



"Give ear, O heavens and I will speak; and may the earth hear..."

"Give ear, O heavens and I will speak; and may the earth hear the words of my mouth"

(Devarim 32:1)

This parsha is read this year between Yom Kippur, the most awesome day of the year when Hashem atones for our sins and the festival of Succot, the time of our rejoicing. I would like to focus on the connection between them.

"Give ear, O heavens." When Moshe Rabbeinu a"h went up to Heaven after the sin of the golden calf and later came down with the second set of luchot, Hashem announced, "And Hashem said, I have forgiven because of your words". The day that Hashem uttered these words and forgave them for the sin of the golden calf, was Yom Kippur.

It seems to me that the potency of this holy and awesome day, which is a day of pardon and forgiveness for all generations, a day that we are cleansed from our sins, as it says, "For on this day He shall provide atonement for you to cleanse you; from all your sins before Hashem shall you be cleansed", is due to Moshe Rabbeinu's prayers on behalf of Bnei Yisrael, which he undertook with great sacrifice until Hashem was appeased. On that day and from that day on, for then and for all generations, it was fixed as a day of forgiveness, pardon and atonement.

But in order to merit this atonement, there is an indispensable condition which is hinted to by the verse, "For on this day He shall provide atonement". The word 'הוֹדוּ' (this) has a numerical value of seventeen, just like the word 'בוטו' (good) and 'there is no good but for Torah'. This means that the atonement of Yom Kippur is dependent on accepting the yoke of Heaven and the yoke of Torah and mitzvot. Hashem informed us: "I created the evil inclination and I created the Torah as an antidote." Only through the Torah is it possible to overcome the evil inclination and stay away from sin, so if a person decides to repent but does not accept the yoke of Torah, his repentance will not be effective.

This is why, when Moshe Rabbeinu came down from Heaven on the very day of Yom Kippur that atoned for the sin of the calf and since became an eternal day of atonement, as explained, he did not appear with empty hands but rather he was holding the second set of luchot. This was to hint to this idea that the atonement of Yom Kippur is dependent on a person cleaving to Hashem and His Torah which are in essence one. This is the meaning of "Give ear" to the Torah which I brought down from heaven for you.

"May the earth hear" hints to the concept of the festival of Succot. The mitzvah of building a succah is performed on the ground. Similarly, the s'chach must come specifically from material which grows in the ground.

According to this, one can say that Moshe Rabbeinu brings this verse to explain the question of why the festival of Succot falls immediately after Yom Kippur, what the relationship is between them and if there is a connection to the parsha.

Yom Kippur, must be understood in the sense of being represented by the heavens, for on this day one can ac-

complish heavenly attainments. On the other hand, Succot, is recognized as being represented by the earth, since one makes the Succah on the ground from s'chach that grows from the ground.

The Gemarah explains that one may only use s'chach that has been severed from the ground while s'chach that remains connected to the ground is unfit to be used. This teaches therefore that a person, in the equivalent way, must sever himself from the materialism of this world and not to be connected "with his head and most of his body" (a concept found in the Laws of Succah) to this world, for then he will lose all the spiritual growth that he achieved in preparation for Yom Kippur. Instead, if he wants the holiness of the day to have an influence over the entire year, he should place "his head and most of his body" inside the Succah, using the concept of the Succah being a temporary dwelling. This World is only temporal whereas the permanent eternal world is the World to Come. In this manner, a person will be successful in connecting Yom Kippur, the most sacred day of the year, to the more profane days of the rest of the year by elevating the mundane to the spiritual, infusing This World with the sanctity of the World to Come.

Just like the s'chach must be severed from the ground, the festival of Succot imparts the message of disconnecting ourselves from materialism and severing our strong connection with the mundane. In this way, we will be able to draw the light and atonement of Yom Kippur and extend it over the whole year. The process that brings us to this outlook is also found within the festival of Succot itself since the holy Zohar calls the Succah "tzila d'mehaimanuta", 'the shelter of faith', the place where we take shelter under the wings of the Holy Shechina.

