

# Devarim

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## 709

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 Choice is Ours

### “And Lavan and Chatzeirot and Di Zahav”

(Devarim 1:1)

Di Zahav is not only a place, but also an allusion to an incident (Berachot 32b). Moshe, the eternal advocate of our people, approached Hashem with the following, “Ribbono shel Olam! It was the gold and silver that You conferred upon Bnei Yisrael, to the point that they cried, ‘Di!’ (enough) which caused them to fashion the Golden Calf.” Rabbi Yonatan adds that we have proof that Hashem accepted Moshe’s argument, in the words of the Navi (Hoshea 2:10), “I gave her much silver and gold but they made it for Ba’al.” It was out of overwhelming love for His nation that Hashem judged Bnei Yisrael favorably in light of Moshe’s words, attributing their terrible sin to the excessive wealth He had given them.

Hashem never tests a person with a situation that he can’t handle. Every person is given the tools to withstand his individual challenges in this world. At birth, a person is delivered a lifetime of trials. It is up to him to choose how to behave. For instance, Hashem confers wealth upon a person to see whether he will use it to help others. If, indeed, he supports Torah scholars and paupers with his riches, he is increasing Hashem’s glory in this world and thereby justifying his existence. He will reap eternal benefits in the World to Come. However, if he allows his yetzer hara to encourage him to spend his money on worldly attractions, he has used his gifts wrongly and will be held accountable.

I know people who unfortunately cast off the yoke of Torah and mitzvot when they were blessed with wealth. The glitter of gold blinded them to Hashem’s will. I pitied them for their spiritual decline and felt it imperative to rebuke them, albeit pleasantly. I put forth a prayer that I succeed in my mission. This is what I said, “Hashem blessed you with

untold wealth. I am pained to see how you misuse this gift. Before you became rich, you were aware of Hashem. But now, your gold has blinded you and you forgot Hashem.” I prayed that my words made their mark, helping to bring wayward sons back to their loving Father.

Our forefathers, too, were blessed with tremendous abundance. Commensurate with their worldly bounty was their unlimited love of Hashem. They were acutely aware that everything they owned came from the outstretched Hand of the Creator. The more they had, the greater was their obligation toward Him. They were expected to do acts of kindness and charity.

Another challenge of our day is in the area of chinuch habanim. It is not easy to protect one’s children against the alien winds blowing from all sides. It is in the parents’ power to steer their children in the right direction, and not, chas v’shalom, to bring them to doom. Unfortunately, we hear all too many tales of parents who “educate” their children in ways opposed to Torah. They teach them to value corrupt and profligate lifestyles. How can these parents expect their children to bring them nachat?! Sadly, only after the damage is done and these parents see the devastation before their eyes, do they bother making an accounting of how they had raised their children. As the Gemara (Berachot 7b) states, “A bad son in a man’s house is worse than the war of Gog and Magog.”

Hashem promised Avraham Avinu tremendous blessings, “For I have known him because he commands his sons and his household after him, that they should keep the way of the Lord to perform righteousness and justice” (Bereishit 18:19). The main reason for bringing children into the world is in order to raise them to a life of Torah and mitzvot, so that they become Bnei Torah and true servants of Hashem.

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### Hillulah of Tzaddikim

6 - Rabbi Moshe Mizrahi

7 - Rabbi Yosef Dinklis

8 - Rabbi Simcha Zissel, The Saba of Kelm

9 - Rabbi Bentzion Moshe Yair Weinstock

10 - Yissachar ben Yaakov Avinu, a"h

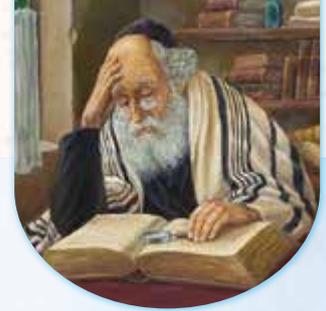
11 - Rabbi Moshe Malka, Rosh Yeshiva of Ohel Moshe

13 - Rabbi Natan Nata Shapiro, Author of Megaleh Amukot



## 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

### The Tree of Life

A dear friend once presented me with two palm trees. I planted one in the yard of our yeshiva in France and the other in my own backyard. The tree by the yeshiva blossomed beautifully, whereas the one by my home withered away. I had to keep cutting off the dead branches, until nothing was left of it at all.

I wondered what the difference was between the two trees. Why did the one by the yeshiva flourish while the other died a slow death?

