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Pachad David

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

Tefillin arouses faith

“And it shall be to you as a sign upon your hand and as a remembrance between your eyes, in order that the law of the L-rd shall be in your mouth, for with a mighty hand the L-rd took you out of Egypt”

(Shemot 13:9)

Hashem told Moshe to command Bnei Yisrael to constantly recall the miracle of the Exodus from Egypt by recording the miracle in the parshiyot (parchments) of the tefillin that are placed on the arm and on the head between the eyes, as Rashi explains: And it shall be to you as a sign: The Exodus from Egypt shall be to you as a sign. upon your hand and as a remembrance between your eyes: This means that you shall write these passages [verses 1:10 and 11:16] and bind them on the head and on the arm.

This implies that by Am Yisrael placing daily the tefillin that contain the parshiyot which tell about the miracle of the exodus from Egypt, they will constantly remember the wondrous miracles that happened to them when they left the slavery of Egypt. The mitzvah of tefillin is one of the first mitzvot that Bnei Yisrael were commanded after their departure from Egypt, since this mitzvah increases and strengthens one's faith. After Hashem took Bnei Yisrael out of Egypt, the first thing He asked them was to believe in Hashem and Moshe His servant, since faith is the key and basis to the existence of Am Yisrael as a Chosen Nation. Without strong and firm faith, Am Yisrael cannot connect to the words of Torah and engage in it. Only when Am Yisrael believe wholeheartedly in the Creator, they are able to embrace the Torah with enthusiasm, and they merit being the Chosen Nation; unique of all other nations.

There are many people in the world who lead a life of Torah and mitzvot through habit, however, the pure and simple belief is absent from their hearts. They practice mitzvot without any emotion. They go through the motions only because they have

become accustomed to this way of life from childhood, and not because they believe wholeheartedly that by learning Torah and observing mitzvot they can come closer to Hashem and become bonded with the triple bond of Torah, Hashem, and Am Yisrael (see the Zohar part II, 90b; part III, 4b). These people resemble a rich man who has a lot of money, but is actually a pauper, since all his life he spends his time chasing after money, until he has no time to enjoy his wealth. I have met several wealthy people, who were so burdened by their business, that they did not even have time to eat, and a foul odor emanated from their mouths, as if they were an impoverished beggar.

Faith is man's source of life, and it is one's faith that gives meaning to his life. Without vibrant and living belief, the mitzvot of the Torah lose their inner meaning, and one who performs mitzvot without basic, firm faith, lacks connection to the Source of life and is lacking in the basic foundation for the Jewish nation.

Every morning when we wake up, the first thing we say is “I gratefully thank you, O living and eternal King, for You have returned my soul within me with compassion – abundant is Your faithfulness!” This short prayer recited every morning upon arising, envelops a person in an aura of faith. These words express faith in Hashem, Who returned our souls to us after sleeping, out of compassion. Since Bnei Yisrael believe in Hashem, also Hashem expresses His faith in them, and therefore returns their soul to them, even though they do not fulfill His will entirely during the day, and He waits for them to repent from their erroneous ways.

A faithful Jew, who cleaves to Hashem, must subjugate his heart and mind to Hashem so that all the thoughts in his head and all the desires of his heart are sanctified only to the will of Hashem. The mind and the heart are naturally attracted to material and physical pleasures; however, when faith burns in one's heart, it gives him the strength to channel his passion for spiritual and lofty achievements.

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Hillulah of Tzaddikim

4 – Rabbi Yisrael Abuchatzera The Babba Sali, zya" a

5 – Rabbi Yehudah Aryeh Leib of Gur

6 – Rabbi Shimon Gabbai

7 – Rabbi Levi Saddy Nachmani

8 – Rabbi Yosef G'iyon Av Beit Din of Benghazi

9 – Rabbi Refael Shmuelevitz Rosh Yeshiva of "Mir"

10 – Rabbi Shalom Mizrachi Sharabi The holy Rashash

25 – Rabbi Shlomo Mazuz



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 Shaking Story

A man who had sinned terribly approached me. When I heard about his sin, I explained the gravity of his actions and chastised him severely. Then I added, "You should know that if the Beit Hamikdash would be standing, the Sanhedrin would kill you for what you did."

