

Eikev

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Hilula

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23 - Rabbi Ya'akov Yisrael Kanievsky

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28 - Rabbi Avraham Chaim Adas

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 Merit of Making Aliya

Excerpt from a Gathering of Inspiration in Honor of the Absorption of French Immigrants

"For Hashem, your G-d, is bringing you to a good Land: a Land with streams of water, of springs and underground water coming forth in valley and mountain; a Land of wheat, barley, grape, fig, and pomegranate; a Land of oil-olives and date-honey; a Land where you will eat bread without poverty – you will lack nothing there; a Land whose stones are iron and from whose mountains you will mine copper" (Devarim 8:7-9)

These verses bring to our attention the magnificence of Eretz Yisrael, the Holy Land. The Torah stresses, "For Hashem, your G-d, is bringing you to a good Land" meaning, when you come to Eretz Yisrael you should know you are coming to the Holy Land. It is not simply another land but a land which is holy.

What, in fact, makes Eretz Yisrael different from any other land? Why is only this country called the Holy Land while other places are simply 'lands'?

The Holy Torah, together with the special mitzvot specific to this Land alone, are what make Eretz Yisrael holy, and we have the merit of settling in this Holy Land.

If it is the Torah and mitzvot which make the land holy, then it should be that every Jew who makes Aliya finds himself on a spiritual ascent in the merit of his Torah study and mitzvah observance. However, unfortunately, there are those who upon arriving in Eretz Yisrael, about which the verse says (Devarim 11:12), "A Land that Hashem, your G-d, seeks out; the eyes of Hashem, your G-d, are always upon it, from the beginning of the year to year's end", instead of finding themselves elevated, lose heart due to the many challenges strewn in their path.

Since we are discussing the significance of Torah which is what provides us with strength, I wish to say at this point, believe me, the only thing that comforted me after my mother's passing, was the Holy Torah. Sometime after my mother, the Rabbanit a"h, sent my brother Rabbi Ya'akov away to Yeshiva, my esteemed father zy"a suffered a stroke. When my brother heard about it he called my mother and said: "I heard that Abba had a stroke. Can I come visit him?" Ima a"h answered (in Arabic), "Your father can die, your mother can die, but you will remain in Yeshiva!"

This is how our parents instilled in us faith and love for Torah; to live it in all situations, whether good or bad. Indeed, our parents demonstrated self-sacrifice for the sake of Torah study, and they were the ones who encouraged us to constantly elevate ourselves in

Torah, without interruption, even when Abba was sick or we faced any other disturbance. Continue studying Torah with self-sacrifice.

I would like to share the events concerning my own aliya to the Holy Land. Before I made aliya, I asked Maran HaGaon Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef zy"a for his opinion, whether I should move to the Holy Land. This was his reply: "Of course, of course. It is a Holy Land which sanctifies its occupants. And you should continue both here and there your involvement with the public. Although here this holy occupation is very difficult, if, with Hashem's help, you are successful, you will enjoy a great merit."

Indeed, as Maran Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef zy"a disclosed, I see clearly how very challenging the work is in the Holy Land. For as long as I have been here, I can think of many families who made aliya but at some point regretted their decision. Either they returned to France or moved to a different country, but they did not stay here, due to the fact that they were not well prepared for their move. Where to live, which schools would be best for the children, and more all require advance thought.

This is a result of believing the Holy Land is a place of tourism, and not of Torah and mitzvah observance. Since this was their thought, they did not prepare themselves in any way for life in the Holy Land. Even if later on they did wish to change, by the time they woke up and opened their eyes to contemplate their situation and decide how to go further, they had depleted all their capital and found themselves in a big mess.

We must realize ours is not the generation of the Exodus and our accomplishments do not come close to those of that generation. Those who left Egypt went into the desolate Wilderness empty handed, without even food and water or any prior preparation. The verse describes this clearly (Shemot 12:39), "for they were driven from Egypt for they could not delay, nor had they made provisions for themselves." All they had was the remnants of the matzah which they ate along the way. In the merit of this faith Hashem showed them with wonders and miracles, which further ingrained faith in Hashem in their hearts.

