

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

A Faithful Servant Doesn't Speculate

"If you buy a Jewish bondsman, he shall work for six years; and in the seventh he shall go free, for no charge" (Shemot 21:2)

In Parshat Yitro the Bnei Yisrael received the Torah and promised, "We will do and we will obey". Now, in Parshat Mishpatim they fulfill that promise and start to fulfill the mitzvot. The Torah begins with the commandment of a Jewish bondsman so that we learn from him how to be faithful servants to Hashem.

Just as a person sells himself as a servant in order to pay off his debts, we too must know that we also have many debts to Hashem which we are obligated to pay back.

Hashem bestows on us endless gifts; a good life, income, good health, a wife and children... All these are debts and if only we could repay Hashem for even one out the thousands of gifts... We are obligated to thank Him for them and not be ungrateful and ignore the fact that we have been blessed.

What is the correct way to thank Hashem Yitbarach? How do we 'repay' Him for all the good?

The answer is by being a faithful servant to our Creator. When a person sacrifices for Hashem's honor and toils in His holy Torah and exerts himself to fulfill the mitzvot, he is an affirmed slave to his Master and through that repays Hashem in a small way for all the good that He bestows upon us.

These are the laws which the Torah demands from the Bnei Yisrael: "If you buy a Jewish bondsman..." Just like that servant gives himself over wholly to his master – so too every person should suppress his desires and his intellect, and sacrifice his personal wishes for Hashem Yitbarach. He should be a devoted servant to Him forever, one who obeys His will and fulfills His word wholeheartedly.

One who wishes to be a faithful servant to Hashem, must believe in Him with all his heart and trust in Him with the clear knowledge that everything that happens to him and all that he goes through whether good and bad, is all with His exact intervention (hashgacha pratit). He should not try to delve into the reasons for his situation or try to understand why a certain incident happened to him, but instead he should follow Hashem with eyes closed, trusting in Him and leaning on Him. The ways of Hashem are hidden from us and it is a sign of arrogance if we think we can understand Hashem's ways and find a reason and cause for everything that we endure. Instead we should trust in Hashem and rely on Him like a faithful servant who follows his master through fire and water.

I gleaned this idea from the name that was given to the leader of Bnei Yisrael, Moshe Rabbeinu a"h,

and also from the way we are told about the name of Reuven, who was the firstborn of Ya'akov. If we look closely we will notice that concerning all the names of the holy shevatim, the Torah first tells us the reason for that particular name and only afterwards we are told the actual name. However, with Moshe Rabbeinu a"h, his name precedes the reason: "She called his name Moshe, as she said, "For I drew him from the water" (Shemot 2:10). With Reuven too, it says (Bereishit 29:32) "She called his name Reuven, as she had declared, "Because Hashem has discerned my humiliation". Indeed, many commentaries ask why the Torah changes the order with these specific names?

I would like to offer an answer as follows, according to the Ba'al HaTurim who writes: The name "Moshe" contains the same letters as the name "Hashem". Moshe Rabbeinu a"h continually developed in holiness and purity and achieved a level beyond human comprehension. He drew close to the level of the holy shechina itself, as it says: "Yet, You have made him but slightly less than the angels" (Tehillim 8:6). His entire spiritual essence and even his physical body became an entity of Torah and holiness, with no remnant of anything physical. He merited sitting in the presence of the angels and even before his birth, before his neshama came down to this world, he was ready to be the savior of Am Yisrael. Due to this the Torah did not find it necessary to explain why he was called Moshe, because it is self-understood that the name 'Moshe' is connected to 'Hashem' through having the same letters, to let us know that Hashem's name was called on him. Therefore, the reason for his name is mentioned in the Torah only 'by the way', it is something secondary- "For I drew him from the water". The truth is that he was given this name to teach us that the name of Hashem is part of him and he is holy to Hashem Yitbarach, and Hashem spoke from his throat.

This is the way that every person must behave in whatever situation he finds himself. He should not question and try and find a cause for a particular incident that happened to him or try and work out why a certain tribulation befell him. He must simply believe without any doubt that it is the will of Hashem and the amount of suffering that he experiences is exact to the tiniest measure, for Hashem is "a G-d of faith without iniquity, righteous and fair is He" (Devarim 32:4), and He alone knows how to run His world. How can a person think he can understand His reckonings and try and find the reason for His deeds?

