

Pachad David

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Under the auspices of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlitia
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Maskil L'David

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

Changing for the better requires will-power

"The lads grew up and Esav became one who knows hunting, a man of the field; but Yaakov was a wholesome man, abiding in tents" (Bereishit 25:27)

In this parashah, the three Avot meet. It is awesome to behold all three holy Avot together engaged in studying the Torah! When Esav was fifteen years old Avraham Avinu died. Rashi comments that Avraham Avinu died on that day so that he should not see Esav his grandson embark on evil ways, since then it would not be considered that he had died at a good old age, as Hashem had promised. For this reason, Hashem shortened his life by five years.

In this parashah Yitzchak Avinu received the blessings of his father and the inheritance. Furthermore, in this parashah Yakov Avinu's exalted radiance began to shine forth. The parashah also discusses how evil Esav was, as it says (Bereishit 25:29) "And Esav came from the field, and he was faint." Chazal expound on this the following: Rabbi Yochanan said five transgressions the evil one transgressed on that day. He violated a betrothed girl, committed murder, denied the existence of G-d, denied the future Resurrection, and demeaned the birthright (of the first-born). His deeds were so corrupt and lowly that Hashem shortened Avraham Avinu's life so that he should not see Esav embark on evil ways and grieve over it.

This is difficult to comprehend. After all Esav grew up in an environment of sanctity and purity, in the homes of the exalted Avot. How was he not positively influenced by the awesome holiness? How did he drop to the lowest level? The pasuk states (Bereishit 25:27) "The lads grew up and Esav became one who knows hunting, a man of the field," and Rashi comments, "As long as they were small, they were not recognizable through their deeds, and no one scrutinized them to determine their characters. As soon as they became thirteen years old, this one parted to the houses of study, and that one parted to idol worship." Thus, initially Esav also studied in the same Talmud Torah as Yaakov. Then, why was Esav not positively affected by the holiness surrounding him. Why did he not choose to go in the same way as Yaakov Avinu?

Let us imagine how the Shabbat table looked by the holy Avot. Certainly Avraham Avinu sat at the head of the elegant table with an aura of sanctity and purity. On his side sat Yitzchak and Yaakov. When they sang the songs of Shabbat, sparks of holy fire would come out of their mouths. Who could withstand being their presence when they were engaged in Avodat Hashem? Esav would sit among

them and observe their sanctified conduct; how is it possible that not only did Esav not rise to exalted levels, but he fell to the lowest degree?!

We can explain that in order to cleave to the righteousness and lofty character traits of these supremely holy people, it is not enough to be in their presence and observe their deeds, but one must consciously desire to resemble them and learn from their lofty ways. Yaakov Avinu knew this secret and took advantage of every moment that he spent in his Father's presence, with Avraham and Yitzchak, and actively sought to be like them. In contrast, Esav, the Rasha, did not want to toil and trouble himself by studying Torah and observing mitzvot. He did not want to change the ways that he was used to. He was happy going in his evil ways. It was easy for him to do as he pleased and behave in a corrupt way with no restraint. Therefore, being in the presence of the most exalted holy people did not affect him positively at all, because their lofty deeds and righteousness did not talk to him, and he did not get impressed by them.

We should examine our aspirations and check if we are not chas v'shalom going in the evil ways of Esav. After all, we sit among great Torah scholars and are surrounded in our homes with supremely holy sefarim. Are we influenced by them for the good? Do we get inspired by being in the proximity of great Torah scholars? If the answers are negative, then this is the ways of Esav. He did not get impressed by the holiness surrounding him and did not want to absorb the sanctity within him. All his deeds were performed by habit alone (like lip-service).

Therefore, Hashem hated Esav, as it says "But I hated Esav," because he possessed all the qualities necessary to grown in Torah and fear of Heaven. His entire environment was suffused with Torah and Yirat Hashem. But he himself did not desire this way and he did not want to learn from them. He did not want to toil and bother, and as we know, the Torah does not endure only in one who "kills" himself over it. About Yaakov it says, "Yaakov was a wholesome man, abiding in tents." תם – wholesome" has the same letters as the word מת – dead," since he "killed" himself and toiled in the study of Torah. In contrast, Esav wanted the easy life, without bother, and chose to go in the ways of Yishmael, about whom it says, "And he shall be a wild-ass of a man; his hand against everyone, and everyone's hand against him."

On the other hand, Yaakov Avinu humbled himself before his elders and aspired to resemble them and learn from their ways. Therefore he merited becoming the chosen of the Fathers.