But how can we compare ourselves to them? We are a simple generation, and so must prepare ourselves appropriately for each and every matter. We are required to invest thought and seek counsel in planning the future of each person involved.



Walking in their Ways

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

This World Takes Its Toll

I was once driving with my escort, R' Moshe Mirali, on a highway in New Jersey. After driving a few kilometers, the traffic suddenly backed up. We were surprised at this and, rolling down the windows to figure out the source of the traffic jam, our ears were assaulted by shouts. A driver was short ten cents of the toll fare and was therefore being detained.

I asked R' Moshe to go over to this driver and offer him ten cents so we could continue on our way. And I realized this incident came my way to teach me a lesson.

Our lives in this world are like a ride along a highway, making our way to our Final Destination, the World to Come. "The days of our years among them are seventy years, and if with might, eighty years" (Tehillim 90:10). When the day will come and we reach the end of our journey, we will have to pay the price with our Torah and mitzvot. And woe to the one who is short of even one cent!

The Haftarah

"Zion said" (Yeshayahu 49)

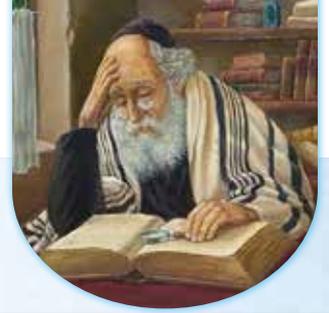
The connection to Shabbat: This Haftarah is the second of the seven special 'Haftarot of Comfort' that are read beginning with the Shabbat following Tisha B'Av. They are chapters of comfort for Bnei Yisrael, together with sections of faith in Hashem and His Torah.

Guard Your Tongue

Take the Results into Account

There is another situation which permits relating derogatory information for a beneficial purpose: if one's intention is to help someone who suffered from the behavior of the one involved.

If someone personally witnesses a Jew causing financial or other harm to his fellow, and his purpose is to help the victim get compensation, this is considered a beneficial purpose and he is permitted to relate the story. However, he must first confirm the facts are correct, rebuke the one who caused the damage, and he must also take into account the results of relating this information, making sure the perpetrator will not suffer more than the law stipulates.



In Our Father's Path

You Deserve the Inheritance!

There are several verses in the Torah that serve to strengthen our trust in the Master of the World who sustains and nourishes all His creatures. Any effort on our part concerning our sustenance and livelihood are only considered hishtadlut, appropriate effort. Just as an intelligent person does not think he helps the engine push the train, so we too do not help Hashem sustain us. He alone provides for us, while with our actions we are only fulfilling the mitzvah of hishtadlut.

We find a reference to this in this week's Parshah, in a powerfully precise declaration (Devarim 8:3), "In order to make you know that not by bread alone does man live, rather by everything that emanates from the mouth of G-d does man live."

This is demonstrated by a story related by HaGaon Rabbi Asher Weiss shlita, concerning an avreich from Manchester who dedicates his day to Torah study with great diligence. Even as his family grew, the avreich studiously continued his Torah study, with the entire management of the home falling on the shoulders of his righteous wife who willingly sacrificed for the sake of her husband's Torah learning.

An entire family of mesirat nefesh; the father, the mother and the children who followed in their parent's footsteps. All their acquaintances wondered, how do they support themselves? Such a large family yet they always seem happy. The father continued with his diligent Torah study while the family continued growing. They had their twelfth and even thirteenth child, yet the father did not consider forsaking his Torah studies. The pleasure he derived from the sweetness of Torah, together with the tremendous support he received from his wife and children, gave him the strength and fortitude to continue.

