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Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

Pachad David

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Under the auspices of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik 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"a

MASKIL LEDAVID



Weekly talk on the Parshah given by Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita

Bringing merit to the people

"When a man from [among] you brings a sacrifice to the L-rd" (Vayikra 1:2)

Chazal say (Menachot 110a), "Whosoever occupies himself with the study of the Torah is as though he were offering a burnt-offering, a meal-offering a sin-offering, and a guilt-offering," as it is stated (Vayikra 7:37), "This is the Torah for the burnt-offering, for the meal-offering, for the sin-offering, and for the guilt-offering." When the Beit Hamikdash was standing, the sacrifices would atone for sins. Whereas now, the study of Torah serves as atonement for a person's sin.

It occurred to me that there is something else that certainly atones for a person's sin, which is bringing merit to the people and sanctifying Hashem's Name in public. In this way one does teshuvah measure for measure; since he desecrated Hashem's Name through his sins, by sanctifying Hashem's Name he will be forgiven. Similarly, Rabbeinu Yonah writes (Sha'arei Teshuvah, Sha'ar IV) that sanctifying Hashem's Name atones even for sins which have no atonement other than death. Chazal say (Avot 5:21), "Whoever influences the masses to become meritorious shall not be the cause of sin; but one who influences the masses to sin will not be given the means to repent. Moshe was meritorious and influenced the masses to be meritorious, so the merit of the masses was to his credit... Yiravam ben Nevat sinned and caused the masses to sin, so the sin of the masses is charged against him..." We need to clarify the essence of the sin of Yeravam ben Navat, who was the source of all the sins of the Jewish people during the First Temple, and Chazal say (Sanhedrin 101b) that his colossal sin began with preventing the Jews from making a pilgrimage to the Temple in Yerushalayim.

Let us examine this mitzvah of pilgrimage which we were commanded in the Torah (Shemot 23:17) "Three times during the year, all your males shall appear before the Master, the L-rd." Certainly this mitzvah was meant to strengthen the faith of the Jewish people by coming to the Temple and seeing the Kohanim in their service, and the Levites on their platform and Yisrael at their station. This would fortify their faith, and Chazal say about this pasuk (Chagiga 2a), "Yera'eh" – "Yirah," "As He comes to see, so he comes to be seen." Rashi elucidates: The Scripture compared "your seeing" to "His seeing," just as you come to see Him, so He comes to be seen by you... At the same time a person observes the Awesome Presence that resides in the place. It is implied here that by his pilgrimage he can achieve the level of truly feeling that Hashem saw him, and he is being observed by Him, and that Hashem's Eyes view all his actions.

Thus, one who makes a pilgrimage has his faith strengthened and absorbs fear of Heaven at the Temple for a number of reasons: When they witness the service of Hashem there – the Kohanim in their service, and the

Levites on their platform, it certainly inspires them to see the tzaddikim's conduct and multitudes gathered together, since "The King's glory is in a multitude of people." Their faith in Hashem gets strengthened by seeing the wondrous miracles taking place there every day, as Chazal say (Avot 5:5), "Ten miracles were performed for our ancestors in the Holy Temple: No woman miscarried because of the aroma of the sacrificial meat, etc. By observing all these miracles, the person beyond doubt understood that it all came from Hashem and that He rules over everything.

The mitzvah of making a pilgrimage is something that we can comprehend, as we explained before, but the mitzvah of offering sacrifices is something that our minds cannot fathom: Why did the people making a pilgrimage have to offer sacrifices? Is it fitting for the holy Shechinah that the place be filled with blood of the sacrifices? The Rishonim explain (Rabbeinu Bechaye and the Ramban and others) that the issue of sacrifices is beyond our comprehension. The Ramban provides an insight that a person becomes humbled and does teshuvah when he sees the animal being slaughtered in his stead.

All this was relevant while the Beit Hamikdash was standing. People ascended to Yerushalayim, making a pilgrimage, and got strengthened in their fear of Heaven and faith. Each person would offer sacrifices and do complete teshuvah. However, now when the Temple has been destroyed, how can a person soar to great heights and improve his character traits? Therefore, Chazal say (Sukkah 27b) that one must go visit his Rabbi on the Festivals. Certainly, when he will behold the holy countenance of his Rebbe, upon which the Shechinah shines by virtue of his righteousness and Torah, he will learn from him to fear Heaven and correct his ways. Chazal state (Ketubot 25b) that anyone who brings a gift to a Torah scholar, it is as if he offered Bikkurim. They also state (Yoma 71a), "If a man wishes to offer a libation upon the Altar, let him fill the throat of the disciples of the wise with wine." This implies that greeting one's Rebbe achieves a similar spiritual benefit as visiting in the Temple.

