

Pikudei

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Paris • Orh 'Haïm Ve Moché

32, rue du Plateau • 75019 Paris • France
Tel: 01 42 08 25 40 • Fax: 01 42 06 00 33
hevratpinto@aol.com

Jérusalem • Prineï David

Rehov Bayit Va Gan 8 • Jérusalem • Israël
Tel: +972 2643 3605 • Fax: +972 2643 3570
p@hpinto.org.il

Ashdod • Orh 'Haïm Ve Moshe

Rehov Ha-Admour Mi-Belz 43 • Ashod • Israël
Tel: +972 88 566 233 • Fax: +972 88 521 527
orothaim@gmail.com

Ra'anana • Kol 'Haïm

Rehov Ha'ahouza 98 • Ra'anana • Israël
Tel: +972 98 828 078 • Fax: +972 98 922 9003
kolhaim@hpinto.org.il



Hilula

2 - Rabbi Simcha Bunim Waldenberg

3 - Rabbi Mordechai Yaffe, author of 'Levush'

4 - Rabbi Leib Sarass, talmid of the Ba'al Shem Tov

5 - Rabbi Moshe Yehoshua Landau

6 - Rabbi David Povarski, Rosh Yeshiva of Ponivezh

7 - Rabbi Ya'akov Toledano

8 - Rabbi Eliyahu HaKohen, author of 'Shevet Mussar'

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

Submission and Subordination as the Basis of Avodat Hashem

"You shall bring Ahron and his sons near to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and immerse them in water. You shall dress Ahron in the sacred vestments and anoint him; you shall sanctify him and he shall minister to Me." (Shemot 40:12-13)

I always pondered the significance of the above verses. Why did Hashem command Moshe to immerse Ahron in water, dress him in his clothes and anoint him with oil? Why could Ahron not do this himself? Does it not show a certain lack of respect for Ahron HaKohen, that his brother Moshe should immerse him in water like a small child? Was this not humiliating for Ahron?

This command also concerned the sons of Ahron. The verse says (ibid, 14-15), "And his sons you shall bring near and dress them in tunics. You shall anoint them as you had anointed their father and they shall minister to Me". We will try to clarify why Hashem commanded Moshe to dress them, were they not capable of dressing themselves?

The answer to this difficulty is an essential and basic element that the Torah wishes to teach us. Namely, that submission and self-annulment for the sake of the will of Hashem is the foundation of all our avodat Hashem. A person must know that nothing else exists in the world besides the will of Hashem, and all his personal desires are negated for the sake of His commandments. A faithful servant who sincerely loves his master is ready to fulfill his every request, wholeheartedly and with joy. This is exactly how we must behave. Even if the request demands true self-sacrifice, it is not difficult for him to fulfill his master's wish because the love that he feels for him is so strong that he is willing to subordinate himself, simply for the sake of fulfilling his wish. The complete deference that he feels towards his master leaves him with no desire other than fulfilling his wish.

This is what Hashem wanted to teach Ahron and his sons. They should realize exactly what true avodat Hashem is all about. For only through complete submission and nullifying one's selfish desires, does one merit becoming a vessel fitting to contain Hashem's honor. The moment that Ahron and his sons were anointed with the anointing oil—they were transformed into 'vessels' for serving in the Mikdash, exactly like the other vessels of the Mishkan, like the Altar and the Washbasin. These vessels were also anointed by Moshe and became holy, and from then on, anyone who misused them had to reimburse their value plus a fifth, and also

bring a guilt offering. Similarly, Ahron and his sons, once they were washed and anointed with the oil by Moshe, became objects of holiness and holy vessels for serving Hashem Yitbarach.

This high level can only be attained after a person completely subordinates himself to Hashem. There was no greater submission than the honorable Ahron HaKohen, who was older than Moshe Rabbeinu, standing before Moshe, and wholeheartedly agreeing to be washed like a small child. Ahron could do this because he said to himself, if it would be the will of Hashem, I would even be willing to give up my life. All the more so was he willing to feel humbled and sacrifice his honor in order to fulfill the command of Hashem. Just like a servant is totally submissive to his master, nothing should stand in one's way besides the will of Hashem Yitbarach; personal desires or concerns do not come into question.

