

Pachad David

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Under the auspices of **Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita**
Son of the tzaddik and miracle-worker **Rabbi Moshe Ahron Pinto, zt"l**, and grandson of the holy tzaddik and miracle-worker **Rabbi Chaim Pinto, zy"l**



Maskil L'David

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

The Attribute of Alacrity is a Crown for Mitzvot

"Then Avraham ran to the cattle"

(Bereishit 18:7)

Why did Avraham have to run after the cattle? Could he not have gone calmly to choose a tender calf to prepare for his guests? Especially since at that time he was sick and recuperating from his brit milah, until Hashem came to visit him personally.

We may infer from this that in order to serve Hashem properly, it is important to acquire the attribute of alacrity. We learn this from Avraham Avinu's conduct. When Hashem commanded him to sacrifice his son on the Mizbeach, Avraham rose early in the morning to fulfill the mitzvah of Hashem, as it says (Bereishit 22:3) "So Avraham woke up early in the morning." Chazal explain (Pesachim 4a) that from this we learn that "The zealous are early to do mitzvot." From here we see that it was not necessary to compel Avraham to wake up early in the morning to perform the mitzvah. Moreover, Hashem did not command him to sacrifice his son immediately in the morning, and he could have delayed performing the mitzvah, but nevertheless Avraham hurried to fulfill the command of his Creator.

Also, when welcoming guests, Avraham conducted himself in this way. Despite being sick, the pasuk states (ibid. 18:1) "While he was sitting at the entrance of the tent in the heat of the day." Rashi explains, "It was the third day from his circumcision, and the Holy One, blessed be He, came and inquired about his welfare." Understandably, Avraham was exempt from welcoming guests, since he was suffering from his circumcision. In addition, Hashem had just come to visit him, so why would Avraham seek to welcome guests at that time?! Let us imagine that there is a sick man lying in bed, and the king comes to visit him. Suddenly, knocking is heard at the door and a guest appears at the entrance. Then the sick man turns to the guest and begins to talk to him, while ignoring the king... This is certainly not proper behavior. And so, although Hashem was standing at Avraham's side when He came to visit him, he kept wishing for guests to appear and was looking out for a wayfarer to invite to his house. Obviously his conduct was proper, since even when he engaged in welcoming the guests, he did not disregard the holy Shechinah, because all his actions were for the sake of Heaven, and he constantly cleaved to Hashem and remained close to Him. This is why

Hashem consented to his welcoming the guests and even waited for him.

Avraham merited all this because of his alacrity in performing mitzvot. He said that although it is true that one who is involved in performing a mitzvah is exempt from performing another one simultaneously, but why should he forgo one of them? On the contrary, he would be quick and profit. Therefore, even when he was sick and it was difficult for him to welcome guests, and furthermore, Hashem was in his house, nevertheless he looked for more mitzvot to perform. Chazal say (Eiruvin 54a) "Hurry on and eat, hurry on and drink, since the world from which we must depart is like a wedding feast." This suggests that this world is like a big wedding in which a large festive feast is served. Each of the guests tries to help himself and take as much as they can from the delicacies. This is also true regarding mitzvot. As much as one can grab mitzvot in this world and utilize his time well, it is worthwhile and favorable. One should not waste a single opportunity.

Likewise regarding the attributes of charity and mercy, Avraham Avinu was outstanding. He was standing in front of Hashem and pleading and praying for the people of Sodom and Amorah that He should have mercy on them. But who were these people? The Torah testifies about them (ibid. 13:13) "Now the people of Sodom were wicked and sinful toward Hashem, exceedingly." They were most corrupt and bad-mannered, but yet Avraham pleaded that Hashem should save them. It is written in the sefer Mishnat Rabbi Aharon of Rabbi Aharon Kotler, zt"l, that Avraham placed himself in danger by praying for them, because maybe Hashem would have gotten angry at him. Therefore, he begged Hashem saying (ibid. 18:30) "Let not my Lord be annoyed and I will speak," and he pleaded that Hashem should have mercy and spare the people. After all, Hashem had fashioned them, and perhaps through his prayers they will be aroused to repent, do teshuvah and come close to Hashem. This was the great virtue of Avraham Avinu, his outstanding loving-kindness and mercy.

