

# Vayeitzei

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## 929

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

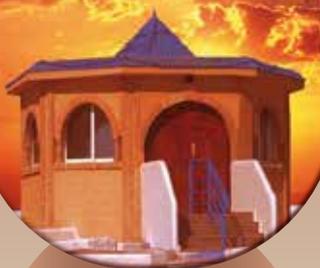
Son of the tzaddik Rabbi Moshe Ahron Pinto, zt"l, and grandson of the holy tzaddik and miracle-worker Rabbi Chaim Pinto, zy"a

### MASKIL LEDAVID

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



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## Hilula

9 - Rabbi Natan Salem, Sage of Yeshivat  
Porat Yosef

10 - Rabbi Ya'akov Attia

11 - Rabbi Yechiel Heller, author of  
Amudei Or

12 - Rabbi Shlomo Luria, the  
Maharshal

13 - Rabbi David Amado, author of  
Tehilla L'David

14 - Rabbi Natan Geshtetner

15 - Rabbi Yehuda HaNassi

## Heavenly Protection

***"And he dreamt, and behold! A ladder was set earthward and its top reached heavenward; and behold! angels of Hashem were ascending and descending on it"*** (Bereishit 28:12)

The Torah's account of Yaakov's dream leads us to question: Does a Heavenly angel need a ladder? As spiritual beings, equipped with their own method of levitation, a ladder seems superfluous. Perhaps we can suggest an answer, after we understand a bit more about angels in general.

As human beings, we cannot even fathom what angels looks like. Their visage is fiery and sublime, striking fear, sparking dread, and provoking reverence. Were a person to catch even a glimpse of one, he would either faint or expire from fear. This is why Hashem made it that we cannot see angels. Chazal (Yalkut Shimoni Devarim, 933) say that when a person's end is imminent, Hashem allows him to see the Angel of Death and his Heavenly sword, and the neshamah leaves his body from the traumatic experience. Regarding a righteous individual however, Hashem comes with the Angel to greet him, causing him to die in a more uplifting manner, as the neshamah is drawn after Hashem and pulled away peacefully.

We are all aware that when a person sins, he creates an angel with evil characteristics and a prosecuting demeanor. Conversely, when a person does a righteous deed, the angel that is created shines in virtuousness and beams with

good character. These angels even spur the person who created them to continue his line of activity, as they thrive on good deeds, almost like a person who is nurtured by consuming food. And so we feel an inner impulse towards good, which is actually a by-product of our former behavior. As these good angels are closely associated with the person who created them, they also watch carefully over him, until they ascend on High.

Perhaps we can now understand the purpose of the ladder in Yaakov's dream. The Heavenly angels that were created by Yaakov's good deeds elevated slowly to the Heavenly realm, casting their watchful glance at Yaakov who lay sleeping below. Their ascent was marked by graduated steps, hence the ladder in Yaakov's dream. Even though their time in this world was drawing to a close, they still wanted to watch over Yaakov as long as they could. Their climbing by means of a ladder alludes to the protective measures such angels provide for their creator.

I saw a similar idea in the sefer Eitz Erez, on the pasuk (Bereishit 28:13) "And behold! Hashem was standing over him." He explains that Hashem stands guard over a person, so to speak, between the performance of one mitzvah and the next. Since the angel that is created by our good deeds eventually ascends on High, Hashem watches over us Himself, until we do the next mitzvah. This is why Hashem appeared in Yaakov's dream.



## Walking in their Ways

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

### Drawn to the Light

When my family once left the house for an extended period of time, we left the windows open to air out the house. This took place during the summer months and toward evening the house became filled with moths, mosquitoes, and other small insects, which were drawn to the lights in the rooms.

When we finally arrived home, imagine how distressed we were to discover these tiny squatters which had taken possession of our domain. We deeply regretted having left the windows open. My daughter, in particular, was terribly disturbed by these creatures. "Father," she cried, "how will we ever get rid of these bugs?"

Together, we tried to think of a solution. Suddenly my daughter had a brainstorm. "The bugs are drawn after the light. So let's shut all the lights in the house and turn on the outdoor lights instead. Then the bugs will fly outside and leave us in peace." This is what we did. Within five minutes, all the creatures flew outdoors and we were finally free of them.

I learned a message from this incident. In Tehillim (36:10) we read, "For with You is the source of life; by Your light may we see light." Man is enjoined to search for the Source of light, which is Hashem Himself. The Torah is also termed light, as it says (ibid. 97:11), "Light is sown for the righteous; and for the upright of heart, joy." Moreover, in Megillat Esther (8:16) we find the phrase, "The Jews had light and gladness and joy and honor." Chazal explain that light refers to Torah.

