

Bamidbar

May 19th 2018
5th of Sivan 5778

749

Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

Pachad David

Published by Mosdot "Orot Chaim U'Moshe" in Israel

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 LéDavid

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

Fire has no effect over angels

"The Levites shall encamp around the Mishkan of the Testimony" (Bamidbar 1:53)

I am always awed when I imagine Bnei Yisrael's encampment around the Mishkan, where the holy Shechinah would reside.

Hashem was in the center and around Him were all of Bnei Yisrael according to their Tribes. They sat in individual camps under their unique Flags, basking in the glow of the Shechinah. Who were closest to Hashem? Of course, the Tribe of Levi, who had the task of disassembling and erecting the Mishkan, and they were the loftiest people of the nation, teaching Torah and mitzvot to the people, as it is stated (Devarim 33:10), "They shall teach Your ordinances to Yakov, and Your Torah to Israel." Therefore, they merited close proximity and camped around the Mishkan itself.

One who contemplates this matter may wonder: Is it not stated about Hashem (Devarim 4:24), "For the L-rd your G-d is a consuming fire." Then how was it possible for Bnei Yisrael to camp around the Mishkan, which is the place of the Shechinah, and not get burned from the consuming fire? How were they able to bear facing the brilliance of Hashem's light, which is indescribable? Wasn't Moshe Rabbeinu the only human being who merited drawing close to the consuming fire and not getting burned?

I would like to suggest the following: When Bnei Yisrael were in Egypt, they were at their lowest level, because of the immorality surrounded them. When they left Egypt, they rose to great heights and purified themselves after witnessing Hashem's mighty Hand through His wondrous miracles before their eyes. When they reached the Red Sea, they rose to an even greater spiritual level and became entirely purified of their defilement achieving the level of prophecy, as Chazal state (Mechilata), "The maidservant saw at the Sea what Yechezkel ben Buzi did not see of all the 'ma'aseh merkavah.'" It is also stated (Shemot 15:2), "This is my G-d and I will praise Him." Chazal explain (Sotah 11b), that even an infant in his mother's womb pointed at Hashem and saw the holy Shechinah.

However, the Zohar says that Bnei Yisrael merited reaching their greatest heights at the Receiving of the Torah, as the Gemara states (Shabbat 146a), when Bnei Yisrael stood at Mount Sinai, their lustfulness departed entirely, and they became purified and exalted even more than the Heavenly Hosts, until the Ministering Angels came and began to serve them and place crowns on their heads. The Gemara describes (Shabbat 88a) how when Bnei Yisrael gave precedence to "we will do" over "we will hearken," six hundred thousand Ministering Angels came and set two crowns upon each man of Israel.

All of Bnei Yisrael were exalted, and therefore they were able to camp within their Tribes around the Shechinah, even though it was a consuming fire, because they had risen to great heights and shed all their

defilement and impurity. Since they were rid of all lust and evilness, they turned into angels, who do not fear fire, and like Moshe Rabbeinu, a"h, who ascended to heaven and remained there with the angels, Seraphim, and Ar'elim, which are all flames of burning fire, he nevertheless did not get burned, because the defilement of impurity did not cling to him, and he turned into an angel of Hashem.

Upon seeing all this, Bnei Yisrael learned an important lesson about the enormous potential inherent in man. They saw what a low point they had been in at first, and to what heights they had climbed. In the beginning, they were immersed in a spiritual darkness and fog, since the defilement of Egypt had permeated them. But slowly, slowly, they began to rise, until they became absolutely sanctified and got rid of all the impurity by the time they stood at Mount Sinai. Then they were absolutely pure, like angels. Thus they understood that if one would only wish to change and remove the evil from within him, surely he will succeed in rising to great heights, since Hashem instilled in him enormous potential through the Breath that Hashem breathed into man, and therefore a holy spirit rests within him. A person just has to fan the flames of the spirit; to take the initiative to improve, then Hashem will assist him greatly, as Chazal say (Shabbat 104a), "If one comes to cleanse himself, he is helped."

