

PACHAD DAVID

Balak



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Under the auspices of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu, the Admor 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"l

“Yisrael settled in Shittim and the people began to commit harlotry with the daughters of Moav. They invited the people to feasts of their gods... Yisrael became attached to Baal-peor, and the wrath of Hashem flared up against Yisrael” (*Bamidbar* 25:1-3).

How did it happen that Bnei Yisrael fell so low as to sin with the daughters of Moav and Baal-peor, the most obscene *avodah zara*? After all, they had already accepted the Torah, and that generation was called the *Dor De'ah* – the generation of true Knowledge of Hashem. How did these tzaddikim come to commit such a sin?

Every form of occupation and every material engagement in This World is called ‘work’, meaning labor. For example, man labors for his livelihood. If so, *l’havdil*, every action that a person takes on this earth for the sake of Hashem, whether it is Torah study, the observance of mitzvot, acts of charity and kindness, or engaging in various spiritual pursuits, all are included in the term ‘work’.

Prayer too is called ‘work’ as Chazal say (*Ta’anit* 2a) on the verse (*Devarim* 10:13), “And to serve Him, with all your heart.” “Which service is in the heart? This refers to prayer.” That is to say, every spiritual act for the sake of Hashem is called work.

From this we learn that just as man uses his body in a physical manner to carry out physical and material acts, so too must he use his body for the sake of avodat Hashem, in a spiritual manner.

Upon contemplation, we will see that indeed the physical and material efforts of the human body are parallel and similar to man’s spiritual avodat Hashem. For indeed, the physical human body operates day and night without cessation. The heart beats non-stop, day and night. The blood too flows continually, and the brain has to work incessantly day and night,

maskil Le'David Non-stop Avodat Hashem



for if any of them would stop functioning for even a moment, the results would be most difficult and bitter.

Every organ and tendon in the human body knows its exact function and for what purpose it was created and exists, and each works in cooperation with all the other systems. In this way the human body is able to function properly.

If G-d forbid there is any problem

in the body, even something small, bodily functions may collapse one after the other, until the person *r”l* actually dies.

After receiving the Torah at Har Sinai Bnei Yisrael settled down to rest in Shittim, and were lax about their toil in Torah and avodat Hashem, not dedicating their bodies to serving Him. Therefore, even though they had already received the Torah and were great tzaddikim, and had experienced victories in their battles against Sichon and Og, nothing helped them overcome sin because they were at rest. This was the cause and beginning of their foolishness; Shittim from the term *shtut*, nonsense.

It is well known that Torah protects and saves from all evil, but if there is no Torah protecting and saving from the Yetzer Hara, then the person immediately falls into its hands. Balak and Bilam were like Amalek to Am Yisrael, personifying the Yetzer Hara. Due to their laxity in Torah, Balak and Bilam caused Bnei Yisrael to sin with the daughters of Moav. Then Pinchas immediately arose, took a spear in his hand, and stood up to stop the plague. He zealously avenged Hashem’s vengeance, and proved to everyone that in avodat Hashem there can be no rest, no compromise, and no concept of triviality and laxity. One must be zealous for Hashem. As a result, Pinchas merited immediate reward; Hashem said that according to justice, he shall receive reward already in This World with the eternal covenant of Kohanim, a reward for all generations.

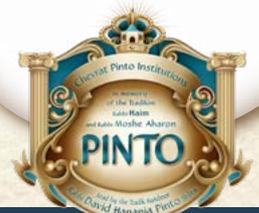
10 Tammuz 5782
9 July 2022

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Hilula

- 10 Tammuz – Rabbi Yisrael Yaakov Algasi, author of *Ara D'Rabbanan*
- 10 Tammuz – Rabbi Meir Melul
- 11 Tammuz – Rabbi Tzvi Hirsch of Ziditchov, author of *Ateret Tzvi*
- 11 Tammuz – Rabbi Attia Churi, sage from Djerba
- 12 Tammuz – Rabbeinu Ya'akov, the Ba'al HaTurim
- 12 Tammuz – Rabbi Aharon Ben Chaim
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- 14 Tammuz – Rabbi Mordechai Attia, sage from Syria
- 14 Tammuz – Rabbi Bechor Refaell HaLevi
- 15 Tammuz – Rabbi Chaim Ben Atar zya"l, the holy Or HaChaim
- 15 Tammuz – Rabbi Shlomo Mashiach
- 16 Tammuz – Rabbi Yaakov Shmaryahu Deitsch, Av Beit Din Chatam Sofer
- 16 Tammuz – Rabbi Shimon Moshe Diskin, author of *Mas'at Hamelech*





WORDS OF THE SAGES

A Heavenly Revelation Concerning Covid

A *beit kneset* is the house of Hashem and a place where we connect to Him. It is the glorious edifice to which all mouths turn; the place where Hashem hears the prayer of every single Jew. This holy place has been entrusted to us so we can connect to Hashem and embrace Him. Understanding this proves how illogical and unacceptable it is to engage in trivial matters within the *beit kneset*, particularly during prayer – the most sacred time in the *beit kneset*.

