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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

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MASKIL LEDAVID

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

Bnei Yisrael Are Able to Uplift Themselves in the Merit of the Tzadik

"Now you shall command the Children of Israel that they shall take for you pure, pressed olive oil for illumination, to kindle the lamp continually" (Shemot 27:20)

Several questions arise from this verse. Firstly, why does the verse begin with the words "Now you shall command", unlike other places in the Torah where it says, "Hashem spoke to Moshe" or "Hashem said to Moshe, saying"?

Secondly, Bnei Yisrael were commanded to bring this oil for a lofty purpose, for the kindling of the Menorah. So it would seem more in place to write "Let them take for Me pure, pressed olive oil" as it says in Parshat Terumah (Shemot 25:2), "Let them take for Me a portion" rather than "take for you" as it says here?

Furthermore, the Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 231:1) writes, "When enjoying any worldly pleasures one should not intend for one's personal enjoyment but for the service of Hashem as it says (Mishlei 3:6), 'In all your ways know Him'. Our Sages said (Avot 2:12), 'Let all your deeds be for the sake of Heaven', this refers even to permitted matters, for example eating, drinking, walking... and all your physical needs should be for the sake of serving your Creator or for the sake of something that leads to serving Him."

The difficulty is, how it is possible to demand that man be wholly focused in all his thoughts on the Creator alone? After all, man is created with a physical body so how can he consider only the Creator throughout the day? Besides, since man resides together with the Yetzer Hara, how can he prevail over his natural desires and overcome all his temptations?

Is it even possible to demand of a very wealthy individual who works tirelessly and invests every hour of his day to advance his business and increase his profits, to understand that all he has, in fact, belongs to Hashem and not consider that "My strength and the might of my hand made me all this wealth"? It seems quite impossible that no matter the situation man finds himself in, he is required to believe that all is 'futility of futilities' and has no substance.

I would like to suggest a possible answer: We offer praises to Hashem that He does not approach any man unfairly. Only in accordance with his individual strength does Hashem try him, never G-d forbid beyond his capabilities. On this topic, the Beit Yisrael zya"a of Gur says in the name of Maran the Chidushei Harim zya"a that man is not given a challenge from Heaven if he cannot withstand and overcome it.

Our Sages zt"l have also expounded on the verse (Tehillim 147:16) "He Who gives snow like fleece", that if Hashem gives snow, He also sends fleece with which to warm ourselves against it. However, in man's eyes, it seems that the test is extremely challenging and endless. Why is this? Due to the power of the image that the Yetzer Hara skillfully draws for man, depicting the challenge as particularly trying so as to cause him to despair, G-d forbid.

But the truth is that Chazal tell us (Succah 52a), "In the future, Hashem will bring the Yetzer Hara and slaughter it in front of the righteous and wicked. To the righteous, the Yetzer Hara appears like a high mountain and to the wicked, he seems like a strand of hair... The righteous cry and exclaim, 'How did we manage to conquer this high mountain?' And the wicked cry and exclaim, 'How did we not succeed in conquering this strand of hair?'" How do we understand the meaning of the Yetzer Hara appearing like a mountain or a strand of hair?

But in light of the above, we can now understand this Gemara. The test which man faces is indeed very small like a strand of hair but the Yetzer Hara is the one who magnifies and enlarges it in man's eye. It is self-evident that the Yetzer Hara invests enormous strength to make the righteous stumble even with small matters. On the other hand, the righteous consider the Yetzer Hara's every challenge as something great, since in line with their strength and holiness, they consider every negative act, even if small, as something big and a serious sin if transgressed. This is why the righteous regard the Yetzer Hara as a high mountain.

This shows us that Hashem expects a tall order from man and as a result we wonder, do we possess the strength to withstand this difficult test of showing self-sacrifice in forgoing our personal desires? This is why Hashem said to Moshe, "Now you shall command...that they shall take for you" implying that in order for Bnei Yisrael to achieve the level of "they shall take for Me", meaning taking their very selves with self-sacrifice for the holy service and annulling all materialistic desires from their hearts, it is necessary that at the outset there should be "וְאָתָּה, Now you", meaning Moshe.

