

# The Path To Follow

A Hevrat Pinto Publication

Va'etchanan

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Av 13<sup>th</sup>, 5771

August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2011

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## When One Sanctifies Himself Below, He is Sanctified Above

It is written, "You have been shown to know that Hashem, He is G-d; there is none beside Him. From Heaven He caused you to hear His voice to teach you, and on earth He showed you His great fire, and you heard His words from the midst of the fire" (*Devarim* 4:35-36). In the Midrash the Sages say, "On the day that the Torah was given, the Holy One, blessed be He, tore the Heavens and showed the Children of Israel the seven firmaments. Just as he tore the upper firmaments, He tore the lower firmaments. He said to them, 'See that there is none besides Me,' as it is written: 'You have been shown to know,' 'Know this day.'"

We need to understand why the Holy One, blessed be He, found it necessary to tear open the upper and lower firmaments for the Children of Israel so they could believe in Him. Why did He not order them to simply trust in Him with regards to His oneness? The answer is that the Children of Israel had practiced idolatry in Egypt, and they thought that Pharaoh was a god because that is what he claimed. Hashem therefore wanted to reveal Himself to the Children of Israel, in order for them to see with their eyes and realize with complete clarity that there is none but Him. He wanted to free them of these false convictions and have them no longer believe in Pharaoh or anyone besides G-d, Who created the world.

The Children of Israel of that time were known as the "generation of knowledge" (*Zohar* II:62b), for they were fully aware of the fact that there is none but G-d. We find no other generation in history called the "generation of knowledge," and only in regards to the Messianic age is it said: "The earth will be filled with the knowledge of Hashem" (*Isaiah* 11:9). Why? Because elsewhere it is said of the Messianic age: "They will no longer teach – each man his fellow, each man his brother – saying 'Know Hashem,' for they will all know Me, from their smallest to their greatest" (*Jeremiah* 31:33). As a result, the entire world will clearly know Hashem in the Messianic era, and there will be no doubts in this regard.

Just as at Mount Sinai, when Hashem tore open the seven firmaments to the Children of Israel after they left Egypt, likewise through *Ruach HaKodesh* Moshe showed their children – the generation that would go into Eretz Israel – something similar when he reminded them of the giving of the Torah on Sinai. The verse explicitly states, "Know this day" (*Devarim* 4:39), and as we said earlier, the Sages explain that Hashem tore open the seven firmaments for the Children of Israel, both upper and lower. From here we learn that just as Hashem showed this to the generation that left Egypt, Moshe showed it to the generation that would enter Eretz Israel.

This is why Moshe told the Children of Israel, before reviewing the Ten Commandments for them: "Not with our forefathers did Hashem seal this covenant, but with us – we who are here, all of us alive today. Face to face did Hashem speak with you on the mountain, from amid the fire" (*Devarim* 5:3-4). Despite telling them that Hashem had torn open the upper and lower firmaments on Mount Sinai, and that all the Children of Israel who stood by the mountain had seen that there none but Him alone, Moshe was afraid that the Children of Israel would ask him how they could know that there is one G-d, thinking that perhaps there were two or more. They could have thought that it was only their fathers – those who had left Egypt – who had seen this, not they themselves.

Their fathers all died during the 40 years that had passed since that time, which is

why Moshe wanted to teach them as Hashem had taught their fathers. He said to them, "You have been shown to know" – just as in the past, when your fathers had a clear understanding that Hashem is G-d and there is none but Him in the upper and lower worlds, likewise today you will clearly understand: "Know this day and take it to heart that Hashem is G-d in the heavens above and on the earth below; there is none else" (*Devarim* 4:39). He opened the upper and lower worlds for the Children of Israel, in order for all of them to know that there is but one G-d.

### This Stone is Like Mount Sinai

In truth, no great miracle took place there. Every place that a Jew studies Torah is like Mount Sinai, and he thereby merits great things. The Sages have said, "The Beit HaMidrash of Rabbi Eliezer was shaped like an arena [*i.e.*, oblong with seats on both sides], and in it was a stone that was reserved for him to sit upon. Rabbi Yehoshua once came in and began kissing the stone, saying: 'This stone is like Mount Sinai, and he who sat on it is like the Ark of the Covenant'" (*Shir HaShirim Rabba* 1:20). From here we learn that every place where a person studies Torah resembles Mount Sinai, and the Holy One, blessed be He, again concludes a covenant with him.