Here is where Yeravam's wickedness manifested itself. Since he was afraid that Bnei Yisrael would acquire fear of Heaven and faith by making a pilgrimage, and consequently they would recognize his wickedness and they would zealously depose him from his kingdom, he prevented the Jews from making a pilgrimage. This is the issue concerning Yeravam that Chazal accused him of sinning and causing the people to sin. On the other hand, Chazal say that Moshe Rabbeinu acquired merit and brought merit to the people; thus the merits of the people are credited to him.

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Hillulah of Tzaddikim

1 – The saintly Rabbi Shlomo Pinto, zya"á

2 – Rabbi Shalom Dov The Admor of Chabad

3 – Rabbi Yechiel Michel The Maggid of Zlotchov

4 – Rabbi Yakov Zvi of Nicholsburg Author of "Haktav v'Hakabbalah

5 – Rabbi Avraham Yehoshua Heshel The "Ohev Yisrael" of Apta

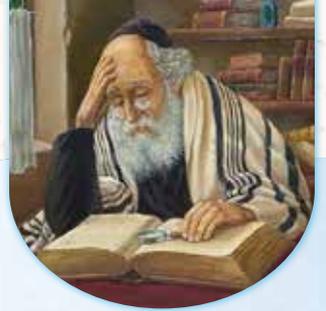
6 – Rabbi Aharon Roth Author of "Shomrei Eemunim"

7 – Rabbi Sasson Mizrahi Author of "Bati Le'Gani"



Walking in their Ways

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



Words of Our Sages

Thanking Hashem

When I met the two dear brothers, Chaim and Yitzchak Weiner (who donated the temporary Beit Haknesset in Ashdod), they promised to donate the sum of nine thousand dollars for our institutions. Some time later, when I had not received the pledge, I asked Rabbi Moshe Gopes to approach them and tell them to hurry up to make good on their word. He should quote the pasuk (Mishlei 10:2), "Charity will save from death."

Rabbi Moshe did as I requested and reminded Yitzchak Weiner to hurry and give the donation as he had promised, so that the verse "Charity will save from death" would be fulfilled. When Mr. Yitzchak Weiner heard the message, he immediately paid his pledge. Afterward, when his brother Chaim came into the office and heard about the matter, he immediately offered to double the amount and give another nine thousand dollars, so that altogether the sum would amount to eighteen thousand dollars, the numerical value of n"i (chai – life).

This took place on Thursday evening. And then, on Friday morning, the two brothers took a flight to a business meeting. On the plane, Yitzchak turned to Chaim, his brother, and asked him why he had decided to double the pledge. His brother Chaim responded, "Do you not agree to it?"

"I do not object," replied Yitzchak. They had barely finished their sentence, and suddenly, horror of horrors, both engines of the plane shut down and the plane fell and crashed into pieces on the ground. Everyone on the flight was killed, except for the two brothers, who by the grace of Hashem, survived. Chaim lost consciousness, and Yitzchak suffered a blow from a large piece of metal and was in critical condition. Thank G-d, they both recovered completely.

When I spoke with them, they immediately thanked me for reminding them to fulfill their vow, "We saw clearly how tzedakah saved us!" I told them, "And what would you like to say to your Creator?"

"One thousand times thank you very much!" they answered enthusiastically. "We thank Him from the depths of our heart for saving our lives, as it is stated: He, Who kept our souls alive and did not let our foot falter."

But we must be aware that the greatest expression of gratitude when a person experiences a miracle is when he draws closer to Hashem, strengthening his commitment to mitzvot and good deeds, because it is not enough to simply say thank you. Gratitude is a feeling that passes and later a person will not remember it. However, if he draws closer to Hashem, he proves his love to Hashem, and this is the greatest show of appreciation, to come closer and closer and seek "But as for me – G-d's nearness is my good."

This is as stated in Tehillim (92:2), "It is good to give thanks to the L-rd." If a person wishes to thank Hashem for His wondrous miracles on his behalf, he should engage in "good" - which implies engaging in the study of Torah. There is nothing as good as the Torah, as it is stated (Mishlei 4:2), "For I gave you good teaching." If he observes the Torah and its mitzvot, this is the greatest show of gratitude, and thereby he fulfills "It is good to give thanks to the L-rd."

A person who is close to Hashem and fulfills His will, besides for meriting a portion in the World to Come, which is eternal bliss, he will also be joyous and happy in this world, without any worries, since he clearly trusts that all that Hashem does is for his best. Even if he experiences difficulties, he knows that his trials are meant to atone for his sins, and he will never question Hashem's ways, but will accept his lot with joy.

