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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"ta

## maskil Le'David

### Bnei Yisrael Grow Spiritually in the Merit of Tzaddikim

**"Now you shall command the Children of Israel that they shall take for you pure, pressed olive oil for illumination, to kindle the lamp continually" (Shemot 27:20).**

Several questions arise from this verse. Firstly, why does the verse begin with the words "Now you shall command," unlike other places in the Torah where it says, "Hashem spoke to Moshe," or, "Hashem said to Moshe, saying?"

Secondly, Bnei Yisrael were commanded to bring this oil for a lofty purpose, for the kindling of the Menorah. Why does it not say, "Let them **take for Me** pure, pressed olive oil" as it says in Parshat Terumah (Shemot 25:2), "Let them **take for Me** a portion," rather than "**take for you**" as it says here?

Furthermore, the *Shulchan Aruch* (Orach Chaim 231:1) writes, "When enjoying any worldly pleasures one should not intend for one's personal enjoyment but for the service of Hashem, as it says (Mishlei 3:6), 'In all your ways know Him.' Our Sages said (Avot 2:12), 'Let all your deeds be for the sake of Heaven.' This refers even to permitted matters, for example eating, drinking, walking... and all your physical needs should be for the sake of serving your Creator or for the sake of something that leads to serving Him."

The difficulty is, how can we expect a Jew to be wholly focused in all his thoughts on the Creator alone? After all, man is a human being – how can he only think about the Creator throughout the day? Besides, man lives with the *yetzer hara*. How can he overcome all his natural desires and temptations?

Let's take the example of a very wealthy individual who works tirelessly and invests every hour of his day to advance his business and increase his profits. Can we expect him to understand that all his wealth in fact comes from Hashem, as opposed to taking credit and believing "my strength and the might of my hand made me all this wealth?" It seems we expect the impossible: man must believe in every situation that everything in

This World is "futility of futilities" and has no substance! I would like to suggest a possible answer. We offer praises to Hashem that He does not approach any man unfairly. Hashem challenges a person in accordance with his individual strength, never G-d forbid beyond his capabilities. On this topic, the Beit Yisrael zy"ta of Gur says in the name of Maran the Chidushei Harim zy"ta that man is not given a challenge from Heaven if he cannot withstand and overcome it.

Our Sages zt"l have also expounded on the verse (Tehillim 147:16) "He Who gives snow like fleece." If Hashem gives snow, He also sends fleece with which to warm ourselves against it. However, in man's eyes it may seem that his test is extremely challenging and endless. Why is this? It's due to the power of the image drawn skillfully by the *yetzer hara*, depicting the challenge as particularly trying, causing him to despair, G-d forbid.

But the truth is Chazal tell us (Succah 52a), "In the future Hashem will bring the *yetzer hara* and slaughter it in front of the righteous and wicked. To the righteous the *yetzer hara* appears like a high mountain and to the wicked he seems like a hair's breadth... The righteous cry and exclaim, 'How did we manage to conquer this high mountain!' And the wicked cry and exclaim, 'How did we not succeed in conquering this hair's breadth!'" How do we understand the meaning of the *yetzer hara* appearing like a mountain or hair's breadth?

But in light of the above we can now understand this Gemara. The test which man faces is indeed very small, like a hair's breadth, but the *yetzer hara* magnifies and enlarges it in man's eye. Obviously, the *yetzer hara* invests enormous efforts in making the righteous stumble even with small matters. On the other hand, the righteous consider the *yetzer hara*'s every challenge as something huge; they consider every negative act, even if small, as something big, and a serious sin if transgressed. This is why the righteous regard the *yetzer hara* as a high mountain.

This shows that Hashem expects a tall order from us, and as a result we wonder if we possess the strength to withstand this difficult test of showing self-sacrifice in forgoing our personal desires. This is why Hashem said to Moshe, "Now you shall command...that they shall take **for you**." In order for Bnei Yisrael to achieve the level of "they shall take **for Me**," meaning taking their very essence and fulfilling their holy service with self-sacrifice, annulling all materialistic desires from their hearts, it is necessary that at the outset there should be "ואתה – Now you," meaning Moshe.

