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781

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

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



MASKIL LEDAVID

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

## Honorable Title – Servant of Hashem

**"An angel of Hashem appeared to him in a blaze of fire from amid the bush. He saw and behold! the bush was burning in the fire but the bush was not consumed"** (Shemot 3:2)

Moshe Rabbeinu was shepherding his father-in-law Yitro's sheep in the wilderness, when suddenly he noticed a wondrous thing- a bush was burning but it nevertheless remained intact and wasn't consumed. Moshe Rabbeinu marveled at this sight and said, "I will turn aside and look at this great sight – why will the bush not be burned?" (ibid 3:3). As he approached the bush he heard Hashem calling out to him and telling him to remove his shoes from his feet for the place upon which he stands is holy ground. Then Hashem turned to Moshe with a request to redeem His people from Mitzrayim, from the oppression of the slavery for "I have indeed seen the affliction of My people... and I have heard its outcry". Hashem chose to attract Moshe's attention by the sight of a bush for man is compared to a tree, as we are told, "Is the tree of a field a man" (Devarim 20:19). Just as a tree requires water in order to survive and flourish, so too Am Yisrael require Torah, which is compared to water, in order to exist and continue the chain of the generations. Hashem specifically chose the bush since it is a small, low tree; a demonstration of "I am with him in distress" (Tehillim 91:15).

The fact that the bush wasn't consumed despite the raging fire, was a message that Bnei Yisrael, too, will continue to exist and survive in Mitzrayim despite all the suffering and afflictions which they endured.

With what merit did the Bnei Yisrael survive despite all the hardships? Due to the fact that they didn't change their name, dress or language; three things which guarded the embers of Judaism that were still burning inside them- this is what gave them the strength not to assimilate with the Egyptians.

Hashem told Moshe that the fact that the bush is not consumed by the fire is something above the laws of nature. Similarly, the existence of Am Yisrael, who continues to survive despite the harsh slavery in Mitzrayim, is also above nature. However, they cannot rely on this phenomenon. A person cannot keep himself alive on the basis of a miracle alone. Therefore, Hashem asked Moshe to go to Mitzrayim to redeem His children. Hashem also revealed to Moshe that Am Yisrael will soon reach the 50th level of impurity, and in this state the fences and barriers that they erected for themselves will no longer have the power to save them.

This message from Hashem holds an important lesson for us. A person cannot hinge his existence on the observance of one mitzvah, for example, tefillin or Shabbat, for even though observing a single mitzvah has enormous value, nevertheless in order

to live a true Jewish life with all the accompanying merits, one is obligated to learn Torah and fulfill all its commandments. We have unfortunately seen this happen time and again. Many Moroccans, Tunisians and Algerians possessed great faith but nevertheless did not devote time to studying Torah and were not meticulous in their observation of mitzvot and as a result, the next generation turned their backs on our heritage and even intermarried, becoming partners in bringing non-Jewish children into the world.

This idea does not, chalilah, take away from the value of performing mitzvot such as tefillin, tzitzit and tzedakah, but one must bolster the idea that observing a single mitzvah or a few mitzvot, does not have enough power to protect a Jew and guard him from slipping spiritually. Only Torah study and observing all the mitzvot without differentiating can safeguard a person and bring him closer to Hashem.

We say in the shacharit prayer on Shabbat, "Moshe rejoiced in the gift of his portion: that You called him a faithful servant". This teaches us about the conduct of the leader of Am Yisrael. Moshe felt perfection and true joy in being a servant of Am Yisrael, for only in a situation where he saw himself subordinate to the people, did he experience a feeling of tranquility and true joy. This idea is expressed in the verses which talk about the receiving of the Torah, (Shemot 19:14): "Moshe descended from the mountain to the people". Chazal explain that instead of taking time to rest and seeing to his own needs, he abandoned his personal requirements and descended from the mountain straight to the people to teach them what he had heard from the mouth of the Mighty One. Rashi says on this verse: "It teaches us that Moshe did not turn to his own concerns but went straight from the mountain to the people."

