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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 LéDavid

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

Learning for The Sake of Heaven Induces Real Pleasure

"You shall observe the commandment and the statutes and the ordinances that I command you today, to perform them." (Devarim 7:11).

Why is the word "commandment (mitzvah)" used in the singular and the words "statutes" and "ordinances" are used in the plural? Similarly, the same language is used above "...and I shall speak to you the entire commandment and the statutes and the ordinances that you shall teach them...." (Deuteronomy 5, 28). "Commandment (mitzvah)" is also said here in the singular. It is necessary to understand which "commandment (mitzvah)" this is referring to and what is its essence.

In order to comprehend this, it is crucial to examine another verse, "And it will be a merit for us if we are careful to perform this entire commandment...." (Deuteronomy 6, 25) and as this also uses the word "commandment (mitzvah)" in the singular, it seems that the intention of the verse is about the main mitzvah, namely the study of Torah, as our Holy Torah is the basis and root of all the mitzvot in their entirety. This is the intention of the verse, when a man sits and studies Torah, it is incumbent upon him to imagine that he is receiving charity and a big favor from the Creator, because he has been given the privilege to be involved in the Torah and its teachings.

To what can this be compared? To a pauper that does not even have the basic necessities and a wealthy benefactor that provides him the charity to survive. There is an enormous obligation upon this pauper to recognize the goodness that the benefactor has bestowed upon him. So, we likewise have to feel when we are involved in the Holy Torah that it is with charity and goodness the Creator has given us the Living Torah that is our very life and longevity. If so then a person will certainly realize that he does not warrant any reward for the Torah he has studied, but rather on the contrary he has an obligation to thank Hashem and fill his mouth with praise and adoration for the charity He has done with him in giving him the Living Torah that is his very existence and ongoing vitality.

The question is how do we reach and achieve such an appreciation towards the King of all Kings and the Holy Torah?

Only by observing the verse "You shall observe the commandment....." that means by keeping this main mitzvah that is the revealing title of all the mitzvot – Torah study, certainly our hearts will be filled with an infinite happiness that we have been deserving of this. It is for this reason that the Torah chose the singular language. Because only by observing the mitzvah of studying Torah (Talmud Torah) and being involved in it, can a person reach the understanding of how much sweetness there is within the Torah and how much more precious it is than pearls and that no materialism can match it. As the mitzvot of Talmud Torah are equivalent to all of the mitzvot collectively, automatically a person will be worthy to fulfill all of

the ordinances and statutes as prescribed. From this we may conclude that Talmud Torah brings a person to a closeness with Hashem, may He be blessed, and in addition all of the mitzvot that he will fulfill, will be with joy and a holy inspiration. This being so, a person profits an extra benefit namely that he is not fulfilling and learning Torah for his own honor or reward but rather purely for the honor of Hashem.

Rashi in accordance with this, writes on the opening verse, "today is to perform them and tomorrow in the World to Come is for the reward of them." In truth the intention is not that man is in some sort of expectation of reward for his deeds because in that way he cannot fulfill "for the sake or honor of Hashem," rather it is everyone's obligation to fulfill mitzvot and learn Torah in order to receive an eternal and authentic reward of basking in the presence of the Holy Divine Shechinah and standing on the threshold of its shadow in the future. This is a pure and correct aspiration, as there is no request for a materialistic reward of wealth, honor and possessions but solely a spiritual reward.

It is essential to know and remember that only he who rejoices in his learning and is happy with it, he is the one who is worthy to learn "for the sake of His Honor" and therefore also "tomorrow" that is in "the time to come," he will receive his full reward. Everything is dependent on the source of the mitzvot and their principle that is Torah learning, that if one is occupied with it and gives his soul to it and delights in it, then inevitably he is drawn after all the mitzvot of the Torah, its statutes and ordinances and then they all become "for the sake of Heaven."

I remember the time when I sat with Maran Rabbeinu Chaim Shmuel Lopian zt"l, my teacher and mentor and I marveled how he is so immersed in learning Torah, I literally felt as if I am standing opposite the Holy Divine Presence. To observe the face of my Rabbi and Teacher, (may his virtue stand us in good stead, amen) was so wonderful that the countenance of his face was that of an angel and like a burning fire worshipping Hashem, blessed be He. And if such a pleasure can be aroused in examining the faithful servants of Hashem, all the more so when a person in the future will be worthy to enjoy the Divine splendor and glory of the Holy Shechinah.

How can one reach this high and lofty level, that it is his obligation to attain?

Only by "And it will be a merit for us...." (Deuteronomy 6, 25). As we explained before, only when a person understands that charity and lovingkindness was done to us by our Creator in giving us the Torah of truth and when a person deals with it in joyfulness and inspiration without any materialistic reward but only "for the sake of Heaven", only then will he succeed in "knowing Hashem" with an enlightening clarity.

