

Vayakhel Pekudei

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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" a



Maskil L'David

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

The Observance of the Shabbat

“Moshe called the whole community of the children of Israel to assemble, and he said to them: “These are the things that the L-rd commanded to make. Six days work may be done, but on the seventh day you shall have sanctity, a day of complete rest to the L-rd; whoever performs work thereon [on this day] shall be put to death”

(Shemot 35:1-2)

“Take from yourselves an offering for the Lord; every generous hearted person shall bring it, [namely] the Lord’s offering: gold, silver, and copper” (ibid. 5)

Parshat Vayakhel begins with the command that Moshe commanded Bnei Yisrael regarding the observance of the Shabbat, although the main purpose in gathering the people was for the purpose of getting the people to donate toward the building of the Mishkan. However, we find that first the Torah warns about the prohibition of doing work on Shabbat, and only afterwards mentions Moshe’s request to Am Yisrael for donations of silver and gold and copper for the lofty purpose of building the Mishkan.

The order of the events in the Torah is not coincidental, but it teaches us important lessons.

Moshe Rabbeinu wanted to instill in Bnei Yisrael the knowledge that even though he is now assembling them for the purpose of having them donate toward the building of the Mishkan, in any event, keeping the Shabbat is far more important than the mitzvah of charity. Unfortunately, we find that there are people who grossly trample the sanctity of the Shabbat, but in order to quiet their conscience they disperse their wealth and assets to generously help the needy. These people console themselves, that although they do not observe Shabbat, they are very generous in giving charity, and it is stated (Mishlei 10:2), “But charity will save from death.” Therefore, they are sure that no harm

will come upon them.

Upon speaking of the mitzvah of Shabbat for the first time, Moshe Rabbeinu emphasized that although the mitzvah of charity is very important, and one who is meticulous in this mitzvah merits great rewards, and we know what Rabbi Chaim Vital, zy”a, the great Kabbalist, wrote (Sha’arei Kedushah part 2:7), that every mitzvah can be lost by committing a sin, but the mitzvah of tzedaka can never be lost despite sinning. However, Moshe wanted to instill the awareness that Shabbat is no less important, and even more important, since it commemorates that Hashem created the world in six days and on the seventh day He rested. Thus, we too must honor the day on which Hashem rested from His work and sanctify it to Him.

We find that Betzalel was commanded to build the Mishkan, and it is stated in the holy sefarim that at the time when Betzalel constructed the Mishkan, he built it with mystical plans based on the holy Names of Hashem with which Hashem had created the world in the six days of creation. Since the Mishkan was permeated with the holy Names, it was forbidden for Am Yisrael to engage in its construction on Shabbat, so that they would not desecrate the holy Names therein. Abstaining from work on Shabbat demonstrates that although Hashem’s resting place was built from the contributions of Am Yisrael, nevertheless, on the seventh day it is forbidden to work, since the observance of Shabbat is more important than the mitzvah of charity.

This is not meant to lessen the importance of performing the mitzvah of charity, but it teaches us about the overriding importance of observing Shabbat, and how meticulous one should be in keeping it.

Likewise, if a person encounters trouble, he should examine his deeds to check what sin he committed to deserve it. If he checked but did not find any sin, he should blame it on the sin of bittul Torah (wasting time from the study of Torah) (Berachot 5a). Bittul Torah is most severe if committed on Shabbat, since then a person has spare time and he should devote his time to studying Torah on Shabbat.

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Hillulah of Tzaddikim

23 - Rabbi Menachem Siriro

24 - Rabbi Eliyahu Hachohen Author of
"Shevet Mussar"

25 - Rabbi Shabtai Korech Sefarim

26 - Rabbi David Halevi Author of "Turei
Zahav"

27 - Rabbi Shlomo Elyashiv Author of
"Leshem Sheva v'Achlama"

28 - Rabbi Moshe Chevrani Rosh Yeshiva
of Chevron

29 - Rabbi Gershon Liebman Rosh Yeshiva
of Ohr Yosef



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 Taste of Abstinence

The following narrative, which occurred in my youth, taught me a valuable lesson. I was walking through the Moroccan market with Father, zy"á. It was during the season of a specific plant which was very popular cooked together with meat. It was nutritious and high-quality.

Even though Father was completely detached from all types of materialistic pleasures, he had the custom of thanking Hashem for all new creations. He therefore purchased this plant so that he could make the blessing Shehecheyanu after it was properly prepared.

After it was made and served to him, Father tasted it and then pushed away the plate. We tried our best to convince him to eat this healthful food. But Father flatly refused. He stated that by making the Shehecheyanu blessing over it and taking a taste, he had satisfied all of his interest in this food. After thanking Hashem for it, he saw no need in continuing to eat it.

Father's abstinence from physical pleasures made a deep impression on me. I constantly try to follow in his ways, minimizing materialism and maximizing spirituality instead.

The Haftarah

"And the word of the L-rd came to me, saying: Son of man!"

