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Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

# Pachad David

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Son of the tzaddik and miracle-worker Rabbi Moshe Ahron Pinto, z"l, and grandson of the holy tzaddik and miracle-worker Rabbi Chaim Pinto, z"l



Maskil LéDavid

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

## Leading in Kedushah

**"They brought their offering before the L-rd: six covered wagons and twelve oxen"**  
(Bamidbar 7:3)

Rashi comments: Rabbi Nathan says: Why did the Nesi'im see fit to be the first to contribute here, whereas concerning the work of the Mishkan, they were not the first to contribute [but the last]? However, the Nesi'im said as follows, "Let the people contribute what they can, and then we will complement whatever is missing." When they saw that the people had supplied everything—as it says, "And the work was sufficient for them" (Exod. 36:7)—they said, "What is left for us to do now?" So they brought the shoham stones and the filling [stones] for the ephod and the choshen. Therefore, [in order to make amends,] here they were first to contribute. And because they were not commanded to do so, but offered the wagons themselves, Moshe did not accept them from their hands until he was instructed to do so by the Omnipresent, as it is stated, "Take [it] from them, and let them be used in the service of the Tent of Meeting."

It seems puzzling why Hashem did not command Moshe to arrange for wagons to carry the Mishkan in the first place. The beams of the Mishkan were too heavy to carry, so how could they transport them by hand? And if the Nesi'im would not have donated the wagons by themselves, there would have not been any way for them to carry the beams on their journeys and transport them from place to place. Why, then, was this not explicitly commanded by Hashem?

I would like to suggest, with siyatta d'Shemaya, that Hashem intentionally did not command them beforehand in order to give them the opportunity to initiate the offer and demonstrate their desire to do so on their own. Hashem tested them to see if they would realize on their own that the wagons were necessary and thus they would offer to donate them, or would they again now be indifferent and wait until Hashem commands them explicitly. When one's heart is burning with love of Hashem, he wishes to be the leader for all matters of sanctity. He must be like Nachshon, who showed alacrity in serving Hashem, and not wait for others to do it, or to receive an explicit command from Hashem. Since the Nesi'im had been lax in contributing toward the Mishkan, they wished to correct this, and now they hurried to perform the mitzvah, and they took the initiative to donate the wagons in order to carry the Mishkan.

Hashem commanded Moshe Rabbeinu, a"h, "Take [it] from them," because His whole purpose was to test them whether they would demonstrate alacrity in the service of Hashem and initiate to do something on their own, or would they just wait until Hashem would command them to provide the wagons. Indeed, the Nesi'im passed the test and immediately volunteered the wagons, because one whose heart is burning with love for Hashem and His Torah will take the initiative to do more in the service of Hashem, even without being explicitly commanded to do so.

Therefore, the Torah elaborated extensively regarding the korban of the Nesi'im, and listed in great detail

what each of the Nesi'im brought. Likewise, the Torah records in detail about the donation of the wagons, since all this stemmed from their heart's desire and from their good will.

Since they came on their own initiative and good-will and demonstrated love of Hashem to be the first in matters of sanctity, Hashem favored their donation very much, and the Torah did not spare words to publicly tell their praise. From this we learn to show alacrity and contemplate how to improve more and more the service of Hashem, because this proves one's love for Hashem.

How does a person's heart become aroused to take the initiative and demonstrate alacrity in all matters of sanctity?

The answer is by getting excited over the service of Hashem and the study of Torah. And as David Hamelech says (Tehillim 55:15), "In the House of G-d we would walk excitedly." David felt great excitement and enormous yearning to enter the Beit Midrash, and his aspiration in life was (ibid. 27:4), "that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to see the pleasantness of the Lord and to visit His Temple every morning." On one hand, to always be in the Beit Hashem all his life, yet on the other hand, he wished it to be like "to visit His Temple," so that every time it should seem to him like coming for a visit, which is something exciting and new, and thus the excitement and enthusiasm for matters of sanctity would not fade. In this way he would not get caught in the trap of acting out of habit, because then his Torah would be like lip-service, G-d forbid. This then was the request of David Hamelech.

If a person feels such excitement in his service of Hashem, naturally his heart yearns to take the initiative and invest more in Torah and mitzvot, and he becomes the leader in all matters concerning mitzvot and sanctity.

