

The Path to Follow



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

MASKIL LÉDAVID

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

Traveling the Road of Life

“These are the journeys of the Children of Israel who went forth from the land of Egypt according to their legions, under the hand of Moshe and Aharon”
(Bamidbar 33:1)

“And the Egyptians were burying those among them whom Hashem had struck, every firstborn; and on their gods Hashem had inflicted punishments” (ibid. vs. 4)

The Torah details the travels of Bnei Yisrael from the day they left Egypt until the day they entered Eretz Yisrael. Why does the Torah go to such lengths in this description, itemizing each and every journey of Am Yisrael in the Wilderness? What can we glean from this? Furthermore, the Torah makes note of the fact that when Am Yisrael left Egypt, the Egyptians were busy burying their dead, who had perished in the plague of the firstborn. Why is this important for us to know?

A person must recognize his purpose in this world, the reason why he came here. What a shame that there are those who waste their lives on frivolities and foolishness. One hour of repentance and good deeds in this world is preferable to the entire life of Olam Haba (Avot 4:17). When one serves Hashem in this world, he merits a wonderful reward in the World to Come.

This is the reason why the Torah details Bnei Yisrael's journeys in the Wilderness. The primary purpose for their release from Egypt was in order to arrive at their final destination, Eretz Yisrael. But their settlement in the Holy Land was subject to their involvement in Torah and the mitzvot which are dependent on the Land. Hashem put His children through the travails of their travels in the Wilderness so that they would truly appreciate the sweetness of the Land flowing with milk and honey.

When they would reach their final destination, after all the ordeals on the way, they would have a clear understanding of the

suffering which galut entails. Exile from the Land is far more painful than the journeys by Hashem's word in the Wilderness. With all their tribulations, the nation was surrounded by the Clouds of Glory, they were fed by the manna from Heaven, and their thirst was quenched by the Well of Miriam which accompanied them throughout.

Although Hashem protected Am Yisrael under the wing of His Shechinah in the Wilderness, they suffered the difficulties of being on the road. At times, just as they had completed setting camp and settling down, the Cloud would rise, indicating that they must take apart their tents and pack up once again, continuing to travel. But there is no comparing their inconvenience then to the plight in which they would find themselves after they disobeyed the Voice of Hashem and were exiled at the time of the churban.

A person should spend all his life in the pursuit of Torah, called a “journey.” The Ohr Hachaim explains the words (Shemot 19:2) “They traveled from Refidim” to mean that Bnei Yisrael traveled away from a weakening in Torah and accepted upon themselves involvement in Torah. One should constantly be in a state of traveling upon the roads of Torah, reaching greater and greater heights. Then, even when he rests, it is in order to gain renewed strength to continue in his pursuit of Torah and mitzvot.

A method of reaching greater levels in Torah is by constantly remembering one's day of death. This will help him bury his passions, which are merely momentary and of no lasting value. This is alluded to in the station Kivrot Hata'avah (lit. Burying Passion).

The life of a Jew is one long journey. Each act is defined as a good turn or, chalilah, the opposite. If one goes on the positive path, increasing his Torah study and mitzvah observance, he is considered walking in good, elevated ways. But if he chooses materialism and frivolities, he becomes enmeshed in the thorny brambles on the roadside.

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Hillulah of Tzaddikim

2 - Rabbi Aharon Teomim

3 - Rabbi Shimshon MiAstropoli

4 - Rabbi Shimon Biderman

5 - Rabbi Yitzchak Luria Ashkenazi
- Ari Hakadosh

6 - Rabbi Moshe Ezra Mizrachi

7 - Rabbi Shalom Noach MiSlonim

8 - Hamekubal Rabbi Shimon Agasi



Walking in their Ways

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

An Exact Exchange

I noticed a certain Rabbi out of the corner of my eye, entering and exiting our office a number of times, shame and humiliation written on his face. Finally, seeing no other choice, he gathered the courage to approach me. He asked that I raise funds for his yeshiva, which had been devastated by fire and was in desperate need of extensive funds in order to be rehabilitated. I was filled with pain at his story, but sadly told him that I could not help him. I, too, had yeshivot to uphold and could not offer him financial aid at the time.

