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779

Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

# Pachad David

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Under the auspices of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagoon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita

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MASKIL LEDAVID

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

## Strong is the One Who Possesses Torah

**"From the least of his brothers he took five men and presented them to Pharaoh"** (Bereishit 47:2)

Rashi explains on these words – "From the least of his brothers- from the least significant in strength, the ones who didn't appear strong, for if he perceives their strength he will take them as his soldiers, and they are – Reuven, Shimon, Levi, Yissachar and Binyamin."

Out of all his brothers, Yosef presented to Pharaoh the ones who looked weakest so that he shouldn't be impressed by their strength, for this would cause him to desire them for his army. And if they would be enlisted- what would be with their Torah learning?? Ya'akov sent Yehuda ahead "to prepare ahead of him", meaning to establish Batei Midrash in the land of Goshen in order to spread our holy Torah, and if the brothers would be taken to serve in Pharaoh's army – who will worry for the Torah!

Even though Yosef also held a high position and was appointed as ruler over Mitzrayim, he merited special protection whereby he didn't forget the legacy of his father's house even while deep in the impurity of Mitzrayim. Heaven brought about that Yosef would be appointed as ruler over Mitzrayim, in order to bring Ya'akov and the brothers down to Mitzrayim, which would be followed by the bondage and finally the redemption from Mitzrayim which brought them unto the long awaited goal – the giving of the Torah.

The above Rashi leaves us with a difficulty. How was Yosef certain that he could fool Pharaoh by sending the weaker brothers? Pharaoh was certainly aware of the great strength of Yosef's brothers; in fact their strength was famous throughout the world. When they came down to Mitzrayim they almost overthrew the country in order to save their brother Binyomin.

The following explanation will clarify this point: The purpose of the brothers coming down to this strange land, was in order to pave the way for the redemption and for receiving the Torah. The antidote to galut is our holy Torah which has the power to make one forget one's woes and afflictions. This is exactly what David HaMelech tells us in Tehillim: "Had your Torah not been my preoccupation, then I would have perished in my affliction" (Tehillim 119:92). If not for the holy Torah I would have long ago become lost in the pain of my afflictions. We find many stories involving the Gedolei Yisrael concerning this attitude. When suffering great physical pain, they would hasten to engage their mind and soul in Torah learning and through that they found relief.

Ya'akov Avinu wanted to alleviate the enormous hardship that was involved in galut Mitzrayim. He therefore sent Yehuda in advance "to prepare ahead" and also commanded the rest of his children to establish Batei Midrash in Goshen, all in order to disseminate the voice of Torah.

For this reason the town of Goshen (גֹּשֶׁן) is called so – for they wrestled (התגשוש) with each in Torah. A proof of the enormous affect that Torah has, can

be seen from Shevet Levi. Since they sat in the Beit Midrash and toiled in Torah they were exempt from the slave labor, in contrast to the other shevatim who did not spend their time occupied with Torah study and therefore were subjected to the crushing harshness of the slave labor.

Yosef was implying to his brothers that the main message they need to give over to Pharaoh is – "we are cattlemen" (אנשי מקנה), meaning, we are engaged in acquiring Torah (קנין התורה). Although we are strong and men of valor, this is not our main occupation. The Torah is our banner and it is the Torah that stands as our priority. The brothers indeed stressed this idea to Pharaoh: "Your servants have been cattlemen", meaning, not only right now are we occupied with attaining Torah acquirements, but in the past too we were engaged in this, even before we came down to this world. Our entire condition for entering this world was on the term that we will continue to toil in our holy Torah and acquire it, for if not for toiling in Torah the world will cease to exist.

Through Yosef sending "from the least of his brothers" – the weaker ones, he proved to Pharaoh that physical strength is not of relevance to them; their main focus is our holy Torah. The proof is that they do not possess an external muscular appearance. In truth, true strength is the ability to subordinate the yetzer hara and rule over it, as the famous Chazal tell us, "Who is strong? He who subdues his personal inclination".