The prohibition of speaking during prayer is not only a good custom, it is an explicit halacha. Not only may one not speak in the middle of praying, but everyone who is in the *beit kneset* while the congregation is praying is not allowed to speak. Just as it is forbidden to move *muktzah* on Shabbat, so it is absolutely forbidden to speak while praying!

In this week's Parshah, the wicked Bilam utters the words, "How goodly are your tents, O Yaakov." He praises the *batei kneset* we merited. Chazal revealed that from the blessings of that wicked one we can learn how he really wanted to curse, G-d forbid. The wicked Bilam was jealous of the source of our power, our *batei kneset*, and with his evil eye wanted us to lose this precious asset. However, Hashem transformed the curse into a blessing.

Let us grasp this blessing with both hands and embrace the sanctity of the *beit kneset* and the prohibition of conversing during prayer. True, sometimes it's not easy; we just want to say one word, or there is really interesting news! But how worthwhile it is to be careful and stay away from any form of speech during the prayers, because at that moment the Creator listens and hears all prayers directed to Him, and showers us with abundance of salvation and mercy!

In the Dirshu magazine, Rabbi Asher Kobleski shlita^a published an outstanding incident that took place last Nissan, stirring up New York and its environs. Heavenly exposure from the World of Truth about what was happening to us at that time can clearly be seen. This is the story:

Some time ago, a distinguished Jew from New York, Rabbi Shalom Kahalani zt"l, passed away. Although he lived a long life and passed away at age ninety, he was among the hundreds who died as a result of the coronavirus. Several nights after his passing, he appeared to his son, Rabbi Yeshayahu Kahalani...

The son was terrified and broke out in a cold sweat. Suddenly, in the middle of the night, his father who passed away appeared to him in a dream! His face was shining, there was a constant smile on his face, as he approached his son and said:

"Know, my dear son, that I was given permission from Heaven to descend to This World and reveal the cause of the terrible pandemic that is raging, so you may broadcast it all over the world.

"The reason for this terrible plague is disrespect for the dignity of the *beit kneset*. The *beit kneset* is a sacred place for prayer, yet people tend to disregard this and stumble with speaking of mundane matters during prayer! The reason why Heaven allowed me to reveal this to you is because all my life I was particularly careful not to speak about mundane matters in the *beit kneset*!" The son was astounded with this Heavenly revelation, but the father was not yet finished:

"I will give you a sign that my words are correct: the scientific name of the virus is Covid19. Covid (כוביד) alludes to the lack of respect (כבוד), while the number nineteen is a reference to a verse in the nineteenth chapter of Vayikra where it says, "And My Sanctuary shall you revere." This verse mentioned in Parshat Behar which we were forced to read last year outside the locked *batei kneset*, as an indication for the reason behind the outbreak of the virus!"



WALKING IN THEIR WAYS

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

Double Loss

A man came to me, describing his *shalom bayit* (marital harmony) issues. His wife constantly complained that he spent too much time learning Torah and doing mitzvot. It was at the expense of earning a living, she contended. Since he wished to grow in Torah and mitzvot and did not wish to decrease his spiritual pursuits, he could not find any way of coping with his wife's grievances.

After hearing his anguished tale, I decided to talk with his wife. I told her that no one loses out by learning Torah and observing mitzvot. On the contrary, it is precisely these acts which bring down Heavenly abundance upon a person and his family. But she was not convinced. She insisted that her husband apply more of his time to supporting his family.

Since marital harmony is one of the highest values, and since this woman perceived her husband as lazy for devoting himself to Torah study instead of earning a living, I was afraid for their marriage. I did not want a *chillul Hashem* to result, G-d forbid. So I instructed the man to obey his wife and invest more time making money.

A year passed and this man returned to me with agony and anguish written on his face. "Why did the Rav tell me to devote more time to earning a living?" he complained. "I have just declared bankruptcy. Not only did I not gain, even what I used to have I lost!"

I explained, "The advice I gave you a year ago was because I was afraid you would lose your wife as well as your business. I wanted you to at least maintain your marriage by giving in to your wife's demands."

"What do you think my marriage looks like now?" he challenged, in deep pain. "Exactly as the Rav feared! I lost my money as well as my marriage. The loss of my earnings has led to a complete lack of marital harmony."