But the man would not give up. He begged me, over and over, to help his yeshiva. All of Klal Yisrael are mutually responsible, he averred. Therefore, it was my obligation to help his yeshiva just as much as

my own. Seeing his determination to receive some sort of donation, I finally capitulated. I offered him a certain amount of money, but stipulated that it would be paid in twelve installments. At the end of each month, his yeshiva would receive a part of the money. The rabbi was pleased with my offer. He thanked me profusely and went on his way.

Approximately two hours later, I went home. At a very late hour, the phone rang in my house. It was a Jew from Canada, who did not realize the difference in the time: in his country, it was still daytime, so he did not hesitate to phone me. I was acquainted with this man, but had never received a phone call directly from him. But this evening (or day) he called to relate an amazing story.

That morning, he checked his stocks. He saw that they had fallen

and he was about to lose a lot of money. He and his friends therefore resolved that if his stocks become stable again, they would donate one percent of their value to the Pinto family.

Contrary to the natural order, his stocks took a turn for the better. They rose higher and higher until they were completely stable. He hurried to fulfill his promise and phoned to tell me about the sizeable sum on its way to me. When I asked what sum of money we were dealing with, he quoted the exact amount that I had pledged toward the rabbi's yeshiva.

I clearly saw Hashem's hand at work. Hashem saw how much I wanted to help the man and therefore sent me the exact amount needed so that I could transfer the funds immediately.

The Haftarah



The haftarah of the week: **"Hear the words of Hashem"** (Yermiyahu)

The connection to the parashah: This haftarah is the second of three haftarot that Chazal instituted to read during the three Shabbatot preceding Tisha B'Av. They recount the prophecy of Yermiyahu concerning the destruction of Yerushalayim.

Reasons for Jewish Customs



The month of Av is referred to by Chazal as Menachem Av.

There are two reasons for this: It is as if Hashem is comforting Himself, as a father (Av) comforts himself.

And another reason is because the aleph-bet (Av in Hebrew is spelled with the letters aleph and bet) receives comfort, since all the kinnot begin with the letters of the aleph-bet. As we know, the entire creation was created with the letters of the aleph-bet. Therefore, when the geulah will come, the aleph-bet will be comforted.



Guard Your Tongue

The Power of Speech

Turnabout

One who wishes to succeed in guarding his tongue should do the opposite of what gossipers do. They usually gravitate towards crowds so that they might glean a piece of information which they could thereafter use to degrade others. They also pursue new developments in other people's interpersonal relationships so that they could have more to gossip about throughout the day. A G-d fearing Jew should do the opposite.



Words of Wisdom

Midrashim of Chazal on Parshat Hashavua

Miracles and Life

These are the journeys of the Children of Israel, who went forth from the land of Egypt according to their legions, under the hand of Moshe and (Aharon" (Bamidbar 33:1

Your people like (נחית) These are the journeys, as the pasuk states, "You led".sheep by the hand of Moshe and Aaron

?(נחית) "What is meant by "led

:It is an acronym

ניסים - Miracles You performed for them - חיים - Life you granted them, ימין

Honor and greatness (lit. raised - תלוי - Your right hand redeemed them -

.heads) you gave them

miracles you - ניסין: Rabbi Elazar says it is signifying the miracles

the Red Sea you - ים סוף, Life you granted them - חיים, performed for them

.Torah you gave them through Moshe and Aharon - תורה - split for them

your mighty hosts you sent - חילך, wonders you did for them - נפלאות

Also: Piles and piles of water - תלים, The Red Sea you split for them - ים סוף, them

(you erected as walls. (Pitron Torah

Dying Through a Kiss

"Aharon was one hundred and twenty-three years old at his death on Hor Hahor" (Bamidbar 33:39)

See the glory and praise of Aharon the tzaddik. Everyone cried after him, but when Miriam died, no one eulogized and no one went to bury her. Only Moshe led at the head and Aharon was at the foot, and so they went to bury her.