Many of those who knew Rabbeinu Chaim Pinto, zya" a, relate that there were times when they were afraid to look at him directly, because of the brilliant light that shone from his countenance. Also my mother, shetichye, tells about my father, zya" a, that many times she saw flames of fire in his room, and fearing the fire, she ran in, but suddenly saw nothing... Certainly it was an intense spiritual fire that by virtue of their greatness in Torah and the sanctity of our holy Fathers, zya" a, who cleaved to Hashem, they had the fire of Torah burning within them, and therefore the glow of the Shechinah was visible on their countenance. This was the lofty level that Bnei Yisrael reached when they were encamped around the Mishkan, and consequently they were not afraid from the burning glow of the Shechinah, which resided in the Mishkan nearby.

Every person must strive to sanctify himself in these days of preparation for the Giving of the Torah, and of course, one also has to harbor a great yearning to receive the gift that Hashem desires to give Bnei Yisrael. If a person does not prepare himself properly, and thereby does not demonstrate to Hashem his desire for the Torah, then, G-d forbid, he will resemble the nations who refused to accept the Torah. Therefore, it is important to reinforce one's study of Torah, and meticulously follow a consistent learning schedule, without wasting time. And by doing so everyone will succeed in drawing closer and connecting to Hashem, like the Levi'im, who were privileged to camp in close proximity to the Mishkan.

Chevrat Pinto NYC

207 West 78th Street • New York NY 10024 • U.S.A.
Tel: +1 212 721 0230 • Fax: +1 212 721 0195
hevratpinto@aol.com

Jerusalem • Pninei David

Rehov Bayit Va Gan 8 • Jérusalem • Israel
Tel: +972 2643 3605 • Fax: +972 2643 3570
p@hpinto.org.il

Ashdod • Orh 'Haim Ve Moshe

Rehov Ha-Admour Mi-Belz 43 • Ashod • Israel
Tel: +972 88 566 233 • Fax: +972 88 521 527
orothaim@gmail.com

Ra'anana • Kol 'Ha'im

Rehov Ha'ahouza 98 • Ra'anana • Israel
Tel: +972 98 828 078 • Fax: +972 58 792 9003
kolhaim@hpinto.org.il



Hillulah of Tzaddikim

- | |
|---|
| 5 - Rabbi Yosef Ezra Zlicha |
| 6 - David Hamelech, a"h The sweet singer of Israel |
| 7 - Rabbi Yisrael Ba'al Shem Tov |
| 8 - Rabbi Moshe Chaim of Iraq |
| 9 - Rabbi Yakov Chaim Sofer
Author of "Kaf HaChaim" |
| 10 - Rabbi Ezra Harrari-Rafal |
| 11 - Rabbi Yitzchak Yakov Weiss Rosh Beit Din of Yerushalayim |



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 Labor of Love

On a trip to New York, I met the esteemed Rosh Yeshiva of a prominent Torah institution. "How does one grow in Avodat Hashem?" he inquired.

For a moment, I was speechless. "Does the Rosh Yeshiva really mean to ask me this?"

"Definitely," he replied with tranquility. Then he added, "True, I spend all my days immersed in Torah study. I can quote page upon page of Gemara by heart. When I lecture to my students, I cite various sayings of the Sages and words of mussar. But to my dismay, I personally do not feel any spiritual elevation."

Just as a person who lacks a sense of taste demonstrates a physical problem, so, too, one who remains unaffected by divrei Torah demonstrates that he lacks spiritual taste buds. He must nip this problem in the bud. One who does not digest his food properly must seek immediate medical attention. A Jew who is not affected in a positive way when studying Torah must find a cure for this malady.

Thus I responded, "Just as Bnei Yisrael needed time to prepare for Matan Torah, so must every person prepare himself appropriately before undertaking Torah study. This preparation is called a burden, for it does not come easily. Only afterward, can one hope to feel spiritually elevated."

