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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

A Weighty Responsibility

"These are the journeys of the Children of Israel, who went forth from the land of Egypt according to their legions, under the hand of Moshe and Aharon" (Bamidbar 33:1)

Man travels many journeys during his lifetime; their common denominator must be that they are all "under the hand of Moshe and Aharon", meaning in accordance with the da'at Torah that our Chachamim are empowered with. Before every step that a person wishes to take, he must first weigh it up and consider if it is Hashem's will, or question if this deed is perhaps against the spirit of the Torah? Upon reflection he will then decide whether to proceed or abstain.

I would like to suggest, with siy'ata dishmaya, an interesting hint for this idea. The verse tells us, "...the journeys of the Children of Israel...under the hand of Moshe and Aharon". The word 'בִּיד' (under the hand of) has the same numerical value, (adding one for the actual word which is accepted in gematriot) as the word 'טוב' (good). This implies that all of a person's journeys should be according to Moshe and Aharon, in whose hands the Torah, which is called 'טוב', is found.

Parents bring children into the world and they too set off on their journey. It is the parents' holy obligation to pay great attention to the path that they take, and to verify at all times what they are doing, where they are, where they are going to, who their friends are and what kinds of pursuits they are involved in. They should pay heed that their journey is one that will advance them to the desired goal and must educate them in the wellsprings of Torah and yirah, so that they follow the correct path and continually ascend higher. In this way they will then derive much nachat from them.

However, the parents' primary obligation is to educate themselves in the way of Torah and mitzvot, so that they should be a fitting example to their offspring, and then they too will wish to follow in this path. But if the parents are sometimes lax with a certain mitzvah, or "dance between two opinions" (Melachim I, 18:21) and do not show the utmost reverence for the Holy Torah and give it precedence over the fleeting pleasures of this world, then since their avodat Hashem does not follow a clear and decisive direction, their children too will undoubtedly follow in their footsteps and will not remain firm in observing Torah and mitzvot, eventually leaving the straight path falling to the lowest depths r"l. It is those parents, with their halfhearted approach, who are held accountable for their children's behavior.

This Parsha is read in the middle of the 'bein ha-maitzarim', the days of mourning for the destruction

of the Beit Hamikdash. The destruction of the Beit Hamikdash was a direct result of the deterioration of the state of affairs in Yerushalayim, which became a city filled with sin and serious iniquities. This is the reason why we cry bitterly about the city, for had the oppressors not been given permission to breach the city walls, they would not have been able to destroy the Beit Hamikdash. Yirmiyahu bemoans this accusation by specifically grieving, "when I left Yerushalayim", and not "when I left the Beit Hamikdash", for he lamented and cried bitterly about the commencement of the churban, which had its roots entirely in the condition of the city Yerushalayim.

We can take this idea as a mashal to convey the direct connection between the behavior of parents and their children. Our precious offspring can be likened to the Beit Hamikdash, while the parents can be compared to the City of Yerushalayim, which surrounded and enveloped the holy Mikdash. Parents must stand firm like a fortified wall to guard and protect the pure Beit Hamikdash. However, if chalilah there is a breach in the ruchaniyut of the parents, and the walls of holiness are unsteady, this grants permission to the destroyer- the yetzer hara- to come and breach the walls and fences of the Mikdash - the children, and then they too chalilah will be drawn to harmful ways. This demonstrates that the destruction of the Mikdash- the children- begins with the deterioration of Yerushalayim- the parents. Instead of crying about their children's downfall, they should cry about their own personal failure, for this is what brought about the devastation r"l.

