

## Pachad David

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

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MASKIL LEDAVID

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

## Oil Lights Up the World; the Soul Lights Up the Body

**"Now you shall command the Children of Israel that they shall take for you pure, pressed olive oil for illumination, to kindle the lamp continually"** (Shemot 27:20)

Even before the instruction concerning the garments of the Kohanim, the Torah commands, right at the beginning of the parsha, to take pure olive oil for the Menorah. This oil had to be of a specific nature, as the Gemarah (Menachot 86a) describes: One picks several olives from the top of the tree and squeezes out from them the first drop and no more.

Why does the oil for the Menorah have such great significance that the Torah sees fit to insert it in the middle of the section about the Mishkan, and even before going into detail about the garments for the Kohanim? We also need to understand why only the first drop could be used. Do the other drops not give as nice as a light as the first drop? If we were to examine the oil, we won't find any disparity between the drops. In addition, the Navi tells us (Hoshea 2:2) "and oil is transported to Egypt". He points out that the oil was brought to Mitzrayim. Why was it taken there and what is the significance of this?

In order to understand these concepts, we will first quote Moreinu Rabbi Chaim Vital zya"ta, talmid of the holy Arizal, who says a chiddush: When Hashem created man "and He blew into his nostrils the soul of life" (Bereishit 2:8), He created a body of flesh and bones and covered this over with skin and sinews. Just as the physical body is comprised of 248 organs and 365 sinews, so too does the neshama contain 248 spiritual organs and 365 spiritual sinews! These are the words of my holy ancestor, Rabbi Chaim Vital zya"ta.

This can be compared to the verse in Iyov (10:11), "You clothed me with skin and flesh; You covered me with bones and sinews". This verse is referring to the neshama which was clothed and covered with flesh and bones and sinews. The reason could be that since the soul is of a G-dly and spiritual essence, it would not be able to tolerate the physical body. However, because the neshama is fashioned in a way that is similar to the body, it is able to contain the soul.

We can now explain the significance of the oil according to this concept. The olive itself symbolizes man, while the pit inside the olive symbolizes the bones of man. The oil that is stored inside the olive symbolizes the neshama which is an inner part of man, and just as the oil is used to bring light to the world, so too the neshama lights up the physical body with a precious light- the light of Torah and mitzvot.

This is why the Torah attaches such great importance to the oil for the Menorah. It must be only of the purest oil for it symbolizes the pure neshama, which is a part of G-d (as if it were), and through it a person is able to connect and communicate with Hashem as it says, "The Torah and Hashem and Yisrael are one". This is achieved through our neshama which is a part of the upper world.

With this we can explain why the Navi stresses that the oil was sold to Mitzrayim. Why is it important for us to know where they sold it? The idea is that the Egyptians, who are the symbol of impurity and immorality, wished to contaminate the souls of the Bnei Yisrael and they indeed brought them down to the 49th level of impurity. Therefore, Am Yisrael sold oil to the Egyptians in order to hint to them

that ultimately they did not succeed. On the contrary, not only did our souls remain pure but in addition, using the 'oil' which symbolizes our soul, we are able to have an influence on the entire world and in particular on Mitzrayim.

Oil represents the pure soul, and it is that which gives us the power to overcome our evil inclination which is deeply rooted inside us and which tries to bring us to sin. The Gemarah tells us (Succah 52a): "I will distance the 'tzafoni' (a name for the yetzer hara) from you" – this refers to the evil inclination which is concealed in a person's heart. It is interesting to note that the numerical value of 'שטן' (satan) is 359. The 'שטן' is buried in the 'בל' (heart) which has the numerical value of 32. Together these two words add up to 391, which is the same numerical value as 'שמן' (oil), (adding one for the actual word). This is in line with what we have just explained that it is the soul (oil) that gives us the strength to overcome the satan which is buried in a person's heart.

Another advantage that the neshama benefits us is that it puts us on a pedestal above all the other nations who do not possess this G-dly soul.

