



Pachad David

Published by Mosdot "Orot Chaim U'Moshe" in Israel

Under the auspices of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon 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 Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita

Fulfilling the Mitzvot from Close Up

"But Hashem became angry with me because of you, and He did not listen to me"
Devarim (3:26)

Moshe Rabbeinu beseeched Hashem to be allowed to enter the Holy Land. The 'Ba'al Haturim' writes that the numerical value of the word 'וַיִּתְחַנֵּן' (I implored) is five hundred and fifteen, for Moshe prayed five hundred and fifteen prayers. However, despite these numerous supplications, Hashem was not appeased and even turned to Moshe saying, "It is too much for you! Do not continue to speak to Me further about this matter" (Devarim 3:26).

This entire subject is indeed difficult to comprehend. Is this the reward for Torah? Did Moshe Rabbeinu not deserve to enter Eretz Yisrael after devoting his entire life for the sake of Am Yisrael, even putting his life in danger when he ascended to the heavens to bring them the Torah from the Mighty One? And how come all his prayers had no effect?

Hashem refused Moshe's request since He knew that it would not be beneficial, neither for Moshe nor for the Jewish people, were he to enter the Holy Land. Chazal explain that had Moshe entered Eretz Yisrael, he would have entreated and pleaded with Hashem not to destroy the Beit Hamikdash, and then Hashem, who would not have wished to refuse his prayers, would instead have poured his wrath out on Bnei Yisrael, instead of destroying His house. Since we are precious to Hashem and He has no desire to annihilate us, He therefore preferred to pour out His wrath on sticks and stones, for "the Eternal One of Israel does not lie" (Shmuel II, 15:29).

The above answer contains an important foundation. It teaches us that whatever Hashem does is for the good, and even though the human eye is limited and cannot always fathom Hashem's merciful Hand, it is appropriate to accustom ourselves to notice the great kindness inherent in every single occurrence, even if at the time we are unable to comprehend the underlying intent. When

talking about this concept, Chazal teach us (Berachot 54a): "A person is obligated to bless for the bad just as he blesses for the good". This is due to the fact that even if the calamity that befalls a person appears to be something tragic, it is in fact not so. Man is simply unable to understand G-d's reckonings and see the ultimate good that will sprout from this incident.

There are many things that initially appear to be challenging and painful, but as time passes, the picture becomes clearer and we are able to see that the suffering was the springboard for the salvation. It is only due to our limited vision that we are unable to perceive the benefit and with hindsight we sometimes merit a glimpse of the true picture.

In the same way, Moshe Rabbeinu's numerous prayers should not be considered as having been ineffective. Even though Hashem did not answer his prayers and did not allow him the merit of entering the Land, we believe with complete faith that his holy and pure prayers had an effect in heaven, and they were the catalyst for much good and blessings that Bnei Yisrael merited throughout the generations.

In order to feel Hashem's presence, one must place oneself close to Him and not stand at a distance, since distance breeds coolness and separation between Hashem and His people. One cannot compare gazing at a painting of breathtaking scenery, to coming face to face with the actual scene. When a person is present at a stunning location and faces it directly, the experience is much deeper since all of one's senses are involved in this experience.

Moshe Rabbeinu had an immense longing to enter Eretz Yisrael, for in that Land he would have the opportunity to accomplish many mitzvot that are often just trod upon out of habit. Moshe Rabbeinu's intention was to put effort into those mitzvot and not perform them out of habit and thereby give nachat to Hashem.

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Hilula

16 - Rabbi Yehuda Pinto "Rabbi Hadan"

17 - Rabbi Daniel Pinto zya"ta

18 - Rabbi Yisrael Ziton

19 - Rabbi Ya'akov Kuli, author of 'Me'am Lo'ez'

20 - Rabbi Yosef Tzubari

21 - Rabbi Ahron of Belz

22 - Rabbi Mordechai Bar Hillel, author of 'Mordechai'



Walking in their Ways

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

Like Mother, Like Daughter

Mr. Jackie Edery and his wife were married for many years before they merited having children. They underwent numerous tests and treatments until they were physically and emotionally drained. Their doctors finally informed them that they would never have children, for one of them was infertile.

Despondent, Mr. Edery came to see me. "If Sarah Imeinu and all the other Matriarchs were barren but were eventually redeemed from childlessness, why do my wife and I remain barren?"

"The Matriarchs were extremely virtuous," I explained. "Do you really believe that you and your wife are on their exalted level?"