When did the generation of the desert merit seeing the glory of G-d with their own eyes? It was after detaching themselves from this world, as it is written: "Moshe descended from the mountain to the people. He sanctified the people and they washed their clothing. He said to the people, 'Be ready after a three-day period; do not draw near a woman'" (*Shemot* 19:14-15). The same applies to every generation: When a man detaches himself from materiality and sanctifies himself in what is permitted, he can sense the covenant that the Holy One, blessed be He, concludes with him each day. Hence it is written, "Know Him," in order to teach us that when a man sanctifies himself in what is permitted – when he studies Torah throughout his life and cleaves to the supernal light, as we mentioned above – then the Sages in the Gemara say of him: "If a man sanctifies himself a little, he becomes greatly sanctified. [If he sanctifies himself] below, he becomes sanctified from above" (*Yoma* 39a). They also say, "If one comes to purify himself, he is given help" (*Shabbat* 104a).

If a person were to object by saying, "How can I sanctify myself in what is permitted and detach myself from what the Torah has allowed me to have, since the Holy One, blessed be He, has created the evil inclination? It seeks to kill me, and it grows stronger every day [*Sukkah* 52b]! How can I separate myself from this world?" The answer is that a person is only saved from the evil inclination when he enters the Beit HaMidrash to study Torah, as the Sages have said: "I created the evil inclination, but I created the Torah as its antidote. If you occupy yourselves with Torah, you will not be delivered into its hand. ... If it is of stone, it will dissolve; if [it is of] iron, it will shatter" (*Kiddushin* 30b). The Aggadah cites King David in saying, "Prepare my steps with Your word, and do not allow any iniquity to rule over me" [*Tehillim* 119:133]. Do not allow my feet to go where they wish, but [only] towards Your Torah all day long, towards the Beit HaMidrash." This is because the evil inclination cannot enter the Beit HaMidrash. It will accompany a man there, but once he arrives, it cannot enter.

## Concerning the Parsha

### Pronouncing G-d Name

It is written, "Hashem your G-d shall you fear, Him shall you serve, and in His Name shall you swear" (*Devarim* 6:13).

In the Gemara the Sages state, "Does Scripture not say, 'Hashem your G-d shall you fear, Him shall you serve'? This text is only a positive admonition" (*Temurah* 4a). The Rambam writes, "The fear of G-d includes not pronouncing His Name in vain. Hence if a person has been led astray by his tongue and pronounced G-d's Name in vain, he should immediately praise and glorify Him in order for it not to have been said in vain. How? If he said 'Hashem,' he should say 'Baruch Hu le-olam vaed' or 'Gadol Hu u'mehulal meod,' or something similar so it is not in vain" (*Mishneh Torah, Shevuot* 12:11).

The *poskim* deal with the case of a person learning a passage in the Talmud or Midrash that contains texts or blessings with G-d's Name. Is he permitted to pronounce G-d's Name when he reads it, or should he use the name "Hashem" or something similar?

Rabbi Yaakov Emden writes, "I have seen teachers who ensure that their students do not pronounce G-d's Name when they read verses in learning Gemara. They believe that this may involve using G-d's Name in vain and transgressing, 'You shall not take the Name of Hashem your G-d in vain.' Yet in reality, this is a mistake, and I have never seen competent individuals who pay attention to this. I remember when I was young and we were studying before my father the *gaon* [Rabbi Tzvi Ashkenazi] *Zatzal*, when we came to verses in the Talmud and someone read G-d's Name in a way that differed from how it was written, the *gaon* would reprimand him and order him to read G-d's Name like someone reading out of the Torah. It is therefore obvious that everyone is permitted to pronounce G-d's Name normally in the verses found in the Talmud. On the contrary, we are even obligated to read them in this way" (*Responsa Ya'avetz* 1:81).

The *gaon* Rabbi Moshe Feinstein *Zatzal* explains why Rabbi Tzvi Ashkenazi reprimanded the individual who did not pronounce G-d's Name when he taught the *poskim*. He wrote, "The reason why it is fitting to prohibit the reading of G-d's Name in a different way comes only from the law that 'any verse which Moshe did not divide, we may not divide' [*Taanith* 27b]. When a person does not read G-d's Name as it is written, he stops in the middle of the verse given by Moshe by saying 'Elokim' or 'Hashem' instead of [G-d's] Name, and as such it is not considered as the reading of a verse. It is as if he has divided the verse into two or more parts, since in the middle of the verse he has read a word that does not appear in it" (*Iggerot Moshe, Orach Chaim* 56).