Now that we have gained clarity in understanding why the Torah attaches such importance to the oil- it symbolizes the neshama – we are left with the question of why the Torah specifies that only the first drop of oil can be used to light the Menorah in the Beit HaMikdash. We asked why the rest of the oil is not considered worthy of use.

I would like to suggest that the first drop expresses the first show of strength, meaning that the first moment in the battle against one's evil inclination is the most significant and it is at that moment that a person should invest his utmost. The first moment is the hardest of all for we are told that "all beginnings are hard". After that initial confrontation, it becomes significantly easier for a person, for the original effort influences the continuation of the struggle and paves the continuation of the path. "The end of a matter is better than its beginning" (Kohélet 7:8). This verse is also understood to mean – the end of the matter is better – because of the beginning". When the beginning is good, the continuation follows suit.

A lady once came to see me, crying bitterly about her lot. After many years of infertility, she was finally blessed with joyful news but only a few weeks later she miscarried and her dreams were shattered. I encouraged her by saying – make a great feast for all the Torah scholars and give praise to the Creator of the world. She was most surprised but I explained that on the contrary, until now you thought that you weren't able to bring children into the world, but now it is clear that you are able to become pregnant. She was calmed by my words and did as I suggested, and now Baruch Hashem she is a delighted mother of six children ken yirbu.

In summary, the oil symbolizes a person's soul which is the spiritual power that enables him to conquer his evil inclination. It is the neshama that is the light that elevates us above all the other nations. A person must pay special attention to the first drop – to the beginning, for that sets the way for the continuation.

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## Hilula

11 - Rabbi Avraham Borenstein, the 'Avnei Nezer'

12 - The holy brothers, Shemaya and Achiya, harugei Lod

13 - Rabbi Yochanan Safer, the Admor of Erloi

14 - Rabbi Shem Tov ben Rabbi Yitzchak Ben-Walid

15 - Rabbi Tzvi Hirsch Keidnover, author of 'Kav Hayashar'

16 - Rabbi Pinchas Menachem Alter, the Admor of Gur

17 - Rabbi Ya'akov Chai Bardugo



## Walking in their Ways

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

### "For They are our Light and the Length of our Days"

When I was visiting the grave of the Ba'al Shem Tov in Europe, one of my sons phoned me and told me the following narrative. A student of his, who always attends his daily shiur, is making great strides in spirituality. He also supports Torah scholars. This man was now in dire straits for in a moment of jest, he had threatened to shoot someone. The police were called and they arrested him. Upon a house search, they found a loaded gun in his possession. All his assertions that he didn't mean it fell on deaf ears. He was slated to spend a long stint in prison.

This was my son's story. He asked me to pray that this man should merit immediate release.

I turned to Hashem, and said, "Ribbono shel Olam, You know that if this Jew remains in prison, he will suffer spiritual setbacks. Rubbing shoulders with hardened criminals will surely affect him adversely. He will miss so many Torah lessons, which he was always scrupulous in attending. What will be with his neshamah? Please, for the sake of Your Torah, release him from jail!"

I offered this prayer before Hashem at the graves of the Ba'al Shem Tov, as well as other tzaddikim.

Sometime later, my son notified me that for no logical reason, and without prior notification, the Chief of Police told this man, "Leave immediately. But make sure never to repeat your foolishness."

The man phoned my son as soon as he was freed. He told him that throughout his incarceration, he had fervently prayed for Hashem to extricate him for one reason only: so that he could return to his regular Torah shiurim. They were oxygen for him, he said. Without them, his life was not worth living.



## Words of our Sages

### Favoritism in Heaven is Acquired Down Here!

**"You shall make vestments of sanctity for Ahron"** (Shemot 28:2)

Going about our daily life, we encounter many different sorts of people. There are the successful ones and the ones who constantly fail; those who are energetic and those who take life easy. There are people who are greatly respected and those who are less valued. There are also people who have 'connections' - children of important personalities or famous askanim; they are the ones who can resolve almost any predicament, with minimum time and effort...