Yosef himself possessed great physical strength, and his sons too inherited this quality. In fact, when the brothers became aware of Menashe's strength they said to themselves – "This strength comes from our father's home", for this unique strength was only found among the shevatim. Even though Yosef was blessed with enormous strength, we don't find that he used this strength for battle. He could have fought to be returned to his father's home, but instead he accepted the verdict with love and sat in prison until the time came for him to be released. On the other hand, Yosef personifies a different kind of strength. He possessed the strength to overcome his yetzer hara and rise above the enticement of Potiphar's wife who wanted to cause him to sin. How was Yosef able to arise to the challenge? Because his father's image appeared in front of his eyes. This episode shows us that the shevatim were not only blessed with physical strength, but mainly with a spiritual strength which is true power.

This, then, is the explanation to our question of how Yosef thought he would be able to deceive Pharaoh. Yosef did not wish to cheat him; he simply wanted to make it clear that the essence of the shevatim is our holy Torah and not physical strength. The strength of the holy Torah is what guides us on the straight path and when necessary endows a person also with physical strength when he needs it to overcome his enemies.

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Hilula

7 - Rabbi Rafael Shlomo Laniado

8 - Rabbi Mordechai Karbilya

9 - Rabbi Chaim Shor Ashkenazi

10 - Ezra HaSofer

10 - Rabbi Natan of Breslav

11 - Rabbi Yehoshua Sharbani

13 - Rabbi Moshe of Lelov



## Walking in their Ways

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

### Proud Beginnings, Humble Endings

When we learned in yeshiva as young students, we would argue on Torah topics until one of us could prove to the others that he was right. We relished these arguments, becoming deeply embroiled in them. Each of us would stretch his mind to the limit in order to understand the words of the Gemara, so that he could be the one who would elucidate it before all the others.

But sometimes, we would reach a stalemate. No one was ready to give up his stand on understanding the sugya. At times as these, we would turn to our great teacher, Rabbi Chaim Shmuel Lopian, zt"l, to ask his opinion.

Whenever we presented him with our questions, we felt they were very complicated. But, to our complete surprise, time and again, the Rosh Yeshiva would tell us to carefully read the words of Rashi or another commentator. We would humbly admit that our difficulty was not difficult at all. We felt foolish at having disturbed our teacher over nothing.

Many years have passed since those days. My mind has become more settled. As I contemplate that period of my life, I ask myself, "Why, when we appeared before the Rosh Yeshiva, did our question seem so pressing, but after only a few moments of perusing a commentary, our question evaporated into thin air?"

When we would argue over the meaning of the words of Torah, our arguments were not altruistic. We weren't trying to get to the root of the matter. Instead, we were enrooted in our own pride. As we presented our cases to each other, we became more and more entangled in self-righteousness, motivated by no other factor than proving that the truth lied with us. But when we decided to put aside our pride and approach the Rosh Yeshiva in order to know the real truth, our questions disappeared. We saw the light of truth between the branches of arrogance. Once pride is pruned away, all doubt falls to the wayside, and the pure truth can shine forth.

## The Haftarah

**"The word of Hashem came to me...Now you, son of man" (Yechezkel 37)**

The connection to the parsha: The haftarah speaks about the kingdom of Yehuda and the kingdom of Yosef, which in the future will unite, as is written: "Now you, Son of Man, take for yourself one piece of wood and write upon it, 'For Yehuda and for the Children of Israel, his comrades; and take one piece of wood and write upon it, 'For Yosef'".

This is the subject of the parsha: Yehuda fought to save his brother Binyomin and eventually all the brothers united with Yosef who ruled over the entire land of Mitzrayim.



## Guard Your Tongue

### It's All in the Intention

The Chafetz Chaim writes that included in the prohibition of lashon hara is showing around a letter which illustrates that the person who wrote it is not so clever or not such a great Torah scholar.

Included in the same category is showing someone a book, when his intention is to demonstrate that the author is not a talmid chacham. This is forbidden under the prohibition of lashon hara.



## Words of our Sages

### Racheli Insulted and the Rav Comforted

**"Then he fell upon his brother Binyamin's neck and wept; and Binyamin wept upon his neck" (Bereishit 45:14)**

Yosef and Binyamin, two of the holy shevatim, wept on each other's neck. What was the reason for their crying?