Mr. Edery did not hesitate for even a moment. "Of course, we do not reach their level, but aren't we their children?"

I was left dumbfounded.

"May we, too, merit children," was his conclusion.

"Amen!" was mine. I truly hoped that his dream would be realized.

A year and a half went by. I completely forgot about my talk with Mr. Edery. Suddenly, he contacted me one day and informed me that b'chasdei Hashem, his wife was expecting. He asked that I bless her with an easy pregnancy. Their baby should be born easily and in perfect health.

Of course, I blessed the woman and her child. I also expressed my wonder at this turn of events. "Which doctors did you see?" I asked.

He looked at me in wonder, and answered simply, "No doctors and no professors! Since the Rav blessed me, I placed all my hope in the ultimate Doctor. I fully believed that the merit of your fathers would bring me my salvation. Hashem has accepted the Rav's blessing and come to my aid."

I was touched by his tale. I told him that he had taught me an invaluable lesson in emunah. Simple faith has the power to revoke even a harsh decree and transform it into a good one. How fortunate is the person who reaches this level of faith.



Words of our Sages

Airport Interrogation

"So that He will do good to you and to your children after you" (Devarim 4:40)

Every Jewish person has a share reserved for him in the World to Come. Whether he safeguards his portion or loses it, is already a different question.

Above this basic level, there is also the "ben olam haba", implying he is a part of it, like a child is to a family. He is on a higher level which not every person attains. There is an even higher level of "muzman l'chayai olam haba" (destined for the life of the World to Come), in the sense of being invited and guaranteed a place. We find several places in the Gemara where it mentions individuals who merited this high level of being 'invited to olam haba'.

The Maggid Rabbi Baruch Rosenblum shlita told over: "Once when I was in America, I heard an explanation that illustrated the idea of a 'ben olam haba'. I prayed Mincha in one of the Batei Knesset in Boro Park, which was followed by a shiur in 'Ein Ya'akov'. I did not understand the subject matter since the shiur was given in English which I don't understand.

However, there were two concepts that kept being repeated, which I recognized: 'muzman lechayai olam haba' and 'ben olam haba'.

At the completion of the shiur, I approached one of the participants and asked him to tell me over the gist of the shiur. This is how the Rav, who gave the shiur, demonstrated these concepts:

"Whoever has been to America knows that on entering the country, one has to pass through border control.

At the airport, each passenger's documents are thoroughly checked to see if everything is in order. Both the visa and the passport must be valid. But this is not enough. Already

on the airplane one has to fill out a special form with the following questions: Where are you planning to stay during your visit? Why did you come to the country? How much money do you have with you? These are only some of the bothersome questions, as if all the hassle that one endured in Israel until receiving one's visa wasn't enough...

Upon arrival at the airport, there

is a clear distinction: Those who have Israeli passports are directed to one side, while those who possess American passports follow a different line.

What is the point of this separation? In the end, (almost) all those wishing to enter the country are allowed to proceed, so why do those who possess foreign passports have to stand on a different line?"

The Rav answered: "Although I now have an American passport, I used to only possess a foreign passport, therefore I speak from experience: When a person arrives at the desk and shows his foreign passport, the clerk immediately begins to interrogate him with a new round of questions. Although he spent time completing the forms, he once again has to answer the same questions: What is the reason for your visit? How long are you staying? What are you planning to do during your stay?..."

If the clerk decides that for some reason the tourist seems a bit suspicious, he passes him on to higher authorities. If everything goes smoothly and he has no reservations, he stamps the passport and he is permitted to proceed.

In contrast, an American passport holder is received by a smiling faced clerk. The clerk does not subject him to any cross examination, on the contrary, he receives him with a smile and asks, "How are you Mr...? Did you enjoy your vacation? Where did you go?" He stamps his passport and with a hearty 'Welcome back to our country', sends him on his way.

At the end of the day both travelers are allowed to pass. What is the difference between them?

It is true that both enter the country but in what manner? One goes through a draining cross-examination, with his heart beating wildly - maybe they'll find a reason to defer him - while the other passenger is ushered through without delay, even meriting a warm welcome and a pleasant manner throughout.

The Rav then explained the nimshal: This is the difference when talking about each person's share in the World to Come. Every Jew indeed has a portion awaiting him in the World to Come (besides those who forfeited the merit). Each person will eventually arrive there. The question is- in what manner?