Moshe Rabbeinu considered himself as a servant of the people, therefore when Hashem asked him to go and redeem His people, he tried to excuse himself from this mission, not because he did not desire their good and wish for their redemption, but simply because he didn't consider himself fitting for this position. In his great humility it occurred to him that his brother Ahron the Kohen would be the one fitting to redeem Am Yisrael, and not himself because he was "heavy of mouth and heavy of speech" (Shemot 4:10) and a servant of the people.

In Malachi (3:22) we are told, "Remember the Torah of Moshe My servant". We see that Hashem was in agreement with this feeling of servitude that Moshe felt, and even turned it into an honorable description by calling him an 'Eved Hashem'.



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Hilula

21 – Rabbi Matzliach Mazuz hy"d

22 – Rabbi Shmuel Heller

23 – Rabbi Avraham Falagi

24 – Rabbi Yissachar Meir, Rosh Yeshivat HaNegev

25 – Rabbi Ya'akov HaLevi of Chassidei Beit El

26 – Rabbi Shalom Yitzchak Mizrachi

27 – Rabbi Yitzchak of Krakow, author of 'Siach Yitzchak'



## Walking in their Ways

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

### Subservient to Hashem

A certain priest used to propagandize, morning and evening, about the wonderful religion of Christianity and its remarkable leaders. But he did not practice what he preached. Somewhere inside him, he was uneasy with the whole thing. Various questions arose regarding the Creation of the world and its supervision. Finding no rest for his tempest-tossed soul, he decided to investigate all religions, searching the world for the one truth.

He finally discovered it in the Torah of Am Yisrael. He learned that Hashem is the Master of the world and constantly supervises it.

He took his discovery to its logical conclusion and became a righteous convert. Since becoming a believing Jew, he frequently travels to the USA, where he lectures before Jewish audiences, strengthening their commitment to Torah and yirat Shamayim. He has, to date, succeeded in bringing numerous lost souls back to Hashem.

On one occasion, he told his listeners, "There can be no doubt that this world has a Creator. When I was still a priest, many questions plagued me regarding the Creation and how the world runs. I searched through all of the religions and found the truth only in the Torah of Am Yisrael. This led me to join the Jewish nation. My wife and I converted, and today, we have the merit of observing the mitzvot of the Torah.

"But one thing still baffles me. I, a former priest, stand here, teaching you, bona fide Jews, of the richness of Torah. You should be the ones teaching me. I am not revealing anything new, for Hashem's Presence is keenly felt at our side, every moment of our lives.

"The main feature of Judaism is to be subservient to Hashem. The only way to arrive at the truth is by humbling oneself before it, and before Hashem, Who stands behind it. Only in this manner, did I merit to recognize the Creator and reveal the eternal truth of Torah."

Every Jew should take the message of this convert to heart. When one humbles and submits himself to the will of Hashem, he will merit recognizing Him in the world. Self-negation and humility bring one to faith in Hashem and enable him to acquire Torah in a permanent way.



## The Haftarah

**"The words of Yirmiyahu the son of Chilkiyahu"** (Yirmiyahu 1:2)

The connection to the parsha: the Haftarah tells about Yirmiyahu who at first refused to perform the mission that Hashem requested from him by saying that he doesn't know how to speak for he is just a youth. In this parsha Moshe Rabbeinu tried to absolve himself of Hashem's mission by saying that he is not a man of words.

Ashkenazim read from Yeshayahu 27, **"[Days] are coming when Ya'akov will take root"**.



## Guard Your Tongue

### No Distinction in Nationality

When speaking rechilut (gossip), there is no difference whether one is talking to a Jew or non-Jew. It is easy to stumble in this, for example if one tells a non-Jew that the merchandise they purchased from a Jew is defective, or that a job that a Jewish person did for them is sub-standard. This can bring about much damage and loss to the Jewish worker and cause him great heartache.