I was very saddened to hear these words. I advised him to return to his former schedule, spending the majority of his day in Torah study and mitzvah observance. I blessed him in the merit of my holy ancestors, and his Torah study, that Hashem would assist him in all his endeavors.

When a person does not merit seeing the good reserved for those who study Torah, he must remember that his reward is reserved for him in the World to Come. There, one receives immeasurable salvation and blessing. This thought should empower every person to increase his Torah study.



FROM THE TREASURY

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

Torah Saves and Protects

“He perceived no iniquity in Yaakov, and saw no perversity in Yisrael. Hashem his G-d is with him, and the friendship of the King is in him” (Bamidbar 23:21).

When Balak came to hear how Bilam cursed Bnei Yisrael, Bilam declaimed his parable and said the above verse. “The friendship of the King is in him” means that when Bnei Yisrael study Torah and reach the level of kings, and we know “Who are the kings? The sages” (Gittin 62b), then they merit seeing the fulfillment of the beginning of the verse, “He perceived no iniquity in Yaakov, and saw no perversity in Yisrael.” Meaning, no bad will happen to them even if the greatest prophet of the nations will try to curse them.

We can add that the word “תרועה, friendship” can be rearranged to spell ‘תורה ע’, referring to the holy Torah which can be explained in seventy (ע) ways. This means that Bnei Yisrael merit declaring Hashem their King and being called sons of a King when they are engaged in the seventy facets of Torah. Then “Hashem his G-d is with him” – they merit being saved from mishaps. Similarly the total numerical value of the first letters of each of the words “ותרועת מלך בו”, and the friendship of the King is in him,” is forty-eight, corresponding to the forty-eight attributes with which Torah is acquired (*Avot* 6:6), while the sum of the final letters of “מלך בו, the King is in him,” is twenty-six, corresponding to Hashem’s Name (*yud, heh, vav, heh*).

Bilam came to inflict harm but in effect did the opposite, for he gave us wonderful advice on how to merit Hashem’s protection. But despite the truth coming out of his mouth, he himself remained wicked because he did not fulfill what he preached. Also because he possessed many negative and problematic character traits, including the attribute of pride which is the root of all bad qualities.

One of my students, Mr. Kadosh from Ra’anana, told me that his partner was facing a severe trial in which he could possibly lose a huge fortune. The partner came to me to ask for a blessing, but I made a condition with him that I will bless him if he fixes regular times for Torah study, so the blessing will be able to have an effect. He tried to get out of it by claiming he did not have spare time for Torah study, but I did not let up. Eventually he agreed to schedule times for Torah despite his many concerns. Indeed the merit of Torah stood by him and he was exonerated!

This person only decided to set times for Torah study and immediately merited the fulfillment of Chazal’s words (*Avot* 3: 5), “If someone takes upon himself the yoke of Torah – the yoke of the government and the yoke of worldly responsibilities are removed from him.” We do find though that there are many people who do not only fix times for Torah but devote themselves completely to Torah study yet are still surrounded with problems and challenges to no end. Concerning this we can only say “The hidden are for Hashem, our G-d” (*Devarim* 29:28). Since we have no understanding of hidden matters, we may not try to explain that which is beyond our comprehension.

A DAY OF DELIGHT



Preparations for Shabbat

1. It is correct for every Jewish person, after bathing and dressing in Shabbat clothes, to sit serenely and recite with a pleasant melody “*Shna'im mikra v'echad Targum*” (twice the Torah verses of that week’s Parshah and once the translation of Targum Unkelos). His entire being will be filled with joy and pleasure, and he will long for the arrival of Shabbat. Rabbi Elazar Menachem Shach zt”l expressed it in this way: I have no moment of *nachat* and joy, as I have when I sit on Erev Shabbat dressed in Shabbat clothes, leisurely reading the Torah portion of the week, *Shna'im mikra v'echad Targum*, while waiting for the arrival of the Shabbat Queen.

2. From the time of *Mincha ketana* (two and half hours before nightfall, according to *sha'ot zemanot*) one should not perform *melechet keva* (specific types of work) not necessary for Shabbat. One who does not refrain from doing so will not see blessing from his work. Even if it appears that he is gaining now, he will lose out elsewhere. However, he is permitted to do *melechet arai*, such as sewing a button, writing a letter to his friend, selling goods, washing clothes in a machine, until close to Shabbat (recommended to ask a Rabbi about the status of an intended job). Similarly, any work permitted on Chol Hamo'ed may be done on Erev Shabbat.