Together with the growing challenge of supporting their large family, they strengthened their trust in Hashem that He is the One who sustains and provides for every living being. All attempts on the part of friends to convince him to go and work at least half a day to lighten the burden of parnassah fell on deaf ears. He was bound to Torah learning with ropes of love that no one could untie.

One day upon returning home from the Beit Midrash, this avreich noticed a letter in his mail box. From the look of the envelope it was clear this was no regular letter. Indeed, it contained a summons from the district court for a court case to determine his affairs. He was most surprised; since when does an avreich who spends his entire day inside the Beit Midrash have concerns with the courts? He certainly had not transgressed any criminal offense and was not involved in any financial deal which could have gone wrong.

His speculations grew as the day of the court case approached. He arrived at the court where it turned out that in line with the will of one of the town's great millionaires, he was the sole heir of all his assets which amounted to no less than several billion!

His astonishment knew no bounds. He was sure someone was playing a prank on him. What connection did he have to a gentile millionaire who he had never heard of in his life? He had no doubt there was some mistake here, but the judge explained all was in order. The deceased was a childless individual who loved children, so he declared in his will that he is donating all his assets to the largest family in town!

"We checked through the towns' records," the judge explained, "and discovered that your family of thirteen children is the largest in town. Although there are other families with twelve children, your thirteenth child who was born two weeks ago transformed you into the largest family in town; therefore the inheritance is yours alone!"



Pearls of the Parsha

No Need for More than One Apartment!

"Lest you will eat and be satisfied, and you will build good houses and settle" (Devarim 8:12)

The sefer Ben David quotes Rabbi Ya'akov Duwek HaKohen of Aram Tzova who asks why the verse begins with the future tense, "you will eat" but concludes with the past tense "and be [lit. and are] satisfied." Similarly, it goes on to say "you will build" in the future tense and concludes with "settle [lit. you settled]" which is the past tense?

Rabbi Ya'akov explains beautifully that the Torah wishes to warn Am Yisrael that they should not indulge in the pleasures of This World above what is necessary. That is why the verse says "Lest you will eat and be satisfied" meaning, guard yourself not to overeat if you are already satisfied. Also concerning the warning "you will build good houses and settle", it means to say, if you have a house and are already settled in it, don't wish for another, even more comfortable, home. Because if G-d forbid you are drawn after luxuries, you can arrive at "Your heart will become haughty and you will forget Hashem, your G-d" (Devarim 8:14). However, in the case where a person is hungry or does not possess a house, this warning is not applicable and the Torah permits him to engage in obtaining these matters so he will be satisfied and settled and able to serve Hashem. This will not cause him to be drawn after the counsel of the Yetzer Hara.

The Mitzvah Testifies about the One Who Created It

"Do not turn to the stubbornness of this people" (Devarim 9:27)

How can one say to the King, "Do not turn..."? Does it not say "For [His] eyes are upon man's ways"? Hashem oversees everything, observes all mankind and judges each one, for the good or bad.

The Holy Zohar (Kedoshim 83:1) writes that Rabbi Chiya expounds on the extent to which a person must be careful not to sin, so as not to transgress before the Holy King. Come and see, if one performs a mitzvah, that mitzvah ascends, stands before Hashem and says, I am from so and so who created me. Hashem stands the mitzvah before Him so He can look at it daily and thereby benefit the person on account of it. But if a person transgresses a Torah command, the sin ascends before Him and says, I am from so and so who created me. Hashem then stands the sin before Him and looks at it to punish the sinner. If he repents, it says about him "So too, Hashem has commuted your sin; you will not die." Hashem removes the sin from before Himself so as not to look at it, to benefit the person.

That is why it says, "Do not turn to the stubbornness of this people, and to its wickedness and to its sin."

... The Sabbatical Year ...

