

# Shoftim

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## 713

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**

### Torah – The Ultimate Protection

“You shall set up judges and law enforcement officials for yourself in all your cities that the L-rd, your G-d, is giving you, for your tribes, and they shall judge the people [with] righteous judgment” (Devarim 16:18)

In order for every city to function efficiently, the Torah commanded that judges and law enforcement officials be set up. The judges would arbitrate justly, while the law enforcement officials would provide protection for the people, ensuring that the judgments were implemented accordingly.

Setting up a court system of law and order is a basic function of any city. It is only logical that every city has law officials and judges. Why, then, does the Torah command the nation to set up such a system?

The injunction to set up a court system extends to each and every individual Jew. Shlomo Hamel-ech compared the human body to a large city. If we delve into the matter, we will see how true this is. The human body is comprised of millions of tiny details that function together harmoniously, like a city comprised of numerous components that work together to produce a perfect whole.

For thousands of years, researchers have studied the mystery called the human body. They have not yet completed their investigations. With every study, they discover more and more marvels. Just like the physical aspect of the human body arouses untold wonder, so is the spiritual side unlimited, deeper than the sea. The human mind is capable of containing infinite amounts of information and making all types of inferences, above and beyond what any machine can do.

When a person sleeps, he hovers between different planes. One moment, he is on holy soil, and the next moment, he is taken to other places. Just like one can visit various sites of a large city, so does one's mind take him on a journey to diverse places, some of which are good and some of which are dangerous.

Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai was the smallest of Hillel Hazaken's students, who learned Torah and absorbed kedushah from Hillel Hazaken (Sukkah 28a). Nevertheless, Chazal poignantly state the following (Masechet Sofrim 16:8): If we were to make ink out of all the waters in the world and quills out of all the trees in the world, and write divrei Torah with them, it would be like a drop in the sea compared to the Torah of Rabbi Yochanan

ben Zakkai. This teaches us just how vast is the mind of man, which is capable of containing unlimited treasuries of Torah knowledge. In the same way, the human mind can contain immeasurable amounts of defilement, rachmana litzlan.

It is precisely because of the tremendous power of the human body and mind that the Torah commands us to place judges and officials upon ourselves. We are told to place these law enforcers “for yourself” – to protect ourselves from the yetzer hara.

“At all your gates” refers to the organs of the body, which serve as the gateway to the outside world. It is through our organs that we connect to the world around us. Included in these organs are the eyes, ears, and mouth. At times, these organs can work against us, as Chazal warn, “The eye sees; the heart desires, and the limbs of action complete [the sin]” (see Rashi, Bamidbar 15:39).

The Torah therefore commands us to keep vigil over our organs. We must protect our eyes and ears from inappropriate sights and sounds. We must guard our mouths from saying lies and lashon hara. What body of law grants us the strength to control our body parts? The Torah, which is the shield against the yetzer hara (Kiddushin 30b) does.

Often, inappropriate thoughts creep into a person's mind. These thoughts are liable to cause him to sin. One should avoid such spiritual challenges from the outset by not exposing himself to forbidden sights which might cause such thoughts. However, if he already stumbled by seeing these sights, he should establish law officials in the form of Torah study and mitzvah observance. Involving oneself in such spiritual pursuits will prevent him from dabbling in sinful activities. Chazal (Ketubot 59b) teach: “Idleness causes sin.” In order to protect ourselves from sinning, we must involve ourselves with Torah study. Filling our minds with positive thoughts will avert negative ones.

The word **תתן** (you shall set up) has the same root as the word **מתנה** (gift). The Torah is called a gift (Eiruvin 54a). This is why we call Shavuot **חג מתן תורה** – The Festival of the Giving of the Torah. The Torah is a cherished gift, preserved by Hashem in His treasury for many generations, until He bestowed it upon His people (Shabbat 88b). The words of Torah are the judges and law enforcement officials that the Torah commands us to set up in each city, i.e., in the heart of every Jew.

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### Hillulah of Tzaddikim

4 - Rabbi Meir Simcha HaKohen, Author of  
“Ohr Same'ach”

5 - The saintly Admor, Rabbi Moshe Aharon  
Pinto, zy"ta

6 - Rabbi Yom Tov Lipman Heller, Author of  
“Tosafot Yom Tov”

7 - Rabbi Eliyahu Chaim

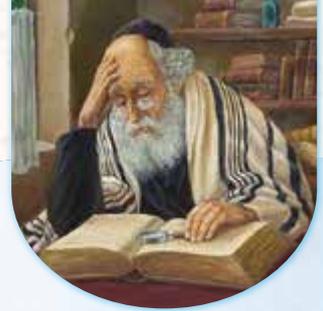
9 - Rabbi Tzadok HaKohen MiLublin

10 - Rabbi Pinchas Shapira MiKoritz



## 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

### A Dreadful Drive

I never told the following story in a public forum before, but since I clearly felt Heavenly intervention, I would like to publicize it now, in order to sanctify Hashem's Name.

