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Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

Pachad David

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Under the auspices of **Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita**
Son of the tzaddik and miracle-worker **Rabbi Moshe Ahron Pinto, zt"l**, and grandson of the holy tzaddik and miracle-worker **Rabbi Chaim Pinto, zy"ta**



Maskil L'David

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

The Continuation and Growth of Torah and Mitzvot

"Make for yourself an Ark of gopher wood"

(Bereishit 6:14)

Hashem asks Noach to engage in building the Ark so that he and his family should be saved from the Mabul (Flood). We may wonder, is it not possible to find an alternate way? Does not Hashem have at His disposal other easier ways to save them other than building the Ark? After all, if regarding drops of rain that fall to the ground Chazal determined that Hashem arranges it so that not one drop touches its fellow, then for sure it would have been possible that Noach and his family could stay home safe and sound despite the waters of the Mabul. Or, alternately, Hashem could have commanded Noach and his family to go to Eretz Yisrael where the Mabul did not fall. Thus, why did Noach have to trouble himself to build the Ark?

In addition, in Bereishit it states (Bereishit 7:7) "Noach, with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives with him, went into the Ark because of the waters of the Flood." Rashi comments, "Noah, too, was of those who had little faith, believing and not believing that the Flood would come, and he did not enter the ark until the waters forced him to do so."

Really, how can we say such condemning things about Noach? After all, if Hashem testifies about him that he was "righteous and perfect" then how could we say that he had little faith? Could we refer to a person who has little faith in Hashem as "perfect"?!

It can be explained in the following way: A person must progress in his Avodat Hashem, and strengthen himself in Torah and mitzvot and Yirat Shamayim. However, this is not enough, since one's duty is to constantly ensure the continuation of his spiritual ascent and perfection and not be content with his achievements. He may not stop halfway, and not slacken in the midst of his spiritual ascent. Otherwise, he will inevitably fall, and ultimately all that he had achieved previously will be lost, and he may never succeed in recovering what was lost.

What can this be compared to? It can be compared to a sparrow that in the midst of its flight midair seeks to rest a bit from spreading its wings. Inevitably the sparrow will fall to the ground. So too it is in spiritual matters. A person must continue to go from strength to strength and grow

in holiness and purity constantly, in fulfillment of "one mitzvah leads to another mitzvah." The moment he finishes doing one mitzvah, he should seek another one. He should always actively seek more holiness and purity. If he will slacken and seek to relax, he will lose everything.

Similarly, in the generation of Noach, all the people were wicked and corrupt. They had strayed from the right path. Hashem had created His world on the foundation of Torah and mitzvot, but the people came and destroyed everything. Torah and mitzvot could not thrive in such an environment. Noach was the only one who continued to recognize Hashem and conducted himself with honesty, leading a life according to Torah and mitzvot in righteousness and perfection. Since his entire generation was entirely wicked, the general atmosphere on the street was full of spiritual decadence and heresy. There was a great danger that even Noach the righteous tzaddik would be dragged along with the people and be influenced by their evil ways, since often just by looking at the face of an evil person, one can deteriorate completely.

Therefore, Hashem commanded Noach to engage in building the Ark, so that he should not have spare time to connect with his contemporaries and befriend them. If Noach would have sat idle in his home, then he would have become corrupted, as Chazal say (Ketubot 59b), "Idleness leads to sin." Thus Noach was commanded to engage in building an Ark so that he would not have free time to deal with his evil contemporaries, and not even look at them, so as not to chaila become affected negatively by them, because then there would be no one left to maintain the continuity of the Torah.

When the work of building the Ark was completed, and Noach and his family were about to enter it, Chazal testify that Noach had little faith. Although initially Noach was a righteous man and perfect, and his faith in Hashem was firm and unwavering, it was only because he was engaged in building the Ark and did not have free time to befriend his contemporary fellows or even look at them. However, as soon as he completed his job, and he sat idle without employment, in those few free moments the Yetzer Hara found ample time to harm him spiritually, and right away he was affected by his corrupt environment, causing him to have little faith. This was all because he remained lax for just a moment from Avodat Hashem.