Just as the flying creatures are drawn after light, but then get burnt by its heat, so must we cling to the Torah until we get scorched by its intensity. This means that one should become transformed by his Torah study and use it to rise to greater levels.

## The Haftarah

**"And yet My people waver about returning to Me"** (Hoshea 11).

Ashkenazim read the section **"Ya'akov fled to the field of Aram"** (Hoshea 12).

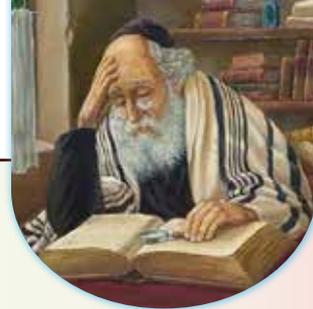
The connection to the Parshah: The Haftarah mentions Ya'akov who seized Esav's heel, as it says, "In the womb he seized his brother's heel", and the Parshah talks about Ya'akov fleeing from his brother Esav.

## The Path of the Upright

It is a mitzvah to give every Jewish person the benefit of the doubt and always judge Am Yisrael favorably (dan l'chaf z'chut). Suspecting the innocent is considered a very serious sin.

(Some use the connotation of kaf, which can mean shoe-horn, to explain that just as one uses a shoe-horn to push one's foot into the shoe if it is too small, this is comparable to finding a way to exonerate the person even if this justification seems far-fetched and hard to fit into rational reasoning.)

If a person takes an approach with others that leans towards kindness (and doesn't condemn them), Hashem will act towards him accordingly, measure for measure.



## In Our Father's Path

### Why Did Rabbi Ephraim HaKohen zt"l Fast?

When Ya'akov left Be'er Sheva for Charan, he spent the night at the holy site of Har Hamoriah. He lay down and went to sleep after placing stones around his head. When he awoke in the morning, the Torah says he felt the holiness of the place, and then we are told (Bereishit 28:18), "Ya'akov arose early in the morning and took the stone that he placed around his head and set it up as a pillar; and he poured oil on its top."

We must treat inanimate objects that have been sanctified with high regard, as evident in the Midrash (Shir Hashirim 1:20) stating that a stone on which Rabbi Eliezer ben Hurkenos sat was compared to Har Sinai!

The gaon and tzaddik Rabbi Reuven Sharabani zt"l recounts: "I recall from my youth a story they often told in my home about the famous study partners, Chacham Ephraim Kohen and Chacham Salman Eliyahu zt"l, who together studied the hidden sections of Torah. After many years of studying together in the Porat Yosef yeshiva, it was time to replace the table at which they always studied. An argument broke out among several of the yeshiva's scholars, since each one wanted the privilege of inheriting this old table that had been sanctified for more than twenty years through the Torah study of the pious sages, Chacham Ephraim Kohen and Chacham Salman."

The sefer Darash B'chochma reports that once when the Ben Ish Chai zt"l was delivering a Torah lecture to his foremost students, he had to leave the room for a short time. Before he went out he took off his shoes and left them next to his seat. One of his outstanding disciples got up, picked up the shoes and kissed them.

The sefer Vaya'al Eliyahu relates a similar inspiring testimony from Rabbi Eliyahu Sharam zt"l:

"I was told that once Rabbi Ephraim Kohen was visiting his master, Rabbeinu the Ben Ish Chai, and a poor man came to ask for charity. The Ben Ish Chai got up, gave him charity and went to accompany him outside. Rabbi Ephraim immediately took hold of the Ben Ish Chai's shoes, kissed them with devotion and passed them in front of his eyes as one does with tzitzit.

"When the Ben Ish Chai came back inside and saw this, he asked in surprise: 'Rabbi Ephraim, what are you doing?' Rabbi Ephraim was taken aback out of reverence for his master, and the shoe fell from his hand to the floor. The next day Rabbi Ephraim fasted, following the law of someone who drops his tefillin..."



## The Sabbatical Year

1. Chazal permitted certain acts during Shemittah to prevent damage to the plants and trees. These acts are permitted even when the damage is not certain, according to the rule that if one has a doubt concerning a rabbinical prohibition, one may be lenient. Still, every farmer must prepare his fields well before Shemittah and carry out any acts that will lessen his intervention during Shemittah, including acts which are permitted because they sustain (and do not enhance) growth. Acts permitted to sustain growth are also permitted for the sake of the fruits, not just to keep the tree alive.

