בס"ד

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

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Hillulah of Tzaddikim

12 – Rabbi Shlomo Luria, the Maharshal
13 – Rabbi David Shalosh
14 – Rabbi Matityah Garji, author of 'Oneg Shabbat'
15 – Rabbi Yehuda HaNassi
16 – Rabbi Shaul Yedidya Taub, Admor of Modzitz
17 – Rabbi Ya'akov Lofess
17 – Rabbi Yosef Yozel Horowitz, the Alter of Novardok
18 – Rabbi Yosef Yehuda Chakim, the Chacham Bashi of Izmir

MASKIL LEDAVID

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

Why is the Evening Prayer Voluntary?

"Ya'akov departed from Beer-sheva and went toward Charan" (Bereishit 28:10)

Yitzchak Avinu's approach in Avodat Hashem was different from Ya'akov Avinu's. Yitzchak's approach was mainly an internal, spiritual Divine service and for all intents and purposes, even his exterior physical body was considered as such. He was a perfect burnt-offering, and just as a burnt-offering is offered in its entirety to Hashem, so Yitzchak Avinu was an entirely praiseworthy holy being for Hashem Yitbarach. Yitzchak served Hashem with the depths of his soul, a service that stemmed from the attribute of gevurah, strength. He was as strong as a lion in performing the will of his Creator. This is a lofty level of attainment that most mortals do not have the ability to even fathom. Chazal tell us that his body transformed into something as spiritual as an angel that has no residue of materialism at all. I have seen written in the holy sefarim that Yitzchak did not even have the regular physical pleasures of mortals, such as the delight in eating and drinking, for his body became pure and clean from any form of materialism. He became like an angel and saraf.

Whereas Ya'akov Avinu's a"h approach was, in addition to his internal worshipful service, to focus as well on the external holy service. He summoned strength and courage in his battle against the deceitful Lavan and his excessive impurity. Ya'akov absorbed his main strength from the power of the Holy Torah, with which he occupied himself throughout his life without cessation. He was considered as "a wholesome man, abiding in tents" and killed himself in the tent of Torah. That is why Ya'akov left home, as the verse says, "Ya'akov departed". He left his family and exiled himself to a place of Torah, to the Beit Midrash of Shem and Ever, and there he immersed himself in Torah for fourteen years, engaging in Torah study with self-sacrifice and super-human strength, and without even sleeping for all those years.

While Yitzchak and Ya'akov had different approaches in Avodat Hashem, "All the rivers flow into the sea" (Kohelet 1:7). Both of them had, each in his own way, the common goal of sanctifying Hashem's Name and performing His will wholeheartedly. Both of them garnered their spiritual strength and absorbed their holiness from their holy father Avraham Avinu.

When Ya'akov arrived in Charan, the sun set and the verse says (ibid 28:11), "He encountered the place and spent the night there". The Gemarah tells us (Berachot 26b), "There is a braitah, Ya'akov established the evening prayer as it says, 'he encountered (ויפגע) the place'. 'פגיעה', encountering, always denotes prayer". I found this hard to understand. If Ya'akov established the evening prayer, why does a different Gemarah say (Berachot 27b) that the evening prayer is voluntary? This is corroborated by the halachic ruling (see Orach Chaim siman §237). Seemingly, just as Avraham established Shacharit and Yitzchak established Mincha, and according to all opinions, these are obligatory prayers, should not the Aravit prayer that Ya'akov established have the same ruling? Why is this prayer less important to be considered only voluntary?

With siyata dishmaya I would like to explain the idea as follows. Ya'akov Avinu was the pillar of Torah upon which the world stands. The verse testifies about him, (ibid 25:27), "But Ya'akov was a wholesome man, abiding in tents". The word 'תם', wholesome, can be rewritten to spell 'מת', dead, for Ya'akov Avinu killed himself in the tent of Torah. He engaged in Torah study without weariness both day and night, when awake and when sleeping, as it says (ibid 28:16), "Ya'akov awoke from his sleep (משנתו)", Rabbi Yochanan says, don't' read it 'm'shnato', from his sleep, but 'm'mishnato', from his learning.

Even when Ya'akov Avinu a"h went to rest, he was engaged in the Holy Torah and did not cease for even one moment. The verse says (ibid 37:1), "וישב יעקב, Ya'akov settled", implying that he settled himself in Yeshiva (ישב בישיבה) all his life. The Torah was his entire essence, and all his preoccupations were given over to it. That is why it says about him (ibid 33:18), "Ya'akov arrived intact" and Chazal explain (Shabbat 33a), "intact in his Torah". Even though for many years he shepherded Lavan's sheep and he suffered through many tribulations, nevertheless his Torah was not blemished and he did not forget anything from his learning. His Torah was preserved inside him because he was connected to it and clung to it with his entire soul.

