

Chukat

July 16<sup>th</sup> 2016  
Tamuz 10<sup>th</sup> 5776

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Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

# The Path to Follow



Published by **Mosdot Orot Chaim U'Moshe** in Israel

Under the auspices of **Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlitia**  
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"ta**

MASKIL LÉDAVID

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

## Wholehearted Service of Hashem

***"This is the law: if a man dies in a tent, anyone entering the tent and anything in the tent shall be contaminated for seven days"*** (Bamidbar 19:14)

Chazal teach that "a tent" refers to the Hall of Torah Study. This is inferred by the pasuk regarding Yaakov (Bereishit 25:27), "Yaakov was a wholesome man, abiding in tents." A person should constantly strive to sacrifice his personal interests in order to dwell in the tent of Torah. The word מת (dead) can be transposed to spell תם (wholesome). Yaakov Avinu merited being the pillar of Torah due to his sacrifice in the tents of Torah.

Many things in this world are acceptable in halves. Even a small amount of an item is better than none at all. But concerning Torah study, we don't go halfway. The words of Torah must be upheld unequivocally. When there is a deficiency in one's Avodat Hashem or mitzvah observance, it can be the cause of his spiritual downfall, causing him to lose all he had attained. For this reason, we are adjured to sweat and toil over the words of Torah, upholding them perfectly, until we "kill ourselves" in the tent of Torah.

No one can be half dead. Either he is alive or he is dead. As long as he breathes, a person is obligated to study Torah. The Rambam rules that even a dangerously ill man is not exempt from the mitzvah of Torah study. As long as a person lives, his Yetzer Hara beats within his heart, bent on bringing him to sin. Only upon death does the Yetzer Hara let up, allowing him to rest in peace. Even a sick man must combat his Yetzer Hara with the life-giving waters of Torah.

I remember being very sick once, my temperature soaring. Nevertheless, I did not allow myself a break from Torah study. I continued learning as before, with energy and enthusiasm. With Hashem's help, I revealed a novel idea in Torah, thereby resolving a previous difficulty. Even a sick man has the ability to learn Torah. If he exerts himself in this area, he will be rewarded with blessing.

The only way to save oneself from the net of the Yetzer Hara is by means of Torah study. When a person is not taking succor in the tent of Torah, all life is sucked out of him. And just as the dead cannot sin, for the Yetzer Hara is powerless against them, so too, is a person who "kills himself" in the tent of Torah saved from sin, for the Torah protects him from the Yetzer Hara.

As is known, man is comprised of two parts – the materialistic body, a product of the earth, and the spiritual neshamah, a product of heaven. The body and soul are interconnected in a strong bond. Each is able to influence the other. If the body holds sway over the neshamah, it reduces its spiritual level. It is well-known that as long as a body has not been buried, the neshamah continues hovering over it. Only after it has been interred and completely covered, can the neshamah ascend to heaven and return to its place of origin.

The neshamah returns On High, but it still maintains its connection with the body that housed it in this world. This, though, is on condition that the person spent all his days pursuing Torah and mitzvot. Such a person's neshamah is drawn to his elevated body and remains, on some level, connected to it even after death. This is in line with the belief that the lips of tzaddikim murmur from the grave when their Torah teachings are being studied in this world. From here we see that if one elevates himself and learns Torah to perfection, to the extent that he "sacrifices himself in the tent of Torah," he will merit that even his physical being will become exalted. Even after he passes on, his holy neshamah will cleave to his body, as his lips murmur in the grave.

Thus, it is man's obligation in this world to serve Hashem with complete dedication. He should constantly aspire to reach greater heights of perfection. He should never, chalilah, satisfy himself with a partial job. Accomplishment is considered meaningful only if it is complete.

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## Hillulah of Tzaddikim

10 - Rabbi David Hassin

11 - Rabbi Zvi Hirsh Author of Atteret Zvi

12 - Rabbeinu Yakov Ba'al Haturim

13 - Rabbi Elchanan Wasserman hy"d

14 - Rabbi Yosef Mitrani

15 - Rabbi Chaim ben Atar

16 - Rabbi Emanuel Mishali



## Walking in their Ways

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

### No Human Intervention

On one of my trips to the States, a short time before I was scheduled to return to France, a man approached me, asking that I bless him with financial security. Of course, I blessed him from the depths of my heart, in the merit of my holy forefathers. After I finished, he added a request: He wanted me to bless him that already before the coming Shabbat, Hakadosh Baruch Hu would send him sustenance.