I thought for a moment and then continued, "When you make blessings prior to eating, do you think of the meaning of your words? Do you consider before Whom you are standing, with Whom you speak, and Whom you are thanking for the satisfying food? It is not a simple matter to invest thought and contemplation into each and every berachah we make, but this is the definition of work. If you follow this prescription, you are sure to see the cure to your spiritual ills."

When we make blessings, we say, "Blessed are You." Isn't the word You inappropriate for One as lofty as Hashem? But Hashem, in spite, or maybe because of, His greatness, wants us to feel close to Him. For this reason, He allows us to speak to Him in this familiar way, like a son speaking to his father.

But when a person prays without proper intention, he fails to consider the tremendous privilege he has in coming closer to Hashem, the King of the world. For this, he will be held accountable in the Heavenly Tribunal. Hashem will demand of him, "How did you dare to address me with the familiar You? You never attempted to recognize Me like a Father."

In order to feel closeness to Hashem, one must invest effort. He must constantly feel the Heavenly yoke upon his shoulders. Regarding Hashem as the lofty King He is, brings one to greater levels in spirituality.

The ways of Hashem are hidden

When we contemplate the number of people in each Tribe we find that the Tribe of Dan was the largest Tribe, except for the Tribe of Yehudah. This is the reason that the Tribe of Dan was at the outskirts of all the camps, because it was the largest in numbers, so they traveled in the back, and anyone who lost an object would return it to Dan, as is described in the Yerushalmi (Eiruvin 85a).

How did they merit this?

Rabbi Yechezkel Levenstein, zt"l, the Mashgiach of the Yeshiva of Ponovezh said that upon reflection there is an important lesson to be learned, since when the Tribe of Binyamin went down to Egypt he had a big family that numbered ten children, so according to all logic, his Tribe should have been blessed with many offsprings. On the other hand, the Tribe of Dan that was comprised of only one child when they went down to Egypt, who was also deaf and challenged, it is logical that a small Tribe would emerge from him. However, against all logic, Binyamin numbered thirty-five thousand four hundred, while the Tribe of Dan numbered sixty-two thousand seven hundred, almost two times the largest Tribe!

The Chafetz Chaim commented at one of his lectures in his house on Shabbat about an incredible event that occurred in Galicia. There was a custom among the local Jews that they would gather together every Shabbat prior to the evening service of Motzei Shabbat to recite Tehillim in the Beit Haknesset.

One Shabbat, a man entered the Beit Haknesset and saw how another person was standing in a corner and reciting Tehillim with such fervor from the depths of his heart, until he got caught up in the devotion and the earnest recitation, and he too began to recite Tehillim with wholehearted emotion. Thus they both cried without knowing what the other one was crying and praying for.

After the evening prayer was over, the congregant turned to the man that had inspired him and told him that he had seen him so devotedly reciting Tehillim, he was curious: What problem was troubling him that he was praying so hard?

The man answered: I have a daughter who is of marriageable age, but I do not have money for her marriage expenses and therefore, she is sitting at home, and there is nothing I can do but recite Tehillim and beg Hashem to send His salvation.

When the congregant heard his words, he said to him: "Listen, I have a son who is G-d fearing and virtuous, but I have no money to give. So let us make a match between our children."

Thus, their descendants married and they had four sons, who all turned out to be great Torah leaders.

Here we see that a person should not rely at all on his logic, and he has no reason to despair and feel unfortunate; he should strengthen his faith and pray wholeheartedly, and he will merit the assistance of Hashem.

The Haftarah

"The number of the Children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea..."

(Hoshea 2:1-22).

The connection to the parashah: Hoshea prophesies that the Children of Israel will increase to be as numerous as the sand on the seashore, which cannot be counted. This correlates to the "Book of Countings" (Bamidbar) that mentions the numbers and the counting of Bnei Yisrael.



Guard Your Tongue

The Power of Speech

Rebuking in a gentle manner

Chazal teach us (Shabbat 54b), "Whoever can forbid his household [to commit a sin] but does not, is seized for [the sins of] his household," and he is punished for them.