And even upon the death of Moshe, the entire congregation of Israel did not weep as they wept for Aharon, because Moshe would admonish the people about anything and everything, as it says "The Children of Israel bewailed Moshe," but by Aharon it says "All the House of Israel." This is because Aharon never condemned anyone; he never exposed faults to any man or woman.

When Moshe saw the glory and appreciation of Aharon, since his coffin was accorded the greatest honor, and Hashem and the Administering Angels surrounded it and eulogized him honorably, he immediately sat down and cried, "I am left alone. When Miriam died, no one came to bury her. Just I went with Aharon and his sons, and we stood around her coffin and cried after her and eulogized her and buried her. When Aharon died, I took care of him with his sons, and we stood around his coffin. But what will be with me? Who will stand by me when I die? I have no father, no son, and no brother or sister. Who will cry after me?

Then, Hashem told him:

Do not fear. I will stand near you by Myself and bury you in great honor, as it says, "And He buried him in Gei."

Just as the cave of Aharon is hidden and not known to anyone, so too is your cave hidden, as it says "And no one knows his burial place (Devarim 34, 6)." Just as the Angel of Death wielded no control over Aharon, and he died through a kiss, so too by you. The Angel of Death will wield no control, and you will die through a kiss, as it says, "At the mouth (lit. mouth) of Hashem (Bamidbar 33,38)."

Immediately Moshe was comforted.

Fortunate are the tzaddikim that Hashem Himself gathers them to Him, as it says, "And the glory of Hashem will gather you in" (Yeshayahu 58:8). Furthermore, the Administering Angels go out towards him and rejoice with him and greet him graciously and tell him, "Come in peace," as it says "He will come in peace; they will rest on their resting places - he who walks in his integrity." (Yalkut Shimoni)

Treasures

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



Praiseworthy Is Peace

"Then Aharon the Kohen went up to Hor Hahor at the word of Hashem and died there, in the fortieth year after the Children of Israel went forth from the land of Egypt, in the fifth month on the first of the month. Aharon was one hundred and twenty-three years old at his death on Hor Hahor. The Canaanite king of Arad heard - he was dwelling in the south, in the land of Canaan - of the approach of the Children of Israel" (Bamidbar 33:38-40)

Some of the journeys of Bnei Yisrael in the Wilderness are recorded in detail, whereas others are just mentioned, without recording what transpired there.

As Bnei Yisrael traveled from Kadesh to Hor Hahor, Aharon passed away. The Torah then tells us that the Canaanite king of Arad "heard" of the approach of Bnei Yisrael. Rashi explains that they were emboldened to attack Bnei Yisrael since the Clouds of Glory had departed with Aharon's death.

This entire incident is clouded in ambiguity. If the Canaanites were heretofore afraid to attack Bnei Yisrael, on account of the special protection Bnei Yisrael received via the Clouds of Glory, how did they have the audacity to strike when these clouds were taken? Did they really believe that Hashem's Divine protection depended only on whether or not there were physical clouds protecting the nation? The physical clouds were merely a symbol of His shield. It is self-understood that He supervises Bnei Yisrael constantly, cloud or no cloud. Why, then, did the Canaanites see fit to fight when the clouds were removed?

Bnei Yisrael exist in the merit of their unity. The entire world is founded on the principle of peace, without which it would crumble into oblivion. Aharon exemplified the trait of peace, as the Mishnah (Avot 1:12) encourages us to emulate him by "loving peace and pursuing peace, loving people and bringing them closer to the Torah."

Whenever there was dissention among friends or spouses, Aharon would step in to restore the peace. He increased love among Bnei Yisrael. The incident of Korach highlights Aharon's good nature. Although Korach slandered Aharon, Aharon remained silent and did not respond. Due to Aharon's tremendous love for peace, when he passed away, the entire House of Israel, men, women, and children, mourned his death.