2. Therefore, one may remove leaves from a tree if this will prevent the fruit from rotting.

3. One may cut branches from a tree to use as s'chach (special roof covering for a sukkah), since pruning that is not done to enhance growth, and is carried out in an amateur (and not professional) fashion, does not fall under the prohibition of pruning. The definition of an unprofessional act is when it is clear that he is not doing so to prune the tree, for example he cuts branches only from one side of the tree.

4. If a gardener is cutting down branches before Sukkot and he does not intend to prune and is doing an 'amateur' job, for example he cuts from one side only, you may ask him to cut s'chach for your sukkah. But if a gardener is cutting branches before Sukkot and intends to prune, you are not allowed to ask him to cut branches for your s'chach, for he would be considered like your messenger and you are therefore causing him to commit a forbidden act. If the trees had been sold to a non-Jew, this would be permitted.

5. If trees are growing at the side of a courtyard or public area and the branches make it difficult to walk past, one may cut the branches since pruning is only forbidden to enhance growth of the tree or fruit. Similarly, if one needs the branches to light a fire or some similar need, he may cut them. He should be careful to do so in a way that does not bring benefit to the tree.

## Treasures

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



### We Raise our Eyes to the Mountains (Forefathers)

Chazal say (Bereishit Raba 68:2), "Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachman said: 'A song to the ascents. I raise my eyes to the mountains (הַרִימִים)' (Te-hillim 121:1); [it can also be read] I raise my eyes to the forefathers (הוֹרִים), to my masters and mentors; 'from where will come my help?' When Eliezer went to bring Rivka, it says (Bereishit 24:10), 'Then the servant took ten camels...' But I (Ya'akov) do not have even one nose ring or bracelet.

"Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: he (Yitzchak) sent (gifts) with Ya'akov but Esav came and took them from him. Ya'akov then said: 'Will I lose hope in the Creator? Instead [he said], 'My help is from Hashem, Maker of heaven and earth. He will not allow your foot to falter; your Guardian will not slumber. Behold, He neither slumbers nor sleeps – the Guardian of Israel.'"

Chazal explain that Esav sent his son Eliphaz to pursue Ya'akov and kill him. But when they met up, Ya'akov persuaded Eliphaz to take all his money rather than kill him, because a poor person is considered as dead (Nedarim 64a). In this way he could leave him alive but still fulfil his father's command. This is what Eliphaz did and Ya'akov's life was saved.

But when Ya'akov arrived in Charan penniless, he wondered for a moment and said, "From where will come my help?" In other words, "Eliezer, servant of Avraham, came here loaded with everything good, but just barely managed to get permission for Rivka, my mother, to come back with him. It seems that the people here are deceitful and covet money. So how will I, a destitute man, be able to accomplish my wish and take a wife for myself from this place, especially since I am not young."

However, he immediately strengthened his faith in Hashem and declared he would not lose hope in the Creator. "I raise my eyes to the mountains, to my forefathers; in the merit of my holy forefathers. And above all, my help is from Hashem, Maker of heaven and earth. Just as Hashem created the world 'something from nothing', so certainly He can deliver me from my hardship and send salvation."

Ya'akov left this outlook as a legacy to his children and all future descendants. Even when a Jew is experiencing great hardship, and momentarily his eyes cloud over (may we be spared) and he does not see any hope for salvation, even then he must raise his eyes in prayer to Hashem and plead incessantly to the Creator, for nothing is too hard for Him and in any situation He can deliver us from our suffering.

Furthermore, every Jew must remember to raise his eyes to הַרִימִים, the mountains, which can also be read as הוֹרִים, our holy forefathers, who under the most difficult circumstances, no matter what the challenge, never despaired but continued to pray to the Creator. Even in times when they could not see the light, they prayed to Hashem and trusted in His salvation. Indeed they saw the fulfillment of "my help is from Hashem, Maker of heaven and earth." And so it is for every single Jew.



## May the Memory of a Tzaddik be for a Blessing

### Hagoan Rabbi Ya'akov Moshe Charlap

Hagoan Rabbi Ya'akov Charlap zt"l, who passed away on 6 Kislev 5712, was born in the holy city of Yerushalayim on Shabbat Kodesh, 29 Shevat 5642, to his father the gaon and tzaddik Rabbi Zevulun Charlap zt"l. He attended the Eitz Chaim talmud Torah and yeshiva. The Gaon Rabbi Shmuel Salant zt"l, Rav of Yerushalayim, imparted much of his Torah wisdom to Rabbi Ya'akov, and showed him particular affection.