But sadly to say, I could not discern a trace of remorse on his face.

Suddenly, we were interrupted by the sound of screeching brakes. Then sounds of tumult reached our ears from the street below. A pedestrian had been crossing the street and did not notice a car speeding toward him. Had the driver not slammed on the brakes, the man would have been killed on the spot. I turned to the man sitting in my office. "See the great miracle which happened to this man," I pointed out. "If the car's brakes would have failed, the man would have died immediately."

I watched in wonder as the man began to tremble, his teeth chattering violently.

"What happened?" I asked concernedly. "Why are you shaking?"

"Just this week, I was saved from a similar situation," he replied. "I had bought a new car and on one of my very first trips, the brakes suddenly went! I was a hairsbreadth away from death. Only by a miracle did nothing happen to me."

"You should know that due to your sin, you deserved to die. But Hashem had mercy on you and gave you another chance since you might still do teshuvah. Resolve to do teshuvah and Hashem will have mercy on your soul!"

Then and there the man accepted upon himself the yoke of Heaven. After showing him how to make restitution for his deeds, he merited doing complete teshuvah.

I have no doubt that the merit of my fathers stood in this man's stead. Hashem sent a car accident, right outside my window, in order to shake his soul into submission. My words entered his listening ears and succeeded in causing him to improve his ways.

Why bother?

"Please, speak into the ears of the people, and let them borrow, each man from his friend and each woman from her friend, silver vessels and golden vessels" (ibid. 11:2)

Rashi comments: Please, speak: Heb. אֶן-רַבֵּד is only an expression of request. [The verse is saying] I ask you to warn them about this, [i.e., to ask their neighbors for vessels] so that the righteous man, Avraham, will not say He fulfilled with them [His promise] "and they will enslave them and oppress them" (Bereishit 15:13), but He did not fulfill with them "afterwards they will go forth with great possessions."

Many commentators have brought explanations why Hashem found it necessary to beg the people to have them go borrow silver and gold vessels. After all, if there would be an announcement that someone standing outside the hall is distributing large sums of money to everyone, would any person remain inside?

The Maggid of Dubno, zy"a, illustrates with a parable, as was his custom: Once there were two kings who fought each other for a long time, and there was no end in sight to their battle. Until one day they thought about it and decided: Why kill so many of our soldiers? Each one should send one soldier, and the two soldiers should have a match near a pit, and in the end, whoever succeeds in throwing his opponent into the pit will be the winner.

So that is what they did. One side sent a huge soldier, who was enormous, while the other side sent an ordinary soldier, who was not especially big.

The signal was given and the two began to scuffle...The enormous soldier lunged towards his opponent and grabbed him tightly, swung him onto his shoulder and began to march towards the pit. The king of the ordinary soldier, who was throne on the shoulder of his foe, took a deep breath; he was about to lose the war...

When they got close to the pit, the ordinary soldier punched the enormous soldier in the face, and then added another two to three cutting jabs, and finally threw his contender into the pit. Every applauded his victory and a grand ceremony was held in which the soldier was awarded a medal of excellence by the king.

At the end of the ceremony, the king called the soldier over and said: "You deserve a prize for bringing me victory, but really you also deserve to get lashed, since if you knew how to conquer your contender, why did you not do so right at the start? I nearly died from anxiety when I saw your opponent getting ready to crush you!"

The soldier replied: "Your honor, the king, did you see what the other soldier looked like?" "Yes," answered the king. "He was enormous!"

"So," the soldier explained, "why should I carry him on my back all the way to the pit? Am I a porter? That's why I let him carry me on his shoulders all the way to the pit, and only in the last moment I threw him into it..."

In other words, the main booty from Egypt was the booty of the Sea, as it is stated (Shir HaShirim 1): "We will make you rows of gold with studs of silver." Chazal explain (Shir HaShirim Rabbah 1): "We will make you rows of gold – is referring to the booty of the Sea; with studs of silver – is referring to the booty of Egypt. Just as there is a big difference between silver and gold, so too the booty at the Sea exceeded greatly the booty of Egypt." Thus, the main salvation came at the Sea, because until then the Egyptians were still pursuing them, and also the main booty was acquired at the Sea.