Work necessary for Shabbat may be done all day, even by a professional. It is therefore permissible to repair a short circuit or hotplate at any time on Friday. Similarly, owners of grocery and beverage stores that sell Shabbat provision may sell throughout the day, but should leave sufficient time to return home and calmly prepare for Shabbat.

3. A scribe who writes Torah scrolls, tefillin, and mezuzot is **not** allowed to write after *Mincha ketana*, unless he requires the money to purchase provisions for Shabbat. One may proofread that week’s Torah portion in the Sefer Torah.

4. It is permissible and even a mitzvah to create novel Torah ideas and commit them to writing throughout the day, whether by hand or on a computer. But a typist, even if typing words of Torah, may not do so after *Mincha ketana*.

5. A travel agent may not sell tickets for a flight scheduled for Shabbat. Even if the plane leaves on a Thursday or Friday and lands before Shabbat, but the passengers will not manage to get home before Shabbat, he must not sell such tickets because it would be considered as assisting those who transgress. However, if there is a reasonable chance they would be able to arrive home by car before Shabbat, it is permissible to sell these tickets.

6. A coin machine which automatically supplies food or drink may be left to operate on Shabbat in a gentile neighborhood. It is preferable for the owner not to consider the money as his until after Shabbat.

7. On Erev Shabbat there is no obligation to disconnect an electronic secretary on a phone or fax machine.



Rabbi Chaim ben Atar zy" a

Rabbi Chaim ben Atar zy" a, author of the *Ohr Hachaim*, was born in 5456 in the city of Sali, Morocco, to his father Harav Moshe, son of the holy gaon Harav Chaim, descendant of a noble family who lived through the Spanish expulsion. He studied Torah with his paternal grandfather, his namesake, as he writes in the introduction to his sefer *Chefetz Hashem*:

"I studied Torah from my master and teacher, my renowned grandfather, widely acclaimed for his greatness, the humble and pious Rabbi Chaim ben Atar zy" a, from whose well of living waters I drank. I was raised on his knees and sat in his lap, and from the day I was born I drew upon his upright words and exceptional piety. I can say that there was almost no night where he did not wake up at midnight (even in the months of Tammuz) to lament and mourn like a widow, for the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash, the G-dly House, with great weeping. He spent the rest of

the night studying Torah, with me and other offspring." Already then, as a young child, Rabbi Chaim promised that when he grew up, he would strive with all his might to restore the crown of Israel to its former glory.

He was well-known for his holiness and abstention from a young age, and all foretold a great future for the child, who was famous for his holiness and purity, completely removed from the material world, often fasting and practicing other forms of abstinence. Despite his asceticism, he did not refrain from studying Torah with enormous diligence. At a young age he published his sefer *Chefetz Hashem*, *chiddushim* on several *masechtot* of Shas.

The tzaddik soon became famous throughout the city, and many students began coming to his *beit midrash* to draw from the fountains of his teachings. Rabbi Chaim zy" a did not seclude himself; he gave public lectures about matters of Torah and *mussar*, and his young age did not prevent the masses from coming to listen to his words of Torah.

It is worth quoting here an incident from the sefer *Divrei Shalom*, in the name of Rabbi Yechezkel Shraga Halberstam of Shinava, author of *Divrei Yechezkel*, related on his return from Eretz Yisrael:

"The holy and pure Rabbi, the awesome and lofty Rabbi Chaim ben Atar, had two wives who were *yevamot*. Before his death they cried to him and asked, who will support us after your passing? He replied: "I am giving you my tefillin. After my death announce all over that whoever wishes to pray with my tefillin should come and

pray. They should pay a certain sum for this privilege, and with that money you will make a living. But one thing I warn you strongly: Take care! While a man wears these tefillin on his head he should not G-d forbid speak mundane matters because they are holy! Mundane talk can G-d forbid desecrate their holiness and the letters in the *parshiot* will fly in the air and the tefillin will become unfit."

After his passing they followed this advice and spread the word throughout the Diaspora. Many Jews indeed came with great longing to pray while wearing these holy tefillin, and it was a source of livelihood for the widows.

One time, while an eminent merchant was praying with these tefillin, a gentleman suddenly approached the widows and told them he had to ask the merchant something very important and could not wait till after the tefillin would be removed, because he was in a hurry. The widows always guarded the doorway and did not allow anyone to enter the *beit midrash* while the tefillin were being used. Whoever wanted to pray with the tefillin had to do so in solitude to preclude any possibility of speaking mundane matters.

This gentleman somehow made his way inside without permission and spoke to the merchant. The widows began shouting and decrying this terrible act of talking while wearing the holy tefillin. Afterwards, they checked the tefillin and found that all the letters had disappeared; they had flown away as Rabbi Chaim foretold!

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