I remember from my childhood, that my father, Harav Hatzaddik Rabbi Moshe Ahron Pinto zya"a, would set up a small chair in the Succah for the Ushpizin – the holy avot a"h and when he would enter the Succah he would greet the Ushpizin, as a person talking to his friend and would say, "Welcome Avraham Avinu" and so forth, as if he could actually see them. As young children, although we did not see anything, the pure faith of our father a"h made us feel that the Ushpizin were actually present in our Succah. This experience remained deeply engraved in our hearts for years to come. This is an example of how the Succah serves to impart the lesson of pure faith in the Creator of the world and in his tzaddikim.

"You have been shown in order to know" a wonderful and profound insight of why the festival of Succot falls straight after Yom Kippur. It teaches us how to stretch the light and holiness of Yom Kippur throughout the year, by disconnecting ourselves from this world and understanding that our role is to infuse materialism with a spiritual connection. This idea is possible to achieve only if it is based on strong foundations of emunah in Hashem and in His tzaddikim.

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Hilula

13 – Rabbi Shaul Adadi

14 – Rabbi Yosef Tzvi Dushinsky

15 – Rabbi Mordechai Leifer, the
Admor of Nadvarna

16 – Rabbi Moshe Zakut, author
of 'Shorshei Hasheimot'

18 – Rabbi Betzalel Ranshbourg

19 – Rabbi Yosef Moshe Adass, of
the Rabbanim of the 'Porat Yosef'
Yeshiva

12 – Rabbi Yechiel Michel of Zvhill



Walking in their Ways

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

No Short Cut to Repentance

Every year I visit the graves of the tzaddikim in Europe. Once when I planned to stay over Shabbat in the Ukraine, close to the holy gravesite of the Ba'al Shem Tov zya"a, I asked the one in charge of the holy site to arrange suitable lodgings for our group. Since I remembered from previous trips that these lodgings could be full of insects and since I am especially sensitive to them, I specifically requested that they thoroughly clean the room before my arrival.

When I arrived I indeed found a clean and tidy room, but nevertheless, I was concerned that all kinds of creatures could be hiding out in the corners and in the dark of the night they will suddenly make their appearance... Therefore, just to be on the safe side, I asked my assistant to purchase a spray that kills insects and fumigates the room. Lo and behold, after the spraying, all different kinds of creatures came scuttling out of their hiding places and began crawling around the room. Of course, under no circumstances did I agree to stay in that room until it was thoroughly cleaned.

But at that moment I was struck by a thought and started making a personal reckoning. You see, David, I said to myself, this is exactly what happens with teshuva. A person prepares himself appropriately for forty days, searching his deeds and expending all the necessary effort to distance himself from evil and fully repent. In his innocence, he thinks that Baruch Hashem, from now he is sin-free and absolved of the obligation to do teshuvah. However, just at the most holy and elevated moments when we stand before Hashem on Yom Kippur, suddenly, all the "skeletons in the closets," or spiders under the bed begin creeping into our mind, in the form of negative and foreign thoughts, which had always existed but were hidden in the inner crevices of our hearts and mind. In our innocence, we imagine that we have already weaned ourselves from them but now to our surprise, we see that we still have much to repair and improve and still have far to go in order to purify ourselves appropriately.

This is a message to all those who mistakenly think that they can do a quick job and in one or two days cleanse their hearts from all evil and completely repent. After this quick repentance, if a person will only check in the depths of his heart he will reveal that the blemishes on his soul are still many and much work awaits him. If Chazal fixed forty days for repentance, they obviously understood that in less time than this it is not possible to fulfill our obligation.

The Haftarah

"David spoke" (Shmuel II, 22)

The connection to the parsha: The haftarah speaks about the Song of David Hamelech a"h, which is a similar topic to the parsha where we read of the Song of Moshe Rabbeinu a"h.



Guard Your Tongue

Rechilut that is Completely True

It is forbidden to tell rechilut even if it is one hundred percent true, even if one does not say it over in front of the original speaker of these words and even if it is clear to the person that he would be prepared to repeat the rechilut in front of the person. All the more so if he actually dares to say in his presence, you said such and such about this person or did such and such to him.

In this case his sin is much greater, for this act causes the person who was spoken about to feel strong hatred and he will now accept the information as the complete truth, for he will be convinced that had it not been the complete truth, he would not have dared say it over in front of the instigator.