A regular individual arrives after passing through a torturous path, suffering various afflictions in Gehinom and going through other purification processes. However, one who is a 'Ben Olam Haba' - is accepted immediately, without the afflictions of Gehinom. He is received warmly, for he truly belongs here- he is a resident, Hashem's child!"...

The Haftarah

"Comfort, comfort My people" (Yeshaya 40)

The connection to Shabbat: This Haftarah is the first of the seven special 'Haftarot of Comfort' that are read starting with the Shabbat following Tisha B'Av. They are taken from the Sefer Yeshaya and are called the 'Shiva Denechemta' (Seven of comfort).



Guard Your Tongue

A Most Severe Sin

One who tells tales about his friend transgresses the prohibition of "You shall not be a gossipmonger among your people" (Vayikra 19:16). It is a great sin which is the cause of much 'bloodshed'. This is why the verse ends with the following command, "You shall not stand aside while your fellow's blood is shed".

We should take a lesson from what happened as a result of Do'eg the Adomi's rechilus- the entire town of Nov, the city of Kohanim, was killed.



Pearls of the Parshah

Honoring Parents Without Reasoning

"Honor your father and your mother, as Hashem, your G-d, commanded you" (Devarim 5:16)

On the words "...as Hashem...commanded you", Rashi explains that the commandment to honor parents was first given at Marah.

Why does the Torah stress that one should perform this mitzvah, as Hashem commanded us in Marah?

The 'Ketav Sofer' explains that there are people who think that the entire mitzvah of honoring one's parents is dependent on a feeling of appreciation for their unending efforts on our behalf from when we were young infants, and for all the effort that they expended in raising us, supporting us and marrying us off..

However, in Marah, the children were not dependent on their parents to take care of their needs, for they ate Manna that fell from the Heaven, their clothes grew with them and the clouds laundered them and nevertheless, in this very place they were commanded to honor their parents. By giving the command in Marah Hashem was implying that it is a mitzvah that one is obligated to fulfil irrespective of what our parents do for us; it is binding in all situations and at all times, for it is Hashem who gave us this precious mitzvah.

Never Neglect

"...Return to your tents.' But as for you, stand here with Me..." (Devarim 5:27-28)

These two verses, writes the 'Ahavat Shalom', are connected.

Hashem told Moshe "Go say to them" (the Bnei Yisrael) two things:

Firstly, "Return to your tents." Secondly, say to them, "you, stand here with Me".

This means that when each of you returns to his tent, remember that even when you are occupied with your needs, you are still standing before Me, as it says, "I have set Hashem before me always" (Tehillim 16:8). This is the meaning of "as for you", each one of you should stand here with Me, in fulfillment of the concept "In all your ways know Him" (Mishlei 3:6).

How Does One Feel Love?

"You shall love Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your resources" (Devarim 6:5)

The holy Ohr Hachaim zya"a poses the following question: Since love is a feeling that comes from the heart, how can one obligate a person to love someone or something? How can the Torah command us to love Hashem? One cannot force the heart to love something that it has no feeling for?

He answers that intrinsic in the following verse is the way to achieve love of Hashem Yitbarach: "And these matters that I command you today shall be upon your heart". By continually placing matters that arouse a person to love Hashem on our heart, this will develop an actual heartfelt longing. This is how the Torah is able to command a person to love Hashem.

The above idea can be explained in two ways:

Firstly, each Jewish person has a natural, profound love for Hashem, but since it is implanted deep in his heart he must actively and continually focus on this feeling and long to feel love for his Creator. In this way he is able to uncover the holy spirit which rests deep inside him.

Secondly, Hashem acts with his creations middah k'neged middah. When a person longs and truly desires to love Hashem, then Hashem repays him middah k'neged middah, and turns His own heart to love the one who desires Him.

Treasures

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



Ponder the Pain of the Churban

This Parsha of Va'etchanan always falls close to Tisha B'Av, the day that we afflict our souls due to the destruction of both Batei Mikdashot and mourn the exile by reading Megillat Eichah.

I was once asked why the previous generations used to weep about the destruction and actually felt sincere distress when lamenting the exile, whereas our generation seems to possess a heart of stone in place of a heart of flesh. How many of us manage to shed a tear when lamenting the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash? Our generation is replete with all kinds of troubles and illness, it would seem only natural for us to mourn the Churban with intense feelings of anguish and beg that Hashem should announce "You have suffered enough!" Why does our behavior contradict what would seem to be the rational reaction?