Rashi explains: They cried for the two temples which would, in the future, be built in the portion of Binyomin and were destined to be destroyed.

Rabbi Mordechai Progomansky asks:

Why was it appropriate to cry about the churban now, even before the Beit Hamikdash was built? There is a time to wail and a time to dance (Kohelet 3:4). A time to rejoice and a time to cry; each one at the appropriate time?

The answer is that in truth, this was the most fitting time to spill tears, as Chazal explain on the verse "And my Lord Hashem/Elokim will erase tears from all faces" (Yeshayahu 25:8). What does the word 'all' come to include?

Hashem will wipe away not only tears of pain and suffering, but also tears of joy.

Yet at the time of the final redemption joy will increase, as the verse says, "Then our mouths will be filled with laughter" (Tehillim 126:2). If so why should tears of happiness and joy be wiped away?

At a time of joy, the source of one's tears is not an expression of the great simcha, but due to the distressing feeling that this happiness will come to an end. When one experiences and feels the joy, one also becomes aware of its limits, and this is what brings the tears. At first one's joy is unlimited joy but at the peak of one's elation one most strongly feels the distress of it terminating.

Therefore, in the future, tears at a time of joy will be wiped away; there will be no need for these tears for joy will be constant and never-ending.

This is the essence of the tears of Yosef and Binyomin. Despite their joy in being singled out to merit having the Beit Hamikdash built in their portion, they also saw that it would not be permanent; the two Batei Mikdash were destined to be destroyed. This is why they cried, for their joy wasn't complete.

Rabbi Yechezkel Abramsky zt"l, suffered from a heart condition and so would go for walks accompanied by his talmidim. During one of their walks, he noticed a young girl who was crying bitterly. Rabbi Yechezkel bent down to her and asked, "My child, why are you crying?" She answered, "Racheli said my dress isn't nice."

Rabbi Yechezkel turned to her and asked her, "What is your name?" "Shoshana", she replied. The Rav then said, "Shoshana, you have a beautiful name, and your dress is really beautiful too." The little girl immediately calmed down.

His talmidim turned to him in confusion. "Rebbe," they asked, "We were in the middle of discussing Torah. We were talking about holy things. Why did the Rav give of his precious time to calm a crying child?"

This was the Rav's answer: "We are commanded to follow in the ways of Hashem about Whom it says, "And my Lord Hashem/Elokim will erase tears from all faces". The word 'all' includes the tears of a child. And if you think about this, you will realize that their tears are even purer than an adults'."



## Pearls of the Parshah

### Emotions Restrained by the Torah

**“Now Yosef could not restrain himself” (Bereishit 45:1)**

Why just at this point was Yosef unable to restrain himself?

The sefer ‘AleI Veradim’ brings a beautiful explanation from Rabbi Asher Kalman Baron zt”l: Yosef was on an extremely high spiritual level and he constantly scrutinized his behavior as to what degree he was permitted to act towards his brothers with what appeared to be the trait of vengeance. Despite his great difficulty in behaving as a stranger with his brothers, he acted in this way for he knew that this was the right thing to do and he was doing so for Heaven’s sake. At this point, he felt that he had reached the limit of what they deserved and so from this point on it would already be forbidden for him to behave in this way. Therefore he could suddenly no longer restrain himself.

According to this explanation, the wording “could not” is exact. On a simple level, we understand that it is an emotional issue - his heart didn’t allow him to hide himself anymore. But according to the above explanation, the meaning of “could not” is that he was now forbidden to continue behaving in this manner, so automatically he was not able to. In several places we find that the term ‘not being able’ actually refers to something forbidden, as in “In your [outlying] cities, you may not eat” (Devarim 12:17), which the Targum translates as “you don’t have permission” to do this.

### Greater than Yosef HaTzaddik

**“And now, be not distressed, nor reproach yourselves for having sold me here” (Bereishit 45:5)**

A story brought in the holy Zohar on Parshat Mikeitz show the great merit of a person who overlooks personal affront.