Respecting each person

"And if a person brings a meal offering to the L-rd" (Vayikra 2:1)

Rashi comments: "And if a person brings" [literally, "And if a soul brings."] Regarding all the sacrifices which were donated voluntarily, the only instance where Scripture states the word שְׁפָרָה "soul" is in the case of the meal-offering. Now, who usually donates a meal-offering? A poor man [because flour is less expensive than birds or animals]. [Hence,] the Holy One Blessed is He, says: "I account if for him as if he has sacrificed his very soul!" The Ba'al Haturim explains that concerning the bird and the Minchah it is not stated that they bring them "Before Hashem" like by the young bull, because the poor people are the ones who brought a bird, and they were embarrassed to bring them in public. Therefore, they would bring it only to Aharon and his sons. In addition, Aharon was warned that also the Kohen Hagadol should not disparage the Minchah of the pauper.

The gaon Rabbi Yakov Neiman, zt"l, in his sefer "Darchei Mussar" explains the opinion of the gaon Rabbi Aharon Baksh, zt"l, (Av Beit Din of Shavel, one of the Sages of Lithuania): The Torah preserves the dignity of the poor. Therefore, the Torah states, "Break it into pieces," so that it should look like a lot and the pan should be full. Similarly, when a poor person brought a bird for an offering, it is stated, "And he shall split it open with its wing feathers [intact], but he shall not tear it completely apart" (Vayikra 1:7), and Rashi explains (according to what is stated in Vayikra Rabbah 3:5): Surely you will not find even the simplest of people [i.e., even a person who is not particular,] who, when smelling the odor of burnt feathers, does not find it repulsive. Why then does Scripture command us to send [the feathers] up in smoke? [The feathers are left intact] so that the altar should appear sated and adorned with the sacrifice of the poor man [who could afford only a bird].

If the wings would be removed from the bird, the bird would get burned up quickly, and the poor man feel bad and become jealous of the rich man and his offering, since the rich man would bring a bull, which took a long time to process and to burn, while his offering burned quickly, and he would be distressed. Therefore, the Torah states "but he shall not tear it completely apart" – that he should burn it together with its feathers. In this way it would take a long time to burn and the poor man would be gratified. We learn from this how much the Torah preserves the dignity of each man.

Even when a person encounters a relationship in which he has to conduct himself according to the dictum of "trust him, yet suspect him" with his fellow, one should emphasize more the "trust him," than the "suspect him!"

The tzaddik Rabbi Nachum Ze'ev of Kelm, zt"l, was blessed with the ability to speak well in public. His speeches were compelling and would impress his audiences. Once he was invited to a festive gathering in Vilna and was due to speak after another prominent Rabbi. When his turn came, he refused to speak, despite all the pleading from the crowd to approach the podium and deliver his speech.

To his astonished family members, he confided that after hearing the speech of the Rabbi before him, which did not impress the audience, he feared that if he delivered his powerful speech, it would cause a slight to the honor of the prominent Rabbi, and thus he would gain honor through his fellow's disgrace.

The Haftarah

"This people which I fashioned for Myself" (Yeshaya 43)

The connection to the Parsha: In the Haftarah, Israel is accused of not bringing the offerings to Hashem, while the Parsha speaks about the laws concerning the service of the offerings.



Guard Your Tongue

The Power of Speech

One must condemn them

The prohibition of lashon hara is specifically regarding those who according to the Torah are still included as a member of the Jewish congregation, meaning that they are part of the Jewish nation who bear the banner of Torah and mitzvot. However, Jews who are termed heretics, it is a mitzvah to condemn and disparage them, whether in front of them or otherwise, concerning all that one sees or hears about them, as it is stated (Tehillim 139:21) "Did I not hate Your enemies, O L-rd? With those who rise up against You, I quarrel!"



Chazak U'Baruch

When the Mishkan was inaugurated, the Nesi'im, who were the leaders of the Tribes, sought to bring pleasure to Hashem and offer sacrifices in the Mishkan on the occasion of the great day, the inauguration of the Mishkan, which was the day when the Shechinah descended to reside within it. Certainly the Nesi'im sought to offer their sacrifices in the most perfect manner to bring great pleasure to their Father in Heaven. So, what did they do? Let us see what the Midrash states (Bamidbar Rabbah 14:12).