Consequently, when Moshe Rabbeinu approached Bnei Yisrael before they left Egypt and asked them to borrow from the Egyptians some of their silver vessels and golden vessels (because the bulk of the riches they would receive at the Sea), the Jews argued: "Why do we have to carry the possessions of the Egyptians to the Sea? After all, the Egyptians will carry everything to us to the Sea."

This is why it is stated here "Please speak," as an expression of request. Hashem told Moshe to request of Bnei Yisrael that in any case they should take the vessels. Why? So that the righteous man, Avraham, will not say He fulfilled with them [His promise] "and they will enslave them and oppress them" (Bereishit 15:13), but He did not fulfill with them "afterwards they will go forth with great possessions..."

The Haftarah

"The word that the Lord spoke"

(Yirmeyahu 46)

The connection to the parashah: The haftarah tells about the punishment of Pharaoh and the destruction of the land of Egypt, which is similar to what is related in the parashah about the last three plagues and its destruction of Egypt.



Guard Your Tongue

The Power of Speech

Even if he heard it from two people

Just as it is forbidden to accept lashon hara if he heard the defamation from one person, the same applies if he heard it from two or more people.

He may not believe them, because even according to what they claim that so and so did something wrong, they transgress the prohibition of "You shall not go around as a gossipmonger amidst your people," which also prohibits hearing derogatory information which is true.



Chazak U'Baruch

Who truly loves his fellow Jew?

The term love is actually an abstract term. It defines emotion, which has no clear limits. Therefore, we need to clarify for ourselves what the commandment, "Love your fellow as yourself" obligates us. How does love of our fellow Jew manifest itself? How can it be practically applied?

This point was raised by Rabbi Moshe Leib of Sassov, zt"l, who found an original answer to the question, as he himself told his followers one day:

"I want you to know that the true meaning of loving one's fellow I learned from a drunken gentile in the tavern."

The followers raised their eyebrows in amazement. "Really?" They could not imagine this. And then Rabbi Moshe Leib began his tale:

Once on my way from my house to the Beit Midrash, when I passed by the local tavern, crammed with drunken peasants, I noticed through the window a gentile rise from his seat, drunk like Lot, and stagger over to his fellow who sat at the other end of the tavern. He began to hug and kiss him with great love.

"Tell me the truth, Ivan, and only the truth!" his friend asked him; "Do you really love me so much?"

"Of course! I love you as much as I love myself!" answered the drunkard. But his friend persisted: "How could that be? How could it be that you love me as much as you love yourself if you do not know what I really lack?"

At that moment, Rabbi Moshe Leib of Sassov explained, I understood what true love really was. I understood what true love of a fellow Jew entails: When a Jew truly loves his friend, he is supposed to sense exactly what he needs to be happy and understand why he is unhappy and filled with anxiety and depression!

This is because when a person is concerned about a personal issue, he knows exactly what he needs, because he loves himself... If he loved his fellow as much as he loved himself, he would perceive exactly what his friend needs as well, just as if it was he who was lacking something. He would even know exactly how to help his friend with whatever he needs.

From this we learn that the basic requirement of loving one's fellow is to practice sensitivity. One should sense his fellow's feelings and perceive what he is lacking. He must understand what he feels and recognize his distress. This attests to true love, and as a result, he will succeed in assisting his fellow in time of need...

Treasures

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



Achieving greatness by teaching others

"The L-rd said to Moshe: "Come to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, in order that I may place these signs of Mine in his midst" (Shemot 10:1)

From the Zohar (see part II 34a) it seems that "Come to Pharaoh" implies "I and you," referring to Hashem and Moshe.

We may explain the words of the Zohar to signify the virtue of Hashem's emissaries. When Moshe Rabbeinu set out on his mission to Pharaoh, Hashem accompanied him and protected him. He was actually engaged in the mission of Hashem, fulfilling the words of the Torah. The Torah was given to Am Yisrael, and Chazal say (Shemot Rabbah 33:1) that Hashem as if comes together with the Torah. When Hashem bestowed the Torah to Bnei Yisrael, Hashem did not part with the Torah, and Hashem's Presence continues to constantly reside with the Torah. Consequently, when one engages in Torah, Hashem's Presence resides with the person learning.