Not without reason did Hashem choose Moshe Rabbeinu to serve as an example for Am Yisrael. The tzadik of the generation is considered equal to the entire generation, for he has the power to influence and inspire them with his radiance and they, in turn, will revere him as it says (Avot 4:12), "Let the reverence for your teacher be as the reverence of Heaven".

But so that everyone should surround the tzadik and be influenced by him, there must be "וְאַתָּה, Now you". The 'vav' is added to the word 'you', implying something additional. Only when the tzadik conducts himself in line with "Take for Me", meaning he is totally taken to Hashem and serves Him wholeheartedly, then automatically the tzadik has the power to influence others. Through this, the souls of Bnei Yisrael cleave to him and he elevates all of them with a very great spiritual promotion.

This teaches us that man possesses the strength to forgo his desires and temptations and withstand his wealth and all worldly pleasures, only when he is totally given over to Hashem. Then he can annul "my strength and my might", for he is a client of Hashem alone. If he indeed behaves in this way, he merits an abundance of both material and spiritual goodness.



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Hilula

15 - Rabbi Tzvi Hirsch Kaidanover, author of 'Kav HaYashar'

16 - Rabbi Pinchas Menachem Alter, the Admor of Gur

17 - Rabbi Petachye Mordechai Bardugo, author of 'Nofet Tzufim'

18 - Rabbi Yehoshua Rafael Pinchas DeSigura

19 - Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, Av Beit Din of Yerushalayim

20 - Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, Rosh Yeshiva of 'Kol Torah'

21 - Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk, author of 'Noam Elimelech'



Walking in their Ways

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

The Sign

When we celebrated the chanukat habayit (inauguration) of the Beit Midrash in Paris, I sat among the audience asking Hashem for a sign that this place will indeed be sanctified for His Name and the sound of Torah should never cease to be heard here. Suddenly, a couple walked in with their son. They came directly to me and the woman said, "Honored Rav, I have brought my dear son to you."

For a few moments, I was confused, I had no recollection of these people and did not understand what the mother wanted from me. She reminded me of their story. This child had slipped and fallen from the third floor. He had been in critical condition and his

to me for a blessing for a refuah shleimah in the merit of my ancestors zya"n, and I had blessed them.

"Certainly the Rav remembers," the mother added, "how he promised us that the merit of his ancestors would bring the boy a complete recovery and he would attend this chanukat habayit on two healthy feet.

"Until a few days ago, our son was still in a deep coma. Suddenly, he opened his eyes and regained consciousness! Then he began speaking and communicating with us. Finally, he stood up, to the astonishment of all the doctors.

Now we have come to fulfill the second half of the Rav's prophecy. Our healthy son has come to participate in the chanukat habayit of this hallowed sanctuary."

Upon hearing her words, I thanked Hashem for the wonderful kindnesses that He performs with His creatures and for returning this boy to good health.

Then I turned to HaGaon HaRav Solomon, shlita, who sat near me and had heard the entire amazing incident. I told him, "Before these people walked in, I asked Hashem for a sign that this place would be a haven for Torah and holiness. This family's miracle clearly indicates that this edifice will be a fount of Torah and serve as a sanctification of Hashem's Name in the world, drawing countless members of our nation to drink from its spiritual waters."

The Haftarah

"You, Son of Man!" (Yechezkel 43)

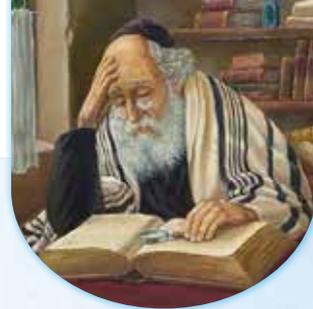
The connection to the Parsha: The Haftarah talks about the dedication of the Altar and the Seven Days of Inauguration, part of Yechezkel's vision about the second Beit HaMikdash. In the Parsha, Moshe Rabbeinu is commanded about the Seven Days of Inauguration at the dedication of the Mishkan.