We should apply this lesson to the way we educate our children. Just as the holiness of Yerushalayim offers us some small perception of the holiness of the actual Beit Hamikdash and all those who witnessed the spiritual beauty of Yerushalayim deduced from this the great splendor of the Beit Hamikdash, so too, one who comes across children who radiate a spiritual beauty and purity of neshama, immediately understands that this demonstrates the spiritual beauty of the parents, for the holiness of the children reflects the holiness of the parents. This is why it is incumbent upon the parents to improve their ways and always walk in the path of holiness and purity, fortifying the walls of purity in their hearts. In this way, they will merit siyata dishmaya to educate their children with the same values. It is of paramount importance that all their deeds should be "under the hand of Moshe and Aharon", in the spirit of the holy Torah.

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Hilula

2 - Rabbi Aharon Te'umim

3 - Rabbi Shimshon of Ostrropoli

4 - Rabbi Shimon Biderman

4 - Rabbi Raphael Enkaua

5 - Rabbi Yitzchak Luria Ashkenazi

6 - Rabbi Moshe Ezra Mizrachi

7 - Rabbi Shalom Noach of Slonim

8 - The Mekubal Rabbi Shimon Agassi



Walking in their Ways

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

Miraculous Mitzvah Money

A woman came to me, bewailing her plight of childlessness. She related the difficulties of her situation and the endless tests and treatments she had undergone, which were not proving productive.

The couple's pain was tremendous. Her husband found these circumstances terribly challenging and was extremely unhappy with his wife, whom the doctors diagnosed as infertile.

I had just returned from a trip abroad, and I had a small sum of money, given to me to distribute to charity. I removed the bill from my pocket. Handing it to the poor woman, I told her, "This money is for a mitzvah. Keep it with you and reinforce your Torah and mitzvah observance. Be stringent especially in the mitzvah of taharat hamishpachah. Give tzedakah generously and increase your good deeds. B'ezrat Hashem, after you fortify your level of faith and truly believe that Hashem can work wonders, you will merit having children."

The woman was very touched by my words and, with trembling fingers, took the money.

"After you give birth, B'ezrat Hashem, come to inform me of the good news and return the money."

Years passed. The woman continued praying and hoping that she would merit having children, with pure faith in Hashem's limitless power.

The incredible then occurred. After eight years of waiting, the woman gave birth to a girl. When she came to return my money, she related her personal miracle. The doctors could not believe that she had conceived, and instructed her to be careful throughout her pregnancy.

She added, "Every day, I prayed to Hashem that I should merit returning the money to the Rav after I gave birth. Baruch Hashem, I have merited doing so."

The Haftarah

"Hear the word of Hashem" (Yirmiyahu 2)

The connection to the Parsha: This Haftarah is the second Haftarah of the three special haftarot that Chazal established to be read during the three weeks leading up to Tisha B'Av. They talk about the prophecy of punishment that Yirmiyahu the Navi prophesized about the destruction of the city Yerushalayim and our glorious Beit Hamikdash.



Guard Your Tongue

Rechilut Related by One's Wife

One who accepts rechilut from his wife, for example she relates that Ploni said such and such about him, besides the sin of accepting rechilut, he brings about much personal suffering, for when the wife sees that her husband accepts her words without reproach, she will continue relating these incidents which will inevitably lead to him becoming angry and involved in arguments and unnecessary sorrow.

Therefore, it is correct that the husband request that his wife not tell him any lashon hara at all.



Words of our Sages

One Cup of Milk

The Navi Yirmiyahu, who is identified more than anyone else with the destruction of Yerushalayim, bemoans the spiritual situation of the people in the period that preceded and caused the terrible destruction, with the following protest: "...and pursued futility, and became futile" (Yirmiyahu 2:5). The people followed futility and vanity and did not concern themselves with the precious treasure that Hashem deposited in our hands – the holy Torah.

It is the way of the world, the Chida points out, that when a person is beset by a certain health ailment, the first notable change will be that he stops attending his shiurei Torah. When the participants ask him, "Why did you not come to the shiur today?" he has a ready answer: "I felt unwell." But on the contrary, had he come to the shiur and occupied himself with Torah, his strength and health would have returned, for one who learns Torah forgets his troubles and pains.

