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Hilula

28 - Rabbi Yitzchak Akarish

29 - Rabbi Shlomo Amralyo

1 - Rabbi Yehuda Ayash

2 - Rabbi David Rappaport

3 - Rabbi Yosef Vital

4 - Rabbi Avraham Ben Yechiel

5 - Rabbi Baruch Shalom HaLevi
Ashlag

Pachad David

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

Son of the tzaddik Rabbi Moshe Ahron Pinto, z"l, and grandson of the holy tzaddik and miracle-worker Rabbi Chaim Pinto, zy"á



MASKIL LEDAVID

Weekly talk on the Parshah given by Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita

Did We Do Our Best when Standing Before Hashem?

"You are standing today, all of you, before Hashem, your G-d"

(Devarim 29:9)

This parsha is read during the month of Elul, just before Rosh Hashana. The Holy Zohar tells us: "'You are standing today...' – this is a reference to Rosh Hashana". On this day, we all stand before the King of the World and pass before Him like a flock of sheep. Whose heart does not tremble on contemplating the significance of this great day when "Through justice a king establishes a land". Hashem sits on the throne of judgement and declares each person's verdict, according to how he prepared himself.

The verse continues, "for you to pass into the covenant of Hashem, your G-d" (Devarim 29:11). Each Jew has a covenant of trust with Hashem; a strong and powerful connection with the King of the World and when he sins and transgresses His commandments, he has harmed that covenant and severed his connection with Hashem. But, as soon as he regrets his sin and sincerely repents, he immediately reverts to pass into Hashem's covenant, for he has renewed his powerful connection with Hashem.

A person should not assume that only terrible and serious sins disconnect him from Hashem. This perception is a great mistake, for even a sin that appears to be minor, distances a person from Hashem and severs the covenant that he has with Him. An example of this is Adam HaRishon, who was created on Rosh Hashana, a form of His handiwork. Chazal said about him (Sanhedrin 38b) that he could see from one end of the world to the other. Yet suddenly the snake seduced him and he transgressed Hashem's will by eating from the Tree of Knowledge. Due to this sin, our Sages z"l described Adam HaRishon with the harshest and most shameful descriptions – a denier and a heretic. Hashem too, charged him and demanded, "Where are you?", meaning take note of the low level to which you have descended. This was due to the fact that even a sin which appears to be minor distances a person greatly from Hashem and damages the covenant of trust that exists between them. Therefore, Hashem requests from us: Repent and you will thereby renew the connection with Me and once again merit to pass in the covenant of Hashem, as the verse tells us, "for you to pass into the covenant of Hashem, your G-d".

It is important to note that although we all stand before Hashem on the Day of Judgement, there are different types of 'standing'. There is the one who

stands before Hashem, but he arrives without any advance preparation. He is filthy and corrupt from the sins that he committed for he did not take the opportunity to wash and cleanse himself from the excrement of his iniquities; he is full of wounds, bruises and fresh blows. In contrast, there is the person who stands before the King of the world clean and spotless without any blemishes, for he invested effort and exerted himself during the month of Elul to examine his deeds and rectify them. He took care to straighten his ways and return to Hashem. This kind of person stands secure in judgment, certain that with Hashem's kindness he will be vindicated, for he did his utmost to pass into the covenant of Hashem and strengthen his connection with Him.

How does a person merit entering the covenant of Hashem, standing secure on the Day of Judgement and being found worthy? Only if he comes with Torat Emet (the Torah of Truth), mitzvot and good deeds in his hand. He will then be acquitted for if he possesses the merit of toiling in the Holy Torah, he possesses the best lawyer and advocate for the Day of Judgement. This is the implication of the words, "You are standing". The word 'אתם' (you) contains the same letters as the word 'אמת' (truth), which hints to the Torah which is called Torat Emet. If a person approaches the Day of Judgement holding on to Torat Emet, following in its ways and fulfilling Hashem's will, then he is promised that his righteousness will emerge and he will be written for a good life and for peace.

If he merits and he is deeply rooted alongside brooks of water, the brooks of the Holy Torah, then all the foreign winds in the world will not succeed in throwing him from the path of Torah and mitzvot which he established for himself, because he has strong faith in Hashem Yitbarach and he cleaves to His commandments. This can be compared to the long reeds that grow on the river bank. Even the mightiest winds do not succeed in uprooting them. Why? Because they grow close to water. So it is with a person who plants himself deeply in the waters of the Holy Torah. He becomes truly immune to the evil inclination and even if he is faced with many challenges in life, with Divine assistance he will succeed in overcoming them.

May it be His will that we merit to stand confident in judgment with abundant backing and advocates of Torah, mitzvot and good deeds. With Hashem's help we will be written and sealed immediately for a good life and for peace, Amen v'Amen.