This latter group is in a special category; everything falls into place for them almost by itself - they find work easily, they have friends in all the right places, they are accepted in the best educational institutions, and in the Beit Haknesset too they are accorded all the honors. The cherry on the cake is that when they need to deal with an issue in a government office, or sort out a problem with the local council they enjoy special treatment; lengthy procedures are carried out with alacrity and in a most efficient manner and they also receive all kinds of benefits...

But in heaven, Rabbi Osher Kovlesky shlit'a enlightens us, there is no such thing. All people are considered equal and are judged according to their deeds alone. Benefits are bestowed on those who have earned the merit. But there is nevertheless one group, a special 'elite' group, whose members do enjoy special reprieve in heaven. They are dealt with lightly, processes are shortened for them, they are assisted in closing their case, and their sins are bypassed. They automatically merit lenient treatment, not down in this world but in heaven - the place where it matters the most...

How does one join this club? It is open to one and all. One's country of origin makes no difference, nor does one's financial status. Those who enjoy special benefits in heaven, those who merit efficient service in the most valuable place - are those who give in to others, those who show submission. They behave

with restraint, know how to defer to others and to be flexible and they know how to yield even when they truly deserve something.

Chazal have revealed a wonderful concept: "המעביר על מידותיו" - one who yields and doesn't take a stand over offenses that were done to him, "he is forgiven for all his sins" - he merits heavenly assistance to fully repent. His repentance is given priority, he is treated with reprieve when seeking to erase debts and sins, and the focus is on judging his merits.

But one moment, how can this be? In heaven, nothing is overlooked. Heaven reckons every word that comes out of our mouths and every sight that we gaze at; a careful note of our every deed is recorded, "for all these things G-d will call you to account" (Kohelet 11:9)?

This is certainly correct - if we too behave according to the strict law and we are most particular about everything that others do to us! But, if we know how to yield and we are prepared to behave beyond the strict letter of the law, then in heaven we will merit the same attitude: we will be rewarded with abundant merits which will glide over our sins.

In this parsha we are told about the garments of the kohanim, the special clothing that Ahron and his sons wore. Ahron HaKohen "loved peace and pursued peace". This was his essence. He was a person who exuded peace and went out of his way to make peace between others and to increase peace and brotherhood. One of the most effective tools for increasing peace and friendship is to adopt the trait of giving way, to forgo and forfeit. We should firmly resolve that we are prepared to flee from all strife and peace is our priority, even if this means forgoing in any way.

The next time someone takes our place in the line, or takes advantage of us in any way for example by blocking our air or light, or parking in our private space - we can be right and make sure that he doesn't get away with it, but it is much more worth it to be clever - to surrender and show restraint, to move on. At that moment we may seem weak in other people's eyes, but right then all our books of debt will be opened in Heaven, and entire pages will be deleted without batting an eyelash. We will merit special benefits and alleviations, which will cause our repentance to be accepted willingly and with ease. It could be that the person will again park in your space, and it is totally correct that someone insulted you so deeply that there is no way you are going to help him, and maybe the neighbor's extension blocks your light - but it is so much more worth it to merit a stream of benefits in heaven! To forgo and receive preferential treatment in the place where life itself is determined, is of much greater worth!

## The Haftarah



**"You, Son of Man!"** (Yechezkel 43)

The connection to the Parsha: The Haftarah talks about the dedication of the altar and the seven days of inauguration, part of Yechezkel's vision about the second Beit HaMikdash. In the Parsha Moshe Rabbeinu is commanded about the seven days of inauguration at the dedication of the Mishkan.



## Guard Your Tongue

### Even Complete Truth

It is forbidden to tell over a shameful thing about one's friend even if it is completely true. This kind of statement is termed by Chazal as lashon hara. (If the narrative includes some false report and due to this his friend is disgraced even more - it is included in the sin of "motzi shem rah" and this sin is much greater.)

One who speaks lashon hara transgresses a negative commandment, as it says (Vayikra 19:16) "You shall not be a gossipmonger among your people". This also includes the sin of rechilus.