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11 Adar 5786  
28 February 2026

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Tetzaveh

Parshat Zachor



## Hilula

11 Adar  
Rabbi Chaim Yosef David Azulai, the Chida

12 Adar  
The holy brothers, Shemaya and Achiya, Harugei Lod

13 Adar  
Rabbi Yochanan Sofer, the Admor of Erloi

14 Adar  
Rabbi Shem Tov ben Rabbi Yitzchak Ben-Walid

15 Adar  
Rabbi Tzvi Hirsch Kaidanover, author of *Kav HaYashar*

16 Adar  
Rabbi Pinchas Menachem Alter, the Admor of Gur

17 Adar  
Rabbi Petachye Mordechai Bardugo, author of *Nofet Tzufim*





## WALKING IN THEIR WAYS

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

### The Sign

When we celebrated the *chanukat habayit* of the *beit midrash* in Paris, I sat among the congregation asking Hashem for a sign that this place will indeed be sanctified for His Name, and the sound of Torah should never cease to be heard here. Suddenly, a couple walked in with their son. They came directly to me and the woman said, “Honored Rav, I have brought my dear son to you.”

For a few moments I was confused. I had no recollection of these people and did not understand what the mother wanted from me. She reminded me of their story. This child had slipped and fallen from the third floor. He had been in critical condition. His parent’s had come to me for a blessing for a *refuah shleimah* in the merit of my ancestors *zy”a*, and I had blessed them.

“Certainly the Rav remembers,” the mother added, “how he promised us that the merit of his ancestors would bring the boy a complete recovery and he would attend this *chanukat habayit* on two healthy feet.

“Until a few days ago, our son was still in a deep coma. Suddenly, he opened his eyes and regained consciousness! Then he began speaking and communicating with us. Finally, he stood up, to the astonishment of all the doctors!

“Now we have come to fulfill the second half of the Rav’s prophecy. Our healthy son has come to participate in the *chanukat habayit* of this holy sanctuary.”

Upon hearing her words, I thanked Hashem for the wonderful kindnesses He performs with His creatures and for returning this boy to good health.

Then I turned to HaGaon HaRav Solomon *shlit”a*, who sat near me and had heard the entire amazing incident. I told him, “**Before these people walked in, I asked Hashem for a sign that this place would be a haven for Torah and holiness. This family’s miracle clearly indicates that this edifice will be a fount of Torah and serve as a sanctification of Hashem’s Name in the world, drawing countless members of our nation to drink from its spiritual waters.**”

*cont. from p. 1 >>>*

Not without reason did Hashem choose Moshe Rabbeinu to serve as an example for Am Yisrael. The *tzaddik* of the generation is considered equal to the entire generation, for he has the power to influence and inspire them with his radiance, and they in turn will revere him, as it says (*Avot* 4:12), “Let the reverence for your teacher be as the reverence of Heaven.”

But so that everyone should surround the *tzaddik* and be influenced by him, there must be “ואתה – Now you.” The “vav” is added to the word “you” implying something additional. Only when the *tzaddik* conducts himself in line with “Take for Me,” meaning he totally serves Hashem wholeheartedly, then automatically the *tzaddik* has the power to influence others. Through this, the souls of Bnei Yisrael cleave to him and he greatly elevates all of them spiritually.

This teaches us that man possesses the strength to forgo his desires and temptations and lessen his attachment to his wealth and all worldly pleasures, only when he totally gives himself over to Hashem. Then he can annul “my strength and my might,” for he is a servant of Hashem alone. If he indeed behaves in this way, he merits an abundance of both material and spiritual goodness.



## PARSHAH PEARLS

### Inspiring Reflections

#### A Tzaddik Kindles Jewish Souls

**“Now you shall command the Children of Israel that they shall take for you pure, pressed olive oil for illumination, to kindle the lamp continually” (*Shemot* 27:20).**

The esteemed *gaon* and *tzaddik* Rabbi David Chananya Pinto *shlit”a* says that this verse serves as an allusion to the power of a *tzaddik*’s holiness, which he can use to kindle the souls of the holy Am Yisrael for the service of Hashem.

“Now you” refers to the *tzaddik*, “shall command the Children of Israel that they should take for you pure, pressed olive oil,” implies that Bnei Yisrael should bring their oil, their souls, to the *tzaddik*. The letters of “השמן” can be re-arranged to spell “גשמה.”