*On the Contrary, It's a Mitzvah!*

The book *Yosef Ometz* by Rabbi Yosef Yuzpe *Zatzal* explains that, on the contrary, it is a *mitzvah* to recite [G-d's] Name when it appears in the Talmud and Midrashim, just as it is written. This is because it is disrespectful to refer to G-d by the name "Adoshem" or "Elokim," with a *kuf* or some other letter.

However this regards Scriptural verses that appear in the Talmud or Midrashim. In regards to blessings that contain G-d's Name, as explained in the responsa of Rabbi Nachshon Gaon, if one pronounces G-d's Name while studying them, such as when a person reads a blessing appearing in the Talmud, this is called using G-d's Name in vain. In his book *Tashbetz*, the Maharam of Rothenburg testifies that when he read the Talmud, he was careful

to say "Hashem" whenever he came upon the Tetragrammaton.

The Ya'avetz had a different view. He felt that even when one pronounces the blessings that appear in the Gemara or while learning, one must pronounce G-d's Name as it appears, "and this requires no proof." In *Chavat Da'at*, the *gaon* of Lisa states the same thing. The Chida notes that what the Ya'avetz says is proved by this, and the custom of the elders of Eretz Israel is not to pronounce G-d's Name when reading the text of a blessing. However one is obligated to pronounce G-d's Name as it appears when reading the Gemara or the Midrashim.

In his book *Zichronot Eliyahu*, the *gaon* Rabbi Eliyahu Mani *Zatzal* cites the words of the Chida, which allows a person to pronounce G-d's Name as it appears in the verses cited by the Gemara. He concludes by saying that nevertheless, we do not have the custom of explicitly pronouncing G-d's Name, and it is better not to introduce innovations. In the same spirit, Rabbi Yechiel Michal Epstein writes: "One who is great in study will not explicitly pronounce G-d's Name, but will say 'Hashem' or 'Elokeinu.' Those who give classes in public by citing a verse that contains G-d's Name will not say it, but will say 'Hashem.' Even if some allow this, it is better not to do so. This is the accepted custom" (*Aruch HaShulchan* 215:2). In *Responsa Yechaveh Da'at*, it is written that this is a "stringency that comes from a leniency." In fact we must then say "Elokim" with a *kuf*, which demonstrates a lack of respect for Heaven.

### A Lack of Respect

In regards to teachers who are instructing their students on the blessings, the *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 215:3) states: "It is permitted to teach children the blessings as they are written, even if this leads to pronouncing the blessings in vain while learning them." The Arachonim (cited in *Mishnah Berurah*) have explained that this refers to cases in which a teacher studies the blessings with his students when it is not the time to say them. Yet even in such cases, one is permitted to pronounce G-d's Name, and the teacher himself can also pronounce it to teach children the blessings.

The *Sdei Chemed* (*Klalim* 1:313) states that the expression *Melech ha-olam* ("King of the universe") is not included in the prohibition against using G-d's Name in vain. A person is therefore allowed to pronounce it while studying.

To conclude, let us recall the words of the *Turei Zahav* (*Orach Chaim* 621:2): "In places where we must not mention [G-d's] Name, we must say 'Hashem.' We must not say 'Adoshem,' as many people do, for this demonstrates a lack of respect for Heaven. We must use the classic term 'Hashem.'"

### Growing Wise

It is written, "See, I have taught you statutes and ordinances" (*Devarim* 4:5).

In his book *Tzitzim U'Frahim*, the *gaon* Rabbi Yaakov Haim *Zatzal* (the son of the Ben Ish Hai) explains the meaning of this verse as follows:

It seems to me that this alludes to what our Sages have taught: "Whoever looks upon the face of his Rav as he studies becomes wise," just as the verse states: "Your eyes shall behold your teacher" (Isaiah 30:20). Rabbeinu HaKadosh said, "The only reason that I am sharper than my friends is that I saw the back of Rabbi Meir. Had I seen his front, I would have been sharper still" (*Eruvin* 13b).

The term "see" is therefore a reference to beholding your teacher, to seeing the face of your teacher as he studies. Thus we have: "See, I have taught you statutes and ordinances" – you will merit learning statutes and ordinances, and you will become wise in the study of Torah.

## Quickly

It is written, “You will surely perish quickly” (*Devarim* 4:26).

When someone borrows an object and offers to return it quickly, what timeframe must he adhere to?

In his book *Ta’ama D’Kra*, Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky *Shlita* is of the opinion that “quickly” means 20.5 hours less a very short period of time.