Rav Abba was sitting at the entrance to Lod when he noticed a tired man who sat down on a boulder that jutted out from the side of the mountain and soon fell asleep. While he was still asleep, a poisonous snake made his way over to the sleeping man. Suddenly a branch from a tree broke off and fell directly on the snake, killing it instantly. When the man awoke he noticed the dead snake lying next to him. He got up and started walking away and just then the boulder that he had lain on broke away from the mountain and rolled down to the valley below. Once again he was miraculously saved from death.

Rav Abba was most impressed by the sight of these miracles that he had just witnessed. Rav Abba approached the man and asked him:

“Please tell me, what good deeds do you possess that Hashem performed two open miracles for you? He saved you from the snake’s poisonous bite and from tumbling to certain death.” He replied: “It never happened to me that someone harmed me and I wasn’t appeased. I always forgave him and never held on to anger for any bad that was directed my way. Not only did I forgive, but from that day on, I tried to perform acts of kindness to those who tried to annoy me.”

When Rav Abba heard these words he cried and said: “The deeds of this man are greater than those of Yosef HaTzaddik. Concerning Yosef, those who caused him suffering where his own brothers; he had to have mercy on them. But this person behaved in this manner with every single person, therefore it is fitting that Hashem perform many miracles for him.

### The Secret of Successful Chinuch

**“He sent Yehuda ahead of him to Yosef, to prepare ahead of him in Goshen” (Bereishit 46:28)**

What was Yehuda’s mission?

Rashi explains: “To establish a Beit HaTalmud from where Torah would be taught.”

The commentaries ask, why was Yehuda was chosen for this mission? There were other brothers who could have established a Beit HaTalmud in Mitzrayim. For example, Yissachar, about whom it says, “Yissachar is a strong-boned donkey”(Bereishit 49:14), or Levi about whom it says, “They shall teach Your ordinances to Ya’akov” (Devarim 33:10)?

The ‘Tiferet Shlomo’ zt”l uses this question to derive one of the basics of chinuch. It is a wonderful insight into Ya’akov Avinu’s thought process:

The first person who shouldered responsibility and showed self-sacrifice by saying “I will personally guarantee him; of my own hand you can demand him” (Bereishit 43:9), was Yehuda. Since one of the main attributes for establishing talmidim is being prepared to take responsibility together with self-sacrifice,

Yehuda was chosen to establish this Beit HaTalmud for spreading Torah.

## Treasures

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



### The Power of the Truth Against the Power of Falsehood

**“Thus Yosef acquired all the land of Egypt of Pharoh... Only the land of the priests he did not buy” (Bereishit 47:20-22)**

During the years of famine in Mitzrayim, Yosef the ruler sold the produce to the Egyptians in exchange for anything they had to offer – gold, silver, flock and cattle, until the Egyptians were left destitute. Really this way of dealing should have brought out the Egyptian’s anger and caused them to rebel. How was it that the people remained silent and didn’t protest? The atmosphere in Mitzrayim was one of great fear of Yosef, for if anyone dared to break into the Yosef’s storehouses and steal produce, it would immediately rot in their hands. It stayed fresh only under Yosef’s control. This intimidated the people from daring to rebel.

With the money that Yosef received from the produce, he bought everything available, besides the land belonging to the priests which they had received from Pharoh. Pharoh himself sustained the priests during the famine. In light of this, we are left perplexed. Yosef ruled over Mitzrayim with a firm hand, without any incitement, so how come he allowed those who served avodah zara to stay on their land instead of selling them produce in exchange for their land? He had a great opportunity to get rid of all the avodah zara in Mitzrayim. Why did he leave those priests under Pharoh’s authority?

We can suggest that Yosef knew that if he would force the priests to sell their land against their will, they would do this unwillingly, and as soon as the famine would come to an end they would once again establish these places of impurity. Because Yosef was looking for a long-term solution, he left the priests, complete with their special dress, in their towns. He knew that in this way the Egyptians would have the opportunity to contrast their priests with the holy people of Israel who are called “A kingdom of ministers and a holy nation” (Shemot 19:6), and they would make a comparison. They would be forced to admit that their own priests have absolutely no power to help and are completely limited in their ability to assist in a time of famine. This will bring them to recognize Hashem’s sovereignty in the world, and “The earth will be as filled with knowledge of Hashem as water covering the sea bed” (Yeshayahu 11:9).

