

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

United Around the Mishkan

"They shall make a Sanctuary for Me so that I may dwell among them" (Shemot 25:8)

Many practical insights can be derived from the mishkan and its vessels; these are essential lessons for all generations that can help us discern the correct path to follow in life.

The mishkan was positioned in the center of the camp of Yisrael, with the holy tribes encamped around it, as it says, "They shall encamp around the Tabernacle." (Bamidbar 1:50). This is the way that they encamped and this is the way that they journeyed. The idea behind this arrangement is to teach us that the focal point for Am Yisrael must be the Mishkan and the Ohel Moed, the place where the shechina rests, and we must be united in our aspirations. Even though every tribe has its specific way of serving Hashem, nevertheless 'all rivers lead to the sea'; we share the mutual goal of serving Hashem. "Let them all become a single society, to do Your will wholeheartedly." Chazal tell us (Megillah 14a): Just as this palm tree has only one heart (all the branches stem from one point), so too all Yisrael are of one heart for their Father in Heaven.

In truth, had Am Yisrael not sinned with the Golden Calf, they would not have required the building of the mishkan to unite them around the holy shechina, for they had already achieved this unity at Har Sinai, as we are told: "And Israel encamped there, opposite the mountain" (Shemot 19:2). Rashi writes on this verse: "And Israel encamped - as one man with one heart." All the Bnei Yisrael, as one unit, wholeheartedly and enthusiastically accepted the Torah upon themselves. But this unity was breached by the act of the Golden Calf. Through this sin the Bnei Yisrael attached themselves to avodah zarah and impurity, severed themselves from their Creator and disconnected themselves from the shechina. After they repented, there was a need to return this unity between the people and Hashem, and this was achieved by building the mishkan. Since they encamped around it and the eyes of all the Bnei Yisrael were focused on the holy shechina which rested in it – the unity which had always existed returned to rest between the people and their Father in Heaven.

It is well-known that a circle symbolizes unity. A circle has no sides or corners; it has no beginning and no end. Sitting around a round table shows that all the participants have equal status.

I would like to suggest, with siyata dishmaya, that the Golden Calf, the **עגל הזהב**, with which the Bnei Yisrael sinned, also contains this message. 'עגל' can also mean 'circle' (**עיגול**), which as we said implies unity. Although of course this unity was for a negative rationale and it was a corrupt unity which brought destruction upon the Bnei Yisrael, they were neverthe-

less united with their intention of serving the avodah zarah, and all of them as one said about the Golden Calf "This is your god, O Israel" (Shemot 32:4). This set up a barrier between them and Hashem, and from that point the unity which had been present at Har Sinai left, with separation and distance taking its place, for Hashem distanced Himself from the people and took away His shechina from their midst.

But once the Bnei Yisrael repented and regretted their sin, there was now a need to return this peace between Am Yisrael and their Father in Heaven, to once again draw their hearts together around their Creator, to become as one society doing His will wholeheartedly. Therefore through building the mishkan in the midst of the Bnei Yisrael and their encamping around it, unity was restored between them.

The holy Alshich zya"l explains that the foremost building of the mishkan must take place inside the heart of every Jew. Hashem wishes to rest His shechina inside each person, as it says: "They shall make a Sanctuary for Me so that I may dwell among them". It doesn't say "among it" but "among them" – inside the heart of every single person.

A holy obligation rests upon every Jew, to ready his heart and make himself holy through learning Torah and fulfilling the mitzvot, through behaving with middot tovo and in an upright way, so that his body will be a fitting vessel to receive the presence of the holy shechina.

According to this we can understand why the Torah describes the work of building the mishkan and its vessels in such lengthy detail. Hashem knew that due to our many sins the day will come when the Beit Hamikdash will be destroyed yet it is well-known that there is no word in the Torah which is written unnecessarily. Today, when we don't have a Beit Hamikdash and a Mishkan, how are these sections of the Torah manifested? The answer is, that indeed the Torah commandment of "They shall make a Sanctuary for Me" is a commandment for all generations, whether at a time when the Beit Hamikdash stands or even once it has been destroyed. For although the Mishkan that was made of acacia wood was destroyed due to our sins, there remains a holy obligation upon each person at all times and in all places, to build a private Mishkan inside of himself. He must beautify this Mishkan through Torah study and adorn it with good deeds so that Hashem should be satisfied with him and wish to dwell inside him.

If a person achieves this level, it is considered as if the mishkan was never destroyed, for his own personal Mishkan endures forever inside him.