Walking in their Ways

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

A Justified Expense

At the hilula for our holy mentor, Rabbi Chaim Pinto Hagadol zt"l, that we merited celebrating at his gravesite in Morocco, we heard many stories of miracles from the people who came to participate in the hilula. Following is one of the stories of personal salvation:

Mr. Chaim n"y, a precious philanthropist who is a noted supporter of our institutions, related that once when he gave in his tax report, he reported his contributions for tzedakah as well, so that he could get deductions on them. The gentile who took his case was skeptical about the huge sums donated to charity, that were listed there. Assuming that there was foul play at work, he refused to give him credit for them. Mr. Chaim did not yield. After much back and forth, he ended up being fined to the tune of two million dollars.

During that time, Mr. Chaim sent me a donation of fifty thousand dollars. Once again, he showed his receipt to the powers that be, in order to obtain a tax deduction. But they rejected it, once again declaring that it was too huge a sum for mere charity. Additionally, they sent down a representative to caution him about the severity of counterfeit contributions and receipts.

Mr. Chaim loudly berated the man who stood before him. Then he categorically threw the man out of his office, warning him to never show his face again. This fellow would not take such umbrage sitting down. He called the police down to Mr. Chaim's office and they arrested him for insulting a government employee. But Mr. Chaim was not fazed in the least. In his loud, clear voice, he announced, "I donated to the Torah institutions of Rabbi Chaim Pinto, zya"a. I have nothing to fear from you. Now please leave my office immediately!"

When the officers saw his determination, they had a change of heart. They began speaking to him calmly. Finally, they took their leave. A short time later, they phoned to say that they were willing to offer him a compromise. Instead of paying the sum of two million dollars, he would be required to pay only ten thousand dollars.

Mr. Chaim added a footnote to his story. Since he knew that all of his donations had gone to the worthy cause of Rabbi Chaim Pinto's institutions, he did not fear the tax authorities or the police force. He knew the tzaddik would come to his aid.

That was exactly what happened. Instead of receiving a hefty fine, together with a prison sentence, he was cleared with only a relatively small fine.

The Haftarah

"I will rejoice intensely with Hashem" (Yeshaya 61)

The connection to Shabbat: This is the seventh and last of the 'Seven Haftarot of Comfort' that are read starting with the Shabbat following Tisha b'Av.



Guard Your Tongue

Letter Writing

Concerning rechilut (gossip), there is no difference if the person tells him explicitly what so and so did to him or said about him, or whether he reveals the information in a letter. It also does not make a difference if he tells him that so and so spoke negatively about him or about his wares, since both cause the person to feel hatred towards the one who spoke.



Words of our Sages

What Commitment Did You Undertake?

An aspect of Hashem's kindness towards us is that when a person accepts positive commitments upon himself during these days, this proves that he wishes to improve his ways and then Hashem in his Kindness judges him according to this present state.

Even though a person must work hard to hold fast to his commitments throughout the year, but if he manages to persevere for even a short time after Yom Kippur, for example he accepts upon himself not to speak lashon hara for just half an hour after Yom Kippur, this is also considered as a great achievement, for the evil inclination challenges a person every day and seeks to kill him (indeed the evil inclination makes life extremely difficult for us, as Maran zt"l expressed it), and we don't have the strength to fight him, therefore every effort to overcome our inclination is considered worthy in Hashem's eyes.

During these days of judgement, every person feels a surge of growth. When Maran zt"l was asked how to hold on to the feelings of inspiration that we experience during the Yamim Norai'm, he replied, "One who is able to implement "I have set Hashem before me always", will be okay".

The esteemed 'Tzemach Tzedek' zya"a would say that a 'positive commitment' that a person accepts upon himself during these Holy days is considered like 'a new garment, for the new soul, for the new year'. The Gaon Rabbi Eliyahu Lopian (Lev Eliyahu, Ma'archot Hateshuva 341) brings the words of the Mishna (Avot 4:1) "Rabbi Eliezer ben Ya'akov said: He who fulfills even a single mitzvah gains himself a single advocate" and asks: Why did Rabbi Eliezer phrase his saying in the present tense, "He who fulfills even a single mitzvah" and not in the past tense – he who fulfilled? In addition, what is the meaning of 'even a single' mitzvah? This teaches us that it is not referring to one who fulfills a certain mitzvah, but one who resolves and accepts upon himself to fulfill a certain mitzvah. With this decision alone "he gains himself a single advocate" for the day of judgement.

