

Matot Masei

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Hilula

26 - Rabbi Ahron Berachya of Modena,
author of 'Ma'avar Yabok'

27 - Rabbi Elazar Abuchatzera

28 - Rabbi Yosef Shalom Elyashiv

29 - Rabbeinu Shlomo Yitzchaki
(Rashi)

1 - Ahron Hakohen, son of Amram

2 - Rabbi Aharon Te'umim of Cracow

3 - Rabbi Shimshon of Ostrapali, hy"d

Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

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, zt"l, and grandson of the holy tzaddik and miracle-worker Rabbi Chaim Pinto, zy"a



MASKIL LEDAVID

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

The Soul of Menashe's Tribe Protects the Holiness of the Other Tribes

"They said, "If we have found favor in your eyes, let this land be given to your servants as a heritage; do not bring us across the Jordan" (Bamidbar 32:5)

The Torah tells us that the children of Gad and Reuven had abundant livestock, therefore they asked Moshe Rabbeinu if they could dwell on the east bank of the Jordan and not enter Eretz Yisrael, since the land of Gilad seemed to be most suitable for raising this profuse livestock, as it says, "the place was a place for livestock" (Bamidbar 32:1). Moshe Rabbeinu accused the children of Gad and Reuven for daring to forsake their fellow Jews and not wishing to participate in the long and hard battle to conquer Eretz Yisrael, saying, "Shall your brothers go out to battle while you settle here?" These two tribes accepted Moshe's rebuke and replied that they will first help the rest of the tribes fight against their enemies and inherit the Land, and only once it will be purged from all their enemies, will they return to settle in Gilad, over the River Jordan. Moshe agreed to their proposal and told them that indeed the appropriate approach for the holy tribes who are called "the tribes of G-d, a testimony for Yisrael", is to show responsibility for one another, and only once their brothers are settled safely and tranquilly in the Holy Land, may they settle on the other side of the Jordan.

This matter raises a puzzling question. While we find that Moshe was aggrieved that the two tribes entertained this idea of settling on the other side of the Jordan before conquering and inheriting the Land, we do not find that Hashem displayed any anger towards their request. It seems on the surface that Hashem agreed with the children of Gad and Reuven and did not oppose their settling in Gilad before the rest of the tribes would inherit and apportion the Land.

Moreover, the Rosh Kollel of our Paris branch, Hagaon Rabbi Solomons shlita, asked me why these verses do not mention the children of the tribe of Menashe, who joined the children of Reuven and Gad in their request to settle on the other side of the Jordan. Only after the incident are we told that half the tribe of Menashe were allocated land together with these two tribes. It is also difficult to understand why this tribe split themselves into two parts, with only half settling on the other side of the Jordan and the rest in Eretz Yisrael. Why did they not all remain together, on one of the sides? This is something extraordinary that we do not find with any of the other tribes.

The answer to the latter question could be that originally, the tribe of Menashe was supposed to settle inside Eretz Yisrael, but once the two tribes approached Moshe with their request to settle on the other side of the Jordan and Hashem did not protest, Moshe understood that this was Hashem's wish and he had no power to prevent their request, for they had already conquered this land from Sichon and Og. Despite this, Moshe was concerned about the spiritual fate of these two tribes, that they may come to assimilate with the nations. Looking carefully, we will see that the first letter of these two tribes, Gad (גד) and

Reuven (רְאוּבֵן), spell 'רג', meaning alien, while the last two letters (changing the word order) spell the word 'דנ', meaning wander around. This implies that Heaven decreed that these two tribes would be aliens and wander around in a land that does not belong to them. This might be the reason why they wished to remain outside the Holy Land.

Am Yisrael are responsible for one another, with their souls jointly hewn from the Upper World. The name 'Menashe' (מְנַשֶּׁה) can be re-written to spell 'נשמה', soul, hinting to Am Yisrael's soul which is imbued with mutual responsibility. Due to this, Moshe commanded Menashe's tribe to divide into two, with one half settling in the land of Gilad so as to protect the children of Reuven and Gad from assimilation and strengthening their connection with the soul of Am Yisrael, while the other half of the tribe will dwell within the Holy Land. This means that half the tribe of Menashe who dwelt outside of Eretz Yisrael, would draw holiness and purity from its other half that lives inside the Land, and in this way, they will be able to influence the children of Reuven and Gad who are dwelling on the other side of the Jordan.