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Hilula

4 - Rabbi Eliezer Gordon

5 - Rabbi Avraham Landau, Admor of Tshechnov

6 - Rabbi Chanoch Tzvi Levin

7 - Rabbi Yakov Toledano, Rosh Yeshiva of Chazon Baruch

8 - Rabbi Zecharya Barashi

9 - Rabbi Meir Pinto zya"l

10 - Rabbi David Tzvi Horontzik, the Admor of Radoshitz



Walking in their Ways

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

The Remedy is Prepared Before the Malady

I was once receiving people in a foreign country. A woman approached me and asked for a blessing for general success in the merit of my holy ancestors. For some unknown reason, I instructed her to do an MRI.

The woman was most surprised. "What for? I am not sick, chas v'shalom. Why should I have an examination of my head?"

But I stood my ground. "Check that everything is okay with you."

One year later, I had to meet with an esteemed Rav in that country, in order to ask for a specific favor. Once again, I found myself treading its soil. It was most unlikely that the Rav would accede to my request, but I did what was incumbent on me and went to meet with him.

To my utter surprise and delight, the Rav greeted me most warmly and immediately complied with my request. Additionally, he handed me a sizeable sum of money, stating, "I will forever be indebted to you."

Now I was truly flabbergasted. "What do you mean?" I asked. "We hardly know each other!"

But he knew what he was talking about. "I heard that one year ago, you told Mrs. So-and-so to undergo a series of tests on her head, for no apparent reason. The woman did as you ordered and discovered that she had a malignant tumor. Since it was only in the beginning stages, it was still treatable. I was so moved by this account that I decided I must act charitably toward you, to show everyone the power of your fathers' merits."

I was truly astounded by his words. I felt that Hashem had sent me as an emissary in order to prepare the remedy before the malady. I thought I was just giving this woman good advice about her general health. But Heaven ordained that I should say those words, in order to save her life and obtain the favor I needed.

The Haftarah



"Hashem gave wisdom to Shlomo" (Melachim I 5-6)

The connection to the parsha: The haftarah talks about the building of the first Beit Hamikdash which was built by Shlomo Hamelech, and in the parsha Hashem tells Moshe Rabbeinu a"h about building the mishkan.



Guard Your Tongue

Causing Resentment

The Chofetz Chaim writes zt"l: It seems to me that one must be careful when praising Reuven in front of his partner, Shimon, (or praising a wife in front of her husband and vice versa) by saying that he helped him out with a loan or with a gift of charity or by paying him well for a job, or any similar idea.

It is natural that this might cause Shimon to feel resentment towards his partner Reuven, which can lead to damage or discord, if he thinks that Reuven was too lenient or hasty with dispensing their resources.



Words of our Sages

Giving with Greater Ease

"From every man whose heart motivates him you shall take My portion" (Shemot 25:2)

In the sefer "Oznaim L'Torah", the Gaon Rabbi Zalman Sorotzkin zt"l, the Lutzker Rav, writes about the time that a press delegation came to cover a fundraising event which took place on behalf of the Lithuanian Yeshivot. He had travelled together with a delegation of several other Rabbanim, to Warsaw, Poland, in order to make a large-scale appeal for the Lithuanian Yeshivot who were all facing a financial crisis.

As the event progressed, one of the journalists got up and threw out a provocative question. At about the same time, the Gaon Rabbi Meir Shapira zt"l, had also been travelling around in order to raise money for his vision of establishing a new yeshiva in Lublin. He had organized many gatherings in the Jewish quarters in Poland and Baruch Hashem, he was successful. The Polish Jews indeed witnessed the fulfillment of his dream, and a great Chassidic fortress of Torah was erected in Lublin.

"Would this money had not been put to better use had it gone to feed the hungry bochorim in the already established yeshivot in Lithuania, instead of going towards establishing a new yeshiva building?!" challenged the journalist.

Rabbi Zalman, using his best rhetoric, answered him: "When the Torah speaks about collecting money for the communal offerings, it places a fixed and defined obligation on every individual, whether rich or poor. Each one is obligated to give a half shekel, once a year.

On the other hand, when the Torah talks about donating towards the building of the mishkan, the command does

not include any mandatory obligation. The Torah relies on the generosity of the hearts of the Bnei Yisrael and it suffices with: "From every man whose heart motivates him you shall take My portion". If Hashem indeed relies on the willingness of the Bnei Yisrael, why does it not take this approach concerning the communal animal-offerings?"

"The reason is," continued Rabbi Zalman, "There is a big difference between the two kinds of contributions. Animal-offerings are more beloved by Hashem than the mishkan, as we see from the fact that the building of the mishkan does not take precedence to [observing] the Shabbat, whereas animal-offerings do have priority over the laws of Shabbat. Nevertheless, a person's natural leanings push him to prefer donating towards the building of the mishkan rather than for the offerings. Why is this? An offering is burnt on the mizbeach and what remains from it? Nothing. Whereas the mishkan is a tangible and enduring establishment. For these kind of things where the impact remains and doesn't disappear so quickly, people are much quicker to donate. They have a constant pleasurable reminder of the mitzva, which brings them satisfaction. In addition, a plaque is often erected on the building, describing the generosity of the philanthropist.