As soon as I heard this request, I offered him a sum of money for his family's Shabbat expenses. However, he refused to take the money. "I am not interested in taking money from the Rav," he said, "I want Hashem to send it to me in a different way." I accepted his words and took back my money, with hope and a prayer that Hashem would send him money before Shabbat.

A short while after our talk, I left for the airport. As I made my way toward

the car that would take me there, an unfamiliar man came toward me. He said that he had a sum of money put into an envelope, earmarked for a Jew who has no means of acquiring Shabbat provisions. He himself did not know anyone in this category. Therefore, he said he'd be happy if I could direct him to such a man.

I retraced my steps, taking him along with me to the Beit Hakeneset. There, I pointed out the man who had asked for my blessing to receive money with which to honor the Shabbat. In his great faith, he was now sitting in the Beit Hakeneset, immersed in the recital of Tehillim.

The man with the envelope was happy to find a Jew who "fit the bill," and the poor man was ecstatic that he now had the means to purchase Shabbat necessities. When I saw how joyous this simple man was, I couldn't hold myself back from asking, "Why

did you reject my offer, yet accept this man's envelope with such apparent joy? Isn't this, too, a form of tzedakah?"

The man had a ready answer. "The money in the envelope came from a stranger. It came to me through Heavenly intervention. The donor had no idea that I needed the money; he doesn't even know who I am! He was obviously Hashem's agent to give me what I needed when I needed it. You, however, wished to give me of your own money. All I had asked of the Rav was to bless me that Hashem should send me my needs."

This is undoubtedly a display of true belief in the Creator.

Only in merit of his faith that Hashem would never abandon him, did this man merit having his needs filled in an honorable manner. He felt he had received a divine gift, sent directly to him from on High.

## The Haftarah



### "And Yiftach of Gilad" (Shoftim 11)

Its connection to the parashah: The haftarah describes the war of Bnei Yisrael with Bnei Amon. It also talks about the land that Bnei Yisrael captured from Sichon, who, in turn, conquered it from Amon. Amon is described in the parashah as the nation whom Bnei Yisrael did not attack. Rather, they fought with Sichon and captured the land that Sichon had taken from Amon.



## Guard Your Tongue

The Power of Speech

### Silence is Golden

"All my life, I have lived among Sages, and I have not found anything better for the body than peace" (Avot 1:16)

This sage grew up among Torah scholars and absorbed their good qualities. Among all of their fine characteristics, he found the quality of silence to be best. Although these were great Torah sages who certainly never spoke idle words, chas v'shalom, nevertheless, this sage found, that aside from words of Torah, the best thing for a person is to remain silent.

## Reasons for Jewish Customs



Man is obligated to eat three meals on Shabbat.

The reason for this is the following: Knowing that one is going to be eating a full meal in just a few hours, he will not spend the entire day filling his stomach. In this manner, his seudot Shabbat will be truly l'shem Shamayim, for the sake of the mitzvah of satisfying his soul. This will allow his heart to be free for Torah study.



## Words of Wisdom

### Midrashim of Chazal on Parshat Hashavua

#### **From the Mouth of Hashem**

*“This is the statute of the Torah which Hashem commanded, saying” (Bamidbar 18:2)*

Rav Acha says in the name of Rabbi Yosi in the name of Rabbi Chanina: When Moshe ascended to heaven, he heard Hashem’s Voice studying the subject of Parashat Parah. Hashem was quoting the halachah in the name of Rabbi Eliezer, “A young calf of one year and a cow of two years.”

Moshe was puzzled. “Ribbono Shel Olam,” he cried out, “The heavens above and the earth below are under Your jurisdiction. And You quote a halachah in the name of a human of flesh and blood?!”

“Moshe,” Hashem replied, “A tzaddik is destined to come into My world. He will begin his studies with Parashat Parah, the discussion of Rabbi Eliezer regarding the age of the calf and cow.”

Moshe was so impressed that he asked, “Would that he be a descendant of mine!”

To which Hashem answered, “He will be a descendant of yours, as it says, ‘And the name of the one was Eliezer’ (Shemot 19:4).” (Pesikta D’Rav Kahana)

#### **No Magic at All**

*“The cow shall then be burned in his presence; its hide, its flesh, its blood, with its dung he shall burn it” (Bamidbar 19:5)*

An idol-worshipper asked Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai, “So many of the things you do look like witchcraft! You take a cow, burn it, and grind it. Then its ashes are taken and sprinkled on a person who has become impure through contact with a dead body. Two or three drops of these ashes mixed with water are sprinkled on someone and suddenly, he becomes pure!”

To which Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai replied, “Were you never beset by a spirit in your life?”

“Never.”

“Did you ever see a man who was?”

“Yes.”