In 5674 Rabbi Ya'akov Moshe Charlap zt"l participated in the famous inspirational campaign which made waves all over Eretz Yisrael. It was headed by Harav Avraham Yitzchak Kook (who Rav Charlap was always close to until his last moments), and the gaon Rabbi Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld zt"l.

Five years later, in 5679, Rabbi Ya'akov Charlap approached Baron Rothschild and mobilized all his strength and efforts to cancel the proposal to draft all the yeshiva students to the Hebrew Battalion. Everyone present was convinced that indeed the draft law should not be imposed on those who carry the flag of Torah. His voice thundered throughout the hall, "Dare not touch my anointed ones."

### A Slice of Fresh Shabbat Cake

In 5671 he was appointed as Rav of the Sha'arei Chessed neighborhood in Yerushalayim, which since its inception has always been a neighborhood filled with Torah and yirat shamayim. The strong winds that swept away so many young people at that time, removing them from the world of Torah, did not pass over this neighborhood. Unfortunately, the son of

one of the G-d fearing Jews of the community discarded his traditional garb, cut off his peyot, and slowly distanced himself from religion. Among other occupations, he also volunteered in the underground organization 'Haganah', eventually becoming a senior commander.

One Shabbat, the whole Sha'arei Chessed neighborhood was in shock: this young man was seen driving his car through the streets, for his own enjoyment, in the middle of the holy Shabbat day. This was a red line, crossed for the first time in this neighborhood. His father pleaded with him to at least not travel inside the neighborhood, but his request fell on deaf ears. In his distress, the father turned to the neighborhood Rav for advice and guidance.

Harav Charlap told him to tell his son the Rav wishes to speak to him. The father duly related this message to his son and the entire week begged him to arrange a meeting with the Rav.

Just before Shabbat, the father once again turned to his son with tears in his eyes: "If not for your sake, at least do it for mine!" With extreme reluctance, the son announced he would go.

He arrived at the Rav's house close to Shabbat and was told that the Rav had not yet returned from the mikveh. To his utter surprise, the Rabbanit greeted him warmly and told him to come inside and wait for the Rav. She handed him a slice from the fresh Shabbat cake; and while sipping a cup of sweet tea, the young man marveled at the warm welcome. He guessed that the Rabbanit did not know who he was, and certainly had not heard of his deeds. Soon enough the Rav would arrive and then surely the sermons will begin, rebuking him for being an infidel and heretic.

Several minutes passed and Rav Ya'akov Moshe Charlap returned from the mikveh. His face was shining with the glow of the approaching Shabbat and he was absorbed in contemplations of cleaving to Hashem. When he saw who was waiting for him, he immediately ran over to him and shook his hand warmly. The young man braced himself for shouts and curses, but instead felt waves of love and affection. Pure love for another Jew overflowed from the Rav's heart and entered the heart of the man standing before him. The Rav

apologized for troubling him to come to his home. "Although politeness would dictate that since I'm the one who asked to meet I should come to your house, but due to my old age it is hard for me to get around. Please, forgive me for this!"

I'll Get in The Car with You

After this affectionate welcome the Rav said:

"You should know, I heard special things about you. I heard you are a senior commander in the Haganah and deal with rescuing and protecting Jews. First I want to bless you for your efforts and express our appreciation. If only my share in the World to Come will be among those who merit protecting Am Yisrael, physically and with self-sacrifice. There is no way to describe the greatness of one who engages in this mitzvah. The tremendous virtue of one who engages in this mitzvah cannot be estimated.

"But I want to tell you that there are some people in our neighborhood who are not aware of your worthy efforts. These people do not know that you are involved in an important mitzvah which even overrides Shabbat.

"I was told that last week you drove your car on Shabbat, and probably, if a Jew rides on Shabbat, it must be for a life and death matter. In this case one is permitted to drive on Shabbat and it is even considered a mitzvah. But there are some who are not aware of your important work and may harm your efforts. I am afraid that out of their ignorance your actions will cause a big uproar in the neighborhood. You might have to urgently travel to protect a Jew's life, while they may hold you back from observing this important mitzvah. That is why I troubled you to come to my home. It is my sincere wish that if tomorrow you need to travel on Shabbat, please knock on my door and let me know. I will get into the car with you and travel with you through the neighborhood. In this way it will be clear to all that you are permitted to travel on Shabbat, and they will not harm you G-d forbid..."

From then on this young man never again drove his car on Shabbat in the neighborhood! This incident is an example of Rabbi Ya'akov Moshe Charlap's zt"l remarkable wisdom.