As we know, one for whom Torah is his profession and he engages in it without cessation, is exempt from prayer. Due to this, Ya'akov Avinu did not have to establish the evening prayer during the fourteen years that he studied Torah in the Beit Midrash of Shem and Ever since the Holy Torah was his entire life. As he engaged in it with all his strength and Torah study was more important to him than anything else, he did not wish to cease its study even to pray.

But now that he arrived in a place and the sun set, he felt tiredness and wished to rest a bit after fourteen years of not sleeping. Then he said to himself that if he ceases for a moment from the toil of Torah and rests, the time has come to also engage himself in prayer. Also, the circumstances demanded it because he was now going, at the command of his father Yitzchak, to find his marriage partner. Therefore, particularly at this moment when Ya'akov went to rest and stopped learning for a very short time, he established the evening prayer.

Now we can understand why the evening prayer is voluntary. Ya'akov Avinu's main essence and occupation was the Holy Torah alone, and for this reason he did not engage in prayer because he was exempt. Only that night when the sun set for him and he rested somewhat from the Torah without being at fault for this, did Ya'akov open his mouth in prayer. But this was only a temporary ruling since the Holy Torah was his main occupation, and not prayer.



Walking in their Ways

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

Few in Place of Many

Mr. David Sitbon of Paris has a son, Yochanan, who when he was younger became ill with leukemia. He lay in critical condition, hovering between life and death. During that time, a dinner was arranged to raise funds for the poor for their upcoming Pesach needs.

Approximately four hundred people were invited. Unfortunately, since a football game was scheduled for the same night, only forty people showed up at the dinner. At first, the organizers, myself included, were cast into despair. But we immediately reinforced our faith in Hashem. Seeing how hard we had tried to make this event a success, Hashem would surely extend His hand and deliver us.

Suddenly, Mr. Sitbon entered with another twenty people. The hall now contained sixty people who merited hearing divrei Torah. Occasionally, we would cast a glance at Mr. Sitbon's downcast face and be filled with pity over his son lying deathly ill in the hospital.

Suddenly, I stood up and declared, "We are obligated to help those in need, on whose behalf we have gathered here today. Everyone should donate according to his means. With Hashem's help, this mitzvah will be a merit for the child, Yochanan Sitbon, and Hashem will heal him completely. This mitzvah will certainly cause a ruckus on High, for a mere sixty people are willingly undertaking the task originally expected of four hundred. Hashem will surely effect miracles and in one year's time, we will meet once again, in this venue, together with the child, whole and hearty."

The people were deeply moved at my words. From only sixty people, we managed to raise double that which we had anticipated from four hundred!

I could not attend the dinner the following year, on account of the birth of my son, Rabbi Michael Yosef Alexander, n"y. But the dinner was graced by the presence of the completely healthy Yochanan Sitbon.

Today, he is, Baruch Hashem, happily married and the father of five children, may they increase in number. May Hashem grant him the merit of Torah and good deeds.

The Haftarah

"And yet My people waver about returning to Me" (Hoshea 11)

Ashkenazim read the section ***"Ya'akov fled to the field of Aram"*** (Hoshea 12)

The connection to the Parsha: The Haftarah mentions Ya'akov who seized Esav's heel, "In the womb he seized his brother's heel", and the Parsha talks about Ya'akov fleeing from his brother Esav.

Guard Your Tongue

I Don't Like His Style

Although it seems to be that pointing out matters of personal taste is not considered as a negative comment, for example saying, "I don't like dry wine", simply describes the personal preferences and tastes of the speaker and is not a criticism of the wine.

However, concerning lashon hara, although the same rule would seem to apply and one may think that it is permissible to say that one doesn't like the style of a certain lecturer or speaker, in actual fact, it is generally prohibited to make these kinds of statements because one's words imply that the lecturer is not such a talented speaker.



In Our Father's Path

How Does One Get into a 'Beetle'?

When Leah married one of the choice Avot, Ya'akov Avinu a"h, it says, "And it was, in the morning, and behold it was Leah!" (Bereishit 29:25). Rashi explains, "And it was, in the morning, whereas at night Ya'akov did not notice that it was Leah, because Ya'akov had given Rachel signs and when she saw that they were taking Leah in to him, she said, "now my sister will be shamed", so she revealed those signs to her".