The source of this opinion is found in the Gemara: “Rabbi Acha bar Yaakov said, ‘This proves [that the term] “quickly” [used] by the Sovereign of the universe is 852 years’ ” (*Gittin* 88b).

Since a “day” for G-d is 1,000 years (“for even 1,000 years in Your eyes are like yesterday when it is past” [*Tehillim* 90:4]), and since “quickly” is 852 years, then proportionally speaking, “quickly” for man is 20 hours, 483 *chalakim*, 50 seconds, and 24 thirds.

## Cleaving to Hashem

It is written, “You have been shown to know that Hashem, He is G-d; there is none besides Him” (*Devarim* 4:35).

Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin wrote, “It is really an important matter and a tremendous *segula* to remove and completely nullify all the laws and other desires that one is unable to control. They will not make any impression at all. Man should accept in his heart to say that Hashem is the true G-d, and there is nothing, no power in this world or any other world, except for Him. Everything is filled with only the simple unity of Hashem. One who completely nullifies all else in his heart, not paying heed to any power or will in this world, and who subjugates and clings to the pureness of this concept, only to the one Master, blessed be He, then Hashem shall automatically grant him nullification of powers and wills of the world, that they will not have the ability to act upon him at all” (*Nefesh HaChaim* 3:12).

## Above and Below

It is written, “In heaven above and on the earth below” (*Devarim* 4:39).

In his book *Tov HaLevanon*, Rabbi Bechaye ibn Paquada ben Yosef figuratively explains that in regards to the “spiritual” domain, a person must look above him and yearn for more than he has. The same does not apply to the “material” domain, where a person must always look at what is below and lower than himself.

The verse states: “In heaven above,” meaning that in the spiritual domain, we must always look at what is above us and yearn for more. However “on the earth” – in regards to the material domain “below” – we must look at what is below us and be content with the little we have.

## He Shall Live

It is written, “He shall flee to one of these cities and he shall live” (*Devarim* 4:42).

Let us recall what the Rambam states in the laws concerning murder:

“A student who killed unintentionally is exiled to a city of refuge, and his teacher must go into exile with him, as it is written: ‘And he shall live.’ We give him what he needs to live, and for those who seek wisdom, a life without Torah is considered like death. Likewise when a teacher goes into exile, his yeshiva is exiled with him” (*Hilchos Rotzeach* 7:1).

## Protecting the Home

It is written, “You shall write them upon the doorposts of your home and upon your gates” (*Devarim* 6:9).

We know that the *mitzvah* of the *mezuzah* is responsible for protecting the home from all evil and harm, forces of impurity and demons.

The term *mezuzah* is composed of the same letters as *zaz mavet* (pushing away death).

The Sages have said, “Children die as a punishment for...the sin of [neglecting the *mitzvah* of] *mezuzah*” (*Shabbat* 32b). For a person who pays attention to this *mitzvah*, death does not come to his home. This is why, written within the *mezuzah*, is the Name *Sh-dai*, which is formed by the initials of *Shomer Dirat Israel* (“He protects the dwellings of Israel”). When the forces of impurity see this Name within the *mezuzah*, they yield and flee from that home.

## In the Light of the Parsha

### Delivered by Moshe’s Prayer

It is written, “And I implored Hashem at that time” (*Devarim* 3:23). What does “at that time” mean? The Midrash asks, “How do we know that Moshe prayed 515 times at that point? It is because it is said, ‘*Va’etchanan* [And I implored] Hashem at that time,’ the numerical value of *va’etchanan* being this number” (*Devarim Rabba* 11:10). We read that if Moshe had prayed just one more time, his request would have been granted, which is why G-d said to him: “Speak to Me no further” (*Devarim* 3:26). Let us think about this: If Moshe knew that his request would not be answered, then why did he pray so much? On the other hand, if he knew that just one more prayer would be effective, then why did he not make it?

We may explain this according to what our Sages have said on the verse, “Moshe descended from the mountain to the people” (*Shemot* 19:14): “This teaches that Moshe did not turn to his own affairs, but [went directly] from the mountain to the people” (*Mechilta, Yitro BaChodesh* 3). He conducted himself in this way all through life. Even when he prayed, Moshe did not pray for himself, but for the Children of Israel, of whom he was a part, praying solely for them.

Hence the verse employs the term *va’etchanan* – written in the future tense – to tell us that Moshe had not yet prayed. This teaches us that the Children of Israel were only delivered by the merit of Moshe’s prayers on their behalf, which is why he prayed 515 times. He must again, in the future, make an extra prayer that will be immediately granted. At that point the Children of Israel will be delivered by the merit of Moshe’s extra prayer, one made in addition to the 515 initial ones.