Indeed, proclaims Harav Hagaon Rabbi Ben Tzion Mutzefi shlita, this is exactly what the verse is saying: "Hear the word of Hashem, O House of Ya'akov...Thus said Hashem: What wrong did your forefathers find in Me...and pursued futility, and became futile?". Why, whenever you are faced with suffering, instead of drawing closer to Hashem and cleaving to His mitzvot, do you instead increase your involvement in worldly matters? Do you not understand that your entire salvation is contingent on Torah and prayer and in occupying yourself with eternal affairs?!

Harav Mutzefi says that Hagaon Rabbi Shalom Mashash zt"l, testified that he tried this concept on his own flesh, and indeed every time he sat and delved into the Holy Torah, he no longer felt any pain or distress!

A month before he passed away, when he was already ninety-eight years old, Rabbi Shalom diligently researched all the laws of ishut (marital laws), in order to find a leniency for twenty-nine agunot (women who are 'tied up' – unable to remarry due to the husband being unwilling to give a get or his whereabouts is unknown). Rabbi Shalom, aware of the tremendous pain of these woman whose husbands had left them alone without the possibility of remarrying, toiled for long hours and exerted himself over many days, writing halachic response on the matter, without any thoughts of compensation.

"One day," Harav Mutzefi tells over, "I came to him at three in the afternoon. Rabbi Shalom extended his holy hand with the following words: "I can swear that from the morning until now, the only thing I put in my mouth was one cup of milk and nothing else!"

Let us imagine an elderly man, close to a hundred years old, troubling himself in the matter of agunot without abating, with the strength that pushed him on coming from the power of Torah and his strong desire to end the pain and great distress of these unfortunate woman, whose husbands left them agunot through no fault of their own. All this toil, from the morning until late afternoon, while not eating or drinking anything besides a single cup of milk! How great is the power of Torah that it can sustain a person and bestow physical strength!



Pearls of the Parshah

Kibrot-hattaavah - Symbol of Distance

"They journeyed from the Wilderness of Sinai and encamped in Kibrot-hattaavah (lit. the graves of cravings)" (Bamidbar 33:16)

Rabbi Tzvi Pesach Frank zt"l brings a wonderful remez relating to those who distance themselves from learning and observing the Torah:

"I thought that the verse, "They journeyed from the Wilderness of Sinai and encamped in Kibrot-hattaavah", hints to someone who distances himself from the Torah that was received on Har Sinai. Where will you find such a person? In 'Kibrot-hattaavah', in the graves of cravings!"

Grasping hold of the power of Torah is the only way to curb desires. Without Torah, a person is held captive by the force of his cravings and passions!

He also brings the Gemara (Baba Metziah 85a) which expounds on the verse, "For what reason did the land perish..?" (Yirmiya 9:11). "For what reason did the land perish..?" (Why was the first Beit Hamikdash destroyed?) The Sages were asked and did not have an answer, the Prophets were asked and did not have an answer, until Hashem Himself explained it, as it says, 'But Hashem has said: Because of their forsaking My Torah that I put before them'."

The clarification of the question, "For what reason did the land perish..?", is that the verse is in fact asking how did they come to the point of ruining themselves with such wicked deeds as theft, immorality and murder? Hashem's reply was: "Because of their forsaking My Torah" – this is the main reason, for if one forsakes the Torah, immediately "sin rests at the door" and one can fall to the lowest depths. This is the reason why one must strengthen oneself continually with Torah study!

The Hilula of Aharon Should be a Day of Introspection

"Then Aharon the Kohen...died there, in the fortieth year after the Children of Israel went forth from the land of Egypt, in the fifth month on the first of the month" (Bamidbar 33:38)

Why does the verse mention the date of Aharon's passing – we do not find any precedent for this in the Torah?

The sefer 'Shmi V'shem Avotai' offers two explanations for this difficulty, one of which we quote below: Aharon was famous for his trait of "loving peace and pursuing peace" and as Rashi explains (Sanhedrin 6b), "When he would hear arguments between two people, even before they would come to him to judge their case, he would pursue them and restore the peace between them".