All the commentaries point out Rachel's singular attribute of being prepared to forgo for the sake of her sister Leah. However, this was not just a one-off act, but a concession over a long period. Throughout her married life with Ya'akov, Rachel acted charitably to Leah and gave her the feeling that she performed an act of kindness with her by marrying Ya'akov before her. And even when Leah taunted her, she kept quiet and didn't say anything.

This is how Rabbi Shalom Schwadron zt"l explains why this trial that Rachel faced, stood for her and at the time of the destruction of the Beit Hamikdash and the exile, it was her memory and merit that ascended before Hashem to redeem His children from exile, while the trials of the Avot, which were huge and difficult trials, did not stand for Yisrael to take them out of exile.

The reason is that the trials of the Avot were limited to the time that they occurred, while Rachel's challenge continued over a long period, yet she constantly prevailed in silence and did not say anything! This is a form of strength that has no equal, and this fortitude afforded her the eternal merit of being the one in whose merit Hashem will wish to redeem His children.

The Admor, Rabbi Ahron of Belz zt"l, once had to travel to a brit milah. His attendant showed up with a small car, called a 'Beetle', to take him to the brit.

The Admor asked in surprise, "How does one get into such a small car?" And the reply was, "One has to bend down a bit".

The Admor bent down, somehow crawled inside and the car set out on its way...

The Admor disclosed, "I learnt a great lesson from this: If you wish to get ahead, you must bend down"...

This was Shlomo Hamelech's a"h intention in saying (Mishlei 25:15): "A soft tongue breaks strong anger". With



Pearls of the Parsha

When Tzaddikim Receive Prophecy in a Dream

"He encountered the place and spent the night there because the sun had sent" (Bereishit 28:11)

The Midrash says that the words "because the sun had set", teach us that Hashem made the sun set before its time, so as to speak with Ya'akov privately.

The Midrash explains this using the mashal of the king's beloved friend who came to visit him on occasion. When he arrived, the king said, "Turn off the lights, extinguish the lamps, for I wish to speak with my beloved friend privately". So too, Hashem made the sun set before its time so as to speak to Ya'akov intimately.

Rabbi Shmuel Florentin of Salonica, in his sefer 'Minchat Shmuel', points out the following difficulty. On the verse, "And G-d came to Avimelech in a dream by night", the Midrash says that Hashem especially reveals Himself to the nations by night, as it says, "G-d came to Bilaam at night". We also find with Lavan that Hashem came to him in a dream at night, but Hashem reveals Himself to the Jewish prophets by day, as it says, "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", as well as other examples. So why does the above Midrash say that Hashem made the sun set to speak to Ya'akov intimately, implying at night?

He answers according to the Moharash Yaffe, who says that prophecy by day comes only to a prophet who is accustomed to Hashem speaking to him, while to a prophet who is unaccustomed to prophecy, Hashem only reveals Himself at night. This explanation fits in with the precise wording of the Midrash, "it can be compared to the king's beloved friend who comes to visit him on occasion".

Let us Make an Agreement in Advance

"Then Lavan said to Ya'akov, 'Just because you are my relative, should you serve me for nothing'" (Bereishit 29:15)

The Gemarah (Chulin 127a) brings that the Amorah Rav Gidal offered some advice for life, in the name of Rav: If someone from the town of 'Neresh' kisses you, count your teeth to make sure he did not steal one. If someone from the town of 'Nahar Pekod' accompanies you, it is because of the beautiful jacket that he sees on you and wishes to steal it. If someone from 'Pumbedita' accompanies you, change your place of lodging because he plans to rob you.

The Chatam Sofer uses this Gemarah to explain the verse, "he recounted to Lavan all these events". Ya'akov told Lavan that he stole the blessings from Esav and that is why Elifaz stole everything from him. When Lavan heard that Ya'akov also knows how to steal, he said, "is it because you are my brother (meaning relative)" if so, we are really brothers, partners in crime as it were...

The Chatam Sofer adds that Lavan was saying, "Just because you are my relative", in wonder, implying, "You are a thief just like me and you will serve me for nothing? You will surely still steal from me at some opportunity". Just as the Gemara in Chulin says that a thief has hidden intentions on how to cheat and steal. If so, "Tell me: What are your wages", let us come to an agreement in advance regarding the amount I will pay you, and don't steal from me..."