If a person succeeds in behaving in the appropriate way, he has earned the merit of being a faithful servant to Hashem, and fortunate is he in this world and in the next.



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Hilula

27 - Rabbi Chaim Bardugo

28 - Rabbi Vidal Angel, Ra'avad Yerushalayim

29 - Rabbi Natan Tzvi Finkel, the Saba of Slabodka

30 - Rabbi Meir, the Maharam of Padova

1 - Rabbi Tzedaka Chutzin, author of 'Meikitz Nirdomim'

2 - Rabbi Ben Tzion HaKohen Rabin

3 - Rabbi Eliezer De Abilla zya"ta, author of 'Magen Giborim'



Walking in their Ways

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

“When you lend money to My people, to the poor person who is with you” (Shemot 22:24)

How can a person truly feel the pain of another person and hasten to support him in his time of trouble?

On the words “When you lend money to My people, to the poor person who is with you”, Rashi writes: “Consider yourself as if you are a poor person”. A person can only truly feel the pain of another if he puts himself in his shoes and sincerely considers his friend’s pain as his own personal pain.

I once had the opportunity to personally put this idea into practice, when a famous Admor from Eretz Yisrael came to France in order to raise funds for the various institutions under his patronage.

Large posters were hung in the streets, announcing the arrival of the tzaddik and calling on the public to participate in a special event that was arranged for a certain evening.

I was among those who were supposed to address the public at this event and help the Admor with his collection. A short time before the event was scheduled to begin, the organizers called me and told me not to come because the turnout was very poor. Maybe they hadn’t advertised enough for very few people had turned up and the huge hall that they had rented looked pathetically empty. They didn’t feel it was right to bother me to come and address this very small group.

My first reaction was indeed to agree and I got out of my car in order to go back into my house. But then at that moment I made a calculation and said to myself: If this was my personal event, and I was waiting for this chance and looking forward to people turning up, but for some reason they were not arriving, there is no doubt that I would be embarrassed and disappointed, and I would at least want the rabbanim to come and take their place next to me. If so, why now am I not going? Surely this situation is causing great distress and discomfort to the Admor, so why should I not go and encourage him with my presence?!

With that, I immediately went into action. I retraced my steps and quickly made my way to the hall. Baruch Hashem we experienced great *siyata dishmaya*. The community did not turn up as they had hoped, but I spoke before those few who were present and gave them words of *chizuk* about the merit of supporting Torah. With Hashem’s kindness we merited to raise a respectable sum for the *mosdot* of the Admor.

I personally offered to contribute a fair amount, and then the others who were present followed my cue. I returned home happy that I merited doing this *chessed*. Of course heaven gave me this merit only because I put myself in the Admor’s shoes and I imagined how I would feel if I would be in this embarrassing situation. This is the only way to really understand the pain of another and then automatically, one has the ability and forethought to help him out in a practical way.



Words of our Sages

The Maid’s Segulah

“You shall worship Hashem, your G-d, and He shall bless your bread and your water, and I shall remove illness from your midst” (Shemot 23:25)

“When I was in Mexico”, the tzaddik Rabbi Ya’akov Galinsky zt”l told over, “I was asked to give a lecture about the significance of praying with a minyan. People are in a rush to get to work in the morning so they quickly swallow a few words of prayer at home before they run out to start their day. And at the end of the day, in the evening, they pray once again but their minds are preoccupied with other matters. It is a shame that they don’t remember the words of the gemara (Berachot 21b) that the difference between one who prays alone to one who prays with a minyan, is the same as the difference between one who doesn’t pray at all to one who does pray!

I started off with a true story that took place long ago in a Polish village. A couple owned a one-story house, of which they used the front to house their store, while the back of the house contained their living quarters. The husband and wife were both occupied with running the store so they hired a non-Jewish maid to tend to their young children. One day while the couple was serving their customers, they suddenly heard their baby crying, all the way from the back of the house. Knowing that the maid was with him, they tried to tune out his cries. However, the baby’s cry only grew stronger and soon turned into choking sobs. The mother’s heart could not take the sound of her baby’s distress. What was going on back there? Why was he crying so bitterly? What could be disturbing him? The mother knew that the maid was devoted. She had surely changed his diaper and fed him. Why was he not calming down?

“I have to go and check out what is happening there”, she told her husband and rushed to the back of the house. She saw the maid energetically rocking the baby in his crib, her face a picture of despair. She too didn’t understand what was disturbing the baby.