There is no doubt that on Moshe Rabbeinu's part too, the matter was not easy at all. He was required to wash his older brother, and he understood that it was, as if, an embarrassment for Ahron. Nevertheless, Moshe said if this is the will of Hashem, he is willing to comply with joy, without any questions or doubts. As it says (ibid 16) "Moshe did according to everything that Hashem commanded him, so he did". This is the nature of a faithful servant who is dedicated to his master. He annuls his desires for the honor of his master, and forsakes his own honor and is even prepared to endure shame for the sake of obeying his master.

This parsha manifests this important message. One who wishes to become a holy vessel for Hashem Yitbarach, must be willing to go through this procedure that Ahron HaKohen went through. First of all, "and immerse them in water"; he should wash himself from any impurities that may have clung to him, by cleansing himself in the waters of the holy Torah. After that, "You shall dress Ahron in the sacred vestments" – he should dress himself in spiritual clothes, which are created by observing Torah and mitzvot and performing good deeds, which are considered as one's spiritual garments and called by Chazal "itztala d'rabanen". Finally, "You shall anoint them" – a person should anoint himself, just like the Kohen who was anointed to be chief of war, with the 'war of Torah' – with invigorating Torah study. One who perseveres in this holy path, is promised that he will be transformed into a holy vessel, fitting to serve Hashem, and Hashem will wish to dwell inside him.



Walking in their Ways

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

A Fateful Call

Every week on Friday the pressure in our yeshiva's office mounts as Shabbat approaches. Hundreds of calls are forwarded to various extensions, either to the Kehilla's president, or to me or to one of the secretaries. People ask for a blessing before the onset of Shabbat, a piece of advice, or just a few words of inspiration. The time allotted for these calls is shorter than on the other days of the week. At 12:00 sharp, I leave the office and turn homeward to help with Shabbat preparations.

The Gemara relates numerous instances of our holy Tanna'im who exerted themselves in honor of Shabbat. Chazal also guarantee us (Avodah Zarah 3a), "He who exerts himself on Erev Shabbat will eat on Shabbat." My father, zy"a, used to help my mother, around the house on Friday, and I try to help my wife.

As I passed by an office on my way out of the yeshiva building one Friday, I suddenly heard the phone ringing. I wasn't aware that this room had a phone in it. I hurried to answer the call. A woman's desperate voice came through the line. "What luck that I reached the Rav," she began. "I have a terrible problem and cannot find a solution. I thought that taking my life would be an easy way to end my

suffering. I have tried to reach the yeshiva numerous times, in order to take counsel with the Rav, but no one ever picked up the phone. I decided that I would place one more call to the yeshiva. If I reached the Rav, wonderful; and if not, I would simply put an end to all my troubles."

Hearing her words sent a tremor down my spine. I offered her words of encouragement, explaining the severity of such a step. I finally succeeded in removing such thoughts from her mind. She told me what her problem was, and I offered her sound advice. Then I blessed her with success. She was happy with my advice, and thanked me. We hung up with greetings for a Shabbat Shalom.

As I placed the receiver on its cradle, I was lost in thought over the recent call. I asked the secretaries how the call had come specifically to that office. It turned out that it was a private phone of one of the secretaries. No one knows its number. How the woman found out this number remains a mystery. Additionally, the fact that I "happened" to pass by the room exactly when the phone rang, and answered it, was Heavenly arranged.

Without a doubt, Hashem's hand led me to pick up the phone, thereby saving the woman's life.



Words of our Sages

The Path to the Suspect

How could it be that Moshe Rabbeinu, about whom it says "in My entire house he is the trusted one" (Bamidbar 12:7), had to make an exact reckoning and explain precisely what every single donation was used for?

The Midrash tells us that Moshe heard the scoffers of the generation talking about him, saying: A person who was appointed to be responsible for the work of the Mishkan, who was dealing with talents of pure silver and gold that possess neither weight nor measure, it cannot be that he won't become rich. When Moshe heard this, he said, I promise, when the Mishkan will be completed I will give you an exact accounting. Since now the work was finished, he said to them: "These are the reckonings of the Tabernacle" (Shemot 38:21).

