

# PACHAD DAVID

Nasso



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“All the days of his abstinence, anything made from wine grapes, even the pips or skin, he shall not eat” (*Bamidbar* 6:4).

Why in fact is the *nazir* forbidden to drink wine or eat any form of grapes? What is the connection between a *nazir* and the prohibition of drinking wine?

We can explain according to an idea brought in the *Yabi'a Omer* pamphlet, in the name of Maran the Rishon LeTzion, Hagaon Rabbi Ovadia Yosef zy"a, about Shimshon Hagibor. The verse tells us (*Shoftim* 14:5-6), “And behold – a young lion was roaring toward him! The spirit of Hashem came over him and he tore it apart as one tears apart a kid, though he had nothing in his hand. He did not tell his father and mother what he had done.”

The Telzer Rav asked the Vilna Gaon to explain the following difficulty: since the verse begins by saying Shimshon went down to Timnat with his father and mother, when he met up with the lion and tore him apart, surely his parents were standing with him and saw the incident. So why does the next verse say he did not tell his father and mother what he had done? Why did he have to tell them if they were standing right there and witnessed the act?

The Vilna Gaon replied: “The verse says ‘And behold – a young lion was roaring toward him!’ and not ‘towards them.’ This means he was the only one who saw the young lion, while his parents did not.”

It could be that since his parents were elderly they could not walk as fast as Shimshon, so they were still some distance away when the young lion approached him. When his parents met up with him, he did not mention how he had torn the lion apart with his bare hands, because he did not wish to boast about the miracle. This illustrates the level of

## maskil Le'David

### The Severity of Pride and the Great Virtue of Humility



Shimshon's humility. Despite being mighty, he was also humble.

This helps us reconcile the question about the connection between a *nazir* and the prohibition of eating grapes and drinking wine. Shimshon Hagibor was a *nazir* for the sake of Hashem all his life, and due to

this, even before he was born the angel forbade his mother to eat or drink anything made from wine grapes. As is well-known, the holiness of a *nazir* is so great, his holiness resembles that of a Kohen Gadol (who is forbidden to defile himself for the dead).

We are also all familiar with the verse (*Tehillim* 104:15), “Wine gladdens man's heart.” So we can say that if the *nazir* would be permitted to drink wine or eats grapes, his heart could be inundated with great joy for being privileged to be holy and of high status, and that joy may lead to pride, causing him to completely lose all his holy virtues. This feeling of pride, a most repulsive attribute and great sin, is the reason one who vows to become a *nazir* must abstain from anything made from grapes. The Torah wishes to accustom him to conduct himself with humility, and this is what will allow him to benefit from the holiness of his *nazirut*.

The sin of pride is most abominable before Hashem, and all the more so if a *nazir* behaves with pride, since his entire goal is to become as sanctified and purified as a Kohen Gadol. In order to uproot pride, repentance is not enough. It must be extricated from its root, which can only be done by shaving one's hair, the root of the sin of pride. This illustrates the extent to which pride, in a *nazir*, is repulsive, and the degree of his obligation to behave with humility, thereby benefitting from his holiness.

5 Sivan 5782  
4 June 2022

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## Hilula

- 5 Sivan – Rabbi Avraham Amarlio, author of *Brit Avraham*
- 5 Sivan – Rabbi Chaim Yaakov Sufrin, Admor of Kamran
- 6 Sivan – Rabbi Avraham Eziel, a Beit El chassid
- 6 Sivan – Rabbi Avraham Mordechai Alter of Gur, the Imrei Emet
- 7 Sivan – Rabbi Yisrael, the Ba'al Shem Tov
- 7 Sivan – Rabbi Chaim Yaakov Abulafia
- 8 Sivan – Rabbi Moshe Chaim of Bavel, grandfather of the Ben Ish Chai
- 8 Sivan – Rabbi Moshe Nechemya Kahanov, Rosh Yeshiva Etz Chaim
- 9 Sivan – Rabbi Aharon Eziel, author of *Kapei Aharon*
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- 10 Sivan – Rabbi Ezra Harari-Rafal
- 10 Sivan – Rabbi Elazar Rekach, Av Beit Din Amsterdam
- 11 Sivan – Rabbi Yitzchak Ya'akov Weiss, Av Beit Din Yerushalayim
- 11 Sivan – Rabbi Yehuda Horowitz