The mother rushed over to the crib to pick up her baby but then stopped still in disbelief: Her baby was wrapped up in his father’s tallit, with his tefillin wound around his little body!

“What is the meaning of this?” she asked in surprise. The poor maid explained: “He cried so bitterly and wouldn’t calm down; nothing helped. And then I remembered that the head of the household uses this secret. Early

in the morning he organizes the store and then afterwards he wraps himself with this cloth and winds these straps round himself, and then he sinks into the couch and falls asleep for an hour. I tried this ‘method’ but it didn’t help...”

I ended the tale and the audience couldn’t stop laughing. They said, “But people also pray like this when they pray with a minyan, with their minds focused on other things entirely.”

There is something that is important for everyone to know: Nowadays, it is dangerous to cross the road. Why? The road is full of cars. There are so many different kinds. They tell me that there are cars that cost ten times more than other cars. Why, what’s the difference? The most important difference is in the strength of the motor- how fast the car can travel, the ease with which it manages to travel on rough roads, and how much it feels the weight of its passengers. Expensive cars are only for the very rich. But a private airplane? Only the enormously wealthy can afford this luxury.

And what about someone like me? Someone like me travels with public transport. I can’t afford to buy a car and I can’t afford the expense of maintaining a car. Who’s even talking about a private airplane! When I need to get somewhere, I take a bus which doesn’t cost very much, or I buy a plane ticket from a travel agent.

This is what we say in the “Nishmat kol chai” prayer: “By the mouth of the upright shall You be lauded; by the words of the righteous shall You be blessed.”

One who is upright and righteous, he is fortunate. He is rich, he can praise and bless on his own, like one who travels in an expensive fancy car. “By the tongue of the devout shall You be exalted” – similar to an executive who travels in a private plane. But I need public transport- “And in the assemblies of the myriads of Your people”. Together with them my prayer will also go up!

This idea can be derived from the verse: “You shall worship Hashem, your G-d, and He shall bless your bread and your water, and I shall remove illness from your midst”. Why does the verse start in the singular and finish in the plural? **ועבדת את ה' אלקיכם** is plural and **ונחלתם את הארץ והיחיתו מחלה מקרבך** is singular.

Indeed, each person has his own personal requests. One is asking for salvation in *parnassah*, another for *refuah*. One person needs help with his *shalom bayit* and the other person wishes to be blessed with *nachat* from his children. Each one must pull his weight and then the gates of success will open for him. When will this be? When you serve Hashem together, in public, with which kind of *avodah*? *Avodah shebalev* (service of the heart) – with the service of *tefillah* which is called the work of the heart.

The Haftarah



“The word that came” (Yirmiyahu 34)

The connection to the Parsha: Yirmiyahu HaNavi gets up and warns the people about the mitzva of letting Jewish servants and maidservants go free, which is the same subject as the Parsha which talks about the law of the *eved Ivri* who goes free after six years.



Guard Your Tongue

As if Permitted

Chazal said: “For three sins a person is punished in this world and does not receive a portion in the World to Come. And they are: *avodah zarah*, immorality and murder; and *lashon hara* is equal to all of them.”

The *Rishonim* explain that it refers to those who commit this sin (of *lashon hara*) constantly and do not accept upon themselves to stay away from it, because habit has turned it into something acceptable in their eyes.



Pearls of the Parshah

Compromise is Not Always in Place

“And these are the ordinances that you shall place before them” (Shemot 21:1)

This parsha begins by delineating the pertinent laws between man and his fellow man – the laws of damages, injuries, safekeeping and others.

The question is asked: The Beit Yosef, who wrote the Shulchan Aruch and systematized it into four volumes, chose the section of “Choshen Mishpat” (which deals with the above laws) to be the last volume. Would it not be more fitting for it to be the first of the four volumes, similar to the order of the laws in the Torah? Straight after receiving the Torah the next parsha begins with “And these are the ordinances”?

A wonderful answer is brought by the ‘Zchor Yemot Olam’, in the name of the Satmar Rebbe zt”l. The Beit Yosef chose this order with much thought, for in Choshen Mishpat at the beginning of the laws of judges, we are told the following law: “It is a mitzva to right away ask one who comes for a lawsuit- do you wish to know the law or do you wish to come to a compromise? And every court who manages to reach a compromise, it is considered an exemplary thing.”