The question grows stronger if we think about what took place when they left Mitzrayim. All of Am Yisrael were occupied with collecting riches from the Egyptians, and what interested Moshe Rabbeinu? He was busy searching for the casket of Yosef! So what brought them now to entertain suspicious thoughts? How did they dream of suspecting Moshe Rabbeinu of embezzling the money for his personal use?

Where a person's thoughts are, that is where he is!

This is clear in all areas of life: a shoemaker will notice shoes, a barber will notice hair, a builder will notice buildings. There is a story told about the Alter of Novhardok, on this topic. He was once travelling by train where he met a Jew whom he didn't know. After a short conversation the Alter asked him: "Do you trade in forests?" The person was surprised and asked: "Do you maybe have ruach hakodesh?" The Alter answered: "The way of a craftsman is to observe what concerns him".

This is the answer to the Bnei Yisrael's suspicion of Moshe Rabbeinu, the leader of the generation. Where a person's thoughts are, where his wishes and desires lie, that is where he stands. That greedy person looked at Moshe Rabbeinu through his own glasses and saw that he himself would not be prepared to perform this task without remuneration. This being the case, it is clear to him that Moshe Rabbeinu too would not work for nothing and therefore he suspected him of embezzling money.

R' Moshe Sorchok once told over a story that took place, before the invent of security cameras, in the factory of his friend. The owner suspected one of the workers of stealing, but he didn't have enough evidence on which to base his suspicion. One day R' Moshe visited the factory and listened to the female workers talking among each other. One of them told her friend that her husband was just appointed director of a large-scale money gemach, and they are delighted with this new position.

The suspected worker intervened and asked:

"How much is he getting paid in exchange for his trouble?"

The worker was shocked and answered: "Chailah! All his efforts are for the sake of heaven!" But the other worker was insistent: "Do you honestly think that he won't pilfer a few wads into his own pocket? I don't believe otherwise..."

The Haftarah

"Chiram made" (Melachim I, 7:40)

The connection to the parsha: the haftarah talks about the completion of the building of the Beit HaMikdash in Yerushalayim, and in the parsha we read of the completion and erection of the Mishkan in Midbar Sinai.

Ashkenazim read from "When all the work was completed" (ibid 51)



Guard Your Tongue

Rebuke In Order to Rectify

A person is forbidden to live in a place where there is a concentration of ba'alei lashon hara, and all the more so is one forbidden to sit in their company, for this can easily bring him to sin.

If one finds oneself stuck in their company, one must rebuke them and make them aware of the enormity of the sin of speaking lashon hara. One is obligated to offer rebuke even if one's words will have no effect, as long as they will not cause more damage.



Pearls of the Parshah

The Destiny of Gold

“All the gold that was used for the work – for all the holy work” (Shemot 38:24)

The Chida zt”l quotes, in his sefer ‘Chomat Enoch’, the wonderful explanation of Rabbi Vidal Hatzarfati on this verse:

Our chachamim said that the world wasn’t fitting to use gold, and it was only created because it was needed for the Mishkan.

This idea is hinted to in the verse: “All the gold that was used” – all gold that is found in the world is only “for the work” – for the sake of the work of the Mishkan.

Exempt from Mitzvot

“All the work of the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting, was completed, and the Children of Israel had done everything that Hashem commanded Moshe” (Shemot 39:32)

There is a well-known halacha that “One who is occupied with a mitzva is exempt from a mitzva”. Those who were occupied with the construction of the Mishkan were therefore exempt from performing the other mitzvot.

The sefer ‘Imrei Shefer’ points out a wonderful distinction in this verse. The Torah forwarded the warning about observing Shabbat and put it next to the command about the Mishkan, to teach us that the work of the Mishkan does not take precedence to observing Shabbat. However, all the other mitzvot were postponed because of the work of the Mishkan, just as we explained above that one who is occupied with a mitzva is exempt from a mitzva.