“Rabbi Shimon says: What is the Torah teaching us by stating, “presented by the Nesi'im of Israel”? It teaches that they volunteered by themselves, and each one offered an identical sacrifice, equal in value, and in weight, and not one of them sacrificed more than their fellow. If one of them would have offered more than his fellow, then the sacrifice of one of the Tribes, whose turn would be on the seventh day of Shabbat, would not have been able to override the sanctity of Shabbat, and he would have been denied his turn. Hashem said to them: Since you have honored one another, therefore I will honor you by allowing you to sacrifice your offering on my Shabbat, so that there should be no cessation in the succession of your offerings.”

The Nesi'im of Israel, the Chafetz Chaim teaches, knew the secret: They understood that the best way to bring pleasure to Hashem was by having each of them offer the exact same sacrifice so that there should not be any competition between them...

The Nesi'im understood that Hashem's joy in their sacrifices would be complete, since it would not be accompanied by any strife or awful jealousy between them. By witnessing all His children demonstrating love and respect to each other, Hashem's pleasure would be magnified more and more.

Indeed, the Nesi'im merited a magnificent privilege because of this: even though an offering of the Nesi'im would generally not override the sanctity of Shabbat, since it was a sacrifice of an individual, and it was a sacrifice of voluntary donation, which does not override Shabbat, nevertheless, Hashem told them: Since you honored one another, I too will honor you, and in order not to cause a cessation in the succession of your sacrifices, I will allow you to sacrifice your offering also on the holy day of Shabbat.

Instead of trying to gain honor through hatred and rivalry, the Nesi'im gained a lot more honor through their brotherly love and by protecting their fellow's honor! They gained the honor from the treasury of the King of all kings, Who's resources are unlimited.

When each person tries to attain everything the world has to offer at the expense of his fellow, then he may succeed... but woe to such success. How short lived it is, and how deficient! How much honor, or wealth, or success, can a man of flesh and blood ultimately achieve through all his labor?

But when one's priority is to benefit his fellow as he would want to benefit himself, then he acquires direct access to the boundless treasures of his Father in heaven! Through these treasures one can find true and unlimited success in all that he needs: salvation, health, pleasure, livelihood, and everything good!

We sometimes live with the feeling that the success of our fellow is actually at our expense. Therefore, we look grudgingly at other people's success... However, this is clearly a mistake! For Hashem it makes no difference if there is only one person on earth, or billions, more than we can count. He has no problem providing and sustaining the entire creation with all its needs, just as He provides and sustains all creatures, “from the horns of wild oxen to the eggs of vermin.”

Furthermore, the opposite is true: Not only will our efforts for our fellow's success not be at the expense of our own well-being, but when we bring pleasure to the Master of the World by seeking to benefit His beloved Children, it will bring us even greater abundance from Above!

Treasures

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



Sanctifying one's entire being

“And what he has trespassed against the holy thing he shall pay, and he shall add one fifth of its value to it” (Vayikra 5:16)

The Ben Ish Chai, zy”a, (Vayikra Year 1) brings the words of Chazal (Bava Batra 75b) “There will come a time when ‘Holy’ will be said before the righteous as it is said before the Holy One, blessed be He.”

We will expand on the words of the Ben Ish Chai. As we know, one who used sacred property thereby committed treachery, and the Torah obligates him to pay the principle, a fifth, and a guilt offering. Why a fifth? I would like to suggest, with siyata d'Shemaya, that the sacred property does not belong to the person, but it is Hashem's, and no one has the right to use it for his own needs. If he transgressed by using it, even unintentionally, he committed treachery, and tarnished not only the sacred property, but also the entire Torah, including all five chumashim of the Torah. Therefore, he pays “a fifth,” signifying the discredit he caused to all five chumashim of the Torah. No one can have any part in an object that was assigned as holy for Hashem, and was sanctified for Hashem's sake, and it is prohibited by all means to use it, turning it mundane. It is so severe to the extent that it is considered as if he discredited the entire Torah, and that is why he pays specifically a fifth.

If concerning an inanimate object that was sanctified for the sake of Heaven one commits treachery by using it for his personal use and pays a fifth – how much more so one who commits treachery with his body and uses it for unholy purposes, speaking words that are not permitted by the Torah, or using it to sin, G-d forbid. This too is considered committing treachery and one is obligated to pay a fifth because he caused discredit to all the five chumashim of the Torah. All the organs and limbs of a person are considered sacred, since Hashem commanded us to be holy, as it is stated (Vayikra 19:2) “You shall be holy, for I, the Lord, your G-d, am holy.” Thus, by default a Jew's body is sacred by the command of the Torah. Hashem allows a person to use his body only for the purpose of observing Torah and mitzvot. One who transgresses and uses his body for evil, committing sins through his limbs and organs, is guilty of committing treachery with that which is sanctified for Hashem's sake, and he is obligated to pay a fifth, since by doing so he caused discredit to all five chumashim of the Torah.