Residents of Yerushalayim, as it is Purim for them, read the Haftarah **"Shmuel said"** (Shmuel I, 15) while Ashkenazim begin from **"So said Hashem"** (ibid).

Guard Your Tongue

Hints, Winks, Signs or Facial Expressions Are Also Forbidden

The prohibition of lashon hara is not limited to speech. Included in this prohibition is any form of expression through which derogatory or harmful words are conveyed. Therefore, lashon hara that is expressed in writing, or through hints, winks, signs or facial expressions that convey a derogatory or harmful message, are also forbidden.



In Our Father's Path

Rabbi Moshe's Compelling Decision

The concept "chachmei lev", wise-hearted people, that appears several times in the topic of the construction of the Mishkan, is used as a metaphor in all areas of Jewish life when wishing to describe the image of a Ben Torah. In our generation too, we have merited having among us these precious personalities, those who possess 'chochmat lev'. Regarding one such individual, Rabbi Moshe Shapira zt"l, we will relate the following:

The wealthy father-in-law of a respectable avreich from Bayit Vegan went bankrupt. The avreich began raising money to set him back on his feet and among other people visited the home of Rabbi Moshe Shapira, despite not having much of a connection with him. After hearing the details of the incident, Rabbi Moshe was crestfallen. Known for his insight into the ways of the soul, Rabbi Moshe sensed how this wealthy person felt, now bereft of his source of livelihood. From the depths of his sensitive soul, Rabbi Moshe felt the implication of falling 'from a high roof to a deep pit'.

"You say that he used to be very wealthy?" he asked the avreich in distress.

"Absolutely".

He sighed deeply, took out his checkbook and wrote out a large sum. "I am giving you all that I have right now," he said.

Later on, the avreich related that when Rabbi Moshe handed him the check, his eyes glistened with tears.

Rabbi Moshe took a tremendous proportion of his deeds with him to the grave, but on this subject of fatherly concern for the fate of his talmidim, many inspiring stories have been told. One of his talmidim, a ba'al teshuva, related: "Rabbi Moshe was extremely devoted to me at all times, even when I cried to him that I am in a constant state of 'They rise heavenward, they descend to the depths'. One can say that he built me up from scratch and stood by my side throughout, to the extent that it was as if 'all my breakers and waves passed over him'! He fed me spoonful by spoonful, until I built myself up and became a Ben Torah.

During a certain period, I was hospitalized and confined to bed with an infectious illness. At some point, I was forbidden to make the slightest move and I did not always have someone to aid me with my physical needs.

To my great surprise, Rabbi Moshe turned up! He entered my room with a bowl, washed my hands, brushed my teeth and took care of my different physical needs himself. I, from my pathetic position, found it hard to watch the sight: The esteemed Rabbi Moshe of Slabodka troubling himself with these things...

Later on, he helped me understand that to engage in these matters when necessary, can be the epitome of dignity!"

And another amazing story: The story of a kidney.

One of his talmidim from 'Or Sameach' required a kidney transplant. The fee for a kidney that matched his requirements was a hundred thousand dollars, a fortune in those days that he had no way of acquiring. When Rabbi Moshe Shapira heard about his talmid's suffering, he said without hesitation: "Take a bank loan! I will mortgage my house for it!"

The talmid was embarrassed and hesitant. He tried to refuse, but Rabbi Moshe Shapira's decision was more compelling than a bank mortgage...

He mortgaged his own apartment for the loan of this enormous sum!



Pearls of the Parsha

A Tzadik Kindles Jewish Souls

"Now you shall command the Children of Israel that they shall take for you pure, pressed olive oil for illumination, to kindle the lamp continually" (Shemot 27:20)

The esteemed Gaon and tzadik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto shlita says that this verse serves as an allusion to the power of a tzadik's holiness, which he can use to kindle the souls of the holy Am Yisrael for the service of Hashem.

