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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, shlit'a
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"ta



Maskil L'David

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

The Influence of the Sanctity of the Mikdash

“Speak to the kohanim, the sons of Aaron, and say to them: Let none [of you] defile himself for a dead person among his people”
(Vayikra 21:1)

Rashi explains – “Speak [to the Kohanim ...] and say [to them],” lit. “Say...and you shall say.” [This double expression comes] to admonish the adult [Kohanim to be responsible] for the minors [that they must not contaminate themselves] (Yevamot 114a). There are a lot of commentaries about this issue, and I would like to suggest my opinion, with the help of Hashem.

We know that a person is influenced by his environment both for the good and bad. The more his environment is saturated with sanctity, so too, the influence of the place will be more positive and he will rise in his level of sanctity because of the sanctity of the place. Likewise, young men learning Torah in the Beit Midrash in the sanctified yeshiva, engaging diligently in their studies; the atmosphere of the yeshiva leaves an indelible mark on them. When they leave the Beit Midrash, the sanctity of the place is evident on them, and their faces indicate that they were in a sanctified place within the Beit Midrash.

The Tanna says (Avot 2:11), “Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananya – praiseworthy is she who bore him.” It is brought in the Yerushalmi (Yevamot 1:6): Rabbi Dosa ben Harkinus saw Rabbi Yehoshua in his greatness and declared upon him the pasuk (Yeshayahu 28:9), “Whom shall he teach knowledge and to whom shall he explain the message? To those weaned from milk.” I remember how his mother would bring in his cradle to the Beit Midrash so his ears should cleave to the words of the Torah. These are the words of the Yerushalmi. Of course, the baby did not understand the discussions of the Sages in the Beit Midrash. As a baby, Yehoshua ben Chananya did not comprehend, but he absorbed the holy atmosphere that prevailed in the Beit Midrash, and this sanctity influenced him to develop into a lofty and saintly Tanna.

If there is such a sanctified influence in the Beit Midrash and the Beit Haknesset, which are regarded as “miniature Temples,” then how much more so in the confines of the actual Beit Hamikdash; a place where the Shechinah resided permanently. Certainly the Kohanim serving there were influenced positively by the force of the sanctity surrounding them in the Temple of the King, and by witnessing the miracles which occurred daily (see Avot 5:7) and seeing Hashem’s Omnipotence. They were filled with holiness and purity because they were influenced for the good from the sanctity of the place and absorbed the purity of the Mikdash. Consequently, the Torah warns them, “Let none [of you] defile himself for a

dead person among his people.” They are forbidden to defile themselves with a dead person, because there is no place for impurity in a place that has such a powerful atmosphere of holiness and purity.

If the Kohanim were influenced by the sanctity of the Mikdash and were warned not to defile themselves by the impurity of the dead – how much more so was this true of the Kohen Gadol, who entered the Holy of Holies, which is the most sacred place. Certainly the sanctity of the place affected him more than the rest of his brethren, the Kohanim, and his level of sanctity was above theirs. Therefore, the Torah warns them more and forbids them to defile themselves also for those closest to them, and even “he shall not defile himself for his father or his mother” when they die. Why? “For the crown of his G-d’s anointing oil is upon him,” and therefore, his sanctity exceeds the sanctity of the other Kohanim.

Thus, Chazal explain the double language, “Emor... v’amarta – Speak... and you shall say,” to admonish the adult [Kohanim to be responsible] for the minors [that they must not contaminate themselves]. The Gemara says (Makkot 11a) that “amirah” denotes gentle speech, whereas “dibbur” denotes strong [emphatic] utterance. The Torah commands the Kohanim who lead the nation that when they come to caution the young people and rebuke them, they must speak with them in a gentle and pleasant manner, “Emor... v’amarta,” and not harshly, because they should be aware that not all people are on their lofty level. Therefore, the leaders have to be patient with the people and their approach should be gentle and respectful towards the younger generation, reproving them with gentle words in a pleasant manner, as in “Emor... v’amarta.”

What should the older people warn the younger ones about? “Let none [of you] defile himself,” to beware of defiling the body and the soul by distancing themselves from forbidden speech and obscene language, since a large percent of the sanctity of a person is dependent on this. When a person’s mouth is defiled with forbidden speech, his prayers are not answered and also the Torah that he learns is credited to the impure forces.