## WORDS OF THE SAGES

### The Value of a Meeting with the President

In the division of labor among the members of the tribe of Levi, described in Parshat Bamidbar and this week's Parshah, the Torah mentions the role of the Levites in general (*Bamidbar* 1:53): "The Levites shall safeguard the watch of the Tabernacle of the Testimony." Rabbeinu the Abir Yaakov zy" a, in his sefer *Petuchei Chotem*, explains that here lies an allusion to the idea of being among the first ten to arrive in the *beit kneset*. The words את משמרת, the watch, are an acronym for משימים שיהיו מעשרה ראשונים תחילה. The most fitting way to pray is to rise early and be one of the first ten to arrive in the *beit kneset*.

Rabbi Yitzchak Zilberstein shlit" a recounted that he once went to visit Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt" l to discuss a certain halachic query. In the middle of the conversation, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman looked at his watch and then told his guest: "It is time to go and pray!"

A family member who overheard the conversation was surprised because he knew that prayers in the Beit Kneset HaGra begin in another fifteen minutes, while to get to the *beit kneset* on Rechov Bar Zakkai from Rabbi Shlomo Zalman's home on Rechov Porush, takes no more than two minutes. So why did Rabbi Shlomo Zalman stop the discussion and say it was time to leave?

Rabbi Shlomo Zalman, who noticed his astonishment, explained in his beautiful way:

"If we were invited to a meeting with the President of the United States, we would certainly not leave in the last minute. We would take all the necessary precautions so as to arrive on time, and do everything possible to ensure that no mishap or hindrance delay us. Is it not obvious that we would set out much earlier than a quarter of an hour before the appointment?! All the more so when we have a meeting with the King of kings, the Holy One, Blessed be He, a meeting in which we have the merit of speaking to Him and presenting our prayers and requests. Should we not leave extra early?"

It is worth taking note of the words of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levy (*Berachot* 47b): "A person should always rise early to go to the *beit kneset* so he will merit being among the first ten. Even if another hundred come after him, he receives reward equivalent to them all." One who rises early and opens the *beit kneset* receives reward equal to all those who arrive after him. If a hundred people come, he receives the reward of a hundred; if a thousand people come, he receives the reward of a thousand!

Continuing the above parable, what a shame it is for those who have been granted a meeting with the President at the White House, the prearranged time has arrived and the President is waiting for them, but they do not enter! It is as if they are standing right at the doorstep of a store, the staff handing out vouchers worth hundreds and thousands of shekels, and all they have to do is stretch out their hands and take. But they remain oblivious!

The Pele Yo'etz would lament regarding these people: "One who comes early and is among the first ten receives reward equivalent to all those who later join the minyan. The holy Zohar heaps tremendous praise on one who is the first to arrive, saying he attains the level of a tzaddik and it is also a powerful rectification for any blemish in the holy covenant. Furthermore, he is considered as Hashem's beloved one. Who can be privy to these words and not try with all his strength to be the first to arrive or at least among the first ten, to give pleasure to the Creator Who rewards those who do His will! Many in fact do arrive early and could be among the first ten, but they choose to remain outside in the courtyard, deep in conversation, and 'leave their possessions to others.' They do not care or pay attention to the fact that maybe someone else will precede them, because they are not aware of the importance of this mitzvah."



## WALKING IN THEIR WAYS

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

### To Life!

An elderly father of a disciple of mine was beset by terrible pains throughout his body. His devoted son immediately took him to the doctor, and after extensive testing, the father was diagnosed with cancer and had to undergo immediate surgery.

The day before surgery the father and son came to me and asked for a blessing for complete recovery, in the merit of my holy ancestors zy" a.

I took a cup of water and instructed the stricken father to drink from it. This would provide a tangible object upon which my blessing could take effect. The old man awkwardly informed me that he had been ordered to fast as part of pre-op preparations, and therefore could not drink the proffered cup of water.