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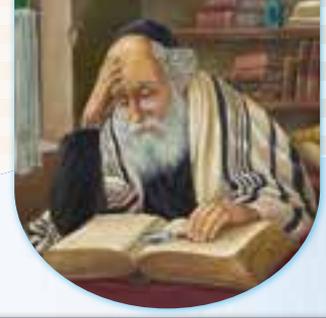
Hillulah of Tzaddikim

- 4 - Rabbi Eliyahu Sarim
- 5 - Rabbi Moshe Bardugo
- 6 - Rabbi Yehudah Hachassid
- 7 - Rabbi Meir Shapiro of Lublin
- 8 - Rabbi Nachum of Horodna
- 9 - Rabbeinu Asher ben Yechiel
- 10 - Rabbi Refael Aharon ben Shimon
Author of "Nehar Mitzrayim"



Walking in their Ways

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



Words of Our Sages

Gems on the Parashah From the Torah Sages

Truly finding favor results from sincere humility

“Noach was a righteous man, perfect in his generations” (Bereishit 6:9)

The best and most vital blessing a person can get is to merit finding favor in the eyes of Hashem and man. It is told in the sefer “Peninei Rabbeinu Yechezkel” about a student who came to say goodbye to his Rabbi, the gaon Rabbi Yechezkel Abramsky, zt”l, and asked him for a blessing on the occasion of his departure from Eretz Yisrael to go spread Torah abroad. Rabbi Yechezkel said: The best blessing is “Find favor and good understanding in the Eyes of Hashem!” Ultimately it will also be “in the eyes of man!” Blessed is the man who finds grace and good understanding in the Eyes of Hashem! This blessing includes all the blessings in the world. Therefore, you should try to find favor in Hashem’s Eyes!...”

There is a story about a person whose business did not succeed. His debts increased and his creditors harassed him. His friend advised him: Hide all your merchandise in your shop and shout that thieves emptied your shelves. Then everyone will feel sorry for you and collect money to put you back on your feet.

The man refused to take his friend’s advice and said, “I am not a liar, nor a crook!”

But one day, this misfortune struck him as well. When he arrived at his shop in the morning, he saw that thieves had emptied all his shelves completely. Then he stood in the street and wailed loudly. People approached him and tried to console and encourage him. His friend saw him and winked knowingly: You play the role well! You will soon experience salvation!”

The poor man called after him: You are mistaken! I really have nothing left!

The Rabbi concluded his parable: This is the destiny of a tzaddik who carries on in front of an audience about his low state and lacking Avodat Hashem. The listeners think that he is acting humbly, but the tzaddik knows that it is the absolute truth.

I was stunned at this revelation. I told Mr. Ben-Gigi that this man passed away many years ago. How could he possibly cause him harm from his place on High?

But Mr. Ben-Gigi did not believe me. “Honored Rav, I don’t have the faintest idea as to what you are talking about. The man whose name is written here is the one behind all of my problems.” Suddenly, his face broke into a smile. “Just a moment,” he said. “Could it be that I am mixing up two people who have similar names?”

“Very likely” I replied. “In any event, I have no idea about your adversary. All I did was write down this man’s name, with no specific intentions. It seems that on High they arranged things this way so that I should be able to help you out of your difficulty.”

Mr. Ben-Gigi nodded in assent. Seeing an opportune moment, I added, “If Hashem orchestrated things in this way, it must be that I am His messenger to help you. Maybe now you can be the messenger to help me. I am in dire need of a large amount of money to pay the monthly stipends of the avrechim in my kollel, as well as for renovations which we must make at the yeshiva. Would you be able to assist me in this matter?”

Mr. Ben-Gigi realized that Hashem’s hand was behind all this. He immediately made a sizeable donation to the yeshiva. In the merit of donating charity, all of his problems were solved.

Since he paid up the yeshiva’s debts, his businesses, on the verge of bankruptcy, were saved. Since that time, he constantly sees blessing in all his endeavors.

The Promissory Note

Mr. Ben-Gigi of Morocco is an acquaintance of Mr. Messika, a good friend of mine. Unlike his acquaintance, though, Mr. Ben-Gigi never had faith in the merit of the tzaddikim. He never sought their blessings. But then his life took a turn for the worse. Various problems plagued him from all sides, and he felt like he was sinking in quicksand. Who could assure him that he would ever extricate himself from his troubles?

His acquaintance, Mr. Messika, suggested that he come to me for a blessing to be spared his suffering, in the merit of my ancestors. But Mr. Ben-Gigi countered that he had no faith in the unbelievable miracle stories which are told about me.

Mr. Messika was taken aback by his attitude. “I am of Tunisian lineage, yet believe in the tzaddikim of Morocco, while you are a Moroccan Jew, who has certainly heard of the prestigious Pinto family, how can you not believe in their powers?!” With nothing to lose, and no alternative course of action, Mr. Ben-Gigi came to me for a blessing for success.