"Now you" refers to the tzadik, "shall command the Children of Israel that they should take for you pure, pressed olive oil", implies that Bnei Yisrael should bring their oil, their souls, (the letters of השמן can be re-arranged to spell נשמה, soul) to the tzadik.

"Pressed for illumination" implies that Bnei Yisrael should crush their very being and annul themselves before the tzadik, since he is the "illumination", just as we are told that a tzadik lights up the eyes of Bnei Yisrael.

"To kindle the lamp continually" means that the tzadik should kindle their souls, because the word נר, lamp, hints to the soul as it says (Mishlei 20:27), "A man's soul is the lamp of Hashem".

Torah Study Without Distraction

"They shall take for you pure, pressed olive oil for illumination" (Shemot 27:20)

Rabbeinu Chaim ben Atar, the Holy Ohr Hachaim zya"l, teaches that this verse hints to the Torah that is compared to oil. Just as oil lights up the world, so too Torah illuminates the world.

The precise wording of "pure" is a lesson that one must engage in Torah for its sake without other considerations and distractions, just as the oil must be pure without preservatives.

Rabbi Shabtai Atton zt"l in his sefer 'Ruach Chochma' adds that this verse also alludes to not diverting one's attention from Torah study, as Chazal say (Chagigah 15a), "Words of Torah can be lost as easily as glass vessels". Therefore, man must engage in Torah constantly without distraction. This is the meaning of "to kindle the lamp continually". Diligence results in the flame of Torah being preserved in one's heart and in this way one retains one's learning.

Kindling the Lights is a Segulah for Kingship

"An eternal decree for their generations" (Shemot 27:21)

Even though due to our sins, we no longer have a Beit Hamikdash, our Batei Knesset and Batei Midrash remain in existence for all generations and the practice is to kindle the Menorah in these holy places of worship.

The Midrash HaGadol writes: One who is accustomed to kindling the lights in the Batei Knesset and Batei Midrash merits kingship as it says, "Ner begot Kish. Kish begot Shaul" (Divrei Hayamim I, 8:33), yet elsewhere it says "There was a man of Binyamin whose name was Kish son of Aviel" (Shmuel I, 9:1).

If he was called Aviel why is he referred to as Ner in Divrei Hayamim?

Because he would kindle the lamps, nerot, in the Batei Knesset and Batei Midrashot. In the merit of this, King Shaul descended from him.

A Positive Thought is Considered as a Deed

"The belt with which it is emplaced, which is on it, shall be of the same workmanship, it shall be made of it" (Shemot 28:8)

It is a well-known principle that concerning a mitzvah "A positive thought is considered as a deed". Even if in the end one was unable to carry out the mitzvah as one intended due to circumstances beyond one's control, the Torah considers it as if one actually performed the mitzvah.

In light of this idea, the Chida, in the name of Rabbeinu Ephraim zya"l, explains the verse "The belt with which it is emplaced (חשב)": The thought of performing a mitzvah that adorns a person (אפוד, belt also means adornment), is considered as "במעשהו", as if he already performed the mitzvah. But what does this concern? When "it shall be made of it", he truly desired to perform the mitzvah and only because he was compelled he could not do so...

Treasures

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



The Potency of Piety Lies in its Beginning

"They shall take for you pure, pressed olive oil for illumination, to kindle the lamp continually" (Shemot 27:20)

Our Sages have taught (Menachot 86a) "There are three references to olives in the Torah and each refers to a different kind of oil that they produce. The first kind, the superior grade, is that one picks the ripe olives off the tree, pounds them and puts them into a wicker basket, where the oil drips through the holes of the basket into a vessel. Pressing the olives under heavy wood is the second type, while grinding and then pressing again is the third kind. The first one is fit for kindling the Menorah while the other oils are used for flour-offerings."