The tree by the yeshiva was in a sunny spot in the yard, receiving sustenance from the sun, and tended by our devoted gardener, who watered it consistently. The tree by my house, however, lacked both sun and water and therefore died.

The Torah says (Devarim 20:19), "The tree of the field is a man." Just as a tree needs light, heat, and water, so does a person need the warmth of the Beit Hakeneset and the Torah with its refreshing waters. Without these conditions, he is liable, chas v'shalom, to wither away.

## The Haftarah

The haftarah of the week:

### "The prophecy of Yeshayahu"

(Yeshayahu 1:1)

The connection to this Shabbat: The haftarah relates the punishment Bnei Yisrael will suffer during the time of the churban, due to their sins. This is the third haftarah that we read during the three weeks leading up to Tisha B'Av.

## Guard Your Tongue

*The Power of Speech*

### In Full Glory

If someone will be denigrated for refraining from speaking rechilut, he certainly should stand up to the challenge and not say forbidden words. He should know that he will be considered Hashem's beloved one, his face shining like the sun. He will merit the praise of Chazal (Yoma 23a): Those who are insulted but do not insult; those who hear themselves reproached but do not reply... about them, Scriptures says, "And His beloved ones are like the sun in its full glory."

### When We least Expect Him

Chodesh Menachem Av, literally implies "the month of the consoling father." This is the month that contains the seeds of redemption, the month of mourning when we anticipate Mashiach's arrival.

Chazal tell us that Mashiach will come "like rivulets in arid land of the south." Rabbi Shlomo Levenstein shlita, explains, "No rains fall in the arid land. Rather, the rains fall in the mountains of Yehudah. Slowly and gradually, these rains form rivulets, trickling downward. Eventually, they form a huge body of water.

A Jew sits in the south and sees no sign of water. Everything is parched and lifeless. Suddenly, a cascade of life-giving water comes crashing down, seemingly out of nowhere. This is exactly how Mashiach will arrive.

Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin would explain Mashiach's arrival in the following way:

One day, I will make my way home after Shacharit in the yeshiva, as usual. The Rabbanit will ask me, "Chaim, do you want to eat right now?"

"I haven't yet finished preparing the shiur that I must deliver today. I'd like to learn the sugya a little more before having breakfast."

"So be it. Meanwhile, I'll go over to the market to buy something. I'm leaving something on the fire. Please make sure it doesn't burn. But please don't forget. I know that when you're involved in learning, you tend to forget the world around you."

My wife will make her way to the market and I will open a sefer. Suddenly, I will find the sun shining brighter than ever before. Such illumination! The birds will burst forth in a new, captivating tune. Then I will hear a voice from the street. I'll stretch my neck out the window to find Eli the shoemaker rushing frantically about.

"What happened to the sun, Eli? From where are these wonderful songbirds? How did the trees suddenly sprout the most exotic leaves?"

"What, Rebbi? Haven't you heard?" the shoemaker will eye me in surprise. "Mashiach has come!"

I will hurry to the closet and don my Shabbat clothes in order to greet Mashiach. But then I'll notice a button missing... After Shabbat, when I asked my wife to sew it on, she said, "What's the rush? You won't need the suit until next Friday." And now I must greet our new king, with a button missing! While I'm ruminating over whether to wear the kapote with the missing button or just a weekday suit, the Rebbetzin flies into the house, panting and puffing. "Where were you, Chaim?" she demands. "The food in the pot is burnt to a cinder!"

"Why are you worried about the food in the pot?" I chasten her. "Hurry and put on your best Shabbat dress and come with me to greet Mashiach!"

As Michah (3:1) succinctly put it, "And suddenly, the Lord Whom you seek will come to His Temple."





## Chazak U'Baruch

Strengthening Fellowship and Meriting Blessing

The following story took place decades ago and was publicized by the organization Bnei Emunim. It was told firsthand:

As a child, I lived on the Lower East Side of New York. There lived a wonderful Yid who devoted his life to inspiring others regarding the importance of answering Amen. For many years, this man was a walking symbol of this mitzvah, to the extent that the neighborhood children dubbed him the "Amen-man."

Throughout the synagogue where he prayed, his loud "Amen" resounded whenever a berachah was made. Regardless of any commotion, one could easily discern this man's intent-filled Amen and feel the glory of Hashem filling the sanctuary.

In his selflessness, he encouraged others, as well, to try to "catch" as many Amens as possible. He especially focused on the young children, promoting his cause with pockets full of treats. This helped them gain a greater appreciation for berachot and Amens.