This helped me resolve a question that the Rosh Yeshiva of Kol Torah, Rabbi Moshe Yehudah Shlesinger, shlit"a, asked me. He raised the issue that once tzaddikim would isolate themselves to concentrate on their service of Hashem. Also the Gemara states that "The pious men of old used to wait an hour before praying and an hour after praying in order that they might concentrate their thoughts upon their Father in Heaven." Thus they had a lot of time for their personal growth. But today the Rabbis and Rosh Yeshivot are burdened with the needs of the people, spreading Torah and teaching their students. From where can they find time to advance in their personal growth?

I replied to the Rosh Yeshiva that by turning to the needs of the people, and dedicating himself to them, molding them to be proper servants of Hashem, he thereby improves himself and advances in his service of Hashem, as is stated in Tanna D'vei Eliyahu (Zuta 17), "Torah scholars increase peace in the world, as it is said: 'And all your children will be students of Hashem, and your children will have peace – do not read 'your children,' but 'your builders.'" This signifies that by Torah scholars building and improving their students and their fellow people, they build themselves. It is also stated (ibid. 42:21), "Hashem desired, for the sake of its [Israel's] righteousness, that the Torah be made great and glorious." All that the Rabbis do serves to spread Torah and glorify it.

This can be compared to a housewife who busily cooks and dedicates herself to the needs of her household. She serves them during mealtimes, while she herself hardly tastes anything. Nevertheless, she does not feel hungry, because she feels fulfilled in her role of caring for her children and providing for their needs. Likewise, when the Rabbis provide for their disciples, they feel fulfilled.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



The plague that made a lasting impression on the little children

The midrash brings regarding the pasuk, “And in order that you tell into the ears of your son,” that this is referring to the plague of locusts, as it is stated by the prophet Yoel, “Tell your children about it.”

We need to clarify what is unique about the plague of locusts that we are commanded to tell our children about it?

In the sefer “Chiddushei HaRadal” there is a beautiful answer:

Perhaps this is because it is the nature of children to play with locusts and grasshoppers, as it is brought in Gemara in Masechet Shabbat, that it was customary to save the grasshoppers for the little children to play with (instead of Lego and Playmobil).

That is why the younger children are told about the plague of locusts more than about the others.

Men of Faith

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

Mrs. Altit’s young son, Chaim, was very sick. Suddenly he turned deathly ill and was hovering between life and death. When his mother realized how serious the situation was, she raised her hands to Hashem and cried, “Elokim! I have only one son!”

Afterward, she removed the seven bracelets from her hand and resolved to present them as a gift to Rabbi Chaim Hakatan, zya”a, since she knew that he would use them to assist poor people. In this merit she begged Hashem to help her son recover.

A short while later, the doctor arrived at her house and checked the boy. He said, “Mrs. Altit! Your son has only one more hour to live.”

The mother, however, was fortified with staunch faith in Hashem. “Your job,” she told the doctor, “is to heal the sick and save their lives, and not to determine who will live and who will die. It is only Hashem who performs the wondrous miracles of granting life, as well as taking it away, in due time.”

Not long after, the child started sweating profusely. Then, he began to move his limbs and

even asked for a drink of water. In the end, he rose from his bed and began to walk. Everyone clearly saw the miracle in his recovery, and there was great rejoicing.

Early the next morning, at six o’clock, there was knocking on the door. At the entrance, Rabbi Chaim stood together with his attendant. He asked, “Is everything alright?”

“Yes, everything is fine,” answered Mrs. Altit.

“If so,” the tzaddik reminded her, “give me the seven bracelets that belong to me.”

Mrs. Altit was amazed! She turned to the holy Rabbi Chaim, zya”a, and asked: From where does your honor know about it? I did not utter the words from my mouth, but only thought about it in my heart.

The tzaddik replied: True, but exactly at the time when you offered your prayer, I was missing that very sum of money to repay my debts. So when you thought to donate the money, Hashem transmitted your thoughts to my mind, so that I should be aware of it.