“And what was done for him?”

“They prepared a plant, burned it up, and placed it underneath him. Then they poured water over it and the spirit departed.”

“Let your ears hear what your mouth speaks! So, too, is this impure spirit expelled through the waters of niddah, until it is completely gone.”

After this interchange, Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai’s disciple asked him, “Rabbeinu, you managed to give this man a fitting answer. But how do you explain the matter to us?”

“You must know that it is neither the dead that defiles, nor the water that purifies. Rather, Hakadosh Baruch Hu has stated, “I have decreed it shall be this way. You may not transgress My word, as it says, ‘This is the statute of the Torah’” (Midrash Rabbah).

## Treasures

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



#### **Hitting the Rock**

“Moses raised his hand and struck the rock with his staff twice, when an abundance of water gushed forth, and the congregation and their livestock drank” (Bamidbar 20:11)

The parashah describes the sin of Moshe Rabbeinu. At Mei Merivah, he hit the rock instead of speaking to it. For this reason, he was denied entry into Eretz Yisrael. Let us try to understand why Moshe disobeyed Hashem. The Ramban (ibid. 20:8) writes in the name of the Rambam that Moshe Rabbeinu was punished for his words, “Now listen, you rebels,” speaking derogatorily to Am Yisrael. Instead of judging them favorably when they were so desperate for a drop of water, he castigated them.

I would like to add according to this, that hitting the rock was a direct result of Moshe’s anger toward Am Yisrael. It was in the category of, “One sin begets another” (Avot). His anger blinded him and he misjudged the situation, until he came to the point of hitting the rock instead of talking to it.

Since Hashem had previously told Moshe to hit the rock and only later, to speak to it, Moshe deduced that there was no major difference between speaking harshly and striking. Therefore, he felt that he was fulfilling the command of דבור, which is a harsh form of speech, by striking the stone. Moreover, the nation was parched with thirst. Perhaps Moshe felt that there was no time to waste considering whether to speak or strike.

But Hashem had commanded Moshe to speak to the rock. Moshe was expected to follow Hashem’s word to the letter and not make his own calculations. Hashem’s intention in having Moshe talk to the rock was to increase His glory in the world. Merely striking the stone in order to extract water could have had the opposite effect. People could have inferred that this was a “magic staff” of sorts. Didn’t this staff play an instrumental role in bringing the plagues on the Egyptians? Wasn’t this the staff that split the sea? However, speaking to the stone would arouse people’s attention. After forty years in the Wilderness, nearly everyone who had seen the fantastic miracles in Egypt and in the Wilderness had passed on. The new generation was liable to think that the staff with the holy Names etched into it was responsible for all the miracles that had transpired. For this reason, Hashem wanted Moshe to speak to the stone and not hit it.

Moshe was our loyal shepherd. Let us judge his intentions favorably. The Torah promises us, “If you follow My statutes and observe My commandments and perform them, I will give your rains in their time” (Vayikra 26:3-4). A land devoid of rain is not a place where people can live. If, chalilah, Bnei Yisrael were to abandon the Torah, there would be no dew and the land would not yield its produce. Bnei Yisrael would effectively be exiled from their land, for it would not be suitable for living. There are so many mitzvot that depend on water, such as the libation in the Beit Hamikdash and the laws of the land such as terumot, ma’asrot, and the various other forms of ma’aser.

Moshe struck the rock in order to make an impression in the water for generations to come. Even if Bnei Yisrael were not worthy of receiving rains, the heavens should send them anyway. He wanted this quality to be impressed into the water even after Bnei Yisrael entered the Land. By drinking of the water that was struck with this thought before they entered Eretz Yisrael, Bnei Yisrael would be impressed with its message for many years to come.

Moshe knew that he might pay for this act by being denied entry into the Land. Nevertheless, he did it, out of love for his people. After Moshe prayed extensively to be allowed to enter Eretz Yisrael, Hashem told him, “It is enough for you.” Hashem was saying that He had understood Moshe’s reasoning in striking the stone. He should desist from further prayer, since he had brought this consequence upon himself. In his merit, the Land would be saturated with rains of blessing.

# Wellsprings

## Chapters in Child-Raising



Parents who are accustomed to giving their children expensive gifts find themselves disappointed in the results. Why is this? A large gift lacks the magic of a smaller, more personal one. It's a case of quality vs. quantity. An expensive present expresses the giver's wish to enrich his fellow man. He tries, by this means, to fill a material void in his friend. Such a gift does not have a personal touch. As long as the giver has some specific motive in giving his gift, it can just as well come from an anonymous stranger.