Thus the pasuk states (ibid. 2:4), "אלה תולדות השמים והארץ בהבראם" – These are the products of the heaven and the earth when they were created." Chazal explain: do not read "בהבראם" – when they were created," but (rearrange the letters to read) אברהם – Avraham, since the entire world exists in his merit.

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Hillulah of Tzaddikim

18 - Rabbi Refael Baruch Toledano

19 - Rabbi Yeshua Ettiah

20 - Rabbi Mordechai Sharabi

21 - Rabbi Aryeh Binah Rosh
Yeshiva Netiv Meir

22 - Rabbi Yissachar Dov Rokeach
Admor of Belz

23 - Rabbi Refael Alkoubi of Miknes

24 - Rabbi Avraham Azulai Author
of Chessed LeAvraham



Walking in their Ways

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

The Promise That Materialized

For many years, I used to receive the public in Vienna, Austria, in the home of Mr. Papa, may he live long. Then, for four years, I stopped this custom.

Mr. Papa consistently pressed me to come again, saying, "Why doesn't the Rav wish to visit? The Jews of Vienna await his arrival. Why does he refuse to come?"

I always came up with some sort of excuse and did not make an appearance.

But I had a reason for not coming. The last time I had visited, a man who had been married a number of years came to me. He had not yet been blessed with children. He visited me often, relentlessly begging me to promise him a son.

The key to life is in Hashem's hands alone. I promised to pray on his behalf and blessed him in the merit of my holy fathers. But he insisted that I explicitly guarantee him that he would have children.

In his state of pain, he told me, "I refuse to leave the Rav's presence until he promises me a son. And I hope that the next time the Rav visits our city, I will come to greet him with a baby in my arms." To these words, I replied, "Amen! So be it!" But he continued in his obstinacy, "But, Rav, I want a promise from you!" He left me with no choice but to guarantee him a son.

Skeptical as to whether or not my promise

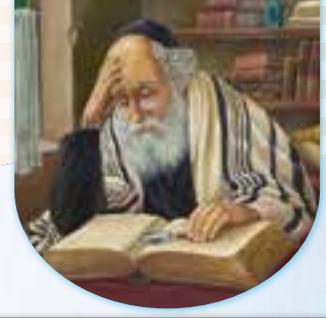
was fulfilled, I ceased my visits to Vienna. I was afraid the man would approach me with the grievance that my promise had not had effect.

With time, I forgot about my promise. After four years, I accepted Mr. Papa's invitation and visited Vienna again. I was invited to attend the Bar Mitzvah of a member of the community and accompanied Mr. Papa to the hall.

Suddenly, I noticed the man who had asked me for a promise for a son four years earlier. I turned to leave before he saw me, but Mr. Papa stopped me, asking in surprise, "Why is the Rav leaving?" I replied, "There is a man inside the hall who asked me to promise him a son, which I did. I am afraid to meet him, because he may not yet have been granted a baby."

Mr. Papa rewarded me with a huge smile. "Come with me into the hall. This man has good news to relate to you." As soon as I entered, the man came running toward me. Amid hugs and kisses, he related, "Honored Rav, in the merit of your blessing, last Friday, my wife gave birth to a boy! This is just as I told the Rav, that the next time he arrives, I hope to have good news to share with him!"

I was extremely happy to hear that he had merited a son, after so many years of waiting. My joy was increased by the fact that I was guided by Heaven not to say anything untrue. After four years, my words had effect.