The Canaanite king of Arad heard of the death of Aharon, the great peacemaker. His nation therefore felt they could overpower Bnei Yisrael and subdue them. They believed that the removal of the Clouds of Glory indicated that the protection offered by Aharon, with his pursuit of peace, had been removed from Bnei Yisrael, as well. Thus, they felt sure that they would triumph.

Wellsprings

Chapters in Child-Raising



Sometimes it happens that a child who is learning with much enthusiasm and devotion to Torah, falls from the level he was on and stops learning with his usual vigor and diligence. His dedication to Torah seems to vanish.

His parents are surprised and do not know what happened suddenly to their diligent son, who had been highly praised by his teachers. Nothing seems to help, and the child continues to go downhill, worsening steadily, until sometimes he turns into a dropout, an absolute boor, may Hashem protect us from this.

An awesome story is told in the book *Aleinu Leshabayach*, which took place by Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky, shlita. Among those waiting on line in the gaon's house was a senior engineer, a prominent professor in his field, who was about 85 or 90 years old, a religious G-d fearing Jew, and all his children were Torah observant, occupying the Batei Midrashot.

The Professor told Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky with a crestfallen face that he could not comprehend a daf gemara, even after trying hard for decades, he could not understand a thing. How was it that he succeeded in becoming a professor of mathematics and understanding all the complicated formulas in this field, but he failed to comprehend a daf of gemara!

He went on to say that it bothered him greatly that while in shiurim of halachah he could manage minimally and he could comprehend

the halachah presented in the Mishnah Berurah, but when it came to gemara, his brain got blocked, and he was at a total loss.

Suddenly he said to Rabbi Chaim, that while talking to him, he had a brainstorm and may have discovered the reason for his inability to delve into a daf gemara.

With teary eyes he began to describe his memory of his childhood, but suddenly the professor interrupted his narrative and began to recount a story that occurred with the gaon Rabbi Akiva Eiger, zt"l, when a tearful mother came to him for advice about her seven year-old son who had suddenly lost his desire to learn Torah.

The gaon Rabbi Akiva Eiger thought a bit and told her that probably her son had eaten something that was not kosher and therefore his brain had become blocked. The mother was surprised: In our house we eat strictly kosher. We do not allow anything into our house that is even slightly questionable. The gaon did not back down. With his extraordinary kedushah, he sensed that the reason for the child's mental block was because he ate non-kosher food.

The woman went home and began researching the matter, checking the source of every food that entered her home.

What turned out? In that city, the chief Rabbi disqualified the local butcher from slaughtering. However, the butcher brazenly continued to slaughter despite the Rabbi's decree.

At that time, one of the families in the city made a wedding for their son and it seems like they wanted to take advantage of the discounted price and ordered the meat from the disqualified butcher. The child attended

the wedding and ate from the meat that lacked a kosher certification.

The mother returned to Rabbi Akiva Eiger and told him what had transpired. "This is the reason for the child's mental block," the gaon ruled. In response to the mother's query how she could correct the flaw of her son, Rabbi Akiva Eiger instructed her to send the child to Eretz Yisrael to learn Torah there through hardship. Indeed, the child immigrated to Eretz Yisrael and grew into one of the greatest Torah scholars of Yerushalayim.

"Also in my case the mental block began at a young age, when I was learning in the "cheder" of the town. Therefore," the professor continued shakily, "I thought that perhaps the same thing had happened to me."

He thought and thought until he remembered that when he was a child of about nine years-old, he saw by his non-Jewish friend a portion of meat, which was non-kosher, and suddenly he had an uncontrollable desire to eat, which led him to partake of that meat, despite the fact that he knew that it was a severe transgression.

"From the moment that I tasted the traif meat, my brain became blocked from Torah and I could not comprehend the gemara taught in cheder," the old man, who was nearly 90 years-old said tearfully. He asked Rabbi Chaim what he could do to correct his transgression.

The gaon suggested that he fast one day in order to cleanse him from the traif meat. When the professor claimed that it was very difficult for him to do so and even on Yom Kippur he could barely fast due to his age and health conditions, Rabbi Chaim ruled that nevertheless he should fast.

Men of Faith

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

Handing over the Pen

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."