If a person experiences such enthusiasm while sitting in the Beit Midrash, he must continue to feel this even when he is outside, when he leaves the confines of the Beit Midrash. He should always live surrounded by sanctity, and should not leave his lofty conduct only for the Beit Midrash and go outside devoid of spirituality. He should make sure that his sanctity accompanies him every step of his life, as it is stated (Mishlei 3:6), "Know Him in all your ways."

I found an allusion to this in the pasuk (Bamidbar 4:21), "Take a census [lit. raise] of the sons of Gershon, of them too." "Gershon" is derived from the word "hitragshut," or excitement. This implies that one who serves Hashem with excitement and emotion, and his heart burns with the love of Hashem, he merits being raised above all others, and he becomes the first and foremost in all matters of sanctity and is assured of advancing constantly in spiritual achievements.

Similarly, the Nesi'im, whose hearts were full of love for Hashem and enthusiasm to fulfill His will, demonstrated alacrity and were quick to initiate the contribution of the wagons and offer sacrifices to Hashem, Who loved them very much for this donation.

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### Hillulah of Tzaddikim

12 - Rabbi David Pardo Author of  
"Shoshanim L'David"

13 - Rabbi Yakov Mutzafi

14 - Rabbi Nissim Yagen

15 - Rabbi Yediyah Refael Chai  
Abulafiya Author of "Derech  
v'Shalom"

16 - Rabbi Gedalya Nadel

17 - Rabbi Moshe Leib Shapira Author  
of "Taba'ot HaChoshen"

18 - Rabbi Yerucham Levovitz



## Walking in their Ways

Tidbits of faith and trust penned by Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita

### A Picture of the Truth

I once spent the night at the hospital bedside of a man in Argentina. When I stood up from the hard plastic chair where I had spent the night, I turned to open the door of the room to air out the place and stretch my legs a bit. The day was Tishah b'Av, the day we mourn the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash. As such, I wanted to go to the Beit Hakeneset for Morning Prayers, the reading of Megillat Eichah, and the recitation of the kinot.

Just then, a white-bearded, black-robed priest made his way down the corridor. When he noticed me, he seemed to be startled. After a moment, his stance turned to real fear. I was wondering what he was afraid of. In order to calm him down, I smiled at him and wished him well.

But the priest was going from bad to worse. His entire body began trembling. I stretched out an arm to steady him and keep him from falling. Slowly but surely, he regained his equilibrium. He then began stammering in Spanish. I told him that I did not know the language. I am fluent only in French, English, and Hebrew.

Finally, he allowed himself to smile. I helped him enter the room and placed the chair before him. After a few moments, he told me, "Downstairs, in the lobby, there are various pictures of people of different religions. They sport white or grey beards, which add to them an aura of saintliness. When I looked at these pictures, I remained indifferent. But when I saw you, I was immediately overwhelmed with fear and reverence. Why do I feel nothing

toward holy men of other religions, who look similar to you, yet when I see you, I am overcome by fear?"

Since he had initiated this conversation, I decided to turn the tables. I asked what he thought was the answer. He tried to evade responding, but I would not let up. Finally, he spoke. "The difference between Jewish clergymen and those of other religions lies in the fact that the Jews have the true Torah. When the truth stares you in the face, you become afraid." He then lifted his hems and left the room.

As he left, I was lost in thought. Surely after such an eye-opener, the priest would wish to convert to Judaism. But, on second thought, I realized that he would never convert. His neshamah had never stood at Sinai. There are numerous kings and presidents who seek the blessing of the tzaddik and enjoy listening to the prayers of the Jews, yet they do not convert to our religion. This is because they never received the Torah like Bnei Yisrael at Har Sinai, and they never heard Hashem say, "I am your G-d."

A non-Jew who never received the Torah might admire the Jewish rituals. But this admiration does not give him a ticket to join our nation. Conversely, there are righteous converts who join our nation. They contained a spark of a Jewish neshamah. Since this spark stood at Har Sinai, together with all of Bnei Yisrael, after they recognize the truth of Torah, their neshamot bond with the neshamot of our nation, and they convert according to halachah.



### Words of our Sages

#### It was not in vain

**"He shall not eat any product of the grape vine, from seeds to skins"** (Bamidbar 6:4)

"Whoever witnesses a suspected woman," Rashi comments: in her disgrace, "should withhold himself from wine" (Sotah 2a).