Words of Our Sages

Gems on the Parashah From the Torah Sages

The prerequisite for the virtue of chessed (kindness)

"He ran toward them from the entrance of the tent, and bowed toward the ground" (Bereishit 18:2)

In Pirkei Avot (5:24) Chazal teach: "Those who have a good eye, a humble spirit, and a meek soul are among the disciples of our forefather Avraham." We may wonder: Why is it not mentioned that the disciples of Avraham Avinu are charitable? After all, gemillut chasadim (kind deeds) was the main trait that Avraham was praised for.

The tzaddik Rabbi Shalom of Baranowitz, zt"l, explains: Because only if a person has these three traits of a good eye, a humble spirit, and a meek soul, then he can acquire the trait of chessed, because these are the conditions necessary to attain it, and without them a person will not become a charitable man.

"The disciples of our forefather Avraham" are people who wish to acquire this praiseworthy trait of gemillut chasadim. And only one who possesses these three traits is capable of becoming truly kind. Only one who is not egocentric and selfish can properly perform kind deeds with his fellow.

Once a student studying in the Yeshiva Porat Yosef came to his Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Yehudah Tzadka, zt"l, and precisely then he was on his way out of his house for an important public function where he was scheduled to deliver a speech. However, as usual, he received his student warmly, and gave him his full attention.

The student, who was a blossoming Torah scholar, simply wanted to present to the Rosh Yeshiva an original thought on the subject he was learning. Just a few moments after his arrival, both plunged deeply into the depth of the matter, in a vigorous discussion of Torah with unabated joy. The student presented his thought, and the Rosh Yeshiva listened attentively, commenting on and gently elucidating the novel idea. The student's heart filled with joy: Thank G-d I found the right time to come to speak to the Rosh Yeshiva when there is nothing else pressing"...

Just at that moment, when this thought passed through his mind, loud knocking was heard on the door. Someone entered and called the Rosh Yeshiva to come to the waiting car outside. The student realized that the Rosh Yeshiva was about to deliver a speech in just a few moments as planned in front of thousands of people gathered in the Binyanei Ha'Uma hall. This did not prevent the Rosh Yeshiva from giving his undivided attention to hear the thought that his student presented before him.

The Haftarah



"One woman from among the wives of the prophets' disciples"

(Melachim II 4:1)

The connection to the parashah: The haftarah discusses the blessings of the prophet Elisha to the Shunamit that she will have a son, and the fulfillment of the promise when she gave birth to a boy at the time that he had told her. Likewise, in this parashah, the angels inform Avraham that in the following year at this time he will have a son.



Guard Your Tongue

The Power of Speech

Forfeiting the segulah

It is incredible how the nature of a person is to search for segulot and seek to receive blessings from great people for success in their livelihood. What are all the segulot and blessings worth if chas v'shalom he is accustomed to sinning in lashon hara and gossip? This causes one to suffer the curse explicitly written in the Torah "Accursed is one who strikes his fellow stealthily," which is referring to lashon hara, as Rashi explains. Chazal say (Shevuot 36a) "Arur may imply excommunication, curse, or oath." These words were not declared only by a single individual, but through the consent of all of Yisrael, together with the Kohanim and Leviim. Thus, through lashon hara he cancels the benefits of the blessings.



Chazak U'Baruch

Strengthening Fellowship and Meriting Blessing

The following is a good tip to merit answering 90 Amens each day, for those who cannot pray with a congregation for reasons beyond their control as brought by the gaon Rabbeinu Yosef Chaim, zya"a, in his sefer "Ben Ish Chai":

I found in the sefer Keter Malchut, written by hand: It is a worthy custom for a person to say each day the pasuk, "Blessed is Hashem forever, Amen and Amen" forty-five times, and this pasuk can benefit him in place of 90 Amens, which a person is obligated to answer each day, when due to situations beyond his control, he cannot answer [90 Amens each day], such as when he has to remain at home alone and cannot go to the Beit Haknesset. I think that this is an excellent custom.