This shows us that Hashem did these two tribes a great favor by dividing the tribe of Menashe, that hints to the soul of Am Yisrael, and settling half of them on the other side of the Jordan. While one half dwells in the Land and absorbs its holiness, its other half too draws on this holiness and disseminates it further to the other two tribes, Reuven and Gad. And since Heaven had decided that their fate was to wander around in a foreign land, we do not find that Hashem was angry with them for this request. Moshe Rabbeinu seeing that Hashem was not angered by their request, understood that it was Hashem's will and therefore he too must show his consent.

This teaches us that despite the mutual responsibility and brotherhood that must prevail among Am Yisrael, nevertheless each tribe, group, and community within Am Yisrael must preserve their specific customs and prayer versions. This fact is not a contradiction to responsibility and unity, just as each tribe in the Wilderness had its own specific banner and never camped under a different banner. On the contrary, specifically due to recognizing the uniqueness of each tribe and community, each one is able to assist the other with the gifts with which they were blessed. An example of this is the tribe of Menashe, who hints to the soul. They assisted the two tribes and protected their souls so that they should not assimilate among the nations, even though they could have reasoned that they wish to dwell in the Holy Land together with the rest of their tribe.

This is why Parshat Mattot is read during the Three Weeks, days of sadness and mourning for the exile and the destruction. Reading this Parsha is a message for Am Yisrael, how Hashem, in His great love and mercy, preceded the exile with a remedy, by allowing two and a half tribes to dwell on the other side of the Jordan, for in this way, land outside of the Holy Land would also be influenced by its holiness.



Walking in their Ways

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

A Captivating Prediction

The dear avreich, Mr. Ben-Shimol, related the following narrative in order to sanctify Hashem's Name:

"My dear father was once arrested in France due to a scandal incited by the media. The police were seizing people of stature, in an attempt to extract information regarding specific people whom they were after.

My father was one of those they harassed and since he was completely innocent, they could not extract from him the information they sought. Instead, they embittered his life and kept him imprisoned for a full nine months, without informing him of the reason for his incarceration. The lawyer representing him attested that the whole episode seemed extremely suspicious as there was no substantial pretext for his incarceration. However, he was unable to help my father who was kept under lock and key, while his family was sick with worry over his fate.

When Rabbi David Pinto, shlita, arranged to receive people in Paris, my sister approached him to ask for a blessing on behalf of our father's unusual situation. She later related his words at that meeting, "In another day or two, your father will be released. B'ezrat Hashem, in the merit of the tzaddik, Rabbi Chaim Pinto, everything will be straightened out."

The truth is, when my sister heard these words, she found herself experiencing inner turmoil. On the one hand, she believed wholeheartedly in the merit of the tzaddikim and had perfect faith that her family would witness great miracles. But on the other hand, it was difficult to believe that her father would suddenly be a free man.

However, the unbelievable indeed took place, as per the concept "Whence will come my help? My help is from Hashem". The very next day, Father was called to stand before the judge, who informed him that his case was closed. He was vindicated and could return home!

Father phoned the family and asked them to come immediately and take him home. They were full of questions. Who, what, where, and how did he obtain his release? He only said that with Hashem's kindness he was freed, and he himself had no explanation. The news of his release soon became public knowledge, to everyone's delight and joy.

I have no doubt that from the moment Rabbi David prayed for my father's deliverance, in the merit of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Pinto zya"a, and declared that my father will be set free, Hashem immediately fulfilled his request and set my father free."

This is Mr. Ben-Shimol's story, an account that generated a tremendous Kidush Hashem.

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 calamity that Yirmiyahu the Navi prophesized, concerning the destruction of the city Yerushalayim and our glorious Beit Hamikdash.

Guard Your Tongue

Accustomed from Youth

Speech and middot are matters that require much practice. Becoming accustomed to a certain form of behavior is what empowers us with control in that area. If we think about it, we will realize that violating this terrible sin of lashon hara is due to the fact that from our earliest days, we become accustomed to speaking as we wish, and no one protests. Therefore, it does not enter our mind that this way of speaking might comprise some prohibition.