I saw such firm faith on the faces of father and son that I felt in my heart a strong sense of imminent salvation from the complex surgery. I was sure my prayers for this man, in the merit of my ancestors, would bring about deliverance. I asked him to drink the water in spite of the doctors' instructions. I even added, "You are completely healthy. Don't worry about drinking the water."

The next day, before the planned surgery, the doctors wanted to run a series of tests in order to ascertain the exact size and location of the growth. In nothing less than an open miracle, the results showed that the man was completely healthy!

The professor was taken aback by the results and, certain they belonged to a different patient, asked for a repeat. But to his amazement, the results came back exactly the same as before!

I know that it was not my meager powers that brought about this miracle. It was the merit of my ancestors, tzaddikim of stature, who prayed before the Creator for this elderly Jew and pleaded for mercy on his behalf.



## FROM THE TREASURY

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

### Elevation in Avodat Hashem

The holy Zohar states that Parshat Nasso has 176 verses, more than any other Parshah in the Torah. It is worth considering why this Parshah is the longest.

There is an opinion that explains since this Parshah always falls close to Shavuot when we receive the Torah, therein lies a message that although accepting the Torah is certainly praiseworthy, but following this we must strengthen ourselves and continue studying Torah.

The practical message is that if one devotes oneself to the Torah, one should choose the long way rather than the short way. When we say the long way, the intention is to study as long as one can and not cut this time short or constantly look at the clock to see when the study session will end. Nasso, being the longest Parshah in the Torah, teaches us this lesson.

The word Nasso is derived from the term *hitnassut*, elevation, upliftment. Indeed the purpose of the Torah is to teach us how to live exalted lives. When Hitler *ym"sh* decided to exterminate the Jews, he sent a famous letter (also circulated among the general population) to his generals, where he wrote about his reason for annihilating the Jewish people:

"... since the Jewish people possess morality. And if the Jews have morals, then they have a different purpose in the world, therefore they are a hindrance to us and this is why they must be destroyed." Baruch Hashem his mission was not successful because we retained our morality. We have always been here and will always remain here, despite Hitler's opposition, and to the chagrin of all our enemies throughout the generations.

Hashem wants us to study Torah and observe the mitzvot so we can elevate ourselves and rise to higher levels. But we have to keep in mind something important: when a Jew wearing a *kippah* spits or shouts in the street and people observe this behavior, their first reaction is - "Look at this Jew!" This is in contrast to other nations, where if they behave in the same fashion, no one pays any attention or comments.

## A DAY OF DELIGHT

### Honoring Shabbat



The Gaon Rabbi Yehonatan Eibshitz zt"l writes: "It is impossible for man to be saved from desecrating the Shabbat if he has not studied all its laws well. And whoever has not studied the laws of Shabbat two or three times will not be able to escape its desecration. It is praiseworthy to continually study the laws of Shabbat, and one should clarify all the laws with a rabbi until he is familiar with them all. The reward for this is great and protects against calamity."

We therefore dedicate this column to a mutual study of the laws of Shabbat. Each week we will try to delve into both the spirit of Shabbat and the activities forbidden on this holy day. We pray to merit the fulfillment of the words of the Navi (*Yeshaya* 58:13-14): "If you restrain your foot because it is the Shabbat; refrain from accomplishing your own needs on My holy day; if you proclaim the Shabbat 'a delight,' and the holy [day] of Hashem 'honored,' and you honor it by not engaging in your own affairs, from seeking your own needs or discussing the forbidden - then you will delight in Hashem, and I will mount you astride the heights of the world; I will provide you the heritage of your forefather Yaakov, for the mouth of Hashem has spoken."

The Gemara tells us (*Shabbat* 118a): "Rabbi Yosi said: 'Anyone who delights in the Shabbat is given an inheritance without borders.' Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: 'One is saved from the enslavement of the exiles.' Rav said: 'He is granted his heart's desires,' as it says (*Tehillim* 37:4), 'And delight in Hashem, and He will grant you the desires of your heart.'"