The animal-offerings are dearer, but they need more urging for they are burnt on the mizbeach. This same tendency is clear when fundraising for a yeshiva," Rabbi Zalman finished his retort. "It is much easier to find people who are willing to contribute towards buying a plot of land for establishing a building. But it is much harder to open ones pocket and donate money for food for the talmidim. Supporting talmidei chachamim who sit and devote themselves to Torah is most dear to Hashem, but it is difficult to interest people in this cause.

I know, the Lutzker Rav added, that the Gaon of Lublin will face difficult times once his building stands in all its glory. He too will then need to worry about finding ways to sustain his talmidim.

Indeed this is exactly what happened. "A wise person is more skilled (in foreseeing the future) than a prophet."



Pearls of the Parshah

Compared to a Fly

“Let them take for Me a portion” (Shemot 25:2)

There are many explanations offered on why it says “Let them take for Me”, and not “Let them give to Me”. I would like to quote the Beit HaLevi who lays down a fundamental principal concerning money. He writes that the amount of money that a person really owns - is the amount that he gives away to tzedakah! The idea is that even a person who possesses great wealth – does not own his money; it is simply placed in his care. This can be compared to a big lump of sugar that is found inside a closed container. A fly, trapped inside this container, walks all over the sugar and partakes of this delicacy to his satisfaction. Can this fly pride himself on being rich and owning all this sugar? The reality is that he is trapped inside a container!

So it is with riches; the money is placed in a person’s custody. It does not belong to him in any way. Only the amount that he gives to charity is truly his.

This is what Chazal refer to in Eiruvin (54a), “If you have, do good for yourself”. Meaning, what you give away to tzedakah is what benefits you. According to this idea, giving charity is taking for oneself, for only in this way does one ‘acquire ownership’ over the money.

A Segulah for Wealth

“Let them take for Me a portion” (Shemot 25:2)

The ‘Hafla’ah’ brings another beautiful idea on this verse. If we take the letters of the word **ממון** (money) and spell them out fully, **מ-מ, מ-מ, ו-ו, כ-ו**, the extra letters form the same word – **ממון**, with the addition of the letter ‘vav’ which doesn’t have any significance. But, if we write the word **ממן** without the ‘vav’, in a way that the word is lacking a letter, as if to say – if one takes away from one’s money in order to give it to charity, then when we spell out the word in full **מ-מ, מ-מ, כ-ו** we are once again left with the word **ממון**, which signifies – you give away, you get more...

The Sefer ‘Matok Ha’or’ brings an interesting gematriah on this theme:

The words **ויקחו לי תרומה** add up the numerical value of 821. Similarly, the words **שפע ברכה והצלחה** add up to 821. This hints to the fact that one who gives generously to tzedakah, will merit abundant blessings and success.

Hashem Measures the Degree of Challenge

“Shoham stones and stones for the settings, for the Ephod and the Breast-plate” (Shemot 25:7)

The Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh zya”a poses the following question: The shoham stones and the stones for the settings were worth more than the gold and silver; if so why are they mentioned only at the very end of the list of materials that were needed for the mishkan?

He answers that Chazal tell us that the shoham stones and the stones for the settings, were delivered from heaven by the clouds. The significance of this is that they arrived without any effort or expense on behalf of Am Yisrael, therefore the verse first mentions the other materials like gold and silver which required effort and expense.

The sefer ‘Chochma V’Da’at’ expands on this idea by quoting the Chazal that tells us that the flour-offering of a poor person is as dear to Hashem as the animal-offering of a rich person. There can be a situation where a rich person donates a hundred dollars but it does not demand much effort from him, whereas the single dollar that a poor person gives away from his meagre allowance is considered more precious to Hashem. Hashem measures the value of the donation according to the effort and sacrifice of the giver.

This concept is true not only concerning tzedakah, but also applies to every single mitzvah. “The reward is in proportion to the exertion” (Avot 5:26). Hashem, who plumbs our feelings and tests our innermost thoughts, acknowledges and cherishes the degree of challenge that each person has in learning Torah and observing the mitzvot, and according to this yardstick He reckons the true merit of each Jewish person.