In Our Father's Path

How Much do you Value Laying Tefillin?

"Moshe spoke to the people, saying, "Arm men from among yourselves for the legion that they may be against Midian to inflict Hashem's vengeance against Midian" (Bamidbar 31:3)

Rashi quotes the Sifri who says that even though Moshe knew that he would die after this war, he proceeded with alacrity and joy.

The tzaddik Rabbi Eliyahu Rata zt"l, a distinguished Torah scholar from Yerushalayim, was a talmid of Rabbi Shlomke of Zvhil zt"l. Early one morning, Rabbi Eliyahu approached a young avreich who stood in the corner of the Beit Knesset with his folded tallit on his shoulder, in intent preparation for donning tallit and tefillin and beginning the Shacharit prayer. He approached him and said: "Dear avreich, I have an interesting proposal for you which will earn you a small profit. Just for today, forget about your tallit and tefillin. Agree not to put on your tallit and tefillin for just one day, and in exchange I will pay you fifty dollars!"

The avreich was stunned, he could not believe his ears: "R' Eliyahu!" he cried out with emotion, "what came over you? Do you really think that I will agree not to lay tefillin today?"

But R' Eliyahu retained his position: "I will give you a hundred dollars, even five hundred dollars or more, as long as you agree not to wear your tallit and tefillin today!"

The avreich realized that he had not been decisive and clear enough, so he raised his voice and shouted:

"R' Eliyahu! I do not understand what you want from me today. Even if right now you would place a million dollars on the table, even several million dollars, I promise you that I will not relinquish this mitzvah for even one day. It simply doesn't come into question at all!"

When R' Eliyahu heard this, his face lit up and he said, "I will now explain my intention and what I wanted from you. You clearly pronounced that you willingly give up several million dollars for the sake of laying tallit and tefillin! If so, I am wondering why, when you are about to put on tallit and tefillin, you do not radiate great joy, at least as much as if you had just earned several million dollars?" This was R' Eliyahu empowering message!



Pearls of the Parsha

Can it Be? He Gives Charity and is Called a Rasha!

"If a man takes a vow to Hashem" (Bamidbar 30:3)

Onkelos adds a significant word: "If a man takes a vow before Hashem".

Rabbi Yeshayahu Chadad zt"l from Tiberius, in his sefer 'Vayomer Yeshayahu', offers an explanation based on the words of the Mishna (Avot 5:13), "There are four types of donors to charity: (a) One who wishes to give himself but wants others not to give, he begrudges others; (b) that others should give but that he should not give, he begrudges himself; (c) that he should give and that others should give is pious; (d) that he should not give and that others should not give is wicked".

The difficulty is, if the wicked one does not give charity and he does not want others to give either, why is he included among donors to charity?

It could be that the Tanna is referring to a collection undertaken in the Beit Knesset in support of Torah or another cause. In such cases, it is appropriate to publicly announce the amount one wishes to donate, for this causes others to also participate in the appeal. This kind of person is referred to as 'pious'. But there is also the 'pious' person who does not give publicly. Rather, after the appeal he goes over to the Gabbai and quietly hands him his donation, thinking that it is preferable to donate privately. But the opposite is true! It is only better to give secretly when one is giving one's own charity. But when there is a public appeal, if he gives without others knowing about it, he is preventing others from giving, for they will say, since so and so did not donate, I too will not donate. This is the Tanna's intention when saying, 'that he should not give' implying 'in public', he only gives privately, and therefore he causes 'that others should not give', therefore, how frightening, the Tanna calls him a wicked person.

According to this explanation, it could be that by adding the word 'before' Hashem, Onkelos is implying that when one makes a public appeal in the Beit Knesset, the place of Hashem's presence, then "he shall not desecrate his word", meaning he should not remain quiet and say, I will give the Gabbai afterwards privately, but "according to whatever comes from his mouth shall he do", he should publicly announce the amount he wishes to donate, and this will cause others to give too.

A Battle for Hashem's Sake Only

"Arm men from among yourselves for the legion that they may be against Midian to inflict Hashem's vengeance against Midian" (Bamidbar 31:3)

The word 'Arm' can also mean 'remove', as in "she shall remove his shoe from on his foot" (Devarim 25:9).