Therefore, a person should always rebuke his family in these matters of guarding one's tongue from speaking lashon hara and rechilut, but only in a gentle manner. He should explain to them the enormous punishment for this in the future, and the huge reward for one who is careful to refrain from it.



Chazak U'Baruch

We are dedicating the section of "Chazak U'Baruch" this week to improving our preparations for proper prayer through an extraordinary lesson from the holy Ba'al Shem Tov, whose hillula is this week.

A wondrous story is brought in the pamphlet "Mishkenotecha Yisrael," which gives us a glimpse into the exalted conduct of the Ba'al Shem Tov, zya"n, in his special preparations before prayer, in which he would praise and glorify, plead and beseech the Creator of the world in favor of the entire nation as well as for individuals:

Not far from the town of Medzibozh, on the road leading to the forest, a spring of water materialized miraculously, which to this day is still referred to, also by the local non-Jews, as "Rabinova Krinitza," which means in Ukrainian, "the spring of the Rabbi."

The spring is famous, and many people travel there to see the miracle with their own eyes. A small stream of water flows across the field, and it is impossible to identify its source, just as one cannot identify where it ends. Many insist on drinking its waters as a segulah for material and spiritual success.

The source of the spring and the reason for its special sanctity is revealed in the following story:

One day, the Ba'al Shem Tov invited his devoted disciple, Rabbi Yakov Yosef Cohen of Polonoye, zt"l, to join him on a journey out of the city, in which other illustrious followers also participated.

On their way back, since it had become late, the Ba'al Shem Tov and his entourage stopped near the forest outside the city to pray Minchah. The Ba'al Shem Tov wanted to wash his hands in preparation for the prayer, but realized that all the water from their jug that they had taken with them had finished. The disciples dispersed to search for some source of water, but could not find a trace.

When the disciples had despaired of the search and returned empty-handed, the Ba'al Shem Tov looked up at the sky, which was quickly darkening, and when he realized that soon the time for the afternoon service would pass, he turned around and began walking alone into the thick forest.

His disciple, Rabbi Yakov Yosef, set out after his Rebbe.

In the dimness of the forest, the Ba'al Shem Tov laid down his staff and leaned it against one of the tree trunks. Then, at once, he fell flat down on the ground. Rabbi Yakov Yosef became alarmed! He never saw his Rebbe flat on the ground before, and landing with such a great thud. What self-sacrifice!

Suddenly, he heard a heartbreaking wail. Yes! It was the voice of the Ba'al Shem Tov, crying from the depths of his heart.

"Ribbono Shel Olam! I beg of you, please have mercy and provide us with water to wash our hands before the Minchah prayer, for if not, it is better that I die! Cause me to die rather than forcing me to transgress, G-d forbid, the words of our Sages, of blessed memory!"

Rabbi Yakov Yosef's hair stood on an end from fear. His heart seemed to stand still. The Ba'al Shem Tov, zya"n, rose from the ground and took his staff in his hand, and walked back to his group of followers. Then, just behind where they stood, three steps away from where their wagon was waiting, a spring of water appeared before their eyes...

"They have eyes, but cannot see!" declared the Ba'al Shem Tov jokingly. "Here next to us we have a fountain of fresh water, and we went to search for it all over."

The followers looked on in amazement. Everyone washed their hands and began their prayers. But only Rabbi Yakov Yosef knew the real secret. Only he witnessed what had transpired only a few minutes earlier in the thick of the forest.

Such self-sacrifice, to the extent of pleading, "it is better that I die," just in order to fulfill a Rabbinical directive, Rabbi Yakov Yosef had never witnessed before, and until his last day, he never ceased to be overwhelmed by it.

Later, he realized that this was one of the main reasons for his utter devotion to the Ba'al Shem Tov, and he was recorded for posterity as an absolute Chassid.

Treasures

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



Who is considered a Levi?

"Only the tribe of Levi you shall not number, and you shall not reckon their sum among the children of Israel!" (Bamidbar 1:49)

We may wonder: why really were the Levi'im not counted together with the other Tribes?