Idols are Sorcery

"She said to her father, 'Let not my lord find it annoying that I cannot rise up before you, for the way of women is upon me" (Bereishit 31:35)

The sefer 'Lemachar A'atir' brings a wonderful idea that he heard from his grandfather, Hagaon R' M. M. Breslauer zt"l:

Hagaon Rabbi Yeshaya Pik Berlin zt"l, author of 'Mesoret HaShas', explains in the name of his wife the Rabbanit a"h, that when Rachel said "the way of women is upon me", she was referring to the idols that she was hiding, because idols are an act of sorcery. The verse says (Shemot 22:17), "You shall not permit a sorceress to live" and Rashi expounds that the court-inflicted death penalty applies equally to male and female sorcerers, but the verse uses the feminine because this activity was more common among women. This is a source for sorcery being referred to as "the way of women". By saying "the way of women is upon me", Rachel was implying, the idols which are an act of sorcery and are called the way of women, are upon me, are with me. According to this explanation, it follows that indeed Rachel did not lie but spoke in a manner that could be interpreted in two different ways.

Treasures

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



Why Did Esav Agree that his Son Eliphaz Study Torah with Ya'akov?

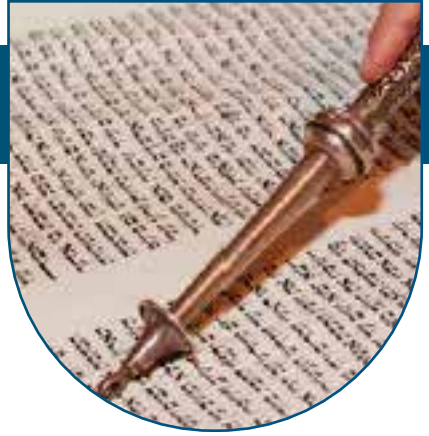
So lofty was the level to which Ya'akov Avinu a"h rose, that he merited being the pillar of the Holy Torah that upheld the world, and his image was engraved in the Throne of Glory.

Let us separate between the holy and the profane, between the pure and the impure, and focus on Esav the rasha, brother of Ya'akov Avinu a"h, who was the exact opposite. He was despised by Hashem and by mankind too. Hashem hated him as it says (Malachi 1:2-3), "yet I loved Ya'akov. But I hated Esav". There was not one sin that he did not transgress, whether in immorality or theft. He also denied Hashem's existence r"l and did not believe in the resurrection of the dead.

We should not mistakenly think that Esav did not recognize the greatness and importance of Torah. He certainly understood the great value of the Living Torah of G-d, but it was hard for him to abstain and distance himself from the temptations of This World, for he lacked the willpower to avoid obscenity and other abominations. We can bring a proof for the fact that Esav was aware of the greatness of Torah from the following Chazal (Rashi 29:11): Esav ordered his son Eliphaz to ambush Ya'akov and kill him. Eliphaz pursued and found Ya'akov, but, having been raised by Yitzchak and having studied Torah with Ya'akov, he could not bring himself to kill. He asked Ya'akov, "What about my father's command?" Ya'akov told him that by taking away all his wealth and thus impoverishing him it would be considered as if he complied with Esav's order, for the Sages say that a poor person is tantamount to a dead man.

It seems very strange that Esav the rasha should agree that his son Elifaz study Torah with Ya'akov, for he hated the Torah and those who study it.

But from here we see that Esav knew and recognized the great value and importance of Torah. He wanted his son to follow in its ways and merit absorbing the holiness of Ya'akov so that he too should become a Talmid Chacham like him. However, Esav himself did not want to cleave to the Torah, he wished to continue his wicked ways and corrupt himself with the temptations of This World. He preferred to live a life of abandonment and debauchery, and so even when he saw the truth in front of his eyes, he did not agree to repent on any account. And so he persisted with his rebelliousness and insubordination, adding impurity to his already impure state.



A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA

In the historical meeting between the deceitful Lavan and Ya'akov Avinu a"h, Ya'akov declares, "G-d saw my wretchedness and the toil of my hands, so He admonished you last night" (Bereishit 31:42). Rabbeinu Bachaye explains, "He admonished you last night- that you should not kill me. If so, the merit of the (integrity of the) toil of his hands saved him from being killed and the merit of his fear of G-d saved his money"...

In connection to this, the Maharal lays down the following ruling in his sefer 'Derech Chaim', based on the Mishna (Avot 1:17), "The world endures on three things, justice, truth and peace". "Hashem Yitbarach gives each person a fitting acquisition, and no person can touch what has been set aside for his friend, only what Hashem determined for each individual. But if mankind does not uphold justice, the acquisition that has been Heavenly ordained for a certain individual will be annulled and given over to someone else who is not worthy of it.

The Gate of Bitachon

Rabbi Gamliel HaKohen Rabinowitz shlita relates the following story that he personally heard from the hero of the tale. He was a 'ba'al teshuva' who married an American converted Jewess. Her non-Jewish father was one of the American tycoons and his legendary wealth was valued at tens of billions.