Because of this, upon the completion of the Mishkan, the Torah reminds us that once again the Bnei Yisrael were obligated in all the mitzvot: “All the work of the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting, was completed” – since they were no longer occupied with this mitzva and did not have the exemption of fulfilling the other mitzvot, the verse ends with this announcement: “and the Children of Israel had done everything that Hashem commanded Moshe” the entire gamut of mitzvot that Moshe commanded them, “so did they do”.

All Beginnings Require Siyata Dishmaya

“Moshe saw the entire work, and behold! – they had done it as Hashem had commanded, so they had done! And Moshe blessed them” (Shemot 39:43)

What is the blessing? “He said to them: May it be His will that the shechina rest on the work of your hands.” (Rashi)

Why did they need Moshe’s blessing in order that Hashem should rest His shechina in the Mishkan? They were involved in the most sublime work, in building the Mishkan which was constructed with purity and holiness. Additionally, they were promised right from the start “They shall make a Sanctuary for Me – so that I may dwell among them”?

Rabbi Eliyahu Yurkanski zt”l, Rosh Yeshiva of the Mir in America, explained it in this way:

In order to succeed in spiritual matters a person needs special and continuous Divine assistance. There is no way he can be successful without this assistance. Therefore, the Bnei Yisrael needed Moshe’s blessing so that Hashem should rest His shechina in their midst.

This also explains the Chazal “All beginnings are hard”. When starting out, a person must do all that in his natural power to accomplish and only after doing whatever he is capable of doing, then Hashem gives him siyata dishmaya. Since at the beginning he does not experience siyata dishmaya, it is hard for him to accomplish relying on his own strengths and talents.

“...And has commanded us regarding washing the hands”

“When they come to the Tent of Meeting and when they approached the Altar they would wash” (Shemot 40:32)

Rabbeinu Eliezer Papo zt”l, the ‘Pele Yoetz’ interprets this verse allegorically:

“When they come to the Tent of Meeting” – this refers to the Beit Haknesset. “And when they approached the Altar” - this refers to one’s table, for a table is compared to an altar.

“They would wash” refers to the obligation to wash ones hands. Before starting to pray and before sitting down at the table to eat, we are commanded to wash our hands.

Treasures

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



‘Adar’ and ‘Dirah’

The Chiddushei Harim zya”a writes that the word ‘Adar’ has the same root as the word ‘dira’ (dwelling place). I would like to suggest the connection: Since in the month of Adar Am Yisrael re-accepted the Torah willingly and out of love (as the Gemara tells us in Shabbat 88a), the shechina returned to dwell among them.

In the same vein, this idea can also shed light on the well-known Chazal (Taanit 29a): “In the month of Adar one increases joy”. Why is specifically this month connected to the mitzva of simcha? Is it because of the many miracles that we experienced? Yet isn’t every month one of numerous miracles? We don’t find that Chazal commanded us to intensify our joy at any other time. Why is Adar singled out?

The Gemara (Megillah 13b) quotes the verse “the lot was cast” (Esther 3:7) and expounds: “The Breita says, Haman greatly rejoiced that the lot fell in the month of Adar. He said, my lot fell in the month when Moshe Rabbeinu died. But he didn’t know that on the seventh of Adar he died and on the seventh of Adar he was born.”

The intention of the Gemara seems to be that since Moshe Rabbeinu was born on the seventh of Adar, from this point onward he remained alive, for even after his death he is considered to be living, according to the Chazal (Berachot 18a): “Tzaddikim in their death are called alive”. On the contrary, after their petirah when the pure neshama departs from the coarse body, they become even more elevated, as we are told in a different Gemara (Chulin 7b): “Tzaddikim are greater in their death than in their lifetime”. Their life now is purely spiritual. This is the secret that the wicked Haman didn’t know.

The Ba’al Haturim writes that the name ‘Moshe’ contains the same letters as the name ‘Hashem’. We can say that the nature of the connection between the name of Hashem and the name of Moshe is that just as Hashem lives and endures for eternity, so too Moshe Rabbeinu is considered alive even after his death. Chazal have told us (Yerushalmi Shekalim 2:20), that when one says over a halacha in the name of tzaddikim, their lips move in the grave. Since throughout the generations the Jewish people have always been engaged in Torat Moshe Rabbeinu and are constantly repeating halachot that we heard from his mouth, he is considered alive and enduring inside us.