The Ben Ish Chai adds another good idea that he himself did:

I used to say this pasuk the number of times mentioned [above] every day after the parashah of the blessing of the Kohanim that we say after the Morning Blessings every day. In order that I should not forget to say it, I fixed a regular time for it."

Eliyahu Hanavi came specially

About the power of answering Amen and its benefits in Heaven we learn from an awesome story in which we see how highly Amen is regarded in Heaven and the importance of answering Amen after each and every blessing.

This story is told by the gaon Rabbi Zelig Reuvain Bengis, zt"l, who heard it from others who heard it:

The tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Volozhin, zt"l, took upon himself a stringency that he would not recite a blessing unless there was someone who would answer Amen. This custom he derived from the words of the holy Zohar; that a blessing without

answering Amen after it is like a sealed envelope that cannot be opened [in order to read the letter within].

One night, when Rabbi Chaim sat deeply engrossed in the study of Torah, he began to feel terribly thirsty. Rabbi Chaim looked to find someone who could answer Amen after his blessing on the cup of water, but to no avail. All the members of his household were asleep, and at this time not even a passerby was found wandering outside.

Minutes stretched into endless time, and his thirst increased, until suddenly there was a knock on his door. There stood a student of the yeshivah who came to seek an explanation for a certain gemara. Rabbi Chaim was exceedingly delighted; he recited the blessing of "Shehakol" on the water with great intent, and the student answered Amen. In this way Rabbi Chaim was able to quench his thirst. Then Rabbi Chaim answered the student's questions, clarifying the gemara.

The next morning, when Rabbi Chaim went to the Beit Midrash, as usual, he first approached the place of the student who had come to him and thanked him again for the merit of enabling him to recite the blessing out loud and having someone answer Amen. However, the student looked at him in amazement and said: Rabbi, I do not remember anything of the sort. Last night I went to bed early as usual and did not get up until the morning.

The truth is that Eliyahu Hanavi is the one that appeared in the figure of the student in order to enable Rabbi Chaim, who was so stringent about not reciting a blessing without having someone answer Amen, to make the blessing and quench his thirst.

Treasures

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



The greatness of Avraham Avinu, a"h

Avraham Avinu was born into a generation that was corrupt and evil, and everyone worshipped idols. Even his father and mother were devout in their erroneous belief in idolatry, and they did not recognize Hashem at all.

And then, Avraham suddenly came forth and fought against the tide. He initiated a new line of thought, which he himself had researched in order to arrive at the ultimate truth of who created the world, and who is the master. When he found what he was looking for and discovered the truth, he began to cleave to Hashem with all his might, and in this way he performed all the mitzvot with utmost devotion.

Thus, Avraham Avinu, a"h, merited achieving lofty spiritual levels solely on his own, and he did not receive any assistance for it from the people around him. On the contrary, they just tried to place obstacles in his way and tried to dissuade him from following the right path. But he did not give up, and overcame the difficulties. He cleaved to Hashem with his whole heart and soul. Therefore, he gained even greater merit and favor in Hashem's Eyes, more than other tzaddikim and chassidim.

Every person who is born to religious parents who fear Hashem, believe in Hashem, and keep the Torah – subsequently their son will also merit believing in Hashem even before he is born, when he is still in his mother's womb. Every worthy act and custom that the parents do has a direct effect on the fetus.

For example, when a mother lights the Shabbat candles while she is expecting a child, she also merits that the light of the Shabbat candles will illuminate the soul of her unborn child. When a mother eats kosher and recites a blessing over it with the proper intentions, she enhances her unborn child's awareness of Hashem. If so, then we can understand Rabbi Yisrael of Rhuzin's statement that he recognized Hashem already in his mother's womb. This is because the sanctity of his parents and their righteousness had a positive effect on him in his mother's womb. Similarly, David Hamelech sang psalms for Hashem while in his mother's womb, since also David was surrounded by an atmosphere of spiritual holiness there. This affected the purity of his soul to recognize Hashem and serve Him wholeheartedly.

