

# PACHAD DAVID

Vayeira



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Under the auspices of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu, the Admor Rabbi David Chananya Pinto shlita

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**"Hashem appeared to him in the plains of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance of the tent in the heat of the day"** (Bereishit 18:1).

Chazal tell us that Hashem visited Avraham on the third day after his circumcision, when the wound is most painful. We can ask why the verse does not say explicitly that Hashem appeared to Avraham. All it says is "Hashem appeared to him." Maybe Hashem actually revealed Himself to someone else?

The holy Or Hachaim zy"l writes on this verse that Hashem revealed Himself to Avraham Avinu because through circumcising himself he became 'a chariot for the Divine Presence'. What is the proof for his reasoning? Perhaps Hashem visited him for a different reason? And what is the basis for saying that through brit milah Avraham Avinu became a chariot for the Divine Presence?

Through brit milah Avraham Avinu reached perfection. This is what the Torah wants to teach us. Before his brit milah, Avraham Avinu accomplished great things. He walked together with Hashem and constantly proclaimed the Name of Hashem in the world. He made many converts and instructed the people to give thanks and bless the true Provider of food (Sota 10b). With the utmost devotion he taught the world Torah and mitzvot, instilling in them faith in Hashem.

In addition, he established Torah institutions, as hinted to by the wells he dug, for water refers to Torah. Thus he glorified Hashem's Name in the eyes of the entire world. But all these great accomplishments were achieved while Avraham Avinu was not yet considered a complete Jew, since he still retained the foreskin.

But now, after making an eternal covenant with Hashem through performing brit milah, he became a whole and complete man. From now on, he and all his offspring, the Jewish people, are the only ones who are His people. Surely now Avraham Avinu felt he is part of the Divine essence and has become one with the Almighty, a chariot for the Divine Presence.

Hashem was afraid the attribute of justice would

## Maskil Ledavid

**Avraham Avinu Became a Chariot of the Divine Presence**



accuse Avraham Avinu and question if he truly deserves all this honor. Therefore Hashem visited him as one would visit an ordinary sick person. He sent him guests and did not speak to him as is customary with a sick person. Avraham Avinu understood this and was not moved by Hashem's visit, even telling Hashem to wait until he takes care of the guests. This was all so as not to give an opening to the attribute of justice.

In this way he connected to Hashem without the attribute of justice being able to accuse in any way.

This is why the Torah writes, "Hashem appeared to him." The verse does not emphasize at all to whom Hashem appeared, because through the fulfillment of the mitzvah of milah, an eternal covenant with Hashem, Avraham Avinu elevated himself to such sublime levels, right then he became a chariot for the Divine Presence, uniting with Hashem.

Now we can understand that as a result of this strong connection it was enough for Hashem to appear to Avraham. There was no need for them to speak for His very visit was the connection between them. And at that moment surely all of Avraham Avinu's future offspring were also sanctified, and a covenant was made that we would be Hashem's treasured nation for all generations.

The lesson we can derive is how much man should strive for greatness, to desire to become a complete person and reach perfection, becoming a chariot for the Divine Presence like Avraham Avinu. He instilled this aspiration in each Jewish person; all we must do is connect ourselves to this three-fold thread that binds: the Holy Torah, Hashem and the Jewish people. Through deferring to Hashem's sovereignty, we obliterate the foreskin of our hearts and become part of the Divine essence, a vehicle for the Shechina.

Now we can understand why Avraham's name is not mentioned in this verse. The Torah wishes to imply that despite the great level Avraham Avinu attained at the time of his brit milah, he annulled himself completely before Hashem and felt no inner sense of pride for the honor bestowed on him by Hashem's visit.