The inspirational speaker, Rabbi Elimelech Biderman shlita, tells a story about an avreich who was an exceptional talmid chacham. "I have known him since he was young and for the last several years he suffered terrible, severe pain from a hole in his ear drum. In addition, during this long period he wasn't allowed to immerse himself in the mikveh, for someone who has a hole in his eardrum must take care that water should not enter his ears. On Hoshana Raba (5775) he went to pay a visit to his Rav, who told him that the time had come for him to undergo an operation on his ears. Several medical askanim assisted him and were able to procure an appointment for the operation. This is when the amazing miracle occurred. Upon being examined by a prominent doctor, he told him that everything was fine and he could not find any trace of a hole in his eardrum!

It was an unfathomable riddle. Everyone who knew this avreich was well aware of the torturous pain that he suffered in his ears. Suddenly, the avreich remembered that on Rosh Hashana he had accepted upon himself not to talk during the tefillot. Seemingly, in the merit of closing his mouth, the hole in his ear closed!"



Pearls of the Parshah

The Inner Spark Never Dies

"If your dispersed will be at the ends of heaven, from there Hashem, your G-d, will gather you in" (Devarim 30:4)

The sefer 'Siach Yakov Yosef', brings in the name of the Ba'al Shem Tov zya"a, that even when a Jewish person sins, a small spark of yirat shamayim remains in the depths of his heart. This is the meaning of "If your dispersed will be at the ends of heaven". If at the very edge of a person's deeds, there is yirat shamayim, "from there Hashem, your G-d will gather you in and from there He will take you". At the end of the day, this concept saves a person and will ultimately bring him to repent.

Remember Us for Life – Spiritual Life

"Hashem, your G-d, will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, to love Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live" (Devarim 30:6)

The Holy Ohr Hachaim zya"a explains that the words "that you may live", refer to life in this world, for a person finds no meaning and true purpose in life without fulfilling mitzvot and cleaving to Hashem. One who does not fulfill mitzvot and study Torah, is not considered alive, for "wicked people in their lifetime are called dead".

Therefore, during the Ten Days of Repentance we insert an additional request in our prayers and beg, "Remember us for life, O King who desires life, and inscribe us in the Book of Life- for Your sake, O Living G-d". We are asking for spiritual life; we wish for the kind of life that Hashem will desire. It is a prayer for a life of mitzvot and good deeds, in order to bring spiritual pleasure to Hashem.

Repentance Brings Blessings

"When you shall return to Hashem, your G-d, with all your heart and all your soul" (Devarim 30:10)

The Holy Zohar (Acharei 69:2), in the name of Rabbi Yitzchak, outlines the ways of teshuva: "When a person repents before the King of the world and prays from the depth of his heart, this is the implication of the verse: "From the depths I called You, Hashem"."

Rabbi Abba said: 'From the depths I called You - it is a place hidden away Above, and it is the depth of the well from which rivers and fountains flow to all places, and that depth of the depths is called repentance. One who wishes to repent and purify himself from his sins, must call out to Hashem from that depth. This is the implication of the verse: "From the depths I called You, Hashem".

We are taught that when a person sins before his Creator and then offers his sacrifice on the Altar and the Kohen atones for him and prays for him, mercy is aroused and strict judgement is perfumed by the springs that are drawn out and flow, and all the lights are blessed as one, and the person is purified from his sins.

Treasures

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



Nothing is Hidden Before Your Eyes

"You are standing today, all of you, before Hashem, your G-d: the heads of your tribes, your elders, and your officers – all the men of Israel" (Devarim 29:9)

When I was visiting the gravesite of Rabbi Baruch of Mezibozh zt"l, the grandson of the Ba'al Shem Tov zya"a, I studied his holy sefer and noticed the following question that he asks on this verse: If the words "You are standing today, all of you", include everyone, why does the verse go on to detail "the heads of your tribes, your elders and your officers"? What is the reason for this repetition?

With siyata dishmaya, I would like to suggest an explanation according to the Gemarah (Rosh Hashana 18a) that tells us that on Rosh Hashana all mankind passes before Hashem like a flock of sheep. When counting sheep in order to tithe them, one by one they pass through a small entrance that does not enable them to enter as a group. "Rabba bar Bar Chana in the name of Rabbi Yochanan said and all of them together are examined with one glance, even though they pass through one at a time" (Rashi).

These words of Chazal teach us an important lesson. After nine sheep pass through a narrow opening, the tenth one then becomes holy and it is marked with a red dye in order that it can be identified. Even though this animal is destined to be slaughtered, it continues running and frolicking just like the rest of the animals in the flock and does not imagine that he has been designated for slaughter in the near future.

This too, l'havdil, is what takes place with mankind on Rosh Hashana. On this day, the Creator decrees who will live and who, chalila, will die. On this day the amount of angst and degree of suffering that will be the lot of each individual is also apportioned. It could very well be that a person is marked with a red sign and G-d forbid, it has been decreed that he will die. Nevertheless, he does not pay attention and continues his daily life as usual with no fear. His behavior can be compared to that animal who was designated for slaughter...