This is the reason why the Beit Yosef decided that the Choshen Mishpat should be the last section, for if it would be at the beginning one could mistakenly think that in all sections of Shulchan Aruch it is a mitzva to reach a compromise.

But this is not so, for concerning all the other the laws of the Shulchan Aruch it is impossible to compromise. There is no place for compromise, no giving in. All these laws are connected to mitzvot of the Torah, and when fulfilling the mitzvot one must fulfill them exactly as Chazal and the poskim have outlined for us; they are the founding peg that holds everything in place. However, in the section of Choshen Mishpat concerning the laws between man and his fellow man, in money matters – here a person can give in and compromise. On the contrary, here it is a mitzva to compromise in order to prevent machloket.

Who Pays for Bittul Torah?

“If he gets up and goes about outside under his own power, the one who struck is absolved. Only for his lost time shall he pay, and he shall provide for healing” (Shemot 21:19)

The sefer ‘Kerem Tzvi’ asks: Although the one who caused damage pays for damage, pain, healing, rest and embarrassment, but bittul Torah is also an outcome and who pays for that? And who can atone for the tefillot that he is unable to pray?

He answers that indeed the sin of bitul Torah is the responsibility of the one who caused the damage, but this is only the case if the one who was injured was occupied with Torah before he was harmed, and also if once he is healed he returns as usual to his Torah learning. But if the one who was harmed “gets up and goes about outside” – not only does this show that he does not regret his time that went to waste, but he goes and enjoys himself outside, which proves that the one who caused the damage is not responsible for this bittul Torah, and therefore, “the one who struck is absolved” - he is free of bearing the responsibility for this. “Only for his lost time shall he pay, and he shall provide for healing”.

The Spiritual Reward of the Donkey

“To the dog shall you throw it” (Shemot 22:30)

It is interesting to note the difference between the reward that the donkey received for all future generations, with the reward that the dog received. The dog that didn’t bark in Mitzrayim merited the promise that the meat of a treifah will be thrown to him, and the donkey that carried the booty for the Bnei Yisrael when they left Mitzrayim and journeyed in the midbar, merited the mitzva of redeeming its firstborn.

Why does the dog get a material reward of meat, while the donkey merited much more than this – he became an object of a mitzva?

Rabbi Yitzchak Zilberstein shlita, in his sefer ‘Aleinu L’shabe’ach’ explains a great lesson: The difference can be determined by the fact that the dog was passive- he kept quiet and didn’t bark. However, the donkey performed an act for the sake of Am Yisrael, by carrying on its back, and this is the reason why he merited a much greater reward.

Treasures

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



Who is Considered a Faithful Servant?

“I love my master, my wife, and my children – I shall not go free” (Shemot 21:5)

The verse is talking about a faithful servant to Hashem who gets up and announces, “I love my master” the intention being – I love Hashem. “My wife” refers to the Torah “and my children” - these are his mitzvot and good deeds. Therefore, “I shall not go free” – I ask to cleave to my Master and never be separated from Him.

Only one who behaves in this way will merit the longed for title of “an affirmed servant to his master”, and Hashem announces and promises that “he shall serve him forever” (ibid 6). This person will forever be Hashem’s servant; in this world and in the next. Just as he merited serving his Creator faithfully in this world – so will he merit a world that is utterly good.

My esteemed teachers, the righteous Rabbeinu Shmuel Lopian zt”l, and Rabbi Kaufman zt”l, serve as an example to me of total devotion to Torah even in their old-age; a true example of the Chazal- “An old person sits in yeshiva”. Their entire approach and constant involvement in Torah was with enormous joy and alacrity, as if they were young men.

I never observed any laxity in their devotion to Torah learning; they never appeared fatigued or expressed any desire to relax their intensity, for they knew that as soon as one lets-up a bit in learning, it quickly leads to bitul Torah and this is a disaster. Ya’akov Avinu a”h, the pillar of Torah – requested tranquility towards the end of his life. He wished to learn Torah with less toil and with peace of mind. Immediately Hashem took him to task for this and the anguish of Yosef’s kidnapping pounced upon him. In comparison to his high level, this was considered for him as a laxity in Torah and therefore he was punished. This teaches us how careful a person must be to stay far from laxity and take care not to show laziness when it comes to Torah learning and keeping the mitzvot.