Therefore, the Ben Ish Chai, zy”a, says that tzaddikim sanctify their bodies as entirely sacred to Hashem, with no trace of personal enjoyment. They delight only with Hashem, and ultimately achieve endless joy. Their limbs and organs become holy and sanctified to Hashem also in thought, speech and action. Consequently, in the Future, the angels will say before them “holy, holy, holy,” because they will testify about them that they sanctified themselves by making their bodies holy for the sake of Heaven in all three areas: thought, speech, and action.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Stealing from the public

When the Chafetz Chaim was preparing to immigrate to Eretz Yisrael, he informed the people of his city that since he owned a grocery store for several years, and Chazal say that a store owner is a craft of thieves, he wants to make amends. The Gemara says that one who steals from the public, but he does not know exactly who he stole from, should provide a service for the public, such as wells. Therefore, he declared that he was leaving the well in the courtyard of his house for all the people in the city to use.

Once in the winter it was very cold and all the waters of the wells froze over into ice, but the well of the Chafetz Chaim, by some miracle, did not freeze over.

When the people excitedly came to tell the Chafetz Chaim about it, the Chafetz Chaim responded simply without any surprise over the “obvious” “miracle”: How wonderful! Now all those people I stole from can come and enjoy the waters of my well.



Men of Faith

Excerpts from the book *Men of Faith on the lives and deeds of the House of Pinto*

The Tzaddik's Warning

Mr. Mordechai Cohen embarked on his business at the young age of eighteen. He would travel from city to city, buying merchandise and selling it for a profit. Mordechai was a good soul and he had a partner whom he trusted implicitly. He spent much of his time in assisting others and doing acts of charity.

One day, when Mordechai came to Mogador, he heard a voice behind him calling his name. He looked back and saw a young man.

“Who are you and what do you want?”

“You don't recognize me?”

“No! I do not recognize you at all!”

“You may not recognize me, but I am Chaim Pinto, the grandson of Rabbi Chaim Pinto Hagadol.”

The chance meeting filled Mordechai with joy. The youth standing before him was the grandson of the tzaddik buried in the city. In appreciation, he kissed the young Rabbi Chaim's hand and gave him a gift as a gesture of admiration.

Rabbi Chaim parted from him, wishing him well.

Less than half an hour later, Rabbi Chaim returned to the spot where they had met. He searched for Mordechai, asking all the people around him for a clue to his whereabouts. In the end, Rabbi Chaim found Mordechai loading his wagons with merchandise in preparation for his journey home.

“Be aware,” warned Rabbi Chaim, “that your partner has betrayed you. He sold all the merchandise which you had in stock and plans to rob you of your share. Do not let him get away with it. Bring witnesses to prove your case, since you did not receive a penny from him. Pray that the merit of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Pinto should stand in your stead and save you from the evil schemes of your partner.”

At first, Mordechai did not take the tzaddik's warning seriously, since he enjoyed a solid partnership with his friend, trusting him completely. “How could it be that he had behaved in such a low way?” Mordechai wondered in his heart.

However, since the information had come from a reliable source, he decided to investigate the matter. He waited for an opportunity to verify the accusation.

When Mordechai got home, he set out immediately to his partner's house. After the formal greetings, Mordechai asked him, “How did our business fare while I was away?” His “partner” answered him brazenly, “What business? We are not partners at all! What are you talking about?”

At that moment, Mordechai recalled the words of Rabbi Chaim, including his advice. At first, he called two witnesses to the Beit Din to testify that there had been no dissolution of the partnership and that he had not received a single penny of his share.

Mordechai also remembered the rest of Rabbi Chaim's advice, and he began to cry, “G-d of Rabbi Chaim Pinto, answer me! G-d of Rabbi Chaim Pinto, answer me!”

The partner became paralyzed with fear when he heard the name that Mordechai Cohen uttered. He shamefacedly admitted his evil scheme. His disgrace was revealed in court, and his credibility was damaged. Mordechai legally terminated their partnership.

Moreinu v'Rabbeinu added the following:

“I heard this story from the son of Rabbi Mordechai Cohen. I am absolutely amazed how Rabbi Chaim Hakatan possessed Divine inspiration already at such a young age. The city in which the partner of Rav Mordechai lived was approximately one thousand kilometers from Mogador. How did Rabbi Chaim have such far-reaching vision?”