I think that we can explain this phenomenon with the fact that Tisha B'Av is immediately followed by the start of 'Bein Hazmanim' (recess between study semesters in yeshiva). This vacation is an opportunity to refresh ourselves and take a break from our demanding routine. Since we are organized people and we like to plan in advance, already from Rosh Chodsh Av almost every family knows where they are going to vacation this year. This being the case, how can one mourn and cry about the Churban when in one's pocket rest the tickets to one's chosen destination, or the directions to reach one's hotel. How can we feel the pain that the Shechina is suffering on account of the Churban and the exile, when our heads are deep into organizing our vacation plans?

Since we cannot change the way things are done, on the day of Tisha B'Av we should at least try to concentrate on the pain of the Churban and rid our heads of any thoughts of the approaching vacation. If we are able to focus solely on mourning the tragedy, we will then be able to feel the great agony of the destruction of the Temple and the exile of the Shechina, with our entire soul.

Chazal teach us (Yalkut Shimoni Eichah 1043) that in the future the day of Tisha B'Av will change into a Festival (mo'ed), as it says (Eichah 1:15) "Kara alai mo'ed" (He proclaimed a mo'ed). This is the reason why we do not say the Tachanun prayer on Tisha B'Av (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim 559:4).

May we merit to see the fulfillment of this Chazal speedily in our days, Amen.



"LET HER BE PRAISED"

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

עַז וְהָדָר לְבוּשָׁה וְתִשְׁחַק לְיוֹם אַחֲרוֹן

*"Strength and majesty are her raiment,
she joyfully awaits the last day"*

This wonderful verse has become widely acclaimed as a moving song, in the merit of its poignant tune.

'The Tzaddik of Yavniel', Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi Eliezer Shlomo Shik zt"l, tells the story that lies behind the song: "Rabbi Meir Leib Bleicher zt"l, was the Rebbe of Rabbi Avraham son of Rabbi Nachman Toltshiner zt"l, in the revealed Torah. He taught him much Gemara, Rashi, Tosafot, Shulchan Aruch with all the later commentaries etc. He was extremely poor, and when it came time to marry off his daughter, he could not even afford to buy her a wedding dress. Instead, he sang for her the verse "Strength and majesty are her raiment, she joyfully awaits the last day". He put the words to a tune and since then this song has become famous."

What happened in the end?

"Hashem helped him and in the last minute, with great miracles, he was able to purchase the wedding necessities, including a dress for the bride. This famous song that we all sing originates from Rabbi Meir Leib Bleicher zt"l."

In the Merit of Her Apron Pocket

A pious elderly woman who lived in Yerushalayim, dedicated herself to upholding certain mitzvot that many disregard. She would walk around the alleyways of the Old City, dressed in rags, on top of which she tied a long apron with two big pockets. She would fill the right pocket with papers that had words of Torah written on them and any form of 'genizah' that she found strewn around on the ground. In this way she saved the holy words from disgrace. The left pocket she used to hold peels,

pieces of broken glass or other similar dangerous objects which littered the streets and which were potential causes of accidents.

This elderly woman lived a long life. Just before she passed away, she went to the Beit Din of Rabbi Yehuda Hachassid and asked him to write up her will. In it she requested that after her passing, the Chevrah Kadisha (organization responsible for the purification and burial of the deceased) should use this apron as her shrouds. When her end came, many of Yerushalayim's residents accompanied her to her final resting place and spoke of her praiseworthy deeds.

The Av Beit Din gave a hesped and read out her unique will, an expression of her piety. Several days later she appeared in a dream to the Av Beit Din and told him that in the World of Truth they weighed her merits. Her apron pockets were put on a golden scale. Interestingly, it was the left pocket, the one that she used to hold the stumbling blocks that she picked up from the city streets, that tipped the scales in her favor to merit Olam Haba.

After this incident, the Av Beit Din told over an explanation that he heard from one of the Maggidim, on the verse "Oz v'hadar levusha, (strength and majesty are her raiment), she joyfully awaits the last day". 'Oz' is an expression of strength, while 'hadar' is an expression of beauty. In those days, they wore the same garment for many years and didn't pay attention to the constantly changing fashion. The garment was durable and was always considered pretty. Today, even if the garment is still in good condition, one is embarrassed to be seen with the same dress for too long since it is no longer in fashion. However, the garments of the 'Eishet Chayil', were both 'oz' and 'hadar', until her very last day.