Words of our Sages

Succot – a Wonderful Opportunity to Fill Up on Happiness and Avert Misfortune

A person who is fully absorbed in his obsession for money, cried Hagoan Rabbi Reuven Elbaz shlita, loses all proportion and balance in his life. Nothing comes into account besides his passion to acquire more money, more possessions and more assets!

A person who is infected with a lust for money is in great danger. Money makes him lose his senses and distorts his heart until his entire life centers around chasing after quick profits.

A person's goal in this world is not to gather as much money as possible, but rather to fulfill Hashem's commandments with desire and joy, with a holy and fiery enthusiasm, like the concept of "a coin of fire"!

Hagoan Rabbi Reuven Elbaz testifies that there are untold stories from which one must draw a lesson. We must not forget for a moment that we do not have the power to make anything happen, everything is ordained by heaven, "For everything is from You and from Your hand have we given to You" (Divrei Hayamim I, 29:14).

"I met an older couple and one of their acquaintances whispered to me that each one of them earns a monthly wage of tens of thousands of shekels. We started to talk and the couple told me that they were on the way to chutz la'aretz. I asked them with a smile, "Nu, what are you going to bring back for your children?"

The smile vanished from their faces and they replied: "We do not have any children."

It is difficult to describe the enormous sadness that was written all over their faces.

In conclusion, we must be happy with what we have and not focus on what we lack. We must live with faith and with bitachon. We must thank Hashem for all that He gives us and remember that everything that we possess is intended for one purpose – to perform His will and serve Him with a full heart.

There is a well-known Mishna in Pirkei Avot (4:1): "Who is rich? He who is happy with his lot."

One's level of happiness does not rise in proportion to one's wealth. In many cases, it is specifically wealth that not only drives away all joy and tranquility but is actually the cause of distress and anxiety.

The 'Tiferet Shlomo' of Radomsk zt"l discloses a valuable revelation:

The Succah is a segula to be saved from tribulations and to be delivered from any forms of distress. The Mishna determines: "One who is suffering, is exempt from sitting in the Succah". The 'Tiferet Shlomo' offers a beautiful interpretation on the words of this Mishna: "One who is suffering" – a person who is deep in his pain, in his distress, in his trouble, however great it may be, becomes "exempt" – he leaves behind, with full exemption, all of his troubles and pain, all of his difficulties and challenges, "from the Succah", from the power of the festival of Succot, from the treasure house of blessings which are secreted in the Succah!



Timely Lessons

A Promise for the Future

Rashi explains that the simple meaning of the words, "And you will be completely joyous" is not a command but a promise.

The Ibn Ezra offers a similar explanation of these words. "And you will be completely joyous" - if you rejoice on Succot then you will merit a blessing for the future that you will be forever happy!

According to the Nature of Reality

In this vein, the Abarbanel zt"l writes: "Included in these words is a promise that if one is happy and rejoices on the festival of Succot, he will be happy and joyful the entire year. However, if a person starts off the year with feelings of sadness, then "through suffering you shall eat of it", since this is the nature of reality. One who is happy with his lot achieves joy and happiness. One who sighs without a reason will forever groan."

Promise for a Good Year

The 'Peleh Yo'etz' writes concerning the mitzvah to rejoice on Succot, that this happiness refers to the happiness of mitzvah (performance) and it is a good sign for the whole year. The disciples of the Ari z"l wrote that one who is happy and joyful and is not despondent in the least on this holy chag, is promised that he will be blessed with a good year and will be forever happy! In light of this, man must prevail with strength to forget his sadness and anger and any matter which causes him distress and instead to rejoice every day with a new happiness, with the happiness of fulfilling a mitzvah, as the holy Zohar writes.

This is a wonderful message: A person who is happy on the festival of Succot is blessed with an enormous, incomparable blessing – he will be happy forever! This means that he will merit everything that brings joy- parnassah, health and all the good of this world.

The Shirt of Happiness

The sefer 'Otzrot Hatorah' tells a story about a governor who was very dissatisfied with his life.

He approached a special advisor who advised him to go and search for a happy person and wear his shirt.

He went from town to town searching for a happy person. As soon as he thought that he had found the ultimate happy man, he borrowed his shirt. In this way, he wore the clothes of royalty, of princes and of officials, yet none of this helped to improve his mood.