18<sup>th</sup> of Cheshvan 5783 981  
November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022



## Hilula

- 18 Cheshvan – Rabbi Refael Baruch Toledano
- 18 Cheshvan – Rabbi Nochum Partzovitch, Rosh Yeshiva of Mir
- 19 Cheshvan – Rabbi Yeshua Attia
- 19 Cheshvan – Rabbi Sasi Ma'atok Kohen, author of Birkat Hashem
- 20 Cheshvan – Rabbi Mordechai Sharabi
- 20 Cheshvan – Rabbi Moshe Natan Neta Lemberger, Av Beit Din Akva
- 21 Cheshvan – Rabbi Vidal Ben Vallid
- 21 Cheshvan – Rabbi Aryeh Leib Bina, Rosh Yeshiva Netiv Meir
- 22 Cheshvan – Rabbi Yissachar Dov Rokeach, Admor of Belz
- 22 Cheshvan – Rabbi Avraham Bonan
- 23 Cheshvan – Rabbi Refael Elkoubi
- 23 Cheshvan – Rabbi Aharon Katzenelbogen
- 24 Cheshvan – Rabbi Avraham Azoulai, author of Chesed L'Avraham
- 24 Cheshvan – Rabbi Refael David Auerbach





## WORDS OF THE SAGES

### *Why Do We Not Take an Interest in our Friend's Spiritual State?*

The Midrash tells us Avraham Avinu would teach his guests to bless Hashem after satisfying themselves in the eshel (inn for lodging) he set up in Be'er Sheva.

The question arises: why did he teach them to bless Hashem only after they ate and not before?

The Imrei Emet, the Admor of Gur zt"l, explains: Had Avraham asked them to recite blessings before they ate, his words would not necessarily have found way to their hearts. But after eating food prepared by Avraham and Sarah, which was certainly prepared with holy intentions and thoughts, accompanied by prayers that their guests should be aroused to fear of G-d, the very act of eating this holy food instilled in them sublime desires to draw closer to Hashem. So now they would warmly welcome Avraham's message and willingly bless and thank Hashem for the food they ate.

On the verse (Tehillim 142:5), "Every escape is lost to me, no one seeks to save my soul," the gaon Rabbi Shalom Mashash zt"l, Chief Rabbi and Av Beit Din of Yerushalayim, would say that "escape" refers to a place to which a person can flee and hide in order to save himself.

And so David Hamelech is telling us: If you see a person who feels he has lost all escape, know it is only because "...no one seeks to save my soul," no one inquires about his soul. People are worldly and busy all day only with affairs of This World.

When a person meets his friend, he naturally inquires how he and his family are doing. But does he take an interest in and ask about his soul? "How is your Torah study going? What are you studying at present? Do you live in a neighborhood that cares about modesty? And what about your spiritual elevation?"

"Every escape is lost to me" – because "no one seeks to save my soul!"

Indeed, as the sefer Mishkani testifies, the life story of Rabbi Mashash himself reinforces this idea. It serves as a great lesson about Hashem's miraculous way of providing each person with his needs, and staunchly accepting Hashem's will, not doubting whether or not he understands why he deserves a certain situation.

In his youth Rabbi Mashash studied in Meknes, Morocco. After he married, he wished to continue his Torah studies but had no source of income.

One day when his house was bereft of food, he went over to the Aron Kodesh, opened its doors and began crying to Hashem with his characteristic simple faith: "Master of the World! You commanded us to study Your Torah and I wish to continue doing so! Please help me so I will not have to forsake it! Send me assistance so I can continue engaging in Torah always..."

Several days passed and a meeting of rabbanim was held regarding the local Talmud Torah. At first, many families had sent their children to this Torah Talmud, but upon discovering the conditions were on a much lower standard than those existing in the school established by the French, they transferred their sons to the state education. The rabbanim therefore wished to raise the crown of Torah by appointing a spiritual director for the Torah Talmud, someone who would set the tone and succeed in drawing others to follow his vision.

Surprisingly, at the meeting it was unanimously decided that the one most fitting for this position was Rabbi Mashash, although he was only twenty-six years old and the teachers he would have to supervise were decades older than him!

The locals did not understand – a young man would be directing the teachers who had actually taught him as a child? Rabbi Mashash himself, in his extreme humility, said he received the position in the merit of his sincere prayer to the Creator of the World...



## WALKING IN THEIR WAYS

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

### *The Ultimate Advocates*

Once, while visiting the Jewish cemetery in Geneva, one of my escorts drew my attention to the grave of the well-known philanthropist, Edmond Safra a"h. He was a man of noble bearing, who had donated generously to various tzedakah causes.