It was during the days of the Intifada, when danger lurked at every street corner in Eretz Yisrael, and it was especially scary to go out at night. I spent the day visiting famous tzaddikim and Torah giants, as well as family friends, together with my daughter, Sara. We ended the day with a visit to the Kotel.

When we finished praying at the Kotel, nighttime had already fallen. I wanted to travel to Ashdod via taxi. I found one available nearby. I entered it, unaware that many of the taxi drivers are not Jewish. As we were seated, I realized, too late, that the driver's name, printed on the side of the car, sounded suspiciously non-Jewish. The look he gave me only confirmed my suspicions that we were not traveling with an ally.

My heart was filled with fear. I had no idea what to do. The taxi drove along, preventing me from getting out. I began praying earnestly to Hashem that He give me advice. We raced along the Yerushalayim-Tel Aviv highway, while my heart raced within me.

Darkness descended, and we found ourselves the only travelers on this lonely road, late at night, with a malevolent

driver. Suddenly, without forewarning or explanation, the driver stopped the car at the side of the road. Tremendous fear engulfed me. My mind raced with various options. What to do now? I wondered. Should I recite the Shema? Maybe I should take upon myself some sort of resolution? The fleshy form of the driver did not allow me to believe I could overpower him in any physical way.

As I sat in the back seat with my young daughter, trembling with fear, the driver made his way to the trunk. I turned my eyes once more heavenward, and said, "I came to visit the Holy Land and pray at the holy sites. I have a wife and small children at home. Please, Hashem, have mercy on me, and save us from the jaws of wickedness."

The driver slammed shut the trunk, entered the taxi, and continued on to Ashdod, without so much as a word.

With great Heavenly kindness, we arrived at our destination.

Why did the driver stop mid-trip? What was he looking for in the trunk? Maybe he was seeking some sort of weapon. Why, then, did he change his mind? Only Hashem knows the answer to these questions.

I continuously thank Hashem for sparing us from the jaws of our enemies and all sorts of calamities on the road and enabling us to reach our destination in safety.

***"According to the law they instruct you and according to the judgment they say to you, you shall do; you shall not divert from the word they tell you, either right or left"*** (Devarim 17:11)

The Torah exhorts us to obey our Sages without question, "even if they tell you that right is left and left is right, and all the more so, if they say that right is right and left is left" (Sifri). Sefer HaChinuch (Mitzvah 496) expounds: In every generation, we must obey the Sages who received their words (from the previous Sages), and drank from the wells of their sefarim, and exerted themselves both day and night to understand the depth of their words and the wonders behind them. With this mindset, we will head toward the truth of Torah. And without it, by following only our own ideas, we will not succeed.

Emunat Chachamim, or faith in our Sages, means that we indisputably accept their authority, even when it contradicts our own logic. The Yalkut Me'am Loez explains that for this reason, Jewish mothers would train their children, upon arising in the morning, to wash their hands. They would prepare their bread with their left hands, while holding their right hands in their right hands as they told them to close their eyes and place their hands over their eyes while reciting, "Torah tziva lanu Moshe..." Afterward, they would tell them to eat the bread in their left hands. Then they would say Shema Yisrael with them. A Jewish custom is replete with Torah wisdom. Through these actions, Jewish mothers would instill faith in their offspring, teaching them that the central principle of faith is not obtained by investigations and research, but through transmission from parents to children. No arguments in the world are able to shake faith that is rooted so strongly.

Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky shlita relates: An agunah whose husband had disappeared without a trace came before Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik zt"l, the Beit Halevi, bitterly bewailing her plight. "How can I help you?" the scholar asked.

"Rebbi, just tell me whether or not my husband still alive!"

"He's alive."

"And will he return?"

"He will."

After a short time, the husband indeed came home, healthy and whole. Rav Soloveitchik's acquaintances were deeply moved by this clear miracle. In his humility, he explained, "There's no miracle here at all. Everyone is considered alive until proven otherwise. And if he was still alive, why wouldn't he return home?"

## The Haftarah

The haftarah of the week:

**"I, yes I, am He Who consoles you"**

(Yeshayahu 51).

The connection to this Shabbat: This is one of the seven haftarot of consolation, read each Shabbat for seven consecutive weeks, beginning the Shabbat following Tisha B'Av.



## Life in Both Worlds

If a father constantly warns his children not to speak lashon hara (or curse or lie), it will make a deep impression on their hearts and they will become accustomed to watching what they say. It will be easy for them to be careful in this important mitzvah, earning them a place in Olam Haba, as well as tremendous benefit in this world.