The question is, what is special about the first kind of oil that only this is fit to be used for the Menorah?

We will offer the following explanation that teaches us an ethical lesson: Chazal say (Shir Hashirim Rabba 5:2), "Open for Me just one opening of repentance the size of a needle's eye and I will open for you openings that wagons and carriages can enter. Rabbi Tanchuma and Rabbi Chunya and Rabbi Abahu said in the name of Reish Lakish: It says (Tehillim 46:11) 'Desist and know that I am G-d'. Hashem said to Yisrael, 'Desist from your bad deeds and know that I am Hashem'. Rabbi Levi said, if Yisrael would only repent for just one day, they would immediately be redeemed and Ben David would arrive immediately. Why is this? 'For He is our G-d, and we can be the flock He pastures, and the sheep in His charge, even today, if we but heed His call' (Tehillim 95:7)."

It follows that Hashem asks of man one thing alone: That he should just begin the process of repentance and performing good deeds and then Hashem will immediately assist him in standing up to the Yetzer Hara. As we are told (Makot 10b), "A person is led on the path he wishes to take". Everything is dependent on the beginning of the matter, as it says (Tehillim 111:10) "The beginning of wisdom is fear of Hashem". We are also told (Devarim 10:12) "Now, O Israel, what does Hashem, your G-d, ask of you? Only to fear Hashem, your G-d". One who possesses fear of Heaven possesses everything and one who is lacking fear of Heaven has nothing. Even if he repents, his repentance lacks substance.

This shows us the importance of the beginning of the matter, for the essence of a mitzvah and the core of everything is dependent on its beginning. The Rishonim say (Rokeach, Introduction) that nothing can match the strength of piety at its initial stage, for once one is habituated to the matter, he becomes lax and is no longer meticulous.

This being the case, we can understand why only the first grade of oil was fit to be used for the Menorah. Hashem was hinting to Yisrael that through opening for Him a small opening like the eye of a needle, He will open a large opening for them and they will succeed in defeating the Yetzer Hara. Since they have taken the first step, Hashem will immediately come to their assistance. Man should not wonder, how can I begin to observe Torah and mitzvot? The Torah is extremely broad! How many hundreds of serious mitzvot there are; how many hundreds of serious sins does the Torah involve. How can I be careful with all of these? Therefore, the Torah tells us that the first grade of oil alone is fit for the Menorah, meaning the only action you need to do is to take the initial step and subsequently Hashem will help you complete the journey.

A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA



The offerings brought great satisfaction to Hashem, as it were, to the extent that the Torah calls the offerings "an appeasing fragrance".

Rashi writes on the words "an appeasing fragrance": "It is a source of contentment before, Me that I spoke and My will was done". This is the most refined form of Avodat Hashem, pure of any trace of personal intent or benefit. It gives great pleasure and special satisfaction to Hashem, as Rashi writes.

On a superficial level, it seems to us that the pleasure Hashem derives from the korbanot is the satisfying aroma that arises from them and in this way He is appeased.

However, Rashi reveals to us that the satisfaction brought about by the korbanot is the fact that we carry out Hashem's command, Who told us to offer korbanot.

Harav Binyomin Birenzweig shlita asks that every time one performs a Torah command, it is an expression of fulfilling Hashem's will. So why does the Torah not say that doing any mitzvah affords a satisfying aroma to Hashem? The answer seems to be that the superiority of the offerings is the performance of Hashem's will in the most complete manner, for through bringing a korban a person sacrifices all his deeds entirely to Hashem, everything becomes sanctified for Hashem. There is no personal bearing or benefit when bringing a korban, on the contrary, one takes an animal or money and gives it entirely to Hashem. This is an act of doing His will in the most complete way possible and this is what gives rise to the satisfying aroma.

We can derive from this a lesson for our performance of all mitzvot. If a person performs a mitzvah wholly for Hashem's will without any personal pleasure, rather he intends and acts for the sake of Heaven, one can certainly say that this mitzvah produces a satisfying aroma.