Thousands of people would knock on his door, waiting for hours on end to meet with him. Many wished to simply shake his hand, have a picture taken with him, or receive his warm smile. Rabbanim and prominent people would wait in line to elicit donations for their institutions.

In stark contrast, once he passed away he was no longer sought after. No one even visits his grave. Shlomo Hamelech referred to this when he said, "A live dog is better than a dead lion" (Kohelet 9:4).

Nevertheless, his good deeds stand by him forever, granting him eternal merit.

I came closer to his grave and discovered the following inscription: "Here lies buried the philanthropist, Edmond Safra a"h, who built batei kenessiot and batei midrashot and tended to orphans and widows." Nothing is mentioned about his vast hoards of money, or the banks he owned. Only his acts of charity are recorded for posterity.

Chazal state (Avot 6:10), "When a man departs from This World, neither silver, gold, nor precious stones or pearls escort him, but only Torah study and good deeds, as it says (Mishlei 6:22), 'When you go forth, it shall guide you; when you lie down, it shall guard you; and when you awake, it shall speak on your behalf.'"



## FROM THE TREASURY

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

### *Eventually All Mockers Will Discover the Truth*

The scoffers of the generation had been saying that Sarah must have become pregnant from Avimelech, when he abducted her (Tanchuma, Toldot 1). Hashem therefore made Yitzchak's features undeniably similar to Avraham's, so that even the cynics had to admit, "It was indeed Avraham who bore Yitzchak."

If we think about this, it seems unbelievable how they dared speak and joke in such a way against Avraham Avinu. Was it not Avraham Avinu who instilled faith in their hearts?

The answer leaves us with a message that is a principle for all generations. In every generation cynics will arise who will mock the righteous of the generation. We find this also in Parshat Chukat, concerning the Para Aduma (Red Heifer). Then too the nations of the world mocked this mitzvah, called a chok (a mitzvah whose reason is beyond human understanding). They questioned why even a single black hair disqualifies it, and why it purifies the impure and defiles the pure (see Bamidbar Rabba 19:1). Even Shlomo Hamelech, the wisest of all men, could not fathom the reasoning behind this mitzvah and said about himself (Kohelet 7:23), "I thought I could become wise, but it is beyond me."

The scoffers of the generation who mocked the likelihood of Avraham fathering Yitzchak teach us that in every generation the cynics have nothing better to do but ridicule. Even if it is clear to them that they are lying, they will continue with their jests. But it was incumbent upon Avraham Avinu and Sarah Imeinu to accept this challenge with love. And indeed in the end the truth came to light. Yitzchak Avinu grew up to become a great tzaddik, and this would have been impossible had Sarah conceived from Avimelech, G-d forbid.

If someone follows the correct path but the world mocks him for his ultra-Orthodox ways and steadfast observance of the mitzvot, saying he belongs to past generations instead of moving forward with today's progression, there is no reason for him to be afraid of them at all. Eventually all those scoffers will discover the truth and hide their faces in shame.

May Hashem's Name be publicly sanctified speedily in our days!

## A DAY OF DELIGHT

### *Havdalah on Motza'ei Shabbat*



1. Rabbi Yochanan said (Pesachim 113a): Three who inherit the World to Come are: One who lives in Eretz Yisrael, one who raises his sons to study Torah, and one who makes Havdalah (lit. distinction) over wine on Motza'ei Shabbat. And Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: He who makes Havdalah over wine on Motza'ei Shabbat will have sons worthy of ruling (Shavuot 18b). And Rabbi Tzadok said: He who makes Havdalah over wine, Hashem calls him holy and makes him a segulah (Pirkei d' Rabbi Eliezer).

2. Acts forbidden on Shabbat may not be done before making Havdalah, unless one has recited Ata chonantanu in the Arvit prayer. If it is necessary to do a certain act before praying, one should first say "Blessed is the One who separates between holy and secular, between light and darkness, between Yisrael and the nations, between the seventh day and the six days of labor." Women should recite this phrase before doing any work.

3. After finishing the third meal, one may not eat or drink before making Havdalah. One may drink water but it is preferable to be stringent.