Where could a person have seen a Sotah in her disgrace? It was in the Beit Hamikdash. And what was a person doing there? He went there to become more spiritual and refined. Was he in such danger there, to the extent that he would be affected by the scene, and not even by witnessing the sin, but only its punishment?

Rabbi Yisrael of Salant, zt"l, explains that seeing the Sotah is not the reason; it is a signal. He must ask himself: Why was it orchestrated from Heaven for me to see this? Why was the woman brought out precisely now? This was a sign from Heaven that it was not sufficient for him to make a one-time pilgrimage to the Beit Hamikdash, but he should also become a Nazir and withhold himself from wine.

This is as the navi says (Tzefania 3:6), "I have cut off nations; their towers [lit. corners] have become desolate." Sometimes Hashem destroys a nation entirely, and sometimes only a corner, whereas a district or city are demolished and become desolate. And sometimes, as the navi states, "I have destroyed their streets so that no one passes by. Their cities have become waste so that there is no man-so that there is no inhabitant. And why is this? Hashem says, "I said, "Surely you will fear Me, you will accept reproof," and Rashi comments: I brought retribution upon the nations so that you should see and fear, as He concludes, "I said, "Surely you will fear Me." The navi continues, "and her dwelling shall not be cut off," that the homes of Jewish people should not be destroyed. Not only that, but Rashi explains, "All that I ordained upon her: And all the good that I ordained to bring upon her shall not be cut off from her."

A wonderful story is told in this context by the Maggid, Rabbi Yakov Galinsky, zt"l:

A Jew living in China engaged in an import business. He set out on a business trip to Europe, and of course, he stopped on the way in the

city of Radin to receive the blessings of the saintly Chafetz Chaim. He arrived and introduced himself.

The tzaddik's face lit up and he asked: What is doing in China?

He sighed and told him that there were very few Jews there, the religious community was very small, and there was no Rabbi or mentor, no one to decide halachah, and no shochet...

The tzaddik responded: "This is the plight of many in our times. I hear this from the Jews in North America and South America, South Africa and Australia. It is a difficult challenge, but one can overcome it. For people like you I wrote the sefer "Nidchei Yisrael." Take it as a gift. Study it and teach it to others. What else is doing in China?"

He was surprised by the question, but went on to report that a gigantic dam had burst and flooded a huge valley. It washed away many villages and damaged all the crops. Thousands of people drowned, and hundreds of thousands of people were left homeless...

The Chafetz Chaim was shocked, and inquired about every detail. "Oh! That means that the Attribute of Justice is prevailing!...

The man dared to ask: "Rebbi, what does it have to do with us?" The Chafetz Chaim answered, "If someone would stand up on a podium in the center of the city of Warsaw, the capital of Poland, and begin speaking in Yiddish, who would he be addressing?"

The man answered: "The Jews, of course!"

"Why?" the Chafetz Chaim queried. "Aren't the Jews the minority in the big city?"

"Indeed!" the man agreed. "But only they understand the Yiddish language."

"Exactly!" the Chafetz Chaim explained excitedly. "These disasters are signals from Heaven. Who is Heaven signaling? Only those who "understand the language"... What do the Chinese understand about the Attribute of Justice prevailing? It is intended for us, so that we should repent and do teshuvah. But how will we know about the disasters? Therefore, Hashem orchestrates events that a Jew from China should come to Europe and stop in Radin to report to us, so that we should take the lesson to heart and do teshuvah before it is too late..."

## The Haftarah

The haftarah of the week:

### "There was a certain man"

(Shoftim 13)

The connection to the parashah: The haftarah describes the nezirut of Shimshon, and the instructions of the navi to his mother concerning the nezirut. This is similar to the parashah which discusses the subject of the nazir and its mitzvot.



## Guard Your Tongue

The Power of Speech

### Personal example

A person should be cautious that his family should not hear him utter any derogatory remarks about his fellow, because if he himself transgresses, besides for the transgression itself, he also causes great damage to his family, because he will not be able to teach them to abstain from doing so. Generally, the behavior of one's family in these matters reflect the conduct of the head of the family himself. Therefore, he himself must be very careful in this matter, and then it will be good for him in this world and in the Next.