Laws Concerning the Mitzvah of Shemittah

There is a positive commandment to desist from any work involving the ground and the trees in the seventh year. There are three general mitzvot concerning this year:

1. Shevitat ha'aretz – allowing the land to rest completely in the seventh year; refraining from working the ground, tending to the trees or any related activities.
2. Shemittah hapeirot – declaring all produce of the fields and trees ownerless during this year, treating the produce with the appropriate laws of sanctity, and removing from one's home any produce that is no longer available in the fields, making it available to everyone alike.
3. Shemittah kesafim – waiving any debts owed to him at the end of the seventh year.

Calculating the seventh years is not reckoned from the creation of the world, rather they began counting the cycle fourteen years after Bnei Yisrael entered Eretz Yisrael, from the time they were settled in the Land which is when the obligation to observe Shemittah began. It follows that the first Shemittah they observed was twenty-one years after they entered the Land.

The mitzvah of Shemittah applies only in Eretz Yisrael as it says, "When you come into the Land that I give you, the Land shall observe a Shabbat rest for Hashem." Therefore, the laws of Shemittah regarding money do apply in chutz la'aretz as well, while laws regarding the land and its produce are not observed even as a rabbinical decree.

Treasures

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



Mitzvah that Man Treads with His Heel

"This shall be the reward when you hearken to these ordinances, and you observe and perform them; Hashem, your G-d, will safeguard for you the covenant and the kindness that He swore to your forefathers" (Devarim 7:12)

Rashi explains the term "eikev – when" which also means heel. It alludes to the sort of commandments people may regard as relatively unimportant so they tend to figuratively 'tread on them with their heels'. However, these mitzvot too every person must observe, just as he observes other seemingly more major mitzvot. A person may sometimes think nothing will happen if he arrives a few minutes late for his shiur or prays just once without a minyan. While these are not severe sins, the Torah explicitly commands us that even these 'small' things that man treats lightly and treads with his heel, he must guard carefully, for they too are part of the Holy Torah.

There are also some important, significant mitzvot that a person treads with his heel. These are mitzvot we fulfill daily and therefore grow accustomed to them and don't pay enough attention to them. When it comes to the blowing of the shofar, each one of us concentrates on the mitzvah and entertains thoughts of repentance, for it is a rare mitzvah performed once a year. But when we don our tzitzit every morning, we don't get excited or even think about it at all; we just put it on like any other garment. This is the destructive power of routine, concerning which Hashem warns us to be careful not to fall in the trap of habit and not tread on these mitzvot with our heel. Rather, we should strengthen ourselves and put thought into every mitzvah we do, contemplating its great reward and lofty concepts, and in this way we will not treat these routine mitzvot with indifference.

It is worthwhile understanding why the Torah chose particularly the heel to convey the idea of something a person tramples on and disregards.

The reason could be that since the heel is found at the end of the leg, it hints to a person's end in This World. When man wishes to repent and pay attention also to mitzvot he has become accustomed to performing daily, he must contemplate his end – consider what will be his lot when he passes away and ascends to the Heavenly Court. This thought will certainly serve to arouse in him the awareness that every single mitzvah, however 'small' and 'regular' it may be, earns us great reward in Heaven. After one hundred and twenty years he will require all those thousands of mitzvot that come his way every day which he fulfills out of habit without paying much attention to them.

This is how Rabbi Ya'akov Abuchatzera zy"a, author of Pituchei Chotem, explains the adjacency of the Parshiot Eikev and Re'eh. If man wishes to work on himself and not tread on 'easy' mitzvot, he must see (Re'eh) the heel (Eikev), meaning he must consider the day of death when he will long for even the most minor mitzvah. If a person contemplates this while still alive, he will merit beautifying the mitzvot and bringing them to perfection by fulfilling them with the appropriate concentration.



A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA

Acts of Kindness 'On the Way'

"The passionate man will recognize, understand and know that almost all Judaism and the survival of our Jewish nation, particularly in this long and bitter exile, depends on supporting our brothers and relatives, ensuring they do not collapse." This is how the Gaon, Rabbi Kalfon Moshe HaKohen zt"l, illuminates the mitzvah we read about in this week's Parshah (Devarim 11:22), "For if you will observe this entire commandment that I command you, to perform it, to love Hashem, your G-d, to walk in all his ways and to cleave to Him." As Rashi elaborates: "He is merciful – you should be merciful; He performs acts of kindnesses – you should perform acts of kindness."