“Pressed for illumination” implies that Bnei Yisrael should crush their very being and annul themselves before the *tzaddik*, since he is the “illumination,” just as we are told that a *tzaddik* lights up the eyes of Bnei Yisrael.

“To kindle the lamp continually” means that the *tzaddik* should kindle their souls, because the word “נר” (lamp) hints to the soul, as it says (*Mishlei* 20:27), “A man’s soul is the lamp of Hashem.”

#### Torah Study Without Distraction

**“They shall take for you pure, pressed olive oil for illumination” (*Shemot* 27:20).**

Rabbeinu Chaim ben Atar, the Holy Ohr Hachaim *zy”a*, teaches that this verse hints to the Torah which is compared to oil. Just as oil lights up the world, so too Torah illuminates the world.

The precise wording of “pure” is a lesson that one must engage in Torah for its sake without other considerations and distractions, just as the oil must be pure without preservatives.

Rabbi Shabtai Atton *zt”l* in his *sefer Ruach Chochma* adds that this verse also alludes to not diverting one’s attention from Torah study, as Chazal say (*Chagigah* 15a), “Words of Torah can be lost as easily as glass vessels.” Therefore, man must engage in Torah constantly without distraction. This is the meaning of “to kindle the lamp continually.”

Diligence results in the flame of Torah being preserved in one’s heart and in this way one retains one’s learning.



## WORDS OF THE SAGES

### Rabbi Moshe's Chochmat Lev

The concept “*chachmei lev*”, wise-hearted people, appears several times in the topic of the Mishkan’s construction. It is used as a metaphor in all areas of Jewish life when wishing to describe the image of a *ben Torah*. In our generation too, we have merited having among us these precious personalities, those who possess “*chochmat lev*.” We can gain a lot from learning about any one of them; we will study the behavior of one such individual, Rabbi Moshe Shapira *zt”l*.

The wealthy father-in-law of a respectable *avreich* from Bayit Vegan went bankrupt. The *avreich* began raising money to set him back on his feet and, among other people, he visited the home of Rabbi Moshe Shapira, despite not having much of a connection with him. After hearing the details of the incident, Rabbi Moshe was crestfallen. Known for his understanding of the soul, Rabbi Moshe sensed how this wealthy person felt, now bereft of his source of livelihood. From the depths of his sensitive soul, Rabbi Moshe felt the implication of falling “from a high roof to a deep pit.”

“You say that he used to be very wealthy?” he asked the *avreich* in distress.

“Absolutely.”

He sighed deeply, took out his check book and wrote out a large sum. “I am giving you all that I have right now,” he said.

Later on the *avreich* related that when Rabbi Moshe handed him the check his eyes glistened with tears.

Rabbi Moshe took all his deeds with him to the grave, but on this subject of fatherly concern for his *talmidim*, many inspiring stories have been told. One of his *talmidim*, a *ba’al teshuva*, related the following. “Rabbi Moshe was extremely devoted to me at all times. When I cried to him about my constant state of spiritual ups and downs he would build me up from my lowly state. He stood by my side throughout. He fed me spoonful by spoonful, until with his guidance I built myself up and became a *ben Torah*.”

“During a certain period, I was hospitalized and confined to bed with an infectious illness. At some point I was forbidden to make the slightest move and I did not always have someone to aid me with my physical needs.

“To my great surprise, Rabbi Moshe turned up! He entered my room with a bowl, washed my hands, brushed my teeth and took care of my different physical needs himself. I, in my pitiful position, found it hard to watch the sight: The esteemed Rabbi Moshe of Slabodka troubling himself with these mundane matters!

“Later on he helped me understand that engaging in these matters when necessary can be the epitome of dignity!”

And another amazing story:

One of his *talmidim* from Ohr Sameach required a kidney transplant. The fee for a kidney that matched his requirements was a hundred thousand dollars, a fortune in those days that he had no way of acquiring. When Rabbi Moshe Shapira heard about his *talmid’s* suffering, he said without hesitation, “Take a bank loan! I will mortgage my home for it!”

The *talmid* was embarrassed and hesitant. He tried to refuse, but Rabbi Moshe Shapira’s decision was more compelling than a bank mortgage.

He mortgaged his own apartment for the loan of this enormous sum!