1. One should try to make Shabbat pleasurable with quality, tasty foods and drink. One should be generous with meat, wine, and delicacies as much as one can. It is good to eat fish at all three meals, but if one does not like fish it is not necessary to do so. The more one spends on Shabbat expenses and in preparing fine dishes, the more praiseworthy. One should not be concerned about the money because Shabbat expenses are returned.
2. It is appropriate to give children treats in honor of Shabbat, since they do not gain much pleasure from meat and wine. Adults should also eat treats to complete the one hundred blessings a person must recite every day.

Rabbi Eliezer of Meitz (*Hayere'im*, *siman* 412) writes: "Just as there is a mitzvah of pleasure concerning eating and drinking, so it is a mitzvah to delight in other physical pleasures. Therefore, one should not cause discomfort to one's body by walking barefoot, particularly on cold winter days. Similarly, one should not read depressing or sad books and pamphlets, or engage in other similar activities."



## Rabbi Yisrael, the Ba'al Shem Tov

Rabbi Yisrael, known as the "holy Ba'al Shem Tov," was the founder of the chassidic movement. He was born on the eighteenth of Elul, 5458, to his father Rabbi Eliezer and mother, Sarah, but just a few years after his birth he was orphaned of his parents. His father left him a will: "I see that you will illuminate my light. Although I will not have the privilege of raising you, but, my beloved son, always remember your entire life that Hashem is with you. Therefore do not fear any being; fear Hashem alone."

In 5505 the Ba'al Shem Tov settled in the town of Medzhybizh where he disseminated the chassidic outlook which eventually spread throughout the world. Tzaddikim, kabbalists, and great Torah scholars all sought Torah from him, and he taught them his new path, which developed deep roots in Jewish life to this day. In his teachings, which include the

depth of the Torah's inner wisdom, he gave meaning and importance to the life of a simple Jew who possesses love and fear of Hashem, no less than to a wise Torah scholar; they could each achieve closeness to Hashem.

He had a burning desire to immigrate to Eretz Yisrael. One of the reasons for his wish was to meet the holy Or Hachaim. After much effort and overcoming many obstacles to the point of true danger to his life, the Baal Shem Tov reached only as far as Istanbul, Turkey, where he celebrated Pesach and was then forced to retrace his steps.

On Pesach 5520 the holy Ba'al Shem Tov fell ill, and on Shavuot night when his disciples gathered at his bedside, the Ba'al Shem Tov recited Torah thoughts and then said: "I will soon go to be with Hashem."

The Ba'al Shem Tov gave his disciples a sign: "When I pass away the two clocks in my house will stop working." Indeed a few minutes later the large clock stopped, but his disciples turned it around so he wouldn't notice. But the Ba'al Shem Tov was aware of this and said:

"I know the large clock has already stopped, but I am not concerned because I know clearly that I will leave this door and immediately enter another door."

On the first day of Shavuot the Ba'al Shem Tov passed away in the presence of his disciples. At that moment they saw that the small clock also stopped ticking. His disciple Rabbi Leib related that the sight of the Ba'al Shem Tov's soul departing was like "a flame with a sky-blue color."

The Ba'al Shem Tov himself described his central interest: "I came to This World to show that man should take care to prioritize these three things; love of Hashem, love of the Jewish people, and love of Torah, and there is no need to practice abstentions."

He was renowned for the miracles he wrought:

One winter the Ba'al Shem Tov went to a mikveh together with Rabbi Avraham Mordechai of Pintshov. The Ba'al Shem Tov stood in the mikveh until the candle in the room began dripping and flickering out. Rabbi Avraham remarked that it would soon grow dark. The Ba'al Shem Tov replied, "So take a block of ice from the roof and light it. Whoever told the oil to burn will tell the ice to burn." Indeed the ice was a source of illumination until he went home two hours later. When he arrived home some water remained in his hand.

Once he went out of town with his disciples and when it came time for Mincha he told his disciples: "There is no water to wash our hands before we begin praying." He took his stick, struck the ground, and a fountain of water sprang up which is in existence still today next to Medzhybizh. The gentiles refer to it as the Ba'al Shem Tov's fountain and it is known for its healing waters.

His burial place also possesses supreme holiness. Rabbi Nachman of Breslav zy"va visited this gravesite where he would pray lengthy prayers. He said that the gravesite of his ancestor has the same sanctity as Eretz Yisrael.

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