When Aharon passed away, this pillar of peace was concealed. The verse mentions the date of his passing- Rosh Chodesh Av- so that this time should be kept as a remembrance and for a personal accounting, to stir our hearts and remind us that if only we would embrace this trait, maybe we could annul the decree of destruction that took place in this month, the root of which was baseless hatred.

This is one of the reasons that lie behind mentioning the date of Aharon's passing on Rosh Chodesh Av. It should be a time for reflection for every generation, to rectify this trait among themselves, since it says in the Yerushalmi, "Every generation in which (the Beit Hamikdash) is not rebuilt, it is considered as if that generation destroyed it". This is because the very fact that the Beit Hamikdash has not been rebuilt, shows that the reason for its destruction still exists, and had it been in existence, it would have been destroyed for this reason. This is why it is considered as if "that generation destroyed it".

Annulling an Oath for the Sake of Marital Harmony

"But if she vowed in her husband's home, or she established a prohibition upon herself through an oath" (Bamidbar 30:11)

The 'Meshech Chochma' poses the following question: Why, concerning all the woman who are mentioned in this section of vows, the Torah writes "her prohibition that she established upon herself" and only in reference to the married woman it adds "through an oath"?

He answers that the law is that one may never revoke an oath, for an oath is undertaken using Hashem's Name. However, there is one situation when one is permitted to revoke an oath, namely an oath that was made concerning marital harmony. Just as the Torah permits erasing Hashem's Name in water (a procedure performed for a woman suspected as being unfaithful to her husband) for the sake of marital harmony, so it also permits annulling an oath that was made using Hashem's Name.

Therefore, concerning a widow, divorcee, engaged girl and young girl still living in her father's home, the Torah does not mention the expression of oath, for the leniency of martial harmony is not relevant to these categories of women. Marital harmony is only relevant to a married woman, so when talking about a married woman the Torah writes 'through an oath', to teach us that one is permitted to annul the vow for the sake of marital harmony.

Treasures

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



The Head of the Family is Considered Like the 'Head of the Tribes'

Pinchas son of Elazar was one of the heads of the Jewish people and he demonstrated the approach of being zealous in avodat Hashem. When he witnessed the act committed by Zimri and Cozbi, his heart was stirred and he fearlessly killed them in front of everyone.

It is interesting to contemplate how Pinchas worked up the strength to endanger himself and kill them. From where did he draw the inner strength? We also need to understand if he was indeed allowed to put his life in danger? Since he did not know that a miracle would be performed for him, is this not considered as committing suicide, G-d forbid?

The answer is that when Pinchas saw this despicable act, his anger raged and at that moment he lost his presence of mind and did not stop to think whether he was endangering his life or not. When he saw this terrible desecration of Hashem's Name, he did not weigh up his decision nor think at all; he was prepared to give up his life, for Hashem's sake, with love. He witnessed this act and the only thing that he remembered was the halachah that "one who has relations with a non-Jewess, the zealot takes the law into his hands" (Sanhedrin 81b). Although this is the halacha, one does not go to the Beit Din to ask how to proceed. One is supposed to act according to one's own understanding at the time of the incident.

It is important to point out that the father of a household is considered like the 'head of the tribe', since the responsibility for his sons' and daughters' education rests on his shoulders. He serves as an example to them and they learn from his ways. We are told (Bamidbar 8:2): "...toward the face of the Menorah he kindled its lamps", and I explain this verse, according to drush, as hinting to the idea that the father is compared to the Menorah while the children are compared to the lamps. The father stands opposite the lights – his children, and it is his obligation to light up the way for them and guide them in the way of Torah, mitzvot and fear of G-d. His avodat Hashem and meticulousness in the performance of mitzvot must serve as an example for them, for just like the heads of the tribes were responsible for their congregation and their role was to guide them on the correct path, so too the father is considered as the 'head of his tribe' and is responsible for directing his household in the way of Torah, mitzvot and good deeds.