## Words of our Sages

### Only for the Picture

**"Moreover, behold, he is going out to meet you"** (Shemot 4:14)

The remarkable alacrity of Maran Hagaon R' Yosef Shalom Elyashiv zt"l, was observed close up by those who were present when he arose in the morning, ready for a new day of Torah and avodat Hashem. He had only just opened his eyes, yet he was full of vigor, and in an amazingly short time he was already leaning over his gemarah...

As soon as he awoke in the morning, he would carry on where he had left off with the song of his life. Despite his physical limitations, he would complete all his preparations as quickly as possible, so that within a few moments he was already immersed in the gemarah, totally forgetting all his pains and suffering.

When, in the middle of learning, he required a certain text, this is when his greatness stood out. Although every part of his body was riddled with pain and he could hardly get around even with his walker, he would immediately fortify himself and get up from his place without hesitating for a moment. With uncharacteristic strength he would take his walker and quickly walk over to the shelf that held the volume required. He would sometimes almost fall over as he returned to his place with the book in his hand, depleted from the tremendous strain this involved.

Despite R' Elyashiv's zt"l exceptional diligence in Torah learning, nevertheless at the times that he designated for receiving the public, one never felt that he was pressed for time. Rabbeinu would patiently listen to the person, asking prominent questions so as to get a clear picture and taking an interest in every detail. He sincerely participated in the other person's joy or chalilah, hardship.

This magnanimous attitude was also notable when he attended someone's simcha. Rabbeinu would sit calmly as if he possessed all the time in the world. Only once he decided that he had done his duty, he immediately got up to leave. An apt expression was once heard from Rabbeinu on this point. Once, when Rabbeinu arrived at a wedding hall, his driver inquired as to how long he thinks he will remain at the wedding. Rabbeinu replied: "As long as it takes to have my picture taken." And indeed Rabbeinu entered the hall, sat down at one of the tables and took off his hat in order to give the ba'alei simcha the feeling that he was here to stay...

The photographers quickly approached him and photographed Rabbeinu from every angle, also taking a picture of him together with the hosts... Two minutes later, Rabbeinu put his hat back on his head and left the wedding hall. As they started driving away, Rabbeinu explained that the hosts don't actually require his presence at the dancing. Having their picture taken together with him is what makes them happy, and if this is the case, this is the amount of time that he needs to be there, and that's it...



## Pearls of the Parshah

### \*Each Jew Shines Like a Star

*“And these are the names of the Children of Israel” (Shemot 1:1)*

The Sfat Emet writes on the words of Rashi, “To tell us of His love for them that they are compared to the stars”. Every Jewish person has to know that Hashem loves him, and just as He created the stars to light up the darkness, so too He created us so that we should spread G-dly light and illuminate the darkest and lowliest places.

### Tehillim Pierces the Heavens

*“And these are the names of the Children of Israel who were coming” (Shemot 1:1)*

The last letter of each of the hebrew words “And these are the names of the Children of Israel who were coming” makes up the word ‘Tehillim’. The sefer ‘Emunah Shlemah’ notes that herein lies a hint that when faced with any trouble or hardship (מצרים), one must pick up the Sefer Tehillim and that is where our salvation lies. The best weapon that a Jew has is prayer from the depth of his heart! As Rabbi Yehudi Alcharizi zt”l poetically wrote: “When is prayer heeded? When the soul surrenders, the eye tears and the tribulation seeps into the walls of the heart.”

### Not the Literal Meaning

*“Moshe desired to dwell with the man” (Shemot 2:21)*

The Mechilta tells us that when Moshe said to Yitro “Give me Tzipora your daughter as a wife”, Yitro replied, “Accept this thing that I am going to tell you.” He asked him, “What is this requirement?” He replied, “The first son will be for avodah zarah. After that, for the sake of Heaven.” Moshe accepted this. Yitro said, ‘Swear’, and he swore. As it says, “Moshe desired (ויִוָּאל)”, and אלה is an expression of promising.