According to this, the Sfat Emet explains the above verse that Moshe Rabbeinu was telling Bnei Yisrael to remove from among themselves any personal association. Their intention when fighting this battle should not be for their own honor or for any personal reason, rather for the honor of Heaven alone, "to inflict Hashem's vengeance against Midian".

This is why, the Ktav Sofer emphasizes, Rashi translates "men", as "righteous men". Since Moshe Rabbeinu wanted this war to be carried out for the sake of Heaven and not out of personal feelings of revenge, this required an army of righteous men. This being the case, it was necessary to draft them against their will, as it says (ibid 31:5), "So there were delivered", which Rashi explains "against their will" since they did not believe that they were indeed righteous and could actually have intent solely for Heavens' sake.

An Exact and Powerful Reckoning

"Moshe sent them, a thousand from each tribe for the legion, them and Pinchas" (Bamidbar 31:6)

It was Midian's force of evil that caused twenty-four thousand men from the tribe of Shimon to sin, whose actions then added even more power and strength to this force of evil.

This is why, points out the 'Malei Ha'Omer', when Bnei Yisrael wished to fight against this force of Midian, they required a powerful, opposing strength, of not less than twenty-four thousand righteous men.

How did they arrive at this number? The entire army numbered twelve thousand men (one thousand from each of the twelve tribes), and together with Pinchas who was equal to all of them, it amounts to twenty-four thousand...

Treasures

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



Suffering as a Means of Growth

We will consider the connection between the Parshiot of Mattot and Masei, which are adjacent to each other.

These Parshiot are read during the Three Weeks. Mattot is an expression of blows, while Masei comes from the term 'to journey'. I would like to suggest a connection. So that man should be aroused to journey and grow in Torah, Hashem sends him blows, and then due to the pain and suffering man searches his soul and comes to the conclusion that only the power of studying the Holy Torah can redeem him from his troubles. If this situation has come upon him, it is a hint from Hashem that he must arouse and strengthen himself by journeying towards the Holy Torah.

Today's generation is one where abandonment reigns supreme. Man acts as he pleases as if he is not held accountable for anything. But the Torah was given to Bnei Yisrael in the Wilderness which is ownerless property, to hint to man that he must surrender his very being and all his desires for the sake of studying Torah. Unfortunately, the situation today is the complete opposite. Instead of a person surrendering himself to the Torah and its way of life, do-as-you-please is the predominant ruler, and it is man's Evil Inclination that leads him to the very gravest of sins.

I was contemplating the fact that in This World when a person feels different aches and pains in his body, he takes a painkiller or some kind of pill which brings him relief for his problem. But on the other hand, in the Next World, there is no possibility of alleviating the many afflictions which is the lot of one decreed to suffer in Gehinom. For This World is the world of action and rectification, while the Next World is where we pay for all our deeds.

Imagine a person who leaves the supermarket without paying for his bagful of groceries. When he is asked to show his receipt, he tells the guard that he will pay now. Clearly, this person will be punished doubly, since, besides the cost of his purchase, he will have to pay a fine for not paying for his goods inside the store. So it is with This World, where a person must work on his middot and rectify his ways. If he neglects this obligation, he will not have the opportunity to rectify later on, for death is a one-way street. Therefore, Hashem 'hits' a person while he is still in this world so that he should wake up and search his ways, whereby he will journey and cleave to the Torah and merit inheriting eternal life.



A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA

The passing of Aharon the Kohen signifies the end of a glorious period for Am Yisrael, where their beloved leader carried aloft the symbol of peace between all the tribes of G-d.

Over thousands of years, Aharon's spiritual inheritance has permeated various individuals who deem it a merit to be counted among Aharon's talmidim, those who love peace and pursue peace.

We choose to focus on a wonderful story related by Rabbi Aharon Tvisig shlita, an exceptional and delightful tale, involving a wedding invitation and intense Ahavat Yisrael (taken from K'vodam Shel Yisrael).

One of the neighborhood's residents was about to marry off his oldest child. About two weeks before the wedding, on Shabbat Kodesh after the prayers, a friend approached him and said: "You are about to make a wedding. I wish to tell you something that with G-d's help, will help you greatly. It is something that I personally heard from the esteemed Admor, the Imrei Chaim zya"a.