"LET HER BE PRAISED"

Portrayal of the True 'Eshet Chayil'
In memory of Rabbanit Mazal Madeleine Pinto

נודע בשערים בעלה, בשבתו עם זקני ארץ

"Distinctive in the councils is her husband, when he sits with the elders of the land"

The esteemed Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto shlita, in the hesped that he gave for his distinguished mother a"h, mentioned something that he heard from Maran Rabbeinu Ovadiah Yosef zt"l:

"Sometimes a simple Jew passes away and when he arrives in the Upper World, thousands of dafim of Gemarah joyously come to greet him and lofty angels sing before him and say "Light is sown for the righteous" and praise him "Fortunate are you that you merited establishing the yoke of Torah". The Jew is astounded and says, "I didn't do any of this, I am a simple Jew, maybe there is some mistake here and you have mixed me up with someone else." Yet the Heavenly Court replies, "Rest assured, there is no mistake here. During your lifetime you supported Torah, you gave of your own money to sustain those who toil in Torah and through this you became a partner with all those thousands of dafei Gemarah which they learnt. It is considered as if you yourself learnt all this Torah, this is why all these dafei Gemarah have come to greet you and this is why you can hear the angels singing in your ears "Light is sown for the righteous".

Since today we have widespread institutions of Torah where many hundreds of precious avreichim and bachurim toil in Torah day and night and satiate themselves up with Shas and Poskim, imagine to yourselves how all those millions of dafei Gemarah are welcoming Ima a"h, dancing before her and inviting her to take her honored place in Gan Eden, for everything that we have here is from her strength and all our efforts of zikuy harabim (bringing merit to the masses) is hers. This is besides the immeasurable assistance that we regularly offer other Torah institutions in Israel and throughout the world, assistance which amounts to enormous sums. All the Torah that is learnt in those institutions is also accredited to her, for if not for her mesirat nefesh

for Torah, all this would not be. She is the one who established the yoke of Torah in the world."

There is no doubt that the Rabbanit was a most loyal partner to her husband, the tzaddik and Admor, Rabbi Moshe Aharon Pinto zya"a. With exemplary mesirat nefesh she walked by his side and remained faithful to her righteous husband until her passing. During the long period of her widowhood, she continued to carry his name and the names of his holy ancestors and refused to hear marriage suggestions that could have brought her much honor, for she understood and appreciated the tremendous holiness of the tzaddik Rabbi Moshe Aharon zya"a, and he was her everlasting glory.

Her husband was both "Distinctive in the councils is her husband" and "when he sits with the elders of the land". Everyone knew that the Rabbanit a"h was his holy companion, being eternally devoted to his legacy. After his passing, she continued with even more intensity, preserving his good deeds and transmitting the Holy Torah to the vineyard of Yisrael. She continually stood at her husband's side and merited serving talmidei chachamim and tzaddikim. She established a blessed generation of upright children; how great are her good deeds and the merits that are attributed to her forever.

The Maharit Algazi compiled a special commentary on the song 'Eishet Chayil'. On the verse "Distinctive in the councils is her husband, when he sits with the elders of the land", he points out that this seems like an acclaim for the husband, not for the wife? In addition, where is the praise in sitting with the elders?

He answers that as we know, after her marriage a young woman wishes to spend time with her husband, whereas as they advance in age, this is no longer of paramount concern. She does not object if her husband spends most of his time in the Beit Midrash, as is the way of the elderly. Shlomo Hamelech was indeed praising the woman: If we wish to identify the true 'eishet chayil', it is the one who "Distinctive in the councils is her husband" - her husband grows to such heights because she does not prevent him from going to sit with the elders. Already at the start of their marriage, she behaves like an older woman and is content with her husband spending long hours in the Beit Midrash among the elders. This insight aptly expresses the essence of the Rabbanit a"h.