Therefore, being careful with one’s speech is vital in guarding his sanctity. Furthermore, he should guard his “brit” (covenant), not to defile his body, and he should also guard his eyes, in order that his soul should not be tainted. All these are the foundations for the entire Torah, and the older men must caution the younger ones and teach them not to defile themselves, as it is stated, “Let none [of you] defile himself.”

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Hillulah of
Tzaddikim

17 – Rabbi Yechezkiel Halevi Landau The
“Noda BeYehudah”

18 – Rabbi Moshe Isserlis The “Rema”

19 – Rabbi Ezra Ettiya Rosh Yeshiva of
“Porat Yosef”

20 – Rabbi Avraham ben Avraham The
Ger Tzeddek of Vilna, hy”d

20 – Rabbi Yosef Valtuch

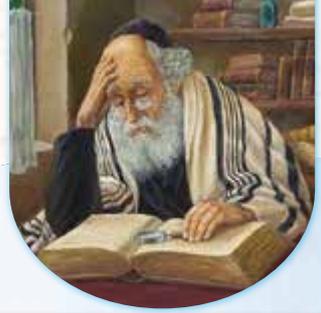
22 – Rabbi Shlomo Eliezer Alfandri

23 – Rabbi Yosef Babaliki



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

“You shall not desecrate My Holy Name. I shall be sanctified amidst the children of Israel. I am the Lord Who sanctifies you” (Vayikra 22:32)

What is considered a desecration of the Holy Name? Generally speaking, one may say that any act that involves immoral behavior, something that is unacceptable by normal standards, which even ordinary people understand constitutes contempt for the Jewish religion.

The Ramchal, zy”a, in Mesillat Yesharim, chapter 11, writes the following: The branches of the sin of “profanation of [G-d’s] Name” (Chillul Ha-shem) are also numerous and great (in their severity). For a person must be exceedingly concerned of his Master’s honor. In everything he does, he must look and contemplate exceedingly that there will not come out of this something which may cause a profanation of the honor of Heaven, G-d forbid. We have learned: “whether one has acted in error or whether he has acted deliberately it is all one and the same where the result is the desecration of G-d’s Name.”

In particular, one who is considered to be a Torah scholar or righteous tzaddik in the eyes of the world, even if he is not sincerely a tzaddik, he has to be more careful, since any act that is not considered suitable for his level constitutes a desecration of Hashem’s Name.

There was a story about a man Reuvain who gave his friend \$100,000.00 and asked him to deposit the money in a certain account. The Yetzer Hara overcame the friend and instead of fulfilling Reuvain’s request, he set out for a place of gambling to try his luck and double the amount, he would thereby be able to distribute money for tzedaka and Torah institutions.

But what happened was that the man lost all his money and left the place entirely cleaned out.

When Reuvain sought the help of a famous lawyer, in order to sue his friend for the damage he had done, the lawyer told him that there was a good chance of winning the case, but “You know, that in such a case the defendant’s picture will be publicized in the national media, and ultimately he will be put in jail.”

The man was alarmed, because his friend who stole his money was a Jew with a beard and sidelocks, and if his picture would be publicized, it would result in a terrible desecration of Hashem’s Name. Such a case is rarely found among the observant Jews, and precisely because of this the media would make a big deal about it and the Chillul Hashem would be even greater. Therefore, he decided to consult the great Torah Sages how to act.

When one of the great Torah Sages was asked about this, he replied: “It is clear to me that it is forbidden to take this man to Court, since it will result in a tremendous desecration of Hashem’s Name, which is worse than any sin!” When Rabbi Yosef Shalom Elyashiv, zt”l, was asked about this, he added that since this man is not known as a common thief, but only succumbed to stealing once, Reuvain is not allowed to place him in prison, since according to the laws of the Torah, he is not deserving of imprisonment. He is only obligated to pay back whatever he stole, and nothing more.

ways and means of sending salvation and blessing upon a person.

The entire matter is in my hands. If there is a dearth of funds in the yeshiva coffers, it is due to a lack of emunah and bitachon on my part. I must increase my level of faith, filling myself to capacity with this quality. The train’s sudden halt for such a stretch is in order to bring me to stop in my tracks and re-assess my spiritual level, garnering reserves of faith to reach greater heights.