Treasures

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



The Jewish Home - Our Personal Mikdash

“They shall make a Sanctuary for Me so that I may dwell among them” (Shemot 25:8)

“They shall make a Sanctuary for Me so that I may dwell among them”, also refers to a husband and wife who, if they make themselves into a mikdash, meaning that their entire goal in life is for the sake of heaven, to perform Hashem’s will – then, Hashem says, I will dwell among them. The tzaddik Rabbi Rafael Yisrael zt”l was a true example of this; he was a great Gaon who authored about seventeen sefarim, where he quotes from all over shas and poskim. He once exclaimed to a Rav, “All these sefarim that you see here – my wife wrote them!”

“Does your wife know shas and poskim?” asked the Rav in astonishment?

Rabbi Rafael answered: “These sefarim that I merited writing – are all in her merit, since she shouldered the entire responsibility of running of the household. She took care of all the material requirements of the home and through that she enabled me to completely devote myself to learning Torah.”

This is a couple who fulfilled the verse, “They shall make a Sanctuary for Me”. They made themselves into a mikdash so they merited the end of the verse: “That I may dwell among them”, just as we are told by Chazal: If they (husband and wife) are worthy, Hashem’s presence rests between them.

I was filled with immense joy when a couple came to speak to me and the husband announced that he had decided to devote himself to Torah learning full time, explaining that they will make do with his wife’s salary alone.

I asked him, “But you promised in the ketubah to be the one to provide for her?”

The husband answered, “Indeed I promised, but I merited marrying a special wife who is in full agreement of this arrangement.”

I turned to the wife and asked her, “Do you indeed agree?”

“It is my greatest pleasure. I am prepared to be the sole provider; the most important thing for me is that my husband should sit in the tent of Torah and completely devote himself to Torah learning.”

I was overjoyed to hear this and I felt how fortunate are Yisrael that this couple are prepared to devote themselves to their Creator. Through this commitment they are making themselves into a mikdash and about them it says, “They shall make a Sanctuary for Me so that I may dwell among them”. They are the true servants of Hashem.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



The Lesson of a Wedding

“Let them take for Me a portion” (Shemot 25:2)

Rashi clarifies the word “for Me” as meaning “for My sake”.

The Kotzker Rebbe brings the gemarah that says that this world is compared to a wedding.

Preparations for a wedding are wide-ranging and include, among other things, inviting one’s guests, preparing the food, arranging the band and the photographer...There are many details that must be taken care of and organized.

However, if the chatan misses out the word “to me” when he announces to his bride: “Behold you are consecrated to me” – the entire wedding is discounted and the marriage is void.

This is the message that we can learn from a wedding: If you come to this world and don’t intend “for Me” – “for My sake”, meaning that all one’s deeds should be for Hashem’s honor, you have missed out on everything that this world has to offer.



Men of Faith

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

I Promise You

Even after his passing, Rabbi Chaim Pinto HaKatan zya”a continues to be an advocate for us and many merited salvation in his merit.

Rabbi Atzraf Timsut, the Rosh Kollel of Zichron Shlomo v’Chaim, named after the tzadikim Rabbi Shlomo Timsut, zt”l, and Rabbi Chaim Atzraf, zt”l, told Moreinu v’Rabbeinu, shlita, the following story:

Rabbi Atzraf got married in 1966 (5726). After three years, he still did not have any children. He constantly prayed to Hashem for children and hoped for good news.

In Tammuz 1969 (5729), while he was learning in kollel, he came across a difficult question which he could not resolve. He agonized over the issue until he fell asleep. In his dream, he saw Rabbi Chaim, who had come to resolve his question. Afterward, Rabbi Chaim informed him, “I promise that you will have a child.”

On Pesach 1970 (5730), a son was born to him. He named him Chaim. From that time on, the merit of Rabbi Chaim has accompanied him.

The Name that Bestowed Life

Once, a baby who was born prematurely was diagnosed with a severe heart defect. The heart was as large as the entire chest, and

the lungs were not developed. The child also suffered from a lack of oxygen to the brain, and his condition was critical.

All the top physicians summoned to diagnose the condition of the baby were of the opinion that he would not live for more than a few hours. They informed the parents, adding that they had nothing to hope for and they should accept this decree of G-d.

The aunt of the child heard that the merits of Rabbi Chaim Pinto Hakatan were extremely powerful. Therefore, she decided on her own to name the child after the tzaddik even before the brit milah. When the matter was discussed with the parents, they unanimously consented to name the child Chaim.

Then a miracle occurred. Within two days after naming the baby Chaim, things began to change in a way that until today the doctors cannot comprehend. They could not understand how their diagnosis was so mistaken.

The heart shrunk to a normal size, the lungs began to receive air, and pure oxygen began to flow to the brain. This was despite the fact that the parents had been warned that even if the child would live, he would be a vegetable all his life. With Hashem’s help, the child grew completely healthy, without a trace of his former condition. (Heard from Nikol Kidron, the father of the child.)