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Walking in their Ways

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

Do Not Disturb

I once needed the help of two yeshiva boys from our yeshiva in Lyon. When I entered the Beit Midrash to call them, I found them deeply immersed in the sea of Torah. I was loath to interrupt their study session. On the other hand, I needed their help. I did not know what to do.

I finally decided not to interrupt their studies, and I waited until they ended their learning session.

As if in support of my decision, I remembered the words of the Rambam, in Hilchot Beit Habechirah (1:12): "All are obligated to assist in the building of the Beit Hamikdash, men and women alike. But young children are not taken away from their Torah studies in order to build the Beit Hamikdash."

This means that when Am Yisrael will begin to build the third Beit Hamikdash, everyone will join, but the children will remain studying Torah.

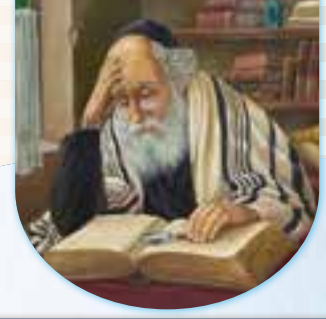
This is quite astounding. Am Yisrael has waited so many years for the rebuilding of the Beit Hamikdash, the

place where the Shechinah will once again rest. Wouldn't it seem sensible that all activities should grind to a halt, including Torah study? Why do we rule according to the Rambam, that the young children remain studying Torah?

The answer can be found in the Gemara (Shabbat 119b), which states, "Reish Lakish said in the name of Rabbi Yehudah Nesia, 'The world stands only in the merit of the Torah studies of the young children... One cannot compare the Torah study of one who has already sinned, to that of one who is free of sin.'"

Hashem cherishes the Torah study of the young children. They have not sinned and, therefore, never created a barrier between themselves and their Creator. Thus, their prayers are most effective. Whatever issues from their mouths is pure and is accepted by Hashem.

For this reason, they may not be disturbed in their Torah studies. Although the entire world may be involved in building the Beit Hamikdash, they are busy building up the world.



Words of Our Sages

Gems on the Parashah From the Torah Sages

A Complete Salvation

"For I will not forsake you until I will have done what I have spoken about you" (Bereishit 28:15)

Hashem showers upon us endless goodness and blessing with loving-kindness in the most miraculous manner. His salvation and Divine supervision are constant, non-stop, and He in His kindness watches over us and provides for all our needs until the last detail.

The following story was told by the gaon Rabbi Isser Zalman Meltzer, zt"l, to one of his relatives:

The person who just left my house told me this story that happened with the elderly Rabbi David Moshe of Chortkov, zt"l:

When Rabbi David Moshe was a young boy of about three years old, a Jew arrived to the waiting room of his illustrious father, the Admor Rabbi Yisrael of Ruzhin, zt"l, to discuss something important with the Rabbi.

Before the Jew entered the Rabbi's study, the young boy, David Moshe, asked him: "What do you want to ask my father?"

"I am in need of a blessing for salvation," replied the Jew.

The boy asked him: "When you come out of my father's study, please tell me what my father said to you."

When the Jew came out of Rabbi Yisrael of Ruzhin's study, the little Moshe David asked him: "What did my father tell you?" The man answered: "The Rabbi said that A-lmighty will help."

The child asked: "What will you do until the A-lmighty will help?"

"I don't know"... he replied lamely.

"Please go back in to my father's study and ask him," said the boy.

The Jew re-entered Rabbi Yisrael's study and asked him the question that young Moshe David posed. The Rabbi replied to his question and said:

"The A-lmighty will help also until the salvation. This is an explicit pasuk in the Torah: "For I will not forsake you until I will have done what I have spoken about you." This implies that Hashem will also help us until the awaited salvation arrives."

The Haftarah



The prophecy of the word of Hashem"

(Malachi 1:1)

The connection to the parashah: The haftarah describes Yaakov Avinu and Esav the Rasha, as it says "Was not Esav the brother of Yaakov?" etc. This is similar to the parashah which discusses the birth of the twins Yaakov Avinu and Esav the Rasha, recording their annuals and progeny.



Guard Your Tongue

The Power of Speech

The secret of happiness and success lies in one's mouth

A person's speech brings him happiness and success, if he uses it correctly. It can also bring the opposite, if he uses it improperly. There is no other organ that can bring him so much harm like his tongue. This is because with every prohibited word uttered, one creates a prosecutor for himself, and in one hour he can utter hundreds of words that are prohibited, with lies, mockery, gossip, and slander.