(Yechezkel 36)

The connection to the parashah: This Shabbat we read "Parashat Parah," in which the mitzvah of Parah Adumah and the purification process of one who is tamei with the ash of the Red Heifer is explained. This is similar to the haftarah which describes how Hashem will purify Bnei Yisrael with the ash of the Parah Adumah in the Future.



Guard Your Tongue

The Power of Speech

Inhibiting the service of Hashem

If the Torah scholar he spoke disgracefully about is a certified Rabbi of the city, the offense is much more serious. Despite the fact that he has to consider him wise and act with respect toward him, since he relies on his rulings; by slandering him, he inhibits the service of Hashem of the rest of the people. This is because the people will claim, "Why should we follow his rulings and take our cases to him?" Consequently, each person will end up doing as he pleases.

The destiny of our success is according to the Torah

When one is referred to as a "Rosh Yeshiva," it implies that he is the "Rosh – head" of the yeshiva. Similarly, when we say about a person that he is an "Av Beit Din," it signifies that he is most prominent and supreme to the other judges. L'havdil, when we refer to a person as the "chief of thieves," this implies that he is the most corrupt and lowest of all other thieves.

Rabbi Moshe Yakov Rabikov, zt"l, also known as the "sandlar – shoemaker," uses this example to explain his point: On Shabbat we say "Most coveted of days, You called it," which implies that Shabbat is the best day and loftier than the other days of the week. But to discern whether this is an honorary title or, Heaven forbid, the opposite, depends on how the person behaves during the six weekdays. If the person engages in Torah and conducts himself according to the Torah and its mitzvot, then the title "Most coveted of days" is honorary. But if, Heaven forbid, he wastes his time and engages in corrupt activities, portraying poor character traits, then the reference to Shabbat as the "Most coveted of days" signifies disgrace about Shabbat. This is as is stated in the Torah: "These are the things that the L-rd commanded to make. Six days..." If a person behaves properly during the six weekdays, then "on the seventh day you shall have sanctity" – he will become even more elevated and sanctified from the sanctity of Shabbat.

It is told about the gaon and tzaddik, the author of the "Chafetz Chaim," zya"á, that he once arrived on one of his trips to a city where a huge factory was located, which employed many of the city's residents. But the owner of the factory, who was unaffiliated with Torah and mitzvot, insisted that the factory remain open on Shabbat.

The Chafetz Chaim heard about this and decided to go talk to the owner and explain to him the magnitude of the sin of desecrating Shabbat. The owner of the factory replied: Every day that my business is open I earn four thousand rubles. Do you want me to lose such a sum of money every single Shabbat?

The Chafetz Chaim answered him: Is it preferable for you to lose the whole factory because of the desecration of the Shabbat? After all, the Torah states explicitly, "Six days you may work, and on the seventh day you shall rest." Is it not clear? Why does the Torah tell us that we may work during the week; it would have been sufficient to only prohibit working on Shabbat, and naturally we would do as we please the rest of the weekdays.

However, this is what the Torah is teaching us: If you wish to have a job on the six weekdays, then rest on Shabbat. Otherwise, also on the six weekdays you will not have work!

The man scoffed: Does the Rebbe really believe that some verse in the Torah can determine the fate of my business?... Having no choice, the Chafetz Chaim left. Not long later, the Bolsheviks invaded Russia and confiscated all his factories. He miraculously escaped with his life, but remained completely destitute. Then he sent a letter to the Chafetz Chaim and admitted wholeheartedly: Now I see that you are right, since a pasuk in the Torah did determine the fate of factories!...



Chazak U'Baruch

It would be appropriate for each of us to live with the realization of "How can I repay the L-rd for all His favors upon me?" If we had to "repay" the L-rd for all the favors that He grants us, we would never be able to return even a small fraction of what we owe. However, Hashem does not ask us to "repay" Him for all the good that He bestows upon us. He does not expect us to repay Him and He knows how limited our capabilities are. There is only one thing He requests of us: That we should love one another!

Can we refuse Him?

The Chafetz Chaim illustrates the point with an enlightening parable:

"What can this be compare to? To an enormously wealthy father, who was wealthier than any other person in the world, and he had a few sons. As long as the sons would remain dependent upon their father, they would not have to worry about their sustenance for the rest of their lives. The sons, however, grew up and sought to be independent, trying their luck in business.

The sons did well, and they met with success in all their endeavors. Nevertheless, they envied each other. Instead of rejoicing in each other's success and wishing each other well, the brothers spent their days and nights scheming how to become more rich and successful than their fellow brother.

One day a wise man turned to the brothers and said to them:

I do not understand you. Why do you spend your time and efforts from morning till night trying to surpass each other? You might go on like this all your life in an endless futile pursuit! Today one of you will surpass the others, and tomorrow it will be someone else. If you would be wise, you would begin to love one another and seek each other's good. Then you will make your father so happy that he will open all his treasure chests for you, and you would not have to work at all; you would have enough to provide for all your needs for generations to come!