## May the Tzaddik's Memory Be a Blessing

In honor of the hillula of the saintly Admor, scion of holy and pure ones, the well-known miracle-worker, the tzaddik Rabbi Moshe Aharon Pinto zy" a, as told by his son, Moreinu HaGaon HaTzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto shlita, at the hillula celebration:

Today is the 5th of Elul; the day of the passing of our father and mentor, Rabbi Moshe Aharon Pinto, zt"l. Our Sages (Chulin 7b) state that the righteous are greater after their death than in their lifetimes. Evidence of this truth is that even today, we relate the wondrous deeds during the lifetime and after the passing of this giant. His acts are a torch, guiding us in the ways of Torah. His mode of life paves a smooth path before us in our journey of avodat Hashem.

We often think that a tzaddik's greatness is measured by the miracles that he performs. But it is fitting to pay attention to the way he served Hashem wholeheartedly and devoted his life to mitzvot. This is really the main thrust of his greatness. When Hashem sees the dedication a tzaddik displays toward doing His will to perfection, He repays him measure for measure, fulfilling the tzaddik's wishes, as the pasuk says, "He does the will of those who fear Him" (Tehillim 145:19). When does Hashem fulfill the wishes of a tzaddik? This is when the tzaddik fulfills Hashem's wishes. The greatest praise of any tzaddik is that his life was one saga of serving Hashem.

Our Chachamim narrate the fascinating deeds of Rabbi Chiya (Bava Metzia 85b): He did his utmost to ensure that Torah would not be forgotten from Bnei Yisrael. He would trap deer, make parchment from



their hides, and write the Five Books of Torah upon them. Then he would travel from town to town and city to city, disseminating Torah among the youth. Rabbeinu Hakadosh proclaimed, "How great are the deeds of Chiya!" Rabbi Chiya was a miracle-worker, as the Gemara (ibid.) points out: He stood up in prayer with his two sons, Yehudah and Chizkiyah. When they said, "He Who brings forth the winds," a strong wind blew past them. And when they said, "And makes the rain come down," torrential showers poured down. The Heavenly angels feared that they would say, "He Who revives the dead," and the redemption would come before the right time. Eliyahu Hanavi appeared in the guise of a bear and interrupted their prayers. This incident proves Rabbi Chiya's greatness as a miracle-worker. Nevertheless, our Sages when they

praised Rabbi Chiya, they emphasized his good deeds and dedication to Torah. This is the true barometer of a tzaddik.

So, too, did our father serve Hashem with tremendous self-sacrifice. He deprived himself of sleep for the sake of Torah and exerted himself in Torah study with every fiber of his being. His vigilance in guarding his eyes and tongue were legendary. For forty years, Father remained at home, in order to avoid seeing inappropriate sights. His entire life was devoted to Torah and tefillah. He accepted suffering with love, never complaining about the poverty and lack that prevailed in his house. Mother, may she live long, told us that many times, the family went to sleep hungry. Father's way was to be satisfied with little in the way of materialism. He adopted the ways of Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa who lived on a measure of carob from one week to the next. But when others came to receive his blessing, Father was generous and blessed them with wealth and financial security.

I remember that when I was a child, Father would buy a small bottle of soda for Shabbat. He would pour out a small amount for each of us, saying, "Lichvod Shabbat Kodesh." During the week, no drink but water made an appearance on our table. I recall a visitor bringing a small bottle of whiskey. Father would have a taste of it only on Shabbat, explaining, "This is not something everyone drinks, since it's so expensive. If I have it, it's only right to use it to honor the Shabbat."

Father's life was devoted to one purpose – to do Hashem's will. This is why Hashem responded by doing Father's will.

May his memory stand by us and all of Klal Yisrael, to be redeemed soon, Amen.



## Food for Thought

### A Boomerang Effect

"You shall set up judges and law enforcement officials for yourself in all your cities that the Lord, your God, is giving you, for your tribes, and they shall judge the people [with] righteous judgment" (Devarim 16:18)

The great advocate of Klal Yisrael, Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berdichev, gives us good advice as to how to prepare for the Day of Judgment, based on the pasuk above. On Rosh Hashanah, Hashem judges all creatures. This is how to arouse

Heavenly mercy on that fateful day:

In order to arouse mercy on High, it is crucial to arouse mercy in this world. How do we do this? By acting kindly toward our fellow Jews and judging them favorably. When we behave this way, we ignite this quality in Heaven. The angels judge us favorably. The Heavenly Gates are open to pour forth blessing upon Am Yisrael.

"You shall set up judges and law enforcement officials for yourself in all your cities." When you deal favorably with your fellow man, the gates on High will open wide, allowing you to pass through with a favorable judgment. The way that we treat others, we ourselves are treated.