Chazak U'Baruch

Strengthening Fellowship and Meriting Blessing

Strengthening Fellowship and Meriting Blessing

Sometimes we encounter honest Jews who are seeking to gain more merits and do good deeds. But inadvertently, often not only do they not increase their merits, but quite the contrary, G-d forbid. This is due to their lack of knowledge in halachah (Jewish law), and because they do not set fixed times to study Torah and learn sifrei mussar, instilling fear of Hashem.

One example is found in the sefer Derech Moshe (Yom 15) in which he complains about those who during the Chazzan's repetition are meticulous in reciting Tehillim, or they learn sefer "Chok L'Yisrael," and so on. Thus he warns: "Do not stop, G-d forbid, even to utter one word until the Chazzan concludes the recitation of the Shemonah Esrei prayer (Amidah). They should not do as many people are used to doing that when the Chazzan repeats the Shemonah Esrei prayer they do not answer Amen and instead continue with their prayers and ma'amadot... If, chas v'shalom, even one of the congregants do not answer Amen, his sin is too great to bear."

Perhaps we should note another example which is related specifically to Gabai Tzedaka (charity collectors), who make their rounds among the congregants during the prayers and distract their minds. Sometimes, they even cause the congregants to miss answering Amen. About this the author of "Shnei Luchot Habrit," zy"u, exhorts: "The custom in Eretz Yisrael is proper and correct, and so the Arizal, z"tl, instructed, that the Gabai Tzedaka should collect tzedaka while the congregants are saying "vayevarech David," and not like they do in other countries, where the Gabai Tzedaka make rounds during the Chazzan's repetition. Then it distracts the congregants from listening to the Chazzan, and they do not answer Amen properly.

The Angel that answered Amen

It is told about the gaon Rabbi Mordechai Banett, z"l, that when any layman would come visit him, the tzaddik would make sure that his guest would ask him at least for a cup of water to drink, so that he could merit answering Amen after their blessing.

On this topic, it is fitting to tell the amazing story that the renowned tzaddik Rabbi Shmelke of Nikolsburg, z"l, told those near him a short while before his death:

As you know, it was my custom since time immemorial to be careful not to recite the blessings over the performance of mitzvot, or blessings over things to enjoy, unless there was a person there who could answer Amen. This is because every blessing creates an angel, but its formation is not complete unless someone answers Amen after the blessing.

Once I was invited by a wealthy layman to one of the towns, in order to serve as a Sandak for his son's Brit Mila. The wealthy layman sent me a horse-drawn wagon driven by a Jewish wagon driver, who was a simple ignoramus. In middle of the journey, when I wanted to recite the 'Asher Yatzar' blessing, I realized to my dismay that there was no one who could answer Amen after my blessing, since the wagon driver was so coarse and vulgar and he would not be inclined to participate in anything related to kedushah.

I did not know what to do, until suddenly, two strange Jews appeared from nowhere and stood next to me. After reciting the blessing out loud, they answered Amen sweetly, with unusual delight, and immediately disappeared. I stood there, frightened, until I realized that Hashem had sent me angels from heaven to answer Amen after my blessing."

Treasures

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



The Blessings from Heaven is the most important thing

"And may G-d give you of the dew of the heavens and of the fatness of the earth" (Bereishit 27:28)

This is the blessing that Yitzchak Avinu blessed Yaakov when he served him the delicacies. When Esav arrived later and cried out an exceedingly great and bitter cry and said to his father (Bereishit 27:34) "bless me too, Father!" then Yitzchak blessed him as well and told him (ibid. 39) "Behold from the fatness of the earth shall be your dwelling and of the dew of the heavens from above."

One who contemplates these words will see that at first glance the blessings resemble each other. Both were blessed with dew from heavens and fatness of the earth. What is the difference between them?

The Kli Yakar explains that there is a big difference between them. For Yaakov, his father first blessed him with dew of the heavens and afterward with the fatness of the earth, "And may G-d give you of the dew of the heavens and of the fatness of the earth," but for Esav he preceded the fatness of the earth to the dew of the heavens, "Behold from the fatness of the earth shall be your dwelling and of the dew of the heavens from above."

Yaakov Avinu was first blessed in spiritual matters that are associated with the heavens, which are spiritual in essence. Ahavat Hashem (love of Hashem) and His Torah were top priority for him. Every word he uttered and every action was laden with spirituality, as it says, "But Yaakov was a wholesome man, abiding in tents." He would sit in the tents of Torah, and merited ascending to lofty heights, until the angels became his servants who do his will. As it says (Bereishit 32:3), "Then Yaakov sent angels ahead of him to Esav his brother," and he was not afraid of fighting and beating the ministering angel of Esav, who is the ס"ן (Satan). It also states (Bereishit 32:1) "Yaakov went on his way, and angels of G-d encountered him." He merited seeing flocks and flocks of angels, because he was used to being among them.