However, Avraham Avinu did not merit this benefit; he did not merit recognizing his Creator already in his mother's womb, because all those around him were heretics and denied Hashem. They were devout in their erroneous belief of idolatry, because they did not know Hashem. Only after Avraham labored with all his might to find out who created the world, he merited arriving at the truth when he was three years old. From then on Avraham cleaved to Hashem with his whole heart and soul and fulfilled His every command with tremendous self-sacrifice.



זכור לטוב

From the teachings of Eliyahu Hanavi

A psalm, a song for the Shabbat day; this refers to the seventh day of the world. Motzaei Shabbat (conclusion of the Shabbat) refers to Olam HaBa (World-to-Come), where there is no death forever and ever, no sin and transgression, no pain and no punishment, everyone will just rejoice in his wisdom and understanding.

From where do we know this? Know that it is so, as you learn this from the Holy-One-Blessed-be-He, Who rejoiced with David in this world and will surely rejoice with him in the World-to-Come, as is stated "These are the last words of David: The words of David the son of Jesse etc., and the pleasing composer of the songs of Israel" (Shmuel II, 23, 1). Another explanation, "These are the last words of David", he [David] said before Him: Master of the World, just as you forgave me for my first iniquities, so too forgive me for my later iniquities. Hence it is stated "these are the last words of David".

Another explanation: "These are the last words of David" they said in

the 22 years that the Divine Inspiration departed from David the King of Israel, every day he would shed tears and eat his bread with ashes, as is stated: "For I have eaten ashes like bread and mixed my drink with tears" (Psalms 102:10), thus it is stated "These are the last words of David etc., and the words of the man who was established on high".

Another explanation: "These are the last words of David," these are?

He [David] said: Master of the World, accept my perfect repentance before You so that the wicked should merit Olam HaBa; say to them just as David King of Israel committed something serious before Me, when he repented I accepted his teshuvah, also you if you shall repent. From where do we know that David said as such? For it is stated: "Against You alone did I sin etc." (Psalms 51:6). Thus it is stated "These are the last words of David".

Another explanation: "These are the last words of David", just as the first ones were without sin and transgression, so too the last are without sin and transgression. It is therefore stated: "These are the last words of David etc., and the words of the man who was established on high". It is thus learned that David accepted upon himself the yoke of Torah and mitzvot. [Hashem said] What is your reward before Me? That you shall be called the messiah of the G-d of Jacob and the pleasing composer of the songs of Israel.

Fortunate is the man who takes upon himself a yoke like an ox and a burden like a donkey, and sits and studies Torah all day. Divine inspiration promptly rests on him and his Torah is in his innards, as it is stated, "Blessed are you that sow beside all waters" (Yeshaye 32:20). "Water" is not other than Torah, as it is stated, "Ho, everyone who is thirsty, go to the water" (Yeshaye 55:1), on all water. How is this? A person reads Torah, Nevi'im and Ketubim, Mishnah, Halachot, Aggadot and Midrash; spends much time in study while minimizing in business, Divine inspiration promptly [enters] his innards and His word is upon his tongue, as in the verse "The spirit of Hashem spoke through me, his word is upon my tongue" (Shmuel II 23:2).

Fortunate is the man who grinds himself (toils greatly) in the words of Torah and sits and "plows" in them as an ox plows in a field. Hashem says to him: the first and last words of Torah are yours, as it is stated, "The G-d of Israel has said – Rock of Israel has spoken to me – [Become a] ruler over men; a righteous one, who rules through the fear of G-d." David said: "The G-d of Israel has said: I rule Man, but who rules Me? The tzaddik. For I decree and he annuls the decree. Thus it is stated, "A righteous one, who rules through the fear of G-d."

Who is the tzaddik who rules through the fear of G-d?

The one who overcomes his evil desires.