Rabbi Meir Rubman zt"l (Zichron Meir) writes that one can say that whenever

one performs a mitzvah with perfection, it gives a satisfying aroma to Hashem.

A most moving and powerful story, concerning the merit of performing a mitzvah with a purity of heart and perfection, is brought in the sefer Ohel Moshe. Harav Yitzchak Eisenbach was born to a well-known Orthodox, Yerushalmi family. In his younger years, he was an active, cheerful child who transformed the town's alleyways into his playing fields where he frolicked around.

One Shabbat afternoon, Yitzchak made his way to the Kotel passing through the Jaffe Gate and the Old City, through the quarter populated extensively by Arabs. Suddenly, he caught sight of a gold coin gleaming on the roadside. The value of this kind of coin was so great that it could be used to support a large family for two whole weeks.

The child was excited about the inherent potential of finding this treasure; it would enable him to assist his family that found themselves in dire financial straits. However, he well remembered that due to the holiness of Shabbat he was forbidden to pick up the muktzah coin. What did he do? He decided to place his foot on top of the coin to hide it from the view of passersby, choosing to remain standing in that spot until the end of Shabbat.

And so Yitzchak stood still in the Arab street for over an hour. Suddenly, an Arab lad approached and asked him why he was standing there like a statue. At first, he did not reply but the lad kept interrogating him until he answered with childlike innocence, "I have something underneath my foot that it is forbidden for me to pick up, so I am waiting here until after Shabbat so that I can..." Before he even managed to finish his sentence, the Arab pushed him over and while Yitzchak lay stunned on the ground, he quickly bent over, grabbed the coin and ran off.

By the time he managed to pull himself together, the Arab had already jumped over the fence and disappeared from sight. The disheartened child made his way to the Beit Midrash of HaRav Nachum Twersky zt"l of Chernobyl, where his father used to pray Minchah and eat Seuda Shlishit.

It was Yitzchak's regular responsibility to put out the chairs, set the table and

serve the food to all the participants who came to be with the Rebbe. But this week he disregarded his custom and just sat crouched in a corner. The Chernobyler Rebbe who was fond of the child, noticed that something was not right. The benches and tables remained unprepared.

The Rebbe approached him and asked, "What happened today? You look so sad. We all need you to set the tables!" Itzele told the Rebbe what had happened and expressed his great regret at the golden opportunity that had slipped through his fingers. The Rebbe listened attentively and then took the child's hand and said, "Come with me now to sit down by the table and after Shabbat, please come to my home".

On Motzei Shabbat, the child accompanied the Rebbe to his home. The Rebbe opened a drawer and took out a gold coin, similar to the one he had found in the Old City. "Here, this coin is yours," the Rebbe said, "but I am giving it to you on one condition. I am asking that in exchange you give me the reward of the mitzvah you fulfilled today!" Itzele was moved and asked the Rebbe in amazement, "The Rebbe wants the reward of the mitzvah in exchange for the coin?" "Yes", replied the Rebbe, "today you sanctified the Name of Heaven in an outstanding way by not picking up the coin due to the holiness of Shabbat. What perfection of mitzvah from a young child! Here, I am offering you this other gold coin instead. Take it, I am just asking for the reward of the mitzvah."

Itzele was shocked. He gazed at the gold coin and quickly thought of all that he could buy for his family. And then he raised his eyes to the Rebbe and said, "If the value of the mitzvah that I performed today is so great, it is not for sale!"

The Rebbe leaned over to the child and kissed him on his forehead.

For many years Rabbi Yitzchak would relate to his children and grandchildren that this lesson he learnt in his childhood from the Chernobyler Rebbe, demonstrated to him more powerfully than anything he learnt as he grew older, the great significance of performing a mitzvah with a purity of intention and perfection. How great is this kind of mitzvah in Hashem's eyes!