The Gemara explains (Bava Batra 121a) that the legion of the king deserves to be counted alone.

In other words, the Tribe of Levi was the chosen and most important Tribe, since they had not sinned with the Golden Calf, and therefore, they deserved greater affection from the Creator of the Universe. They were the leaders and mentors of Bnei Yisrael, as Moshe Rabbeinu, a"n, said about them (Devarim 33:10), "They shall teach Your ordinances to Yakov, and Your Torah to Israel."

These are the words of the Rambam, z"l, (Hilchot Shemittah v'Yovel perek 13, halachah 12): The Tribe of Levi was singled out in order to serve Hashem, to do His work and teach His righteous ways and His true judgment to the people, as it is stated, "They shall teach Your ordinances to Yakov." Therefore, they were distinguished from the rest of the people; they did not go out to war like the rest of the people, and they did not inherit the land like the rest of the nation. They are the soldiers of Hashem, as it is stated concerning Levi, "May the Lord bless his soldiers," and Hashem chose them, as it is stated, "I am your inheritance and portion."

Thus we see that the Tribe of Levi were the ones who held the Flag of Torah and were most dedicated to it. Therefore, Hashem chose them to be closer to Him than the other Tribes.

I would like to suggest, with the help of Hashem, that the name Levi is from the root word "livuy – accompany," as the Torah states by the birth of the Tribe of Levi (Bereishit 29:34), "Now this time my husband will be attached to me [lit. accompany me] therefore, He named him Levi." In other words, the Tribe of Levi were the most respected people, who were given the privilege to accompany Hashem, like a king whose close ministers surrounding him are the only ones who are allowed to accompany him on his journeys.

The Rambam, z"l (ibid. 13) adds: And not only the Tribe of Levi, but every single person in the world, who desires and chooses to dedicate himself entirely to Hashem and do His work and serve Him and learn His ways, he becomes sanctified like the Holy of Holies." This implies that such a person is also considered a Levite.

But we may ask; after all he belongs to another Tribe. How can he be considered a Levite?

But the reason is that since he aspires to grasp the Flag of Torah and dedicate himself to Hashem and His holy Torah as the rest of the Levites, then from now on he too becomes important and respected and worthy of joining the legion of the King and be called a Levite, accompanying the entourage of the King of kings.

SONG OF PRAISE

The following is a piyut for the Festival of Shavuot from the saintly Rabbeinu Chaim Pinto, zya" a:

יְקַרְה מִפְּנִינִים, תּוֹרַת אֲמַת אֲשֶׁר נָתַן, בָּהּ יִכְנָעוּ
הַזּוֹנִים
אַחַר יִצְרָם אֲשֶׁר נָתַן, יוֹתֵן לְטַבַּח וְכָל נִיצוּצוֹ, אֲנִישֵׁי
צָבָא אִישׁ לֹא בָּזְזוּ.
דְּרִשׁוּ ה' וְעוּזוּ:

מָה אָנוּ מָה חַיִּינוּ, כִּי אָדָם לִהְבֵּל דְּמָה,
אִם רִצּוֹן אֶל-עֲשִׂינוּ, הֲלֹא יֵשׁ לוֹ דִּין קְדִימָה
כַּמָּה רַב טוֹבוֹ, מִי בָּא עַד קִצּוֹ, עֵינַיִם אוֹתוֹ כֹּל חַזוּ.
דְּרִשׁוּ ה' וְעוּזוּ:

חֲסִדְךָ וְצַדִּיקְךָ, מִשֶּׁךְ אֶל-חַי לִישְׁרֵי לֵב
זְמַן קֵץ מְשִׁיחְךָ, דְּרִשְׁתִּי אוֹתוֹ בְּכָל לֵב
עוֹלָם קִנְיָ וְנוֹקָם קִצְצוֹ, אֲזִי חֲסִידִים
יַעֲלִזוּ.
דְּרִשׁוּ ה' וְעוּזוּ:

אֲמַרִי אֶל-מַה נִּמְרָצוּ, מֵעֵינֵיכֶם אֶל יְלִיזוּ
הַתְּקוּשָׁשׁוּ וְקוּשׁוּ, אֶל תְּחַטְּאוּ וְתִרְגְּזוּ, וְתַמִּיד פָּנָיו
בְּקִשׁוֹ.
דְּרִשׁוּ ה' וְעוּזוּ:

חֲלָאת זוֹהֶמַת נָחַשׁ, הִסִּירוּ וְהַטְּהִירוּ
עֲשׂוּ מַעֲשֵׂה פִּנְחָס, אֲשֶׁר קִנְיָ לְשֵׁם יוֹצְרוֹ
עוּרוּ הַיְשָׁנִים וְהַקִּיצוּ, וּבְנֵי בּוֹעֲרִים עִם זוּ.
דְּרִשׁוּ ה' וְעוּזוּ:

יִצְרָר אָדָם בְּחֻמָּה, אֲרַבַּע יְסוּדוֹת בּוֹ חֶבֶר מוֹתְרוֹ
מִבְּהֶמָה
הֵן פִּיהוּ הַמְדַבֵּר, גּוֹבֵר עֲלֵיהֶם תְּמִיד כְּחֻפְצוֹ, מִפְּנֵי
חֲלוֹ וְרָגְזוֹ.
דְּרִשׁוּ ה' וְעוּזוּ:



Men of Faith

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

Don't Do It

Moreinu v'Rabbeinu's brother, Rabbi Avraham, experienced an obvious miracle at the grave of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Hagadol.

He and some of his friends were involved in a fatal car accident. His friends were killed, and through Hashem's mercy only he remained alive. His condition was critical.

Rabbi Avraham promised that if he would survive the accident, he would go to Morocco to pray at the grave of Rabbi Chaim Pinto, as well as by the graves of other tzaddikim there.

A few years later, when he had recuperated sufficiently, with siyata di'Shemaya, and wished to keep his promise, he and his family embarked on the journey to Morocco. His mother, tichyeh, joined the other four members traveling by car, making it altogether a group of five passengers.

Before Rabbi Avraham crossed the border into Morocco, his friends warned him, "You will not be permitted to enter Morocco because you have only an Israeli passport, and relations between the two countries are strained. Even a visa would not be sufficient in the present situation." However, Avraham insisted on proceeding.

"I want to go to Morocco as I promised and pray by the graves of my ancestors, come what may."

The family took the risk and arrived at the Moroccan border. The border police stopped them and asked them for their passports. All the passengers handed over their passports, except for Avraham, who did not have a Moroccan passport. The police peered into the car and said, "We have four passports, and see four passengers. All is in order; you may enter." This

was a fulfillment of the verse "They have eyes, but cannot see," since there were five passengers in the car, but miraculously, one was not seen...

Everyone entered Morocco, even Avraham, who did not have a passport. This was an obvious miracle, in the merit of the tzaddik, and in the merit of Rabbi Avraham's resolve to pray at the graves of his holy ancestors. Once in Morocco, Avraham was able to arrange a new passport, since he was a native Moroccan.

After the accident, Rabbi Avraham was left limping, and he had to use a cane. Every day he would go to the grave of Rabbi Chaim and cry out, begging the great tzaddik to help reverse the situation, until even the local Arabs became accustomed to his howling at the cemetery.

One day, Rabbi Avraham pleaded at the grave desperately, "Rabbi Chaim! I am taking my cane and throwing it away for good, and I want you to perform a miracle for me."

The guard of the cemetery heard Rabbi Avraham's brave petition and warned, "Don't do it! You need the cane in order to walk; how can you discard it?"

However, Rabbi Avraham did not heed the advice of the guard. His faith in the tzaddik was firm, "I am surprised at you. You have been working here for many years; certainly you have heard stories of extraordinary miracles occurring in the merit of the tzaddik. Today you will have another story to tell all those visiting the grave."

This is exactly what happened. After Rabbi Avraham concluded his prayers, he threw the cane far away and began to walk on his legs, unaided. Thus, he continues to walk normally until today.