He continued his search and wore the shirt of craftsmen, officers and merchants, but did not see any results. He finally decided to return home, weary and dejected.

On the way home he met a poor farmer who was singing a happy tune to himself while plowing his field. He seemed to radiate true joy. The governor turned to him and asked, "are you happy?"

"Yes," answered the farmer.

"Do you not lack anything?" He continued to probe.

"No, I do not lack anything."

"Maybe you would agree to sell me your shirt?"

"I do not own a shirt," was his astonishing reply, "the shirt that I am wearing is borrowed..."

Treasures

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



The Cloud that Rose from the Incense Contains an Important Message

Following the elevated atmosphere of Yom Kippur, it is worth contemplating the service of the Kohen Gadol on this holy day, in the Holy of Holies. Seemingly, why was the Kohen Gadol commanded to place the fire-pan with the incense specifically between the poles of the Ark?

Another difficulty: Why was the Kohen Gadol commanded to place the fire-pan with the incense and then wait until the incense cloud rose and covered the Ark? Remaining in the Holy of Holies could be a very dangerous, life-threatening situation for the Kohen Gadol. Even when the Kohen Gadol prays for Am Yisrael, he offers a very short prayer so as not to frighten the people who may think that chalila the Kohen Gadol has died, if they see that he delays coming out from the Holy of Holies. If so, after placing the fire-pan, he should have immediately left this holy place. Why must he wait until the Ark was filled with smoke?

With siyata dishmaya, I would like to suggest the following answer: Observing the Service of the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur and beholding the majestic appearance of the Kohen Gadol bedecked in golden vestments, which he later removes and then appears, dressed in pure white garments, accompanied by his brothers, awakens feelings of admiration and awe. The honor that is afforded to the Kohen Gadol seems comparable to the honor of a king. The Kohen Gadol too, feels this honor and prominence and therefore he is told to enter the Holy of Holies where he feels humbled and understands that all his significance stems from the fact that he has been sent to pray on behalf of the holy congregation. His prayer is not only for talmidei chachamim, but also for those who support the Torah, in whose merit the talmidei chachamim can sit and devote themselves to Torah study. This will help him to beg for mercy for the tzaddikim, intermediate ones and wicked ones.

Specifically, a fire-pan containing the incense is placed in his hand since the incense has a pleasant smell, but it nevertheless includes one spice that has a foul smell to hint that the wicked should be included in our prayers. With this fire-pan, the Kohen Gadol enters and beholds the Ark which symbolizes those who study Torah and the poles which symbolize those who support Torah, for the poles were used to carry the Ark. Above the Ark he sees the Keruvim and Chazal tell us that when one fulfills the will of Hashem, the Keruvim face each other and this is a sign of brotherhood, peace and friendship.

When the Kohen Gadol looks at all these signs, any feelings of pride disappear and he feels humbled. He begs for mercy for the congregation and for the individual, for the simple as well as for the great, for both the tzaddik and the rasha, since all of them are important in Hashem's eyes. He waits till the Ark fills with the cloud of the incense, since this will cloud his vision and render things unclear, it will serve as a message to him that he should not differentiate between a tzaddik and a rasha, rather they should be considered equal in his eyes and he should plead for mercy for all of them as one.

This is the power with which the Kohen Gadol steps forward on Yom Kippur and begs for mercy for all Am Yisrael. He sees that this Holy House is filled with smoke and all are equally good. There should be unity among Am Yisrael and we should prove to Hashem that we are indeed united and then He will hasten the redemption as Chazal said (Yuma 9b): "On account of the sin of baseless hatred the Beit Hamikdash was destroyed and will only be rebuilt on account of unconditional love."



"LET HER BE PRAISED"

Portrayal of the True 'Eshet Chayil' In memory of Rabbanit Mazal Madeleine Pinto

תנו לה מפרי ידיה ויהללוה בשערים מעשיה

"Give her the fruits of her hands; and let her be praised in the gates by her very own deeds"

This week, as we come to the concluding verse of Eishet Chayil, we also conclude this column which was dedicated to the memory of the late Rabbanit, Marat Mazal Pinto a"h, the devoted wife of the esteemed Maran, Rabbeinu Moshe Aharon Pinto zya"l. The entire life of the righteous Rabbanit was interwoven with lengthy threads of piety and yirat shamayim. Her entire goal was to give nachat to her Creator and as a virtuous wife, to carry out the will of her husband the tzaddik. With her passing she merited this public acclaim: "Give her the fruits of her hands; and let her be praised in the gates by her very own deeds".