As he sat before me, his eyes alighted on a memo paper that sat on my desk. It had the name of someone who had helped me out in the past. When Mr. Ben-Gigi read the name, he became noticeably upset. In response to my question as to why he was disturbed, he asked a question of his own, “Who is this person whose name is written here?” he demanded.

“Why do you ask?”

“This man is the one who is making my life miserable.”

The Haftarah



The haftarah of the week:

“Sing out, O barren one who has not given birth”

(Yeshayahu 54)

The connection to the parashah: The subject of the Flood is mentioned in the prophecy of Yeshayahu, stating that Hashem promised that He will not bring a Flood to the world again: “For [like] the waters of Noach this shall be to Me.” This is also the main issue discussed in parashat Noach.



Guard Your Tongue

The Power of Speech

First Ask

One whose fellow comes to relate gossip to him should first ask him if his tale has any constructive purpose. If his fellow answers in the affirmative, he is allowed to listen to the tale and be cautious, but he is forbidden to believe it as absolute truth.



Chazak U'Baruch

Strengthening Fellowship and Meriting Blessing

To this invaluable feature, as we already introduced in the previous issue, regarding answering “Amen” and its favorable segulot, we will expound on the three implications of Amen listed by Chazal in the midrash (Devarim Rabbah 7:1) in the name of Rabbi Yehudah bar Simon:

Oath, Admission, and Faith.

It is brought in the sefer “Derech Moshe” that every Jew is obligated to recite berachot in a loud voice, so that the members of his family and others present should hear the blessing and make sure to answer Amen. This is because the word Amen gives testimony that the berachah is true. Thus, if he recites the blessing quietly, it is as if he is withholding testimony about its validity.

So too Rabbeinu Yaakov Ba'al Haturim testifies about his father the “Rosh” that he would hurry to finish the blessing of Kriyat Shema before the Chazzan, in order that he would be able to answer Amen after his berachot.

The “Derech Moshe” continues telling about a chassid who fasted so that the reason of the long exile should be revealed to him. In a dream it was revealed to him: How can the redemption come when the world is not careful with answering Amen after Birkat HaGeulah [the blessing “Hamachazir shechinato l’Zion – Who restores His Presence to Zion,” since the people immediately begin “modim D’Rabbanan,” and birkat “Ufros aleinu,” because the congregants quickly start saying “v’shamru”]. Therefore, every place that I travel to in order to bring merit to the public, I instruct the chazzan to wait a bit after finishing the berachot mentioned above and to bang on the Ark in order to remind the congregants to answer Amen. If from youth people will be trained this way, it will become second nature to them when they mature and they will not be remiss in it later on. If the chazzan does not do this, he can, chalila, cause the one who did not answer amen to die, or become impoverished, since a pauper is considered like a dead man. Therefore, my brothers and friends, answering Amen should not be light in your eyes. A person is not called a tzaddik unless he fulfilled each day 90 Amenim.

Unfortunately, even after birkat “Mechaye HaMaitim – Who resuscitates the dead,” people are not careful to answer Amen and immediately begin the Kedushah, and these are three very important Amenim upon which the redemption is dependent. Therefore, everyone should be very careful with this.

Hashem Desires the Berachah

Rabbeinu Bechaye, zt”l, writes something amazing in his sefer “Kad Hakemach.”

“One must be careful with prayers and blessings to recite Amen after them. We must be careful all the more so because Hashem commanded us about this and instructed us to bless Him. This is a positive commandment of the Torah, as it says (Devarim 8:10), “You will be satisfied, and bless Hashem, your G-d.” This is also apparent from the words of the gemara (Berachot 7a), since it states that Hashem asked Rabbi Yishmael the Kohen Gadol, “Yishmael, My son, bless Me!” Just as Hashem Yitbarach desires our blessings, it is the same regarding answering Amen, since it signifies fulfillment of the blessing.

He also points out that for this virtue of answering Amen, Am Yisrael are called tzaddikim, as it says (Yeshayahu 22:2): “Open the gates, so the righteous nation, keeper of the faith (מינניא – emunim), may enter.”

The gaon Rabbi Yechezkiel Levinstein, zt”l, said in the name of the Saba of Kelem:

It is worth it for a person to come to this world and suffer the pain of lyov during seventy years only to answer Amen once in his life!