## Pearls of the Parshah

## Treasures

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



### The Power of One Moment

*"Pure, pressed olive oil for illumination, to kindle the lamp continually"*  
(Shemot 27:20)

The gemarah (Menachot 99a) brings: Rabbi Yochanan in the name of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai said: even if a person only said the shema prayer in the morning and in the evening, he has fulfilled "This Book of Torah shall not depart from your mouth".

The Chiddushei Harim questions this statement: Why are these few moments of saying krias shema considered as learning day and night? The explanation can be understood according to what the verse tells us about the menorah - "to kindle the lamp continually". Even though the Kohen did not continually light the light but only did so for one moment, but since the menorah burnt the entire day from the power of that moment, his action is considered "continual".

It is the same with saying the shema. If one says shema with concentration and as an expression of one's yirat shamayim which is kindled at that moment, the flame is kept alive in one's heart the entire day, and this is why it is considered as "day and night".

### Two Kinds of Revelation

*"You shall make a Breastplate of Judgment of a woven design"* (Shemot 28:15)

The 'HaKetav V'Hakabalah' writes that the word 'נשך' (Breastplate) contains the same letters as the word 'שחן' (serpent).

These two words are in fact complete opposites. The verb form of 'nachash' means to reveal hidden things through the powers of impurity, whereas the 'choshen' served as a form of inquiry and revealed the hidden through a holy power. The Urim and the Tumim of the Breastplate were the conduit of heavenly revelation.

### A Single Coin Versus a Hundred Coins

*"You shall fill it with stone mounting, four rows of stone"* (Shemot 28:17)

The 'Akeidah' writes that some of these stones were very precious and some were inexpensive, to hint that a judge must give equal thought to a case concerning the smallest unit and a case concerning a hundred coins.

The names of the shevatim were inscribed on these stones in order of their birth - to hint that a person shouldn't show favoritism to anyone. He should consider a lesser person just as he would a more notable person, as if there is no superiority among the shevatim besides their age, and otherwise they are all equal.

### The Symbolic Forehead

*"You shall make a Headplate of pure gold"* (Shemot 28:36)

The Tzitz (Headplate) atoned for brazeness. The verse commands concerning the Tzitz, "It shall be on Ahron's forehead" (ibid 38) and in Yeshaya (48:4) we are told: "Your forehead is brazen". By the Kohen Gadol wearing the Tzitz on his forehead, he subdued the brazen ones of the generation.

This explains the mishna (Avot 5:20): "The brazen goes to Gehinnom, but the shamefaced goes to the Garden of Eden. May it be Your will, Hashem, our G-d and the G-d of our forefathers, that the Holy Temple be rebuilt, speedily in our days, and grant us our share in Your Torah."

What is the connection between brazenness and the prayer that follows - that the Beit Hamikdash be rebuilt?

The 'Ohelah Shel Torah' explains that when the Tanna mentioned the brazen ones, a prayer for rebuilding the Beit Hamikdash burst out from his heart, for it will be then that the Kohen Gadol will wear the Tzitz on his forehead and he will thereby subdue the brazen ones of the generation. The gemarah (Beitza 25b) tells us: Why was the Torah given to Yisrael? For they are brazen. (Rashi: The Torah was given to them so that they should engage in it and this depletes their strength and subdues their heart.) This is why the Tanah finishes off the mishna by praying, "and grant us our share in Your Torah".

### A Person's True Clothing

In this week's parsha we are told about the special garments of the Kohen Gadol, as the verse tells us: "You shall make vestments of sanctity for Ahron your brother" (Shemot 28:2). In the previous parsha the Torah talks about the building of the mishkan.

I would like to clarify the connection between the building of the mishkan and the making of these garments. In addition, we have to understand the significance of these garments and why the Torah sees fit to go into such detail about them.