Indeed, man is inclined to think that only those of means can perform true chesed. For example, only a wealthy person can afford to donate a hundred thousand dollars for a sick person who has to undergo a costly operation. But this is a big mistake, the Gaon Rabbi Moshe Levi zt"l, author of *Menuchat Ahava*, points out. Any act a person carries out to benefit someone else is included in the mitzvah of chesed. If a person only wishes, he can pick up acts of kindness at every step of his way, throughout the day.

Parents, for example, do not realize that taking care of their children is an act of chesed. Not just any chesed, but chesed of the highest caliber, for the most important manifestation of chesed is that which is carried out within the home. Rabbi Moshe Levi zt"l testifies: "From when I grasped this idea, I tried to seize acts of kindness. For example, on my way to and

from Yeshiva, I look out for young children who wish to cross the road and help them cross safely."

And the same applies to spiritual matters. Spiritual kindness, Rabbi Moshe Levi zt"l points out, is no less chesed than material assistance. If, for example, someone hears that his friend is sick and recites Tehillim for him, it is an act of chesed.

Indeed, Rabbi Moshe acted as he preached. When the wife of Rabbi Meir Mazuz shlit"a was sick, he arranged a trip to the Kotel to pray for her, and on the way arranged that his talmidim recite eighteen books of Tehillim for her recovery.

Even When They Make Us Angry

The father of the depressed and broken hearted was HaGaon Hatzadik Rabbi Asher Freund zt"l. His house was open to one and all at all times, day and night. He would show exceptional kindness to all those ill-fated individuals, drawing them close and taking care of all their needs like a compassionate father. He would perform those acts of kindness with modesty and simplicity as was the way of the distinguished Yerushalmi residents, fleeing from publicity and honor. He would constantly impart a message of simple faith, that we do not deserve anything and all we have is due to Hashem's kindness.

He would explain the Chazal, "Just as He is merciful – so you should be merciful" in the following way: Just as He is merciful, just as Hashem is merciful towards Bnei Yisrael even when they do not behave appropriately, we too must adopt this trait and even when people anger us or act towards us in a way we do not approve of, we must still behave with compassion and cleave to Hashem's ways.

The one involved related his story: "At one point I began sliding spiritually. I slowly deteriorated, in prayers and Torah too, until I was left bored

with nothing to fill my time. Rabbi Asher noticed what was going on and invited me to speak to him. At the end of our lengthy conversation, he entrusted me with a mission: to take care of a certain bachur who was not in a good mental state. I was to take him under my wing and provide for all his needs. And so I found myself busy from morning to night, caring for that bachur.

"One day, I suddenly realized Rabbi Asher's great kindness. On the one hand he saved me from boredom and lack of structure, while at the same time he benefited that bachur by giving him the feeling he is not alone; there is someone who cares about him.

"One day the phone rang. Rabbi Asher was on the line, telling me his daughter was getting married soon and he wants to invite me and that bachur to join in his simcha.

"The day of the wedding arrived and we walked over to Rabbi Asher's home. As we approached his home, he was already waiting outside, his shtreimel adorning his head. As soon as he noticed us he asked me, 'Did you shine the bachur's shoes in honor of the wedding?' I replied I had not done so. He quickly ran back inside, fetched some shoe polish and began shining the bachur's shoes..."

One of Rabbi Asher's acquaintances told over another story: "Some of those who hung around in Rabbi Asher's home were unfortunately in a bad state. There was one bachur whose situation was so wretched, he would scream and grow wild and this behavior caused the other guests discomfort. I gently tried to bring to Rabbi Asher's attention that maybe it would be worthwhile sending this bachur away, but he replied assertively: "Is it my home that I can send people away?"