Treasures

Based on the teachings of
Moreinu v’Rabbeinu Hagoon Hatzaddik,
Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, silita



“And the Ark came to rest on the seventeenth day of the seventh month upon the mountains of Ararat” (Bereishit 8:4)

What is the significance of this? It is obvious that every word in the Torah has a message or thought which we can learn from. What can we learn from the name of the mountains that the Ark came to rest on?

I suggest that the numerical value of Ararat (אררט) is 410, the same as “holy” (קדוש) indicating a connection between the two. Holiness is not just an esoteric or abstract concept. Rashi (Vayikra 19:2) explains the pasuk “You shall be holy, for I, the L-ord, your G-d am holy” to mean that Hashem commands us to be holy by abstaining from illicit relations. This implies that the Flood came as a result of the generation’s rampant immorality, which degraded the holiness of human relations and profaned the Name of Hashem. After they were wiped out by the Flood, the world returned to the pristine state represented by Ararat and its numerical value of holiness. Noach and his righteous family came to rest upon the mountain of holiness and chastity because they abstained from the debauchery of their contemporary society. And at the same time, the Name of Hashem was rectified by the purifying waters of the Flood.

Based on this idea, the Kli Yakar elaborates on the dimensions of the Ark. It says (Bereishit 6:15) “And this is the size you shall make it, the length of the Ark three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits.” Here too one can ask, what is the lesson that we can learn from its measurements? Why did the Torah see fit to include this detail in the story of the Flood?

The dimensions of the Ark contain an allusion to the sin of that generation. If we multiply its length (three hundred cubits) by its width (fifty cubits), we come out with fifteen thousand squared cubits, a number divisible by fifteen. If we factor in the height of the Ark (thirty cubits) and multiply its squared meters by thirty, we also arrive at an amount divisible by fifteen. Even if we divide this cubic area by three, corresponding to the height of each of the three levels in the Ark, we still reach a number that is a multiple of fifteen. This, explains the Kli Yakar, is a direct reference to the Name of Hashem י-ה, which has the numerical value of fifteen. Thus Hashem’s Name was unified by the physical dimensions of the Ark. And the Ark was also instrumental in bringing the world and all its flesh back to the level of holiness and purity that had existed before the Generation of the Flood.

The number fifteen recurs several times throughout our parashah. The height of the sea level which rose above the highest mountains was fifteen, as it says (Bereishit 7:20), “The waters prevailed upwards fifteen cubits and covered the tops of the mountains.” The days of the Flood also repeat this message, as it says (ibid. 7:24), “And the waters prevailed upon the Earth a hundred and fifty days.” The Kli Yakar uses these pesukim as examples of how the Flood was a punishment for the immorality which had affected Hashem’s Name.

We can add and point out how the Hebrew word for the Ark הַבַּיִת, also contains the letters ‘ו and ‘ה in alternating sequence. We see again how the Ark not only protected Noach and his family from the raging elements of destruction; it also remedied the estrangement of all flesh and the disunity of Hashem’s Name, when the “earth became corrupted before Hashem.”



זכור לטוב

From the teachings of Eliyahu Hanavi

“Though they will be fashioned through many days, to Him they are one.” This refers to Yom Kippur which was given to Israel, for there was great joy before the Holy One Blessed Be He when He gave with great love Yom Kippur to Israel.

To what is this analogous to?

To a king of flesh and blood whose servants and household were removing the rubbish [from inside the palace] and throwing it by the entrance of the king’s palace. When the king goes out and sees the rubbish he rejoices greatly [since it is removed from inside the palace]. Yom Kippur is similar to this; Hakadosh Baruch Hu gave it to us with great love and joy.

And not just that, but when He forgives the sins of Israel, He is not sad in His heart [He does not do so begrudgingly], but rejoices with great joy, as it is stated, “Thus said the Lord Hashem Elokim to the mountains and to the hills, to the streams and to the valleys, etc.” Come and rejoice greatly that I forgive the sins of Israel.

Therefore a person should remember – from the day that the Holy One Blessed Be He chose Avraham Avinu until this time – all the good and charity that He did with Israel all the time as it is stated (Yeshayahu 44) “Remember these things, Jacob and Israel, etc...” It is also stated “I will have wiped away your willful sins like a thick

mist and your transgressions like a cloud.” Just like mist is wiped away (evaporated) by the wind, so are the sins of Israel wiped away in this world, and they have no revival in the World to Come, as is stated “I will have wiped away your willful sins.” What is the meaning of “For I will have redeemed you?” I have redeemed you from the Book of Death and placed you in the Book of Life. Thus is it stated, “For I will have redeemed you.”