## FROM THE TREASURY

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

### The Importance of Beginnings

**“They shall take for you pure, pressed olive oil for illumination, to kindle the lamp continually” (Shemot 27:20).**

Our Sages have taught (*Menachot* 86a), “There are three references to olives in the Torah and each refers to a different kind of oil that they produce. The first kind is that one picks the olive off the tree, squeezes it and puts it into the basket. Pressing the olive under heavy wood is the second type, while grinding and then pressing again is the third kind. The first one is fit for kindling the Menorah while the other oils are used for flour-offerings.”

The question is, what is special about the first kind of oil that only this is fit to be used for the Menorah?

We will offer the following explanation which teaches us an ethical lesson. *Chazal* say (*Shir Hashirim Rabba* 5:2), “Open for Me just one opening of repentance the size of a needle’s eye and I will open for you openings that wagons and carriages can enter. Rabbi Tanchuma and Rabbi Chunya and Rabbi Abahu said in the name of Reish Lakish, ‘It says (*Tehillim* 46:11) “Desist and know that I am G-d.” Hashem said to Yisrael, “Desist from your bad deeds and know that I am Hashem.” Rabbi Levi said, “If only Yisrael would repent for just one day, they would immediately be redeemed and *ben David* (Mashiach) would arrive immediately.” Why is this? “For He is our G-d, and we can be the flock He pastures, and the sheep in His charge, even today, if we but heed His call” (*Tehillim* 95:7).”

It follows that Hashem asks of man one thing alone: he should just *begin* the process of repentance and performing good deeds, and then Hashem will immediately assist him in standing up to the *yetzer hara*. We are told (*Makot* 10b), “A person is led on the path he wishes to take.” It all depends on the beginning of the matter, as it says (*Tehillim* 111:10), “The beginning of wisdom is fear of Hashem.” We are also told (*Devarim* 10:12), “Now, O Israel, what does Hashem, your G-d, ask of you? Only to fear Hashem, your G-d.” One who possesses fear of Heaven possesses everything, and one who is lacking fear of Heaven has nothing. Even if he repents, his repentance lacks substance.

This shows us the importance of beginnings, for the essence of a *mitzvah* and the core of everything is dependent on its beginning. The *Rishonim* say (*Rokeach*, Introduction) that nothing can match the strength of the beginning of piety, for without it, one becomes accustomed to non-Torah ideas, which causes laxity – then one is no longer meticulous.

Now we can understand why only the first kind of oil was fit to be used for the Menorah. Hashem was hinting to Am Yisrael that by opening a small opening for Him like the eye of a needle He will open a large opening for them and they will succeed in defeating the *yetzer hara*. If they take the first step, Hashem will immediately come to their assistance. Man should not wonder, “How can I begin to observe Torah and mitzvot? The Torah is extremely broad! How many hundreds of serious mitzvot there are! How many hundreds of serious sins the Torah involves! How can I be careful with all of these?” Therefore, the Torah tells us that the first type of oil alone is fit for the Menorah, oil produced by squeezing the olive and using only the first drop.

And the lesson for us is: the only thing you need to do is to take the first step – then Hashem will help you complete the journey.

# A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA



## The Aroma of the Offerings

The offerings brought great satisfaction to Hashem, so to speak, to the extent that the Torah calls the offerings “a satisfying aroma.” Rashi comments on these words, “Satisfaction for Me that I expressed My wish and the nation carried it out.” This is the most refined form of *avodat Hashem*: pure of any trace of personal intent or benefit. It gives great pleasure and special satisfaction to Hashem, as Rashi writes. On a superficial level, it seems to us that the pleasure Hashem derives from *korbanot* is the satisfying aroma which arises from them, and in this way He is appeased.

However, Rashi reveals to us that the satisfaction brought about by the *korbanot* is the fact that we carry out Hashem's command, adhering to His instruction to offer *korbanot*.

Harav Binyomin Birenzweig *shlit"l* asks the following question. Isn't every time one performs a Torah command an expression of fulfilling Hashem's Will? Why does the Torah not say that doing any mitzvah affords a satisfying aroma to Hashem? The answer seems to be that bringing a *korban* is a superior performance of Hashem's Will because it is done in the most complete manner. By bringing a *korban* a Jew sacrifices all his deeds entirely to Hashem; everything becomes sanctified for Hashem. There is no personal bearing or benefit when bringing a *korban*; on the contrary, one takes an animal or money and gives it entirely to Hashem. This is an act of doing His Will in the most complete way possible and this is what gives rise to the satisfying aroma.