When this man reached the age of 75, he suffered from a severe heart ailment. Medicine was not as advanced then as it is today and people suffering from this illness didn't have much chance of survival. His doctors offered two choices: Either he could undergo complex heart surgery, which had only a slight chance of success, or he could opt not to do the surgery, which would spell his imminent death.

The Amen-man listened to his doctors with a calm demeanor. Then he thanked them and left the room, while announcing that he refused to undergo surgery.

His son, who had accompanied him, was most surprised at his decision. He couldn't hold himself back from asking, "Father, why did you choose not to do the surgery? How could you take upon yourself such a momentous decision? At least, you should have asked advice first!"

"My son, I spent my entire life advocating the cause of answering Amen. Didn't Chazal teach us that anyone who extends his Amen is guaranteed an extension of his life? The word אמן is numerically equivalent to 91. I can rest assured that I'll live at least until that advanced age. Why should I agree to an operation that is questionable?"

The Amen-man indeed recovered and lived many more years. When he reached his 90th birthday, his son asked, "Do you remember saying that you'll live until at least 91 in merit of your Amens? Next year is your 91st birthday!"

The Amen-man jokingly replied that he had begun to say, "Amen selah" (Amen forever). A few months later, when he was in his 91st year, he returned his neshamah to his Maker.

## Treasures

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



### A Memorable Occasion

**"These are the words that Moshe spoke to all Yisrael... in the desert, in the plain opposite the Red Sea"** (Devarim 1:1)

Sefer Devarim is also called The Book of Rebuke. In it, Moshe chastens Am Yisrael at the end of his life, in order that they improve.

What did Moshe speak about?

"In the desert in the plain opposite the Red Sea." This is an allusion to the time when a person will be brought to his final rest. Since nobody escapes death, it is worthwhile for one to envision Suf opposite his eyes. Suf, or the Red Sea, can also be read as sof, or end. One should always contemplate his purpose in this world and consider his day of death. When one remembers that he will return to dust, he is motivated to do teshuvah. Chazal (Berachot 5a) teach: A person should always provoke his yetzer hatov to battle his yetzer hara. If the yetzer hatov defeats the yetzer hara, fine. If not, he should involve himself in Torah study. If he thus defeats the yetzer hara, fine. If not, he should recite Kriyat Shema. If he then defeats the yetzer hara, fine. If not, he should remember the day of death.

Remembering one's day of death causes him to make a personal accounting. By taking a break from the hustle and bustle of life and making a personal accounting of his deeds, one successfully distances himself from the machinations of the yetzer hara and the attractions of this world.

As the Tanna says (Avot 3:1), "Consider three things and you will not come to the grip of sin: Know from where you came, to where you are going, and before Whom you will give justification and reckoning. From where you came – from a putrid drop. To where you are going – to a place of dust, worms, and maggots. And before Whom you will give justification and reckoning – before the King Who reigns over kings, Hakadosh Baruch Hu."

Nobody knows how long he will live. Therefore, it is imperative that we spend our lives polishing our neshamot. We should prepare "food for the journey" by increasing our Torah study and mitzvah observance. Rabbi Eliezer says, "Return one day before your death." His disciples asked, "Does anyone know when his day will come?" "That is why one should constantly be involved in teshuvah, lest he die on the morrow. In this manner, his entire life will be spent doing teshuvah."

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT



“Prepare for yourselves wise and understanding men, known among your tribes, and I will make them heads over you” (Devarim 1:13)

Whenever a Jew is in pain, the Shechinah is in pain along with him, as it says in Tehillim (91:15), “I am with him in distress.” In order to alleviate the Shechinah’s suffering, the person is delivered from his personal hardship. However, when one distances himself from Hakadosh Baruch Hu through his iniquities, Hashem is not with him.



For this reason, Chazal advise one who has a sick relative to visit a tzaddik and ask him to pray

## Men of Faith

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

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 unaided, 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

on behalf of his loved one. When the tzaddik hears about the distress of a fellow Jew, he feels his plight deeply. Since the tzaddik is so close to the Shechinah, the Shechinah, too, as it were, is in pain. The ill man is healed in order to bring salvation to the Shechinah.

Moshe Rabbeinu, humblest of all men, did not consider himself as close to Hashem as he should have been. Therefore, when people would approach him with their problems, he did not feel that his personal suffering would bring them healing. So he instructed them to appoint “understanding men” who could help ease the suffering of the nation (based on Eizor Eliyahu).

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.