Sometimes a person can invest a great deal of energy in a matter that doesn't have much importance, whereas he doesn't put much effort into something that is really important. He turns the important issue into something trivial and considers a triviality as something important. When Hashem commanded us to build the mishkan, He wished to have a place to rest His shechina so that we should merit Heavenly assistance in our all endeavors. But it does not end with this. The main thing is that we must toil in Torah and overcome our challenges. This is the essence of garments which clothe a person. Our 'clothes' are our Torah learning and mitzvot. They are not simply clothes, but holy garments through which a person safeguards his holiness, and nothing can protect a person more than toiling in Torah.

A person's body is made up of the upper part, where the heart and brain are situated, which symbolizes spirituality, and the lower part which symbolizes materialism. Through one's dress a person is given the capability of enabling the upper power to rule over the lower power. One of the Kohen's garments was the belt which serves to divide between the upper and lower sections. A person's goal should be to take the spiritual and impose it over the physical.

Once when I was receiving people in Paris, a couple, who had invested a huge amount of money in designer fashion, came to see me. Just two hours before the grand opening of their long-awaited sale, a gas balloon exploded and everything that they had invested, enormous effort and expense, went up in smoke. They were left penniless and in their despair they came to ask me why Hashem had done this to them?

I answered them that on the contrary, they should rejoice that the explosion hadn't taken place when they and the huge crowd were inside. They had been saved from certain death.

In truth, how come they didn't think of this aspect on their own?

The answer is that they were missing the true 'clothes' - Torah and mitzvot, as we explained above. We are talking about people whose only consideration is how they can gratify their desires. Had they dedicated some of their time to attending classes on Torah and emunah, they would certainly have been able to overcome this challenge.

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT



## No Cursing!

Since Moshe Rabbeinu said “erase me now” (Shemot 32:32), his name is not mentioned in this parsha (Ba'al Haturim).

The lesson that we learn from this is that a person is forbidden to curse himself. Moshe Rabbeinu said “erase me now” as an atonement for Klal Yisrael for the sin of the Golden Calf, and despite this intention his words made an impression and his name is not mentioned in this parsha. How much more so must a person, who gives expression to his thoughts out of pure anger with no purpose in mind, be extremely careful with the words that come out of his mouth.

This is how the ‘Siftei Kohen’ explains the intention of the verse “Now you shall command the Children of Israel”- tell them what happened to you as a result of your saying “erase me now” and warn them not to curse themselves.

## Men of Faith

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

A person approached Moreinu v'Rabbeinu with his hand in a cast. He had experienced a devastating accident, and the doctors informed him that his hand must be amputated. He was miserable and poured out his heart before Moreinu v'Rabbeinu, crying bitterly. He moaned despairingly, “How will I be able to manage without a hand?”

When he calmed down somewhat, Moreinu v'Rabbeinu asked him, “How will I be able to change your situation through my blessings?”

“The Rav is a grandson of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Pinto,” he answered simply.

“True, but I am not Rabbi Chaim Pinto,” Moreinu explained.

“In any case, you are the tzaddik's grandson, and I believe that Hashem can perform miracles for me in his merit,” he insisted sincerely.

Moreinu v'Rabbeinu offered words of encouragement and told him, “If you believe so strongly, then with the help of Hashem, you will experience a miracle.”

When they parted, the man said confidently, “I hope the next time we meet, my hand will be healed.”

A year passed, and one time, when Moreinu v'Rabbeinu was delivering a lecture, he needed a pen to write out a pasuk for the people to see. He turned to the crowd and asked if anyone had a pen for him to use. A man came toward him and extended a badly scarred arm, handing him a pen.

“What happened to your hand?” Moreinu asked.

The man reminded him of his past, “Honorable Rav, do you recall how last year the doctors wanted to amputate my hand, and I came to receive a blessing in the merit of your grandfather? Here is my hand. It was not necessary to amputate it in the end. This is why I would like to give the Rav the pen as a souvenir specifically with this hand. I am sure that my hand was saved only in the merit of Rabbi Chaim Pinto. The doctors also cannot believe how the hand healed by itself.”