## Chazak U'Baruch

During the end of Rabbi Shmuel Aharon Lieder's life, when he was old, he began to suffer from impaired vision. His doctor suggested getting medical treatment that would restore his vision. But to the surprise of his family, Rabbi Lieder refused to undergo the treatment, saying, "This is an incredible opportunity from Heaven! If I cannot see, I will not transgress in guarding them from seeing forbidden scenes. Is there a greater blessing than this?"

The children were taken aback, and nevertheless, it was hard for them to witness his failing vision. They turned to the Chief Rabbi of Bnei Brak, Rabbi Moshe Leib Landau, shlit"a, and he hurried over to Rabbi Lieder's house and ruled that his duty requires him to make an effort to repair his vision and thus he should undergo the treatment. In order to convince him more, Rabbi Landau offered him a segulah as a gift. He should count the strings of his tzitzit every day, string by string, eight on each corner, totaling thirty-two strings, because it is a segulah for healthy vision. Rabbi Lieder began to do so and later testified that since then his vision had improved immeasurably.

It is incredible how a person almost ninety years-old feared so much for the kedushah of his eyes, that it was worth losing his vision, in order to guard the sanctity of his eyes. It is also a good idea to adopt the segulah of counting the threads of the tzitzit, in order to maintain the good health of one's eyes for many years.

The most central place in our body, whose sanctity and purity we must guard carefully is the brain. As the most central organ in the body, the supreme commander of all other organs, and the primary data processor, the importance of refinement and perfection of the brain is critical. The brain is the chief commander, and according to the brain everything else runs, and it is the automatic system that controls us. In order to begin becoming sanctified, one must begin specifically with the brain, to elevate it and purify it.

In the medical world, the brain is accorded supreme importance, because it is the central "processor" and "server" in our lives. Therefore, great thought is invested in maintaining its health and optimum function, so that it can perform its various critical functions best. The brain comprehends, analyzes and stores what we read and learn, and later, when we need to withdraw the information that we learned, read, or heard, the brain's role is to identify the information from the past that is relevant for the moment, and take it out of our memory, process the information and use it.

The most influential factor of the brain is the eyes. It is not by coincidence that the eyes are the closest organ to the brain. It testifies to the importance of what we see and at the processes taking place deep in our brains. Chazal say that the eyes see and the heart covets. This implies that what we see has a great influence on our desires and aspirations; in other words, what we see turns into our aspirations and desires, which is something that draws us and we connect to.

That is why, in order to improve the brain's performance and make sure it functions best, one must begin with their eyes, which are the most influential factor. Those who wish to merit succeeding in Torah, remembering their studies and living it, and feel connection with Hashem, with the Torah as a center part of their lives, must begin first guarding their eyes. Those who want a developed brain, high quality memory, fast data processing, original ideas, and a brilliant mind, must start by guarding their eyes sanctity. (Excerpt from a lecture delivered by Rabbi Asher Kovel'sky, shlit"a)

## Treasures

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



### Keeping arrogance at a distance

**"Should any man's wife go astray and deal treacherously with him" (Bamidbar 5:12)**

The parashah discusses the issue when a married woman secludes herself with a man, and her husband suspects her of sinning with him and brings her to the Kohen to have her drink the bitter curse bearing waters, in order to ascertain whether she sinned. The Torah states (ibid. 5:27-28) "And it shall be that, if she had been defiled and was unfaithful to her husband, the curse bearing waters shall enter her to become bitter, and her belly will swell, and her thigh will rupture. The woman will be a curse among her people. But if the woman had not become defiled and she is clean, she shall be exempted and bear seed."

Chazal say (Avot 4:21), "Jealousy, lust and honor remove a man from the world."

It is important to know that Chazal did not only determine that these vices remove a person from his portion in the World to Come, but they also remove him from this world. This is because an arrogant person will never admit his mistake and acknowledge his sin. Even when he will be in a situation where the noose is tied around his neck, he will still continue going head-on trying to justify himself, until he destroys himself.

It seems to me that this was the evil of the suspected woman that eventually destroyed her. Because of her arrogance she did not admit her bad deeds and she was not willing to accept blame. Therefore, even when she knew that she would inevitably die after drinking the bitter waters, she still stood her ground, denying any wrongdoing, declaring brazenly, "I am clean of sin," because this is the way of an arrogant person. Arrogant people are willing to remove themselves from this world and from the World to Come, so long as they do not admit their mistake.