When a person celebrates a joyous event, the Satan simply cannot bear it. He is unwilling to allow a Jew to make a simcha, therefore he tries his best to introduce problems in the simcha, G-d forbid. For example, as a person leaves his home to go to the simcha, the Satan approaches him and says, 'Oh no, look what happened! You forgot to invite your best friend to your simcha! How can such a thing have happened?'

The Imrei Chaim continued: If the one making the simcha is an intelligent person, he shouts out to the Satan: 'Go away from me! You don't interest me at all!' But if, G-d forbid, he is not sensible, he feels enormous distress and his joy is no longer complete.

I, Baruch Hashem, already have much experience in making smachot," the neighbor concluded. "You should know that sometimes even before the wedding, several invitations that were sent to close friends return unsent because the postal service could not locate their address for all kinds of reasons and mistakes. It could even happen that you actually forget to send someone

you know an invitation. But in any case, don't forget the words of the Imrei Chaim and take care not to allow this Yetzer Hara to affect you!"

The day of the wedding arrived and the family were already sitting in the van that had been ordered to take them to the hall, when suddenly they noticed that one of the girls was still in the house and was not coming out to join them.

The mother left the van to check on her daughter and she found her in the house, crying hard.

"What happened?" she asked in alarm.

The girl pointed to an invitation that was lying on the table. The mother glanced at the name and was filled with dismay. This invitation was addressed to one of the father's close friends, they had previously been partners in Torah study for six and a half years. This daughter, who was responsible for posting the invitations, had forgotten about this invitation, and just now came across it lying forlornly on the table.

There was no time for phone calls. The father was beside himself with aggravation. His family reminded him of what he himself had related two weeks ago in the name of the Imrei Chaim, that it is not appropriate to spoil the simcha because of forgetting to invite a friend; it is simply a ploy of the Yetzer Hara.

Suddenly, in the middle of the wedding, the father spied his friend, the one whom he had forgotten to invite, entering the hall dressed in Shabbat clothes. He was simply delighted and danced with him with great elation. He sat next to him and was ecstatic when his friend stayed even after the meal was over.

When his friend was about to leave, the father plucked up the courage and asked him, "Tell me the truth, did you receive an invitation from me?"

"No."

"So how did you know that my son was getting married tonight?"

The man cleared his throat and explained: "The truth is that until tonight I had no idea. But tonight, as I was standing by the bus stop next to my house, one of our mutual friends approached me and asked if I was travelling to Yerushalayim to the wedding. 'Which wedding are you referring to?' I asked in surprise.

'How come you don't know? So and so, your good friend, is marrying off his oldest son today!'

I could not believe it. 'Are you sure?' I checked with him. He told me that he is quite sure, but since I had not received an invitation, I claimed that it could not be. In the end, I was convinced and I returned home to check out the matter.

I asked everyone, did we receive an invitation from my friend, so and so? No one had seen this invitation. I told them that I just heard that his son was getting married today, and my wife's reaction was: 'Do you think that he intentionally did not invite you? I have no doubt that he indeed sent you an invitation, but due to a postal error, the invitation did not arrive. I think you should quickly get dressed and travel to Yerushalayim to join in the simcha!'"

"I will tell you the truth," the father of the chatan told his friend. "Even if you would have given me a thousand dollars towards the wedding expenses, you would not have made me as happy as you did now. You should know that by coming to participate in my simcha, you caused my joy to be complete!"

Although it is impossible to lay down a clear rule, for this is something that is much dependent on the feelings of each individual, one must still know, that even in the case where one did not receive an invitation to a simcha to which you feel you should have been invited, one should still make an effort to attend the simcha. Anyone who has ever had to use their services is aware of postal disruptions, therefore it is very important to overcome one's feelings, and participate even if one did not receive an invitation.

We must leave behind our pettiness and personal feelings, and try and relate, if only in a small way, to the feelings of others, as the Holy Imrei Chaim taught us. The one who forgot to send the invitation is so distressed, therefore it is incumbent on the friend to take his feelings into consideration. How can he think of his own honor, and not understand his friend's pain?

Of course, if one truly cannot participate in the simcha, one can ask someone to express one's regret to the one making the simcha or wish him mazal tov by phone, but G-d forbid, one should never ignore the occasion, and certainly not because of specific personal calculations.