## Guard Your Tongue!

### Concealed Lashon Harah

The prohibition against speaking *Lashon Harah* applies even when the speaker does not explicitly mention the subject’s name, and simply wants to talk about him. If it will be possible to discover who he is speaking about, this constitutes *Lashon Harah*. Furthermore, even if the speaker’s story contains nothing derogatory, if his words harm or shame the person he is speaking about, and the speaker had this intention from the start, this also constitutes *Lashon Harah*. In fact the Sages call this “concealed *Lashon Harah*.” See how great is the prohibition against speaking *Lashon Harah*, for even if we do not speak out of hatred and have no intention of speaking evil, but simply say something with a laugh or half-seriously, the Torah still prohibits it because they are still derogatory words.

– Chafetz Chaim

### Rabbi Yehudah Pinto – “Rabbi Hadan”

The holy kabbalist and tzaddik Rabbi Yehudah Pinto, called Rabbi Hadan, was the son of Rabbi Haim Pinto Hagadol. Rabbi Hadan became known by his greatness in Torah and Kabbalah. He diligently immersed himself in the study of holy books both day and night, in addition to being a tzaddik, a very pious man. He would perform miracles, and many people came to him for his blessing.

From his father, Rabbi Hadan also inherited the attribute of generosity and helping others. Thus, for example, it is said that he would distribute all his money as tzedakah to the needy poor. Rabbi Hadan was careful not to go to sleep until he had distributed all his available money, hurrying to give it to the poor.

When a boy from a poor family was about to have his Bar Mitzvah, Rabbi Hadan would provide him with new clothes, a tallit and tefillin, as well as food for the boy's family to celebrate without having to worry about anything. Once a boy had grown up and it was time for him to get married, Rabbi Hadan would occupy himself with the great mitzvah of Hachnasat Kallah.

#### Sir Montefiore's Visit

In the city of Mogador, people stretched out finely-made carpets from the port all the way to the home of the tzaddik Rabbi Hadan, who lived in the Mellah (old Jewish quarters). These impressive carpets had been placed in honor of Sir Moshe Montefiore, who in 5623 arrived in Mogador to try and win the favor of the city's governor and avoid riots that were expected following a false accusation in a murder case in Safi, close to Mogador. Sir Montefiore was welcomed into the home of the tzaddik Rabbi Hadan for a few days, where he received his blessing as well as his advice. Since the climate of the city suited him, he remained there longer than expected.

During his stay, Sir Montefiore gave money to the Jews of the city and concerned himself with the needs of the community. The primary objective of his visit was crowned with success, for he obtained a declaration of protection and equal rights for the Jews of Morocco.

#### Do Not Worry

Morocco experienced a year of drought that weighed heavily upon its farmers and the rest of the population. Not the least drop of rain moistened the earth, and all the residents of the country were in distress, no longer knowing what to do, so great were their worries.

During this time, Rabbi Hadan was very saddened and distressed. The holidays were soon approaching, and he had no money on hand to purchase clothes and basic necessities for the poor in town, as he would do every year. One night his father Rabbi Haim Pinto Hagadol appeared to him in a dream and said, “My son, do not worry. Do not be sad about anything. Tomorrow, with G-d's help, your family will have new clothes like they've never had before.”

In the morning, as Rabbi Hadan was preparing to go to synagogue to pray Shacharit, the servant of the wealthy Moshe Aflalo came to his home and announced that he wanted the Rav to come see him.

At the entrance of his home, Moshe Aflalo welcomed Rabbi Hadan with warmth and joy. He then explained what had happened to him: During the night, the tzaddik Rabbi Haim Pinto appeared to him in a dream and said, “Is it possible that you are wearing new clothes for the holidays, and that my son Hadan is wearing old clothes? I order you to also provide my son Hadan and his family with new clothes.”

“I called for you as soon as it was morning,” said the wealthy man, “to carry out the order of your father the tzaddik.” At that point, Moshe Aflalo took out a large sum of money meant to purchase new clothes for Rabbi Hadan and his family, and he also gave Rabbi Hadan a watch and chain of pure gold.

Rabbi Hadan thanked him for his generosity, leaving his home satisfied and content. With the money he received, he began to purchase clothes for the children of the poor, and with the little that remained he purchased clothes for himself and his family.