One time I was walking in a great city in the world and there was an officer there. He grabbed me and brought me into the king’s house. I saw made up beds and silver and gold vessels that were laying there. I said, “O G-d of vengeance, Hashem; O G-d of vengeance, appear!” etc. A Gentile wise man came to me and said, “Are you a scholar?” I told him I studied a bit. He said to me, “If you shall answer me what I shall ask you, you can go in peace.” I said to him, “Speak.”

[I said: Elokim is a true judge, Elokim is holy and a tzaddik and a chassid and true forever and forever, Who knows in advance what will be in the end and tells from the beginning what will be in the end before it occurs. He knows what happened and what will happen in the future, He sees for good and does not see for the bad, He is wealthy and content in His lot. With His sagacity and wisdom He created His world and prepared it; afterwards He created within it Man and brought him to the world and He did not create him for other than the purpose of [man] serving him wholeheartedly and to have satisfaction from him and from his descendants after him till the end of all generations.

But as man multiplied, this one worships the sun, this one worships the moon, this one worships wood and stone, and every day

they are deserving great punishment from Hashem. Therefore, when He looks again on all his handiwork that He created in his world, He says: These and these have life, these and these have souls, these and these have food and drink, they are considered to be like animals and other creatures that the Holy One Blessed Be He created in His world. Immediately He is appeased and does not destroy them. Thus we learn that animals and other creatures were not created in the world other than to be a remedy for man on earth.]

He said to me [the Gentile said]: You say fire is not a G-d. Why then does it say in the Torah “A permanent fire shall remain aflame” (Vayikra 6:6)? I said to him: My son, when our forefathers stood by Mount Sinai to receive the Torah, they did not see any image of man or any image of any creation, or any image of any soul that the Holy One Blessed Be He created in His world, as it is stated (Devarim 4:15) “But you shall greatly beware for your souls, for you did not see any likeness.” But He is one G-d, He is the G-d of the heavenly powers, He is the Lord of the lords, whose kingdom exists in heaven and earth and the exalted upper heavens, and you say fire is a G-d? It [fire] is not other but merely a rod given for the purpose of people on earth.

To what is this analogous? To a king who hung up a whip in his house and said to his servants and sons and household: With this I shall whip you, with this I shall kill you; in order that they should change their ways and repent, and if they do not change their ways, with the whip he shall whip them and kill them. Therefore it says, “A permanent fire shall remain aflame,” and it is also stated (Yeshayahu 66:16), “For Hashem will enter into judgment with fire.”



Men of Faith

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

Sent by Heaven

On Sunday, the tenth of Adar, 1995 (5755), Moreinu v’Rabbeinu, shlita, served as Sandak at a brit milah in Paris, invited by Mr. David Cohen, a prominent member of the community. In middle of the seudah, one of the participants, Mr. Ben-Shushan, stood up and told the following inspirational story:

On the previous hilula of Rabbi Chaim Pinto (twenty-sixth of Elul, 1994), he traveled to Mogador in order to participate in the hilula of the tzaddik. He suffered from severe pain in his legs, with multiple complications, until he could no longer walk on his feet alone, and he required two people to support him.

When he arrived at the cemetery, he decided that he would sleep by the grave of Rabbi Chaim Hagadol, and perhaps, Hashem would grant him a complete recovery in the merit of the holy tzaddik. Thus, he remained by the grave throughout the night.

That night, he dreamed that Rabbi Chaim himself began to operate on his foot. After he concluded the surgery, the tzaddik told him, “In the merit of your faith in Hashem and in tzaddikim, I was sent from Heaven

especially in order to heal you. Now you may rise, because you are cured. You may return to France without anyone’s help! Awaken from your slumber!”

Mr. Ben-Shushan immediately woke up and began to deliberate whether the dream was mere fantasy or reality. After all, he had slept the entire night by the grave, hoping for salvation in the merit of the tzaddik. Perhaps the dream had just been wishful thinking.

He suddenly felt his legs move. He tried to stand up without any help, and to his absolute amazement, he succeeded in getting up and walking around on his own!

His friends were amazed and asked him, “What happened to you? Were you putting on a show until now that you could not walk by yourself?”

Mr. Ben-Shushan dismissed their accusations and told them of his awesome dream. Everyone present celebrated joyously. A great Kiddush Hashem was made on the hilula of Rabbi Chaim Pinto. May his merits protect us.