(Taken from a talk given to the students of "Yeshivat Bain Hazmanim of "Orot Haim and Moshe" Institutions.)

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Hillulah of Tzaddikim

16 – Rabbi Yehuda Pinto

17 – Rabbi Shimshon Wertheimer

18 – Rabbi Dov Ber Eliazarov

19 – Rabbi Yakov Kuli Author of the
"Me'am Lo'ez"

20 – Rabbi Yosef Tzubari

21 – Rabbi Aharon of Belz

22 – Rabbi Mordechai bar Hillel -
Hamordechai



Walking in their Ways

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

The Book That Spoke Volumes

A non-Jewish woman once brought me a book she had written about the angels and asked for my approbation. This was her third book on this subject. Every few years, she would come to me with another book and ask for my endorsement.

I took one look at her defiled book and was filled with a desire to rip it to shreds. How does a gentile woman have the audacity to profess knowing anything about the angels on High? How in the world can she know the names and missions of the Ministering Angels of Hashem? It must be that she studied the holy works of mysticism, the Kabbalah and Zohar, in a most unholy way. Her works, therefore, were saturated with impurity.

It is self-understood that I refused to give her book any sort of approval. To my utter dismay, I could not stop thinking of this vile volume for the entire week. This was due to the forces of evil which had penetrated its writing. It is well-known that when these types of forces attach themselves to a person, it is very difficult to shake them off.

The Ari writes that even passing by a slaughterhouse of non-kosher animals influences a person negatively. One should therefore make every effort to avoid this. A pregnant woman, in particular, should not go by a store that sells forbidden foods, as they can have an adverse effect on her unborn child, chas v'shalom.

I remember that in my childhood, when I lived in Morocco, I often had to walk by the gentile marketplace where non-kosher items were sold. I literally felt the negative effect of this act. Whenever I walked by on Shabbat, I felt a distinct detraction of the kedushah of the day.

The soul of the Jew is extremely sensitive. One who is concerned for its safety would do well to distance himself from any source of impurity and adhere only to holiness and sanctity.

The Haftarah

The haftarah of the week:

"Console, console My people"

(Yeshayahu 40)

The connection to this Shabbat: This is the first of seven Shabbatot of consolation, beginning with the Shabbat after TishaB'Av. It is one of seven haftarot, called Shiva D'Nechamta, read from SeferYeshayahu.



Guard Your Tongue

The obligation to rebuke

If a person feels that his words of rebuke will not make a difference yet will also not provoke the speaker, he is not allowed to keep quiet. Keeping quiet is considered as agreeing with his words. He is required to reproach the speaker in order to clear the reputation of the one spoken about.



Words of our Sages

There are no shortcuts to hasten the redemption

I implored Hashem at that time saying, "My L-rd, Hashem/Elokim, You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your strong hand, for what power is there in the heaven or on the earth that can perform according to Your deeds and according to Your mighty acts? (Devarim 3:23-25)

Moshe Rabbeinu begged Hashem to allow him to enter Eretz Yisrael, davening five hundred and fifteen prayers until Hashem stopped him by saying, "Do not continue to speak to Me further about this matter"(Devarim 3:26).

What in essence, did Moshe Rabbeinu want? Hashem had already decreed that he would not enter the Land; what did he hope to achieve with his prayers?

This concept is something that we have to comprehend whenever we pray, for example, when praying for a sick person to recover, or for a destitute person to be blessed with affluence. If Hashem decreed that he should be in this situation, how do we think we can change the decree?!

Rabbi Baruch Shimon Schneerson zt"l explains this fundamental concept (brought in the sefer U'matok Ha'or):

Moshe Rabbeinu begins his prayer with "My L-rd, Hashem/Elokim". "My L-rd" always signifies a merciful approach while "Elokim" denotes strict

judgment. "You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your strong hand". Similarly, "Your greatness" signifies Hashem acting with mercy, while "Your strong hand" signifies strict judgment.

"Asher mi kail - For what power is there..." "Kail" could imply both mercy and judgment. On the one hand "kail" is one of the 13 traits of mercy. Conversely, we find "Kail zo'em b'chol yom - G-d is angered every day" (Tehillim 7:12). How can this be?

The answer is that

what we perceive as judgment is in actual fact, from a Heavenly perspective-mercy!

This is what Moshe Rabbeinu was implying: "For what power is there in the heaven or on the earth..." Master of the world! Everything that You do is mercy. Only down here in this world there are things that seem harsh. Please, I beg of You. Allow me to understand this as mercy, allow me to feel your kindness! This is what he was praying for.

This seems like a legitimate argument. What was Hashem's reply?

"But Hashem became angry with me because of you, and He did not listen to me". Chazal expound on these words – "like a pregnant women". (The Hebrew words used in this pasuk for 'became angry' and the Hebrew word for a 'pregnant women', have the same root letters). The Meshech Chochmah explains that sometimes a woman in her fifth month of pregnancy, feels that she has come to the limits of her strength and she prays, "If only the baby would come out already".

But if the baby is born at this point he will not live, because he has not yet developed sufficiently to survive in this world. He needs to stay in the womb for the complete nine months; only then will he be mature enough to exist outside the womb.

Moshe Rabbeinu begged Hashem: "I will pass and I will see the good Land". Allow me to enter the Holy Land and conquer it, and then I will build the Beit Hamikdash. I will eradicate the memory of Amalek and the world will attain its final rectification.

Hashem answered him: "No!" "But Hashem became angry with me because of you". Hashem compared this to an expectant woman who wishes to shorten the duration of her pregnancy. Similarly, here, if Moshe Rabbeinu would enter Eretz Yisrael and bring the world to its final purpose, everything would cease at midpoint and this would not be good for the Jewish people. They are still in the middle of their journey; they need more time to complete their mission. Therefore, "because of you" he was prevented from entering the Land, so that they could continue rectifying their souls until the time of the final redemption when the world will come to its tikkun...



Chazak U'Baruch

During the period known as “Bain Hazmanim” is the time to fortify the “mitzvot” concerning honoring parents, and what can be more strengthening than the following astonishing incident.

Immersed in his studies was the “Holy Jew of Peshischa” with his students and when they reached an extremely difficult topic, the righteous man delved deeper into his learning and became unaware of his surroundings. During these moments, his students sitting around him, waited until their teacher would continue his lesson. However, the probing of this righteous man into this significant topic extended for a long time.

Suddenly one of the waiting students felt hunger pangs. Consequently, he said to himself, “certainly the Rebbi will add to his perusal on this passage for a long while. Meanwhile I will run to my mother’s house and taste something to quell my hunger.”

With this in mind he hurried to his home ate something and turned to return to the study-hall. Whilst still on the threshold of the house, his mother’s voice reached his ears, “please my son if you can go up to the attic and bring down a bundle of hay? You know my son that I cannot climb up to the roof and I am in pressing need for the hay!” “Mother,” his son retorted, “I must return straightaway to the study hall. Certainly, my Rebbi will shortly finish his scrutiny of the passage we are learning and will start to explain the issues to the attentive students!”

The son left the house and paced back to the study hall. At the outset he marched quickly, wary in case he should miss one iota of the Rebbi’s words. However, his steps become slightly more regulated when suddenly he stopped in his place in fright. “For what am I learning?” He asked himself penetratingly, “For what purpose am I hurrying to the study hall? Just to learn more and more? Behold, the whole purpose of learning is on condition to realize the messages.”

The youth retraced his steps and returned to his mother’s house. He climbed up to the attic, rummaged through the articles until he found the sought-after bundle of hay. “Here, mother is the hay you requested.” He gave the bundle to his mother with downcast eyes from embarrassment, “please forgive me that I did not fulfill your request immediately.”

Now that he had lightened the load from his heart, the youth hurried to the study-hall and with his burning hands he opened the door. The “Holy Jew” was still immersed in the same passage. Behold when the door opened, the “Holy Jew” raised his head from the book with a smile that illuminated his holy face. He stood up from his place and faced the student standing erect on the threshold.

“Do you know who is accompanying you at this moment?”

The orphaned youth lowered his confused face.

“Tell me please,” continued the righteous man to ask, “which important “mitzvah” did you complete just now, that in its merit came such an important companion?”

And the youth was still silent in bewilderment.

“When you came in here,” the righteous man “tzaddik” continued, “I saw that the Amora Abaye is accompanying you. And his entry enlightened my eyes and answered the serious difficulty that I was deliberating on for these long hours. Tell me then on what and why did you merit such a great escort?”

Then the youth opened his mouth and related all that had occurred during the past hour. “I realized that I had made a mistake,” he concluded, “and so I returned home to carry out my mother’s wishes.”

“Because of this,” the “tzaddik” turned to his students, “it is as clear as the sun for what reason your comrade merited the accompaniment of Abaye. Abaye was orphaned from both his father and mother. In fact, his name is comprised from the initial letters of the words “which through you I will have mercy on the orphan – Asher B’cha Yerucham Yetom.” The Amora Abaye never merited in his lifetime to fulfill this important “mitzvah,” that of honoring one’s parents. Therefore, since his passing, he is accustomed to accompanying those that accomplish this “mitzvah”. From that time, it is his desire to join in with those that do fulfill this important “mitzvah,” the “mitzvah” commandment of honoring a father and mother.

Treasures

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



Who is a happy man?

“I implored Hashem at that time, saying,” (Devarim 3:23)

The “Ba’al HaTurim” points out that the word “va’etchanan” has the same numerical value as “song”. What does this suggest? Moshe Rabbeinu begged to enter Eretz Yisrael in order to teach the people that if they wish to be happy with their lot and song, praises and joy should constantly pour from their mouths – they must be careful not to indulge in the materialism that the good Land has in abundance. They should not become too preoccupied with “the Land flowing with milk and honey”; rather their gratifications should be calculated and indulged in the correct measure. All their intentions should be for the sake of Heaven; for a higher purpose. One who treads this path will without a doubt experience a life filled with happiness and joy; for him it is appropriate to sing.

We find the same idea expressed in the words of the pasuk that talks about ma’aser sheini which must be consumed in Jerusalem. “You may spend the money for whatever your soul desires – for cattle, for flocks, for wine, or for alcoholic beverage, or anything that your soul wishes; you shall eat it there before Hashem, your G-d, and rejoice – you and your household. You shall not forsake the Levite who is in your cities, for he has no portion or inheritance with you” (Devarim 14:26-27) As if to say, when has a person fulfilled “and rejoice - you and your household”? When will he merit enjoying his wealth? Only if he carries out, “You shall not forsake the Levite...” When a person shares what he owns with others, he proves that he is not simply chasing after gratifications; he is satisfied with a modest lifestyle. There is no happier person than one who knows how to use his possessions in the correct way.

In contrast, one who is constantly pursuing riches and wealth, never feels satisfied and does not make do with what he has. He will never be happy because he always feels lacking. Even though he has many possessions, he does not feel content as Chazal say, “A person doesn’t die with even half his desires in his hand” (Kohelet Rabba 1). “One who possesses one hundred desires two hundred”. But one who is happy with his lot and thanks Hashem and praises Him for whatever he blessed him with, is the happiest person in the world.

If a person has the correct attitude towards the materialism of this world and uses it in an appropriate manner, then he will certainly also be sensitive to his spiritual desires. In this way it will be good for him in both worlds.



Men of Faith

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



I Must Learn Torah

A sixty-year-old man approached Rabbi Moshe Aharon worriedly. He said, "I heard in a lecture that every Jew is obligated to set fixed times to study Torah. When a person dies, he is tried in the Heavenly Court and asked several questions, such as, whether he was honest in business, if he set fixed times for learning, and so forth. Honorable Rabbi," the man cried, "I did not engage in the study of Torah, not in Mishnah, not in Gemara, and not in halachah. Now I try to set some time for learning Torah, but I do not understand anything. What will be with me after I depart from this world?"

The Rav answered him calmly, "It is never too late. I also experience this feeling at times when I engage in learning Torah, and do not understand the text. I simply raise my hands and say, 'Ribbono shel Olam, whatever I did not understand in this world, I will understand in the World to Come, when I will learn in the Heavenly Yeshiva, in my designated place.'

"You, too," the Rav told the man,

"can master the entire Talmud. Even if you do not understand a word of it at present, persevere in your studies, and Hashem will grant you your reward. Which reward? In the World to Come, Hashem will delegate a Torah scholar to sit with you and teach you everything that you did not comprehend in this world."

His Shining Countenance

Once, Rabbi Moshe Aharon Pinto stayed in the house of the Azulai family, when visiting Los Angeles. In his honor, the family kashered all their dishes and even prepared special foods for him.

Once, Mrs. Azulai told her son David, "Please go to the tzaddik's room and invite him to come eat lunch." The boy went at his mother's bidding and opened the door to the tzaddik's room. But, suddenly, he recoiled and gasped. He quickly retreated.

The family members were alarmed. "What happened?" they asked him anxiously. The boy excitedly reported, "When I entered the room, I saw that the Rav was glowing with a dazzling light, and his face was radiant and shining."

A similar story happened with Makhluif Bitton from Moshav

Luzit. Rabbi Moshe Aharon was a guest in his home for a few days, and Makhluif noticed that there was a brilliant light shining from his room. It was because the face of the Rav shone like a torch of fire, casting its rays far and wide.

When the host approached Rabbi Moshe Aharon's room, he suddenly stepped back in fear and retraced his steps without entering. His family members also witnessed the scene, which continued throughout his stay in their home.

Such testimony is also given by Rabbi Moshe Aharon's family members. Many nights, when his room was dark, his face glowed like the sun. At first they were frightened by the scene, but later they became accustomed to it.