For this reason, this parashah is read immediately following the Festival of Shavuot – the Festival of the giving of the Torah, so that a person will realize how despicable the vice of pride is, since it removes him from the world. Moreover, whoever is arrogant, the Torah does not reside within him.

Therefore, the parashah of Sotah and Matan Torah are contiguous. It teaches people to be aware of the vice of arrogance and to make sure to distance themselves from it greatly. One should make sure to acquire the virtue of humility, which is the root of all virtues, and thereby merit that the Torah will reside within him and become his acquisition.

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT



## The Kohanim desire to bless the people

“This is how you shall bless the children of Israel, saying to them” (Bamidbar 6:23)

The word “Koh – this is,” means “Kacha – this is how,” that is, how to bless the people. It is strange that first they were instructed about the blessing to recite, and afterward they were instructed how to recite it.

The “Imrei Emet” explains that this is because the virtue of the Kohanim is “chessed – kindness,” as we are taught, “Be among the disciples of Aharon, loving peace and pursuing peace, loving people, and bringing them closer to the Torah.” The Kohanim are eager at all times to bless Bnei Yisrael, so they do not have to be commanded to bless them, but only how to recite the blessing...

## Men of Faith

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

### A Holy and Awesome Man

Meknes was a city full of learned, scholarly people. The Rav of the city was not pleased with many of the community members, since the scholars of the city considered themselves superior in authority to him and argued with him on every possible occasion. There was often controversy between the Rabbi and other scholars.

Once, when Rabbi Chaim Hakatan came to visit the city, the Rav of Meknes conveyed his displeasure with the scholars of his city, since they did not accord him sufficient honor and disputed his halachic rulings.

Rabbi Chaim told him sympathetically, “This generation does not want to accept the truth. Therefore, many disputes arise that are not for the sake of Heaven. However, as the Rabbi of the city, you must always conduct yourself with integrity and try to minimize dissent as much as possible. Your appointment as Rav by the Beit Din below was preceded by your appointment by the Beit Din Above. Therefore, everyone is obligated to honor this appointment.”

On one occasion, when Rabbi Chaim met one of the scholars who did not accord honor to the Rav of the city, he admonished him and told him that this behavior did not reflect the ways of the Torah. On the contrary, he was desecrating the honor of the Torah in this way. He added that anyone who showed contempt for the Torah will ultimately be held in contempt by others.

Evidently, this man was no real scholar. He responded with audacity and ridiculed the tzaddik, “Who are you? Is it not enough that you came to collect alms, but you also dare to rebuke me? Take your coins and return to your home town. Do not dictate to us how to live our lives.”

Rabbi Chaim wisely remained silent, not responding to the tirade. He attempted to get the man to go into an

empty side room with him so he could explain to him his error. Since the rude man would not budge, Rabbi Chaim turned to all the people in the room and asked them to leave.

When everyone had left the room, Rabbi Chaim gently rebuked him, “Your words are not at all correct. In fact, I can prove your false ways to you.”

“How?” asked the man.

“On Ta’anit Esther, you did not feel well, and you took a slice of cake to eat. However, at that moment, you heard someone knocking on your door, and since you were worried that someone would see you eating on a fast day, you quickly took the cake and hid it in the pocket of your caftan...”

The tzaddik continued revealing the man’s hidden deeds. “After they knocked on the door, you went into a side room in order to eat the cake, which you did without first reciting a blessing, since you were afraid of being seen and wanted to hurry. When you finished eating the cake, you drank water from a jug, and washed your entire head with the water. Since then, you suffer from headaches.”

The scholar realized that a holy, awesome man, who perceived the absolute truth, was standing before him. There was no point in denying his words or contradicting them. He fell to the tzaddik’s feet and kissed his hand, tearfully begging his forgiveness.

The congregants, who were waiting outside, were invited to the seudat mitzvah that the contrite scholar arranged in honor of Rabbi Chaim. Facing the Rabbi of the city and all the people, he expressed his regret and begged forgiveness for all his misdeeds. He solemnly resolved to be careful to protect the honor of Torah leaders.

Rabbi Aharon Chassin, zt”l, author of the sefer *Mateh Aharon*, who served as Rosh Av Beit Din in Mogador, was