4. If one mistakenly recited the blessing for food or drink before Havdalah, one should take a small bite or sip so the blessing should not be in vain.

5. If one does not have wine one should make Havdalah using chamar medinah (for example an alcoholic drink, such as white beer or vodka). One should drink the majority of a revi'it (at least 41 grams) at once. If this is difficult for him he should drink with small breaks. One should not make Havdalah using tea, coffee, milk, orange juice, etc., for this would be considered as a blessing in vain and is not considered as having made Havdalah. Therefore, if no chamar medinah is available, he should rely on the Havdalah mentioned in the Arvit prayer.

6. One who arrives in the middle of Havdalah but at least hears the blessing, "Blessed are You, Hashem.... Who separates between holy and secular..." and not the previous blessings, has still fulfilled the obligation of Havdalah, especially since he will not drink from the wine. He should make his own blessing on the spices and flame afterwards.

*For any questions in practical application of these halachot, please consult a rabbinical authority.*



## Introspection

Principles in Service of the  
Heart and Rectification  
of Middot

### Traffic Offenses Originate from Corruption of Middot

The scene is a common one: Erev Shabbat or chag in the afternoon. The city's main street is completely congested with heavy traffic.

What is causing this traffic jam, robbing people of time and money?

A real mystery to all the drivers.

One driver, drawn by his curiosity, gets out his car and walks beside the traffic until he comes across the cause for the congestion:

Someone had to buy something, of course in honor of Shabbat, and parked his car in a place where it is forbidden to park. In a place that did not allow other cars to pass and continue the flow of traffic. He found what he wanted inside the store; maybe he also found the time to bargain with the store owner about the quality of the goods and the payment. And the others? They sit in their cars and

grumble; taxi passengers pay with their hard-earned money for the delay in traffic.

And if you ask, why he did this?! Does it stem from malice, G-d forbid? Does he wish to rob people of time on a short winter Friday?!

The answer is given by the mashgiach, Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe zt"l, using a wonderful parable:

A person is in a room covered entirely in mirrors. The floor, walls and ceiling, everything is covered with mirrors. Everywhere he looks, he sees only himself... As soon as he leaves the room, he sees the sky, humans and the rest of the world.

This person who blocked all the traffic with his car is not wicked, G-d forbid. Rather, he sees only himself. He now needs to buy something, so he stops and parks in the nearest place. He does not consider the possible results of his deed, or take into account that there are also other people who may suffer from his actions.

Decades ago, Harav Wolbe founded a special beit midrash in Yerushalayim called Beit Hamussar (House of Mussar Study). The name does justice to its essence. It is a true beit midrash where only mussar (ethics) is studied. At the first opportunity the mashgiach organized a special talk for avreichim who drive, and honored one of the mussar masters to deliver a moral discourse. In that lecture he explicitly stated that all traffic offenses are a result of (corrupt) middot. Not giving the right of way to the other and not yielding to use of the road.

This point is actually an explicit Mishna in Avot: "Pray for the welfare of the government, because if people did not fear it, a person would swallow his friend alive."

"A human being," said Rabbi Yerucham of Mir zt"l, "is not capable of murdering, of devouring someone else. But there are murders in the world. How can this be?!"

"The answer is that if man would see that someone else exists, he would not be able to murder him. The one who is able to murder does so because he is immersed in his own life and does not see anything else existing beyond that. He is egocentric; his life encircles himself alone.

That's how you get to the worst – murder. And murder, as we all know, does not have to be physical. Words can also kill. And what makes it possible for these words to come out of the mouth is when you don't see someone else and don't think of the other as a human being, just as much as yourself.

How fitting are the words of Rabbi David Chananya Pinto shlit"a, who expounds on Avraham Avinu's attribute of kindness. We are told, "The world is built on kindness," meaning the world cannot exist without kindness. Kindness done privately, only with family etc. is not enough. The entire world needs our kindness! As we find with Avraham that Hashem changed his name from a private one (Avram) to a general one (Avraham), in the merit of the kindness he performed with the public, earning him the title, "Father of a multitude of nations."

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## "Contemplate and see that Hashem is good"

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