It is told about Rabbi Yitzhak Meir of Gur, the ‘Chidushei Harim’, that when he mentioned the above Mechilta at his table he said, “I swear that it is not so and I wouldn’t mention this Midrash if its words were to be taken literally. The implication is that Yitro wanted the child to follow in his (Yitro’s) path by first serving avodah zarah. This will bring him to realize that there is no truth in it. Once he grasps that it is something erroneous and repulsive, he will arrive at the true faith – faith in the G-d of Israel. Moshe Rabbeinu changed his mind and did not agree, for he was concerned that no doubt a slight impression of the corrupt ideas will remain with him.

### One Who is Happy Does Not Lack

*“So that it will happen when you go, you will not go empty-handed” (Shemot 3:21)*

The Imrei Chaim of Vishnitz zya”a used to expound on this verse: The word ‘Vehoyo’ always denotes happiness. The reference over here is, “so that it will happen when you go” – if you go around with the trait of happiness, then you will not go empty-handed – you won’t lack anything, for joy is your lot.

### Who Merits Heavenly Assistance?

*“So now, go! I shall be with your mouth” (Shemot 4:12)*

The holy ‘Or HaChaim’ zt”l explains: Moshe Rabbeinu wondered why Hashem was sending him to speak to Pharaoh if he has “sealed lips”?!

Hashem answered him: “So now, go!” I will only do a miracle for one who starts performing a mitzva; they are the ones who will merit to be assisted by Heaven and experience wonders. This teaches us a fundamental approach: One who wishes to experience Heavenly assistance must take the lead and perform some act and then help will arrive.

## Treasures

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



### Man is a Tree of a Field

*“An angel of Hashem appeared to him in a blaze of fire from amid the bush. He saw and behold! the bush was burning in the fire but the bush was not consumed” (Shemot 3:2)*

Hashem revealed Himself to Moshe specifically in a bush, and not in a stone or through the sheep that Moshe was guiding. It is worth contemplating the significance of Hashem choosing this location through which to reveal Himself to Moshe.

We can explain that Hashem wanted to allude to the fact that that man is compared to a tree. Just as a tree needs water in order to grow, so does a person require Torah, which is compared to water, in order to exist and survive, in accordance with the Chazal (Baba Kama 17a) “There is no water but Torah”. Water is immense and has no specific borders and so too, Torah is wider and deeper than the sea.

And the bush in which Hashem appeared to Moshe was burning with fire, for fire symbolizes the fire of indulgences which have the power to consume a person and remove him from this world. But, if a person toils in Torah, then “the bush was not consumed”, for Torah protects and saves a person from any kind of danger and harm.

There are many different kinds of trees; some are barren and others bear fruit. The analogy is that wicked people are compared to barren trees that don’t produce anything but their sound carries far. On the other hand, righteous people are compared to fruit trees, for they possess much Torah and good deeds, just as the tree bears the weight of its fruit. The multitudes of simple people are compared to trees that are sometimes green and full of leaves, yet at other times are stripped of all their leaves. Those people have times when they observe mitzvot and follow in the path of Hashem, but it also happens that their yetzer hara overwhelms them and they submit themselves to the pressures of the yetzer hara. After returning to their senses they repent wholeheartedly; the leaves grow back and cover them and they return to their original state.

Hashem revealed Himself specifically in a bush to enlighten us with a message about the different levels of people in Am Yisrael.

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

## We Must Do Whatever We Can

Batya, daughter of Pharaoh, after doing all that was in her power (by stretching out her hand towards the bassinet) to save Moshe, was helped by Hashem in a miraculous way (her hand lengthened), and she received great reward for this from Hashem.

The Chafetz Chaim derives from this that a person must not hesitate to try and save one who needs help, even if it seems that according to nature there is no chance of saving him. He should not stand and watch helplessly, but should try and do his maximum, and this will result in salvation coming about in a miraculous way. This is the way that a miracle occurs- it is a follow-on of the effort that preceded it, and fills in from the point where a human being no longer has the power to affect.