Therefore, on the contrary, the merit of this month when Moshe Rabbeinu was born, stands for Am Yisrael as a defense and protection for the segulah of the month is attributed to Moshe Rabbeinu.

Therefore we are told “In the month of Adar one increases joy”. Meaning, since Moshe Rabbeinu became part of the month of Adar for that is when he was born, therefore “one increases joy” - with the joy of Torah. Moshe Rabbeinu was the one who ascended to Hashem to bring the Torah to the Bnei Yisrael, and every single year in this month, his merits and the merit of the Torah, are once again aroused.

Every Jewish person has the obligation to utilize the spiritual abundance which comes down from Above during this period, for spiritual growth - through learning Torah with diligence, love, enthusiasm and joy. By doing so he transforms himself into a holy vessel for Hashem and he will merit ‘Adar’, from the term ‘dira’ - Hashem will come to live with him and dwell inside him.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



“He took and placed the Testimony” (Shemot 40:20)

Rabbi Moshe Midner zt”l explained:

Concerning all the other acts of Moshe Rabbeinu when erecting the Mishkan, the verse only mentions the actual deed itself: “He put the Table”, “He placed the Menorah”, and so on. So why, when it came to placing the luchot, does the verse add this element of “He took”, in addition to “he placed”?

This detail serves as an important lesson for us: Concerning the holy Torah, a person must be in a position of both taker and giver; to receive for oneself and also to inspire others. It is not enough to simply take the Torah and keep it for oneself. A person is obligated to contribute from his wisdom to others: “to learn – and to teach”.

Men of Faith

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

Faith in the Words of the Tzaddik

A Jewish merchant was caught in a terrible situation. He purchased a large stock of merchandise, worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. However, he did not know that the merchandise was actually stolen goods.

The police, who knew of the presence of the stolen goods, came unexpectedly to raid his house. They began conducting an extensive search for the merchandise.

The merchant’s brother, who went to Moreinu v’Rabbeinu to ask for his blessings and advice, related that the merchant was beside himself with worry. He knew that besides for the police confiscating all his goods, causing him a great loss, he would also have to face trial. Ultimately, he would have to pay a fortune in taxes, plus a heavy fine for purchasing stolen goods and storing them in his house.

“When the police come back to the house,” Moreinu v’Rabbeinu instructed, “take salt and throw it on the ground. Then call out, “In the merit of Rabbi Chaim Pinto, everyone should get out of here!” You will witness miracles, with the help of Hashem. However, it is only on the condition that the merchandise was truly purchased honestly, and you had no idea that it was stolen goods.”

Moreinu v’Rabbeinu clarifies that it is not a segulah to throw salt on the ground to avoid the law! On the contrary, when a person gets caught

in a situation in which he sees no way out, precisely at that moment he should strengthen his faith in Hashem and realize that “my help is from Hashem, Maker of heaven and earth.” As seen from our story, the segulah succeeded. However, it was not the segulah that caused the miracle, but the merchant’s faith to carry out what the tzaddik advised him to do, and his belief in Hashem.

The brother quickly went to the merchant’s house and told him what the Rav had instructed him to do. The merchant began to scoff at his brother and screamed, “Are you crazy? The police want to take us to jail, and you want to add to their fury?”

The brother, who believed staunchly in the merits of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Hakatan, did not pay attention to the tirade. He decided to take things into his own hands. When the police returned, accompanied by their commander, he took a large handful of salt, threw it on the ground and began calling loudly, “In the merit of Rabbi Chaim Pinto, everyone should get out of here!”

The police gazed at him and then looked at one another, mutely. Suddenly, the commander said to his officers, “Okay, let’s go. We did not find anything.” He then turned to the merchant and warned, “Next time, be careful not to buy or deal in stolen merchandise.”

A big kiddush Hashem resulted from the story among all the Jewish merchants.