On the other hand, a small gift is a token of true friendship. It is this seemingly simple present that represents true love. Only a real friend gives such a gift.

A person expects some type of payback for effort he

has made. His knowledge that his sweat and tears are bearing fruit is what motivates him to continue. Without this, he would have no desire to work. An assignment that demands greater exertion must offer commensurate recompense.

Man's soul will not be satisfied with money alone; he must feel emotional satisfaction with his work in order to do a good job.

Parents, too, receive appropriate compensation for the tremendous investments they make on behalf of their children. The inestimable reward justifies the unending self-sacrifices they make.

Is it permissible for parents to consider their gains when giving to their children? Parenting counselor, Rabbi David Levi, shlita, says: Yes. Parents are expected to constantly stretch themselves, in all areas, on behalf of their children. Toward this goal, it is permissible, and even advisable, for them to step back, from time to time, and contemplate the wonderful work they are doing. They are encouraged to imagine the blossoming fruit that their efforts will yield.

What is the payoff that parents get for giving so much of themselves for their children?

First of all, they will have a disciplined child with a bright future in Torah and mitzvot.

These children will produce offspring similar to their wonderful parents. What can compare to this? Can a person ask for anything more? A successful son who goes on to build a solid home, is the direct result of his parents' investment in his chinuch.

Aside from the deep satisfaction of raising a Torah family, there is a more personal profit in this venture: As parents exert themselves in educating their children, they are building their own character. As is known, everyone has a need for social acceptance. All humans want to feel valuable to others. Validation is a strong human need. People spend a lot of time building up their image. Someone who feels a void in this area is liable to spend all his time pursuing validation from his environment.

Conversely, this tendency is responsible for a large portion of developing one's motivation. Approval from one's society serves as incentive to use his abilities to their maximum. Without the element of approbation from one's peers, a person's innate talents would remain untapped. He himself would be unaware of the tremendous power lying dormant within him. The need to "prove" oneself propels him to aim for the heights.



## Men of Faith

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

Moreinu v'Rabbeinu's brother, Rabbi Avraham, experienced an obvious miracle at the grave of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Hagadol:

He and some of his friends were involved in a fatal car accident. His friends were killed, and through Hashem's mercy only he remained alive. His condition was critical.

Rabbi Avraham promised that if he would survive the accident, he would go to Morocco to pray at the grave of Rabbi Chaim Pinto, as well as by the graves of other tzaddikim there.

A few years later, when he had recuperated sufficiently, with *siyata di'Shemaya*, and wished to keep his promise, he and his family embarked on the journey to Morocco. His mother, *tichyeh*, joined the other four members traveling by car, making it altogether a group of five passengers.

Before Rabbi Avraham crossed the border into Morocco, his friends warned him, "You will not be permitted to enter Morocco because you have only an Israeli passport, and relations between the two countries are strained. Even a visa would not be sufficient in the present situation." However, Avraham insisted on proceeding.

"I want to go to Morocco as I promised and pray by the graves of my ancestors, come what may."

The family took the risk and arrived at the Moroccan border. The border police stopped them and asked them for their passports. All the passengers handed over their passports, except for Avraham, who did not have a Moroccan passport. The police peered into the car and said, "We have four passports, and see four passengers. All is in order; you may enter." This was a fulfillment of the verse "They have eyes, but cannot see," since there were five passengers in the car, but miraculously,

one was not seen...

Everyone entered Morocco, even Avraham, who did not have a passport. This was an obvious miracle, in the merit of the tzaddik, and in the merit of Rabbi Avraham's resolve to pray at the graves of his holy ancestors. Once in Morocco, Avraham was able to arrange a new passport, since he was a native Moroccan.

After the accident, Rabbi Avraham was left limping, and he had to use a cane. Every day he would go to the grave of Rabbi Chaim and cry out, begging the great tzaddik to help reverse the situation, until even the local Arabs became accustomed to his howling at the cemetery.

One day, Rabbi Avraham pleaded at the grave desperately, "Rabbi Chaim! I am taking my cane and throwing it away for good, and I want you to perform a miracle for me."

The guard of the cemetery heard Rabbi Avraham's brave petition and warned, "Don't do it! You need the cane in order to walk; how can you discard it?"

However, Rabbi Avraham did not heed the advice of the guard. His faith in the tzaddik was firm, "I am surprised at you. You have been working here for many years; certainly you have heard stories of extraordinary miracles occurring in the merit of the tzaddik. Today you will have another story to tell all those visiting the grave."

This is exactly what happened. After Rabbi Avraham concluded his prayers, he threw the cane far away and began to walk on his legs, unaided. Thus, he continues to walk normally until today.