#### Engulfed in Flames

Every year, Rabbi Hadan would bake shmura matza on the day before the eve of Passover. The Rav himself would bake the matzot, not entrusting this task to anyone else. Not content with doing just that, he would also bring his own utensils to the bakery, for the kashrut of the matzot was of capital importance to him.

As in every year, he made an agreement with the owner of the bakery, a certain Ben Ocha, to use his bakery to bake matzot on the day before the eve of Passover. On the given day, Rabbi Hadan would arrive with his utensils, his flour, his water, his roller, and all the other tools

needed to make the matzot. Yet upon his arrival, he realized to his utter dismay that the oven was already being used by someone else to bake matzot.

The Rav was very annoyed, for he had made an agreement with the owner of the bakery, who did not keep his word. His discontent increased when he thought of his large family and the poor who entrusted him with providing them with matzot for the night of the Seder, and yet the following day was already the eve of Passover! He went to complain to the owner of the bakery, who responded with indifference: “There's a lot of things to do today. Come back some other time and bake your matzot.”

When Rabbi Hadan heard this, he left without saying a word. He had not gone far when a large fire broke out in the bakery, a fire that completely engulfed it. The oven, utensils, and matzot – everything was in flames.

The coincidence of both things happening at the same time made the owner realize that dishonoring the Torah had cost him dearly. As his bakery was going up in flames, he immediately ran after the Rav to ask him for forgiveness. He promised that from now on, he would always keep his word, regardless of what may happen. When Rabbi Hadan forgave him, the flames immediately died down, to the point that nobody could tell that a fire had broken out. Even the matzot within the oven were not burned.

When our teacher Shlita recounted this story to his students, he added: “Each time we pass in front of this bakery, we remember the miracle that happened there.”

#### Deliverance Comes from Hashem

After the death of Sultan Mohammed in 5634, a group of Moroccan rebels tried to seize control of the government. One group of rebels encamped next to the city of Mogador and began to attack the fortified walls of the city. The rebels burned the gates of the Mogador and tried to make their way inside to pillage the city and kill its inhabitants.

When Mogador's governor saw the danger at the gates of the city, he immediately sent someone to the synagogue which carried Rabbi Haim Pinto's name. There he asked the Jewish community to pray to the Creator of the world, and to implore Him to prevent this evil from making its way into the city.

That is what those in synagogue did. They began to implore the Creator to save them from violence and death.

Deliverance comes from Hashem, and their prayers were heard by the merit of the tzaddik Rabbi Haim Pinto. The guards overseeing the city's walls reported that during this prayer, they saw horsemen dressed in white and riding upon white horses who came from the area of Rabbi Haim Pinto's grave at the cemetery. They were headed towards the city's walls.

These horsemen fiercely attacked the rebels beneath the city walls, making them flee to save themselves. Later on, the inhabitants could see from close the corpses of many rebels who had been killed in the violent battle.

After the great deliverance and sanctification of Hashem's Name that spread among the nations because of this incident, the governor of the city came to see the tzaddik Rabbi Hadan, the son of Rabbi Haim Pinto. He asked him to establish, from that time on, a permanent prayer for the peace of the kingdom.

Out of gratitude for the prayers of its Jewish citizens, and for the deliverance of the city that took place on account of the Jews, the governor committed himself to defending them. In homage to the Jewish community, he freed many Jews who had been unjustly arrested and imprisoned. Furthermore, he reduced the taxes imposed on the Jewish inhabitants of the city. From then on, the governor knew that each time a misfortune faced the city, he had someone to whom he could turn for Heaven's help.

#### Tikkun for an Animal

Mrs. Simcha Elkeslassy, the grandmother of the Rav Shlita, recounted that one day, while he was traveling from Mogador to Marrakech, Rabbi Hadan encountered a large animal that was moving slowly. He stopped and made a special tikkun for it, saying: “May it be G-d's will for you to have offspring in peace.” He then got up and went on his way. Only Hashem knows what is hidden.

#### You are Merciful

The kabbalist and tzaddik Rabbi Hadan Pinto left this world for the celestial yeshiva on Av 16, 5641. He was laid to rest in the new cemetery of Mogador, and inscribed on his gravestone are the words: “Here lies the complete sage whose merit aided the community, zealous in mitzvot, from a holy family, Rabbi Yehudah Pinto. His life came to an end on Av 16, 5641.”

It is important to note that due to his great modesty in life, as well as in death, no praises were inscribed on his gravestone. It was enough to write “whose merit aided the community, zealous in mitzvot.” That is the main thing, for it is not words that count, but deeds.