After explaining this idea, we can now understand, like a beaded necklace, the meaning of the verse "You are standing today, all of you". The holy Zohar says that this verse refers to Rosh Hashana. We are all standing before the King of the world in judgement. "... all of you" refers to the fact that we are all examined and judged at once. But in order that we should not mistakenly think that the judgement is a general judgement and Hashem does not pay attention to the details of every single act of every single person, the Torah repeats and details "the heads of your tribes, your elders and your officers". Each and every person is judged in a thorough manner for all his deeds and Hashem will bring judgement on every hidden thing. This is why the Torah first uses a general expression and then details the different divisions.

May it be Hashem's will that He merit us with a complete repentance and may we stand before Him in judgement free of all sin and guilt. May we be written and sealed in the book of the righteous, immediately, for a good life and for peace, Amen v'Amen.



"LET HER BE PRAISED"

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

רבות בנות עשו חיל ואת עלית על כלנה

"Many women have amassed achievement, but you surpassed them all"

The verse "Many women have amassed achievement", was mentioned time and again in the hespedim of Rabbanit Pinto a"h, and with good reason. As is known, the Rabbanit merited seeing generations of upright and blessed offspring during her lifetime, all her children are holy acclaimed fruits, with the Torah of Hashem being their sole desire and ensuring the endurance of the world through their occupation with the three pillars on which the world exists – Torah study, the service of Hashem, and kind deeds.

With her great wisdom she steered the ship of chinuch in her home, while shouldering the responsibility for supporting her family, since her husband the tzaddik, Rabbeinu Moshe Ahron Pinto zya"a, dedicated his entire life to the service of Hashem and for forty years remained concealed in his room, delving in the Torah day and night.

A Letter to Father in Heaven

One of the most remarkable shidduchim that took place in the previous generation was the marriage of Rabbi Yitzchak Yechiel Davidovitz zt"l, the Mashgiach of the Minsk Yeshiva, to his wife, Rabbanit Shaina Miriam a"h, who was six years older than him.

In the town of Mir, close to the border between Poland and Lithuania, lived a young girl who was orphaned at a young age. The years passed and while all her friends had already found their intended, she remained single. Her difficulty in finding a marriage partner stemmed from the fact that she dreamed of marrying someone who would dedicate his life to studying Torah. In order to marry someone of this stature, she required financial support from her family, but since she had no father, there was no one who could help her materialize her noble dream.

She worked as a librarian and tried to save most of her wages towards this virtuous goal of marrying a G-d fearing young man.

One day, while sitting in the library and thinking about her situation, she decided to write a letter from the depths of her heart, to the Only One who could help her - her

Father in Heaven. She took a piece of paper that was lying on her desk and wrote down all the supplications that she regularly prayed over the last few years. She described the kind of husband she was determinedly seeking: A young man steeped in learning and possessing good middot, who will not view her poverty to her detriment. She ended her letter with the words: "You Hashem, Who supports the poor and lifts the lowly, can certainly answer my prayer. I rely on You at all times, your devoted daughter, Shaina Miriam."

She put the letter into an envelope and addressed it, 'To my Father in Heaven'. She took a walk to the grounds just outside the town, holding the envelope loosely in her hand, in the direction of the wind. As soon as she felt a gust of wind, she opened her hand and watched the letter being born aloft. She then returned home with perfect faith in Heavens assistance.

Several days after sending off the letter, one of the talmidim from the famous Mir Yeshiva, went out to pray in the fields. An envelope which lay between the bushes caught his eye and he bent down to pick it up in order to fulfill the mitzvah of returning a lost object. How surprised he was when he noticed that the letter was addressed 'To my Father in Heaven'. Unable to contain his curiosity, he opened the letter and read it in amazement. He reread it several times and was deeply moved by the pain and honesty expressed in the letter.

He returned to the Beit midrash and sought the advice of his Rosh Yeshiva (who later became the Rav of Mir), Hagaon Rabbi Elya Baruch Kamai zt"l. After a short discussion, the bachur said that he is prepared to marry this girl.

The relevant inquiries were carried out and very soon an engagement party took place. This is what he told his wife: "Despite the distinguished marriage suggestions that I received from every town and village, you, with your faith and simplicity, surpassed them all." This despite her being six years older than him.

In fulfillment of his wife's dream, her husband Rabbi Yitzchak Yechiel Davidovitz rose in heights and achieved great levels in Torah and yirah. He eventually became the Mashgiach of the Minsk Yeshiva and was the Rebbe and teacher of the previous generation's gedolim.

We can certainly refer the verse, "Many women have amassed achievement, but you surpassed them all", to this righteous woman.