Due to his exceptional wealth, he spent his time enjoying life and indulging in the futile pleasures of This World. Word had it that his rich wife spent over a thousand dollars on her smallest purchase ...

Their dear daughter, whose soul was seemingly hewn from a high and lofty place, greatly despised and detested these futile pleasures. The chase after animalistic enjoyment did not leave her with anything of substance or significance in life, and so she searched for the true purpose of life that would afford her genuine meaning. At the end of a long journey, with Hashem's kindness, her soul found the holy Jewish religion and she converted according to law, detaching herself completely from her parents' home to join the Jewish heritage, while discarding all the exceptional wealth and worldly pleasures of her parent's home. Her parents were extremely insulted and disavowed her completely. They no longer wished to consider her as their daughter.

Now she was free to devote herself entirely to striving spiritually in Torah, prayer and mitzvah observance with the appropriate holiness, as was her sincere wish.

She eventually married a dear young man, the ba'al teshuva mentioned at the beginning of the story. Of course, she did not receive any assistance from her wealthy parents, not even one cent... And so she began her new life with her chatan with absolutely nothing. Through the generosity of our fellow Jews, they established their home in a small, simple apartment, and rejoiced in their spiritual lot of Torah and mitzvah observance with joy and embellishment!

After several years of marriage, when they had already been blessed with several small children, supporting their growing family became a great challenge for them. Whatever they tried was met with disappointment and bitter losses.

But our dear ba'al teshuva did not fall into despair, G-d forbid. Rather, he fortified himself with observing Torah and mitzvot in joy. On the advice of one his friends, he began studying the sefer 'Chovat Halevavot' and became attached to it with all the fibers of his soul! Since he was struggling financially, his friend suggested that he study the section in Chovat Halevavot called 'Sha'ar Habitachon', which details at great length the laws of bitachon and hishtadlut (appropriate effort) concerning livelihood. Indeed, during this trying time, this sefer was their constant companion, and he encouraged himself and his wife not to lose hope in the Rock of the World, G-d forbid, who sustains, provides, and nourishes every single creature, from the horns of a re'em to the eggs of lice.

In this way, the couple endured poverty over a long period of time, but with an overriding feeling of happiness and tranquility. They lived modestly and simply, constantly fortifying their great trust in Hashem's kindness. Their way of life and exceptional determination made a great impression in heaven! After withstanding this difficult test with fortitude and strength, without ever becoming angry or complaining about their difficult situation, Heaven decreed that the time had come to redeem them from trouble to relief!

One evening the husband had an idea. "I have some experience in real-estate, maybe I should try my luck in this profession?" From thought to deed, he turned to several of his friends who were business owners and inquired whether they had any good business deal to offer him. Indeed, one of his friends was happy to suggest a 'deal' that had been 'stuck' for several years, with no interested buyer. The building in question was an enormous, prestigious building in one of the expensive areas in the large business center in Manhattan. It valued at 40 million dollars. "On the contrary," his friend said, "Show us your professionalism by finding a suitable, honest buyer for this prominent deal, and you will be rewarded well!"

With not much choice, since he could not find any simpler offer, he decided to try his luck with this huge deal. He began with a small advert in one of the local newspapers, where he offered several details about the building in question: its location, price, and immediate entry after payment!

Perusing the Notice Due to Boredom

One of the beloved attractions of the wealthy American business owners of Manhattan is ice skating in the massive ski site in Manhattan. One of the regular skiers, an American non-Jew, sprawled out on an easy chair after completing a long ski track. While sipping a drink he noticed a section of the daily newspaper lying on the ground, and out of curiosity and boredom, picked it up and began leafing through it. Suddenly, his eyes caught hold of a small, side advert, concerning a big, prestigious building that was being offered for sale. He was appealed by the offer! It seemed like a most lucrative deal, and right then and there he called the number that was listed in the advert.

The fresh real estate agent was amazed at the quick response to his small advert. After exchanging several more details, it turned out that the man in question was a serious buyer who was prepared to hand over the entire sum immediately!

Just several days passed and the deal of a lifetime was set in motion. Our acquaintance earned a huge fortune in one fell swoop! He received a broker's fee of one and a half percent from each side, which together amounted to a million, two hundred thousand dollars!

This considerable sum was only his beginning in this industry. From then on, his reputation grew sevenfold and today he is one of the biggest real estate dealers in New York. In the shortest time, with Hashem's blessing, they became very wealthy, as it says (Tehillim 84:6), "Praiseworthy is the man whose strength is in You".