I remember a dear avreich who used to learn at our Kollel. He would often come late to kollel and when I asked him why this happens, he answered, “I just wanted to rest a bit...I knew that this lateness would affect my monthly stipend, but I wished to rest”.

And what happened with this avreich in the end? He completely left Torah learning and went to work. Even though when he started off in Kollel he was very studious, but once he started taking it easy, this led to him leaving Torah learning and today he works at simple jobs and to my distress, he doesn’t even bring in a decent income. Even though he regrets his decision to leave, he feels that it would be too hard for him to go back to Kollel now. This is what Chazal were referring to when they said: “If you leave me for a day, for two days I will leave you.”

A faithful servant is never lazy and doesn’t look for the easy way out. He doesn’t slacken from fulfilling his job and serves his master wholeheartedly, with joy and agility. The verse says about Moshe Rabbeinu a”h: “Moshe My servant has died” (Yehoshua 1:2). Even though he is not alive, he is still My faithful servant, for also in the World of Truth he serves Hashem Yitbarach.

May it be His will that we all merit to be faithful servants to Hashem Yitbarach and observe His will with love and joy and with a full heart, Amen.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

We are Thirsty for Torah

“Everything that Hashem has said, we will do and we will obey” (Shemot 24:7)

Rabbi Ahron Zakai shlita, in ‘Torat HaParsha’ asks, each person should have said for himself, “I will do and I will obey” - in the singular. How could they know what was in the heart of everyone else?

The Peshischa Rebbe zt”l, using a mashal, explains that it can be compared to prisoners who are sharing a prison cell. On a particularly hot and humid day when it felt like there was no air in the room, someone entered their cell and asked the prisoners if they would like a drink. All those who were sitting there joyfully answered as one: “We would love a drink!”

Here one understands that it is superfluous to ask how each one knew what the other one desired.

Similarly with the Bnei Yisrael, they were all thirsty and longing for water... They were thirsty for the words of Torah and for the giving of the Torah. That is how each one could say with certainty “We will do and we will obey”.



Men of Faith

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

Stuck to the Seat

Rabbi Moshe Aharon, zy”a, told the following story portraying the extraordinary holiness of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Hakatan, zy”a:

We went to live in Casablanca for a period of time. After finding an apartment to rent, we made sure to light a ner neshamah for the elevation of the soul of my righteous father, Rabbi Chaim Hakatan. My wife would light the candle, which would burn for five days straight.

A week before Rosh Hashanah, my wife planned our return to Mogador in order to participate in the hilula of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Hagadol. She gave the keys of the house in Casablanca to her brother, Massoud, so that he should continue lighting the candle for the elevation of my father the tzaddik’s soul.

Massoud lived in Marrakesh. He earned his livelihood by buying merchandise wholesale and marketing it to stores. He would travel daily with his truck from Marrakesh to Casablanca. This is why my wife figured that he would be able to light the candle in our house each day while we were gone.

One day, when Massoud came to our apartment in Casablanca in order to light the candle, he remembered that he had left his pouch full of money in his truck. He feared that someone would break into his truck and steal the money, which amounted to three and a half million francs.

Nonetheless, Massoud did not neglect his duty. He lit the candle and prayed in the merit of the tzaddik, “Rabbi Chaim Pinto Hakatan, I beg that in your merit Hashem should guard my pouch, since I am lighting a candle for you.” Afterward, he immediately returned to his truck.

When he drew close to the truck, to his surprise, he found a non-Jew sitting at the wheel, holding the pouch in his hand. Massoud asked him, “What are you doing here?” The non-Jew admitted abashedly, “I broke into your truck to steal. However, the moment I grabbed the pouch, I felt myself sticking to the seat, unable to move. That is why I cannot run away. Honest, I did not take any money out of the pouch.”

Massoud told him to put the pouch back and get out of the truck. As soon as the thief put the pouch down, he succeeded in getting out of the truck. In this way, all the money was returned to Massoud intact.

It is obvious Who guarded the money, as it says in Tehillim, (121:4) “Behold, He neither slumbers nor sleeps, the Guardian of Israel.” When the thief stole into the truck, Hashem protected Massoud in the merit of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Pinto Hakatan, for whom he lit the candle, causing the thief to get stuck to the seat, preventing his escape. Regarding this it says, “Tzaddikim are greater in their death than in their lifetime” (Shenot Chaim).