Men of Faith

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

Taking Stock

There was a wealthy Jew from France who owned a thriving clothing shop and lived a peaceful life. His business prospered and flourished, until one bitter day masked thieves entered his shop. They beat him mercilessly with a hammer, and he bled profusely. They stole a large stock of clothing and fled.

He was brought to the hospital in severely critical condition, and the doctors did not give him any chance to live. His head was badly injured, and there was nothing they could do to remedy the situation. His heart had failed; it would be a matter of moments before it would cease beating forever.

The doctors connected him to a respirator as a last resort. They told the family members to remain with him, since he would certainly die within the next few minutes.

Nevertheless, more than a few hours later the wounded man still showed signs of life. However, the doctors maintained that he was hovering between life and death.

The family members standing around his bed prayed to Hashem that the merit of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Hagadol should protect him, and he should live and be well. In addition, some of the family members came to Moreinu v'Rabbeinu to ask for a blessing for his speedy recovery. The Rav told them that they must do complete teshuvah, take stock of their deeds and strengthen their commitment to Torah and mitzvot.

The brothers of the wounded man traveled from Miami to see Moreinu v'Rabbeinu and begged him to go to the hospital to visit their brother. However, Moreinu refused to do so.

Later, he explained to us the reason why he refused

their request: "I questioned what purpose there was in going to him. I was also worried that it might result in a chillul Hashem. If, G-d forbid, the man would die, the family members would say, 'Look, the son of the tzaddik visited him and he did not heal him.' Therefore, I told them to wait another week or two, and see how things would develop."

A month passed, and the man was still hooked up to the respirator. Then Moreinu v'Rabbeinu decided to go visit him in the hospital. A group of people joined the Rav. Among them was R' Avraham Knafo. The group recited several verses of Tehillim near the sick man's bed. Afterward, Moreinu v'Rabbeinu encouraged the family members, telling them, "If after a month he is still alive, despite the doctors' prognosis that he would not live, it is a sign that it is still possible to remedy the situation."

The Rav instructed them in which areas of their lives to improve, such as taharat hamishpachah (observing the halachic laws of family purity), etc. These were changes that would benefit the family members, and especially the sick man himself.

"If you will truly accept upon yourselves to strengthen your mitzvah observance, the merit of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim will protect you, and the patient will improve."

Several doctors were conferring near the man's bed, and they overheard the discussion between the Rav and the family. One of the senior doctors approached Moreinu v'Rabbeinu and asked him, "Does the Rabbi really believe that prayers can effect a change?"

"Why do you ask?"

The professor explained, "Look, Rabbi, according to medical diagnosis and speculations, this patient should

have died many days ago. His condition has been critical from the day that he was wounded."

Moreinu v'Rabbeinu seemed pleased with the doctor's comment and said, "This is proof that one's cure is not dependent upon the doctors at all, but only on Hashem. Only if He wills, are the doctors able to cure the patient; if He does not will, then the doctors cannot effect any improvement. Since the sick man has remained alive until now, it is a sign that Hashem wishes him to live. If the family members will correct their ways, then you doctors will become good emissaries of Hashem."

One of the doctors, who was Jewish, heartily responded, "Amen!"

In fact, two weeks later, the sick man opened his eyes through siyata di'Shemaya. The doctors began to treat him. They ordered additional tests and discovered that his brain had remained undamaged. On the eve of the hilula of Rabbi Chaim Hagadol, on the twenty-fifth of Elul, the family members called Moreinu v'Rabbeinu to happily inform him that the sick man had already been discharged from the hospital.

The miracle was magnified by the fact that the doctors had clearly written in the medical reports that the sick man had come to the hospital in critical condition. They determined that he had been clinically dead. The doctors had administered no treatment at all, only connecting him to a respirator. What a surprise! Despite it all, he left the hospital alive and completely healthy. This was something that until today the doctors cannot comprehend.

Teshuvah, coupled with the merit of Rabbi Chaim protected him, saving him from sure death.