## Men of Faith

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

### Rachel

A woman came from Toronto to Lyon in order to discuss with Moreinu v'Rabbeinu her son's complicated medical issues. On the same occasion, she related the following amazing story:

Moments after she was born in Mogador, Rabbi Chaim Hakatan left his house and headed directly toward her house. When he reached the entrance, he quickly called one of the family members and told him, "Hurry and bring me the baby that was just born."

Upon hearing the unusual request, the family member explained politely, "Rabbi! The baby was just born a few minutes ago and we have not yet washed her. She is still all dirty from the birth."

Rabbi Chaim stood firm. He told the family member, "It does not matter what the baby looks like. Bring her to me at once, before she dies..."

When the parents heard Rabbi Chaim's warning, they knew that it was not a trivial matter. Obviously, something serious was about to occur which they did not know about. Frightened, they brought the child to the Rav.

The Rav blessed the baby, and at the same time, gave her the name Rachel. Baruch Hashem, she was saved and lived a splendid life. Everyone realized that Rabbi Chaim was blessed with Divine inspiration, since he perceived the exact moment of the birth and saw the danger that lay in wait. Therefore, he immediately came to bless the newly-born child.

When Moreinu v'Rabbeinu heard this story, he was surprised. Why? It is common knowledge that when one changes a person's name, the name Rachel is not given (see Devash L'fi of the Chida, Ma'arechet 300, letter 14. In the Shut, V'haya Haolam, page 277). But in this case, Rabbi Chaim deliberately gave the name Rachel. What was the reason for this?

This is to illustrate the extraordinary powers of a tzaddik. He is able to transform the Attribute of Justice inherent in the name Rachel to mercy and compassion, ensuring that she would live.

### Let Me Hear Your Supplicating Voice

Rabbi Chaim Hagadol served as the chief judge in the esteemed Beit Din of Mogador, and Rabbi David Chazan served as his assistant. The third pillar of the court was Rabbi Avraham Koryat, author of the sefer Brit Avot, who was a student of Rabbi Chaim.

How did Rav Avraham merit sitting as a judge in the Beit Din together with these Torah giants? It is told that when he was young, he was very musical and a talented poet. Once, when Rabbi Chaim passed through the streets of Mogador with his friend, Rabbi David Chazan, they heard an enchanting melody echoing from one of the houses. The two followed the sound and discovered Rabbi Avraham Koryat sitting in his house, singing piyutim with a captivating voice, accompanied by the violin.

For a whole hour, the Rabbanim remained entranced by the enthralling melody and

prose. They inquired about the background of the young fellow, and they learned that he was a grandson of the famous tzaddik, Rabbi Baruch from Tetouan, zt"l, and lived alone without any family or financial support.

Upon hearing this, Rabbi Chaim and Rabbi David Chazan told him, "Such a sweet voice should be utilized for learning Torah. Come with us and join us in our study. We will provide you with all your needs."

Rabbi Avraham accepted their offer and joined them, learning both b'iyun and b'kiyut. Rabbi Chaim provided him with all his physical needs with the same devotion as a loving father.

In time, after Rabbi Avraham became well-versed in all areas of the Torah, he too was appointed as a judge in the special Beit Din of Rabbi Chaim and Rabbi David Chazan. From then on the three of them were referred to as echad (one), since אחד is an acronym of their names (דוד, חיים, אברהם).

In addition, Rabbi Chaim had other students, who eventually served as Rabbanim and as Rabbinical authorities. Among them were Rabbi David Zaguri, zt"l, who served as Rav of Lisbon, Portugal, and authored the sefer David Lehazkir; and Rabbi Yaakov Ben Shabbat, zt"l, author of the sefer Ruach Yaakov, in which he cites the divrei Torah of his teacher, Rabbi Chaim.