In one of his talks during the registration period for the yeshivot, HaGaon Rabbi Ben Zion Abba Shaul revealed to his talmidim: “I accepted a young bochur to the yeshiva solely on account of something that he said!”

What was this boy’s story? He explained:

“A boy came to me and asked to be accepted by the yeshiva. I realized that he was younger than the acceptable age in our yeshiva, so I suggested that he try again next year. After leaving the yeshiva building, he came back inside with a request: ‘Could I learn in your yeshiva just for today?’

I was extremely impressed by the boy’s request. I have never heard anything like this. He wasn’t accepted, what will it help him to learn here for one day?

He obviously recognized the importance of each day and did not want to sacrifice the opportunity.

I was surprised at this young boy’s perceptions. It shows his tremendous love for learning and the loftiness of his soul; he is certainly destined for greatness.



## Men of Faith

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

### A Steep Fall

When Rabbi Chaim Hakatan traveled for the first time around the cities of Morocco, one of the wealthiest people begged to host him in his house so that blessing should shine on his business in this merit. The rich man went out to greet the Rav and brought him to his home, according him great honor.

Every day, people came streaming to the rich man’s house to bring their donations to the Rav. Many days passed in this way, until Rabbi Chaim had to continue on his journey. He cordially parted from his host, thanking him for his benevolence and for fulfilling the mitzvah of hosting guests so graciously. He always cherished pleasant memories of him.

A few years later, Rabbi Chaim had to pass through the city again. He remembered the wealthy man and the wonderful hospitality he had displayed on his previous visit. He decided to again stay in his house for a few days. Rabbi Chaim arrived at his house and knocked on the door. He was surprised that the landlord did not allow him to stay at his house, and even prohibited him from crossing his threshold.

Not long after, the wealthy man’s fortune changed and he became bankrupt. He became so poor that he was on the brink of starvation and was compelled to collect alms in order to support himself.

### Change of Fortune

A similar story happened to another rich man who did not display proper respect for Rabbi Chaim Hakatan. His business went bankrupt, and he became impoverished, having to collect alms for his sustenance.

A few years later, one of the royal ministers came to the city and visited the man. On this occasion, the man requested that the minister ask Rabbi Chaim to beg mercy for him, so that he should return to his former status. The minister advised him to first receive Rabbi Chaim’s forgiveness. Ultimately, Rabbi Chaim did forgive him, and from then on his fortune took a change for the better. Once again, he enjoyed great wealth and prominence.

After this incident, the rich man would regularly send expensive gifts to the illustrious Pinto family.