Therefore, his father first blessed him with the dew of the heavens; first he blessed him with spiritual achievements, and if Yaakov merits "the dew of the heavens," which signifies the holy Torah, then certainly Hashem will bestow upon him the "fatness of the earth." He will ultimately also merit goodness and blessing in this world, and he will enjoy a prosperous livelihood and good health, in order to help him realize his spiritual goals. Thus the "the fatness of the earth" that his father blessed him with is not an end but only the means to achieve spiritual greatness.



זכור לטוב

From the teachings of Eliyahu Hanavi

“For the conductor, a psalm by David. The heavens declare the glory of G-d”
(Psalms 19:1:2).

Are they not set in their places and do not move forever?

But even though everything is His and all are His handiwork, His joy is not with everything but only with the seed of Avraham alone. As it is stated: “Day following day utters speech” (ibid. 19:3).

What is the nature of these days?

But this is the day of Moshe who foretold the day of Yehoshua, as it is stated: “This day I shall begin to place dread and fear of you on the peoples under the entire heaven, when they hear of your reputation, and they will tremble and be fearful of you” (Devarim 2:25). And perhaps you shall ask since the Holy One Blessed Be He killed Sichon and Og, who then will tell this to the all of the world? But this refers to the sun that stood (stopped) for Moshe.

Where do we find that the sun stood for Moshe?

[This was] At the time he waged war with Amalek, as it is stated, “The hands of Moshe grew heavy, so they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it, and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, etc., he remained with his hands in faithful prayer until sunset” (Shmot 17:12). Did not the sun (ever) set until this time? But it refers then to the sun that stood for Moshe?

And where do we find that Moshe foretold the day of Yehoshua? For it is stated: “Hashem said to Moshe, “Write this as a remembrance in the Book, and recite in the ears of Yehoshua” (ibid. 17:14). He said to him [Yehoshua], “May it be the Will of Hashem that the sun shall stand for you just as it stood for me.

And where do we find that the sun stood for Yehoshua?

[This was] At the time when he waged war with the kings of the Amorites in Givon, as it is stated “Then Yehoshua spoke to Hashem on the day Hashem delivered the Amorites before the Children of Israel, and he said before the eyes of Israel: Sun, stand still at Givon, and moon, in the Valley of Ayalon. Then the sun stood still, and the moon stopped, until the people took retribution against their

enemies. Is this not written in the Book of the Upright. So the sun stood in the middle of the sky and did not hasten to set for a whole day” (Yehoshua 10:12:13)...

...From here they said; the tzadikim are punished even for minor sins whereas the wicked are not punished only for major sins. This we learn from Moshe, Aaron, Nadav, and Avihu, who were punished for minor sins. And do we know that the wicked are not punished only for major sins. This we learn from Yerovam, Ahaz, and Menashe who were not punished until they filled the entire world with sin.

To what is this analogous?

To a king who was sitting on his throne and the elders of his kingdom were sitting before him; if one of them will utter something improper the king will punish him immediately [they are like the tzaddikim], however those who are outside He waits for them until the justice of Gehinom, as it is stated: “From the end of the heavens is its source and its circuit is to their end; nothing is hidden from its heat” (Psalms 19:7). For what is all this? For the sake of “The Torah of Hashem is perfect, restoring the soul; the orders of Hashem are upright, gladdening the heart” (ibid. 19:8:9).



Men of Faith

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

I Will Pressure Him

On one of his trips to Mogador, Moreinu v'Rabbeinu and his family members stood at the gravesite of Rabbi Chaim Hagadol to pray. His host, R' Mordechai Knafo, was also present.

Moreinu v'Rabbeinu noticed that R' Knafo was praying with intense concentration and banging his hand on the tombstone. He pleaded and beseeched Rabbi Chaim Pinto to heal a very sick young man from Strasbourg, who was lying unconscious.

R' Knafo continued praying and declared, “I request that by next week this young man should recover completely and get up from his bed.”

The young man had been lying unconscious for three months. His liver and kidneys were malfunctioning; the doctors were not giving him any chance to live.

“I observed R' Knafo's behavior,” Moreinu v'Rabbeinu continued, “and I told him to stop banging on the tombstone of the tzaddik. However,

he ignored me and declared with great fervor: ‘I will pressure him.’

“What transpired after the visit to the gravesite is truly amazing. That week, the young man opened his eyes. The doctors were stunned at the miracle unfolding before them.”

Moreinu v'Rabbeinu concluded his extraordinary tale, “I would never dare bang on the tombstone of my grandfather. However, R' Mordechai did it naturally, and he was answered immediately!”