Our desire to find solace has already been expressed by Moreinu shlita with the following words: "But just like Rabbi Yochanan found comfort in Torah for his immense tragedy, we too, with Hashem's kindness, find comfort in the Torah which Ima instilled in us, for 'mine and yours and our holy father's is hers'. Abba a"l would not have been able to reach his high level if not for our righteous mother who constantly stood by his side as a true 'Eishet Chayil'. Ima a"l took the entire burden of the home on her shoulders, including the responsibility of raising the children, so that our holy father should be unhindered day and night to devote himself to avodat Hashem.

Just as her soul's desire was meriting a holy and righteous husband, so too she desired with all her might to merit righteous children, bnei Torah who would occupy themselves with Torah and mitzvot. She sacrificed herself to this end and Baruch Hashem she merited seeing the fruits of her labor."

Through the pages of the weekly bulletin 'Pachad David', we have described the righteousness of the Rabbanit Pinto a"l and praised her in the gates, with the holy and distinct goal that the next generation, those who are now holding this bulletin in their hands and are eagerly reading about the accomplishments of the righteous Rabbanit, will discover how to walk in the path of the upright and the righteous and when the time comes they too will merit words of praise and acclaim in the gates.

She is Right!

The Brisker Rav, Rabbi Yitzchak Zev Soloveitchik zt"l, told over that one night his mother, the righteous Rabbanit Marat Lifsha a"l, appeared to him in a dream and asked him why she was not mentioned in the introduction to her husband's sefer.

The Brisker Rav hurried over to the Dayan of Brisk, the Gaon Rabbi Simcha Zelig Riger zt"l and asked his opinion on the matter.

"She is right," he concluded, "She should be mentioned in the sefer."

Indeed, at the end of the introduction of Rabbi Chaim Brisker's sefer on the Rambam, the Rabbanit's piety is mentioned: "She was unique in her modesty and in the purity of her soul and in her outstanding middot and in her sincere devotion to Torah with all her heart and all her soul."

Maran Hagaon Rabbi Aharon Yehuda Leib Shteinman zt"l, who told over this story, questioned: The late Rabbanit was already in the World of Truth, receiving great reward for all her accomplishments and sacrifice for Torah. Her husband's heart relied on her and he was able to devote himself unburdened and with true peace of mind to Torah study. If so, why is she concerned about words of appreciation that were not written about her in this world of futilities? For this, she had to trouble herself to appear to her son in a dream?

Rav Shteinman zt"l explained, "Of course she herself had no personal interest in this acclaim. But if her deeds would be recorded, it would serve as an inspiration for the wives of talmidei chachamim, infusing them with strength to continue supporting their husbands, knowing that their deeds are appreciated!"

Maran zt"l told over this story on one of his journeys of chizuk to Chutz La'aretz, accompanied by the esteemed Admor of Gur shlita. At the end of one of their visits, while waiting for their flight to depart, Rav Shteinman turned to the group and asked them how much time remained until the flight's departure. Upon being told that they still had about two hours, the Rav expressed his wish to utilize this time to study Torah and asked for his Gemara.

But before he began learning he addressed the group: "Did you buy anything for your wives?" He immediately explained: "You left your homes for several days, while the entire burden of the household was left to your wives. You must express your appreciation to your wives who shouldered this burden and enabled you to travel with peace of mind." He then told over the above story about the dream, where in the end appreciation for the wife of Rabbi Chaim Brisker was recorded in his sefer, praising her wonderful middot and special devotion to fulfilling the Torah and those who study it.

If so, certainly concerning the righteous Rabbanit Pinto a"l, who merited establishing a blessed generation of upright offspring and in particular, Moreinu the Gaon and Tzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto shlita who is widely acclaimed in all the three pillars on which the world depends – Torah study, the service of G-d and kind deeds, we can say about her with the utmost sincerity, "Give her the fruits of her hands; and let her be praised in the gates by her very own deeds".