The moral is obvious.

Hashem is the King of all kings, and to Him is the greatness, the strength, the splendor, the triumph, and the glory. The entire world belongs to Hashem, and it is in His Hand to make anyone great or strong. If we would find favor in His Eyes, we would not lack a thing, since He is able to provide all our needs in abundance, as well as the needs of all our children to the end of days, without us having to bother or worry!

How can we find favor in His Eyes?

We have to do just one simple thing: Love each and every Jew! In this way all the gates will open before us, and the treasures of the King of all kings will be ours and our children's forever!

Treasures

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



The essence of a Jew

The holy Torah is compared to a tree, as it is stated (Mishlei 3:18) "It is a tree of life for those who grasp it, and those who draw near it are fortunate." We need to clarify what the connection is between the Torah and a tree that the Torah compared them.

Upon reflection, I remembered suddenly that when I was a child, I once cut away at a tree until there were no leaves left. I innocently assumed that I had chopped the tree to death, but to my surprise, a few months later the tree came to life and began to sprout fresh green leaves.

This is the connection between the Torah and the tree. Just as the tree renews itself and is always able to grow new leaves, even if its branches are chopped extensively; as long as the roots are not destroyed it can revive itself and sprout new life. Similarly, the Torah is rooted in each and every Jew, whether he is aware of it or not. Therefore, even if a person behaves like a complete rasha, the day will come when he will be aroused to do teshuvah and return in wholehearted repentance to his Father in Heaven.

We see proof of this by many people who during the year live in an unruly manner, casting off the yoke of Heaven entirely. Nevertheless, we see that those same people, despite their derision for Torah and mitzvot, come to the Beit Haknesset on Yom Kippur and fast throughout the day. This testifies to their Jewish roots, which continues to thrive within. Because this root still exists in the essence of every Jew, even though he is presently very far from anything that resembles Jewish, one day his heart will awaken, and he will return in complete teshuvah to his Father in Heaven.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



A face reflects it all

When Moshe concluded his words to Bnei Yisrael, the Torah emphasizes that “The entire community departed from before Moshe” (Shemot 35:20)

Rabbi Eliyahu Lopian explains this: One departure does not resemble the other. According to a person’s appearance, according to his behavior and manner, it can be clearly obvious from where he came and from where he departed. If one sees a man coming out of a place, and his whole body is swaying, and he speaks coarsely and boorishly, it is clear that he must have come out of a tavern where he got drunk. On the other hand, if one sees a person come out of a certain place, and he has a serious expression, with refinement, and calculates his actions, it is a sign that he emerged from a study hall of Torah, steeped in the fear of Hashem. This is what the Torah emphasizes about Bnei Yisrael, that it was evident that they had departed from before Moshe...

Men of Faith

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

The Myara family and the Zubiv family were neighbors, living in the city of Mogador side by side, in peace and harmony.

While the Myara family was imbued with unquestioning faith in tzaddikim, following their direction implicitly, their neighbors, the Zubiv family, were not infused with such faith.

The incident began following a busy day full of bustling activity. On that day, the daughter of the Myara family gave birth to a boy. At the end of the exciting day, the family went to sleep exhausted.

At night, Rabbi Chaim had a dream and immediately woke up, washed his hands according to halachah, and hurried over to the Myara family’s house. The tzaddik knocked on their door, but there was no answer.

They were all in a deep sleep and did not hear anything. Rabbi Chaim did not give up. He knocked on the door repeatedly until someone responded.

Without wasting a moment, the Rav ordered the family to grab a number of essential items and get out of the house immediately. Even the day-old baby had to be evacuated.

Then, Rabbi Chaim hurried to the Zubiv family and ordered them to leave their house as well. However, the family members did not listen to the Rav.

“What is this dream that you dreamed? Why should we leave our house? Is it safer outside? Dreams are deceiving! Our house is our best shelter and we refuse to leave.”

Rabbi Chaim begged them repeatedly, but to no avail.

When he saw that his words were falling on deaf ears, he left them and returned to the Myara family, helping them get organized to vacate their house. He even remained outside with them the entire night, until sunrise.

In the morning, the tzaddik returned with the Myara family to their house. When they got close, they saw a crowd gathered in front of the Zubiv’s house. That is when everything became clear.

The entire building had collapsed late that night. Everyone inside was badly hurt. A terrible tragedy struck the Zubiv family. The father of the house was killed and lay buried under the wreckage.

When Rabbi Chaim heard of the great tragedy, he regretted that he had not persisted in evacuating the Zubiv family from their home. The widow, who sensed the tzaddik’s anguish, told him that he was not to blame at all, since he had done all that he could. Her husband was at fault for not having believed the tzaddik’s warning following his dream about the impending tragedy.

Rabbi Chaim stood by the Zubiv family in their difficult moments, consoling them and assisting them financially for a few years, until they recovered sufficiently to be able to live independently. After a while, the family moved away from Mogador to live near the deceased father’s cousin in Algiers.