I once met with a high-level government official whom everyone used to worship and anticipate his every word. This person would not dare to look at me straight in the face. He claimed that he was afraid. When I asked him to explain he replied that his position affords him the opportunity to see the difference between truth and falsehood, and since it is clear to him that I represent the truth, he is afraid to look at me.

Another story which brings out this lesson happened to the son of my holy grandfather Rabbi Chaim Pinto zya”a, who once hit the son of the mayor. This mayor was extremely angry and came over to my grandfather to complain, but as soon as he looked at his shining countenance, he turned on his heels without uttering a word. This is a clear demonstration of how emet outshines sheker, to the extent that even a simple person can differentiate and infer conclusions.

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT



## Alarmed by a Mouse

Rabbi Chaim Kanievsky shlita told a story about an unusual occurrence that happened to a chatan and kallah on their wedding day. As is the custom, upon leaving the chupah they went straight to the cheder yichud, when suddenly a black mouse appeared and darted between them! The kallah was alarmed and became very nervous. She panicked, for she saw this occurrence as a bad omen, as if this was a sign that maybe this wasn't her true zivug. She refused to go back out to the wedding hall.

All attempts to calm her down came to naught. The family sent for a psychologist who attempted to relieve her of her anxiety, but to no avail.

The family hurried to my father's house and poured out their distress. Even though my father never accepted women, he asked that the kallah be brought to him, and indeed the kallah, in all wedding glory, entered his holy room. My father started talking to her:

"According to my opinion, you are right to assume that this incident, where a black mouse came into the yichud room and darted between you, is something that has great significance. I think that even the psychologist who told you that you are mistaken, is himself making a mistake. Listen well to what I am telling you now. Chazal tell us that there is no ketubah that doesn't come with arguments. They tell me that the parents on both sides are upright, honest and noble people, who are not capable of arguing. Until this moment no disagreement came up in the ketubah. But the words of Chazal have to be fulfilled, so Hashem sent this mouse to the cheder yichud, so that the dispute about which Chazal spoke should come to fruition. But from now on, everything will be more than okay, be'ezrat Hashem, and you will merit happiness, nachat and simcha all your lives."

The words of the tzaddik had an immediate effect on the kallah. She accepted his words with pure faith and returned to her former calm state. She was as composed and serene as she was when she stood under the chuppah.



## Men of Faith

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

### The Revelation in a Dream

The holy tzadik Rabbi David Ifergan zt"l, came twice in the same night in a dream to Rabbi Chaim HaKatan zy"a. He said to him "Rabbi Chaim, please get up immediately and go to the house of my granddaughter, who just gave birth to a girl. Bless the baby and give her the name Hanina." Rabbi Chaim got up promptly, washed his hands properly and accompanied by his attendant quickly went to the house of the Ifergan family. Upon arriving they knocked strongly on the door; when they opened the door the members of the family were very surprised to see Rabbi Chaim there at such a late hour.

Rabbi Chaim zy"a did not waste any time and got straight to the point; he said to them, "Quickly bring me the baby girl who was just now born".

The parents were amazed! "How does the Rav know that we just had a girl?"

"Your grandfather, Rabbi David Ifergan, came to me in a dream and requested that I come here and bless the child, and also to give her the name Hanina", responded Rabbi Chaim.

The parents of the baby were rather startled upon hearing Rabbi Chaim's last sentence.

"Is the Rav aware" the father asked, "that last year a baby girl was born to us and we named her Hanina, but she passed away a short time later?"

"There is nothing to be concerned about", Rabbi Chaim calmed them. "Bring me the child and I will bless her and call her Hanina. "She will merit a long life and you will see much joy from her descendants."

The tzadik Rabbi Chaim took the baby in his holy hands: blessed her and gave her the name, Hanina. His blessing was fully realized; the little girl grew up, got married and merited seeing children and grandchildren. (Heard from Rabbi Beneviste, the principal of the school in Nice, France, the son of Mrs. Hanina.)