**We can derive from this a lesson for our performance of all mitzvot. If a person performs a mitzvah wholly for Hashem's Will without any personal pleasure, rather he intends and acts for the sake of Heaven, one can certainly say that this mitzvah produces a satisfying aroma.**

Rabbi Meir Rubman *zt"l* (*Zichron Meir*) writes that one can say that **whenever one performs a mitzvah with perfection, it gives a satisfying aroma to Hashem.**

A most moving and powerful story is told about performing a mitzvah with purity of heart

and perfection in the *sefer Ohel Moshe*. Harav Yitzchak Eizenbach was born to a well-known Orthodox, Yerushalmi family. In his younger years he was an active, cheerful child who transformed the town's alleyways into his playing fields where he frolicked around.

One Shabbat afternoon, Yitzchak made his way to the Kotel passing through the Jaffe Gate and the Old City, through the quarter populated extensively by Arabs. Suddenly, he caught sight of a gold coin gleaming on the roadside. The value of this kind of coin was so great that it could be used to support a large family for two whole weeks.

The child was excited about the inherent potential of finding this treasure; it would enable him to assist his family who found themselves in dire financial straits. However, he well knew that due to the holiness of Shabbat he was forbidden to pick up the *muktzah* coin. What did he do? He decided to place his foot on top of the coin to hide it from the view of passersby, choosing to remain standing in that spot until the end of Shabbat.

And so Yitzchak stood still in the Arab street for over an hour. Suddenly, an Arab boy approached and asked him why he was standing there like a statue. At first he did not reply, but the boy kept harassing him until he answered with childlike innocence, “I have something underneath my foot that is forbidden for me to pick up, so I am waiting here until after Shabbat until I can...” Before he even managed to finish his sentence, the Arab pushed him over and while Yitzchak lay stunned on the ground, he quickly bent over, grabbed the coin and ran off.

By the time Yitzchak managed to pull himself together, the Arab had already jumped over the fence and disappeared from sight. The disheartened child made his way to the *beit midrash* of HaRav Nachum Tavarsky *zt"l* of Chernobyl, where his father used to pray *Mincha* and eat *Seuda Shlishit*.

Yitzchak regularly put out the chairs, set the table, and served the food to all the participants who came to be with the Rebbe. But this week he disregarded his responsibilities and just sat crouched in a corner. The Chernobyl Rebbe

who was fond of the child noticed something was not right. The benches and tables remained unprepared.

The Rebbe approached him and asked, “What happened today? You look so sad. We all need you to set the tables!” Yitzchak told the Rebbe what had happened and expressed his great regret at the golden opportunity which had slipped through his fingers. The Rebbe listened attentively and then took the child's hand and said, “Come with me now to sit down by the table and after Shabbat please come to my home.”

On Motza'ei Shabbat the child accompanied the Rebbe to his home. The Rebbe opened a drawer and took out a gold coin, similar to the one he had found in the Old City. **“Here, this coin is yours,” the Rebbe said, “but I am giving it to you on one condition. I am asking that in exchange you give me the reward of the mitzvah you fulfilled today!”**

Yitzchak was moved and asked the Rebbe in amazement, “The Rebbe wants the reward of the mitzvah in exchange for the coin?”

“Yes!” replied the Rebbe, “Today you sanctified the Name of Hashem in an incredible way by not picking up the coin due to the holiness of Shabbat. Such perfection of a mitzvah from a young child! Here, I am offering you this other gold coin instead. Take it, I am just asking for the reward of the mitzvah.”

Yitzchak was shocked. He gazed at the gold coin and quickly thought of all that he could buy for his family. And then he raised his eyes to the Rebbe and said, **“If the value of the mitzvah that I performed today is so great, it is not for sale!”** The Rebbe leaned over to the child and kissed him on his forehead.

For many years Rabbi Yitzchak would relate to his children and grandchildren that this lesson he learnt in his childhood from the Chernobyl Rebbe demonstrated to him more powerfully than anything he learnt as he grew older, the great significance of performing a mitzvah with purity of intention and perfection. How great is this kind of mitzvah in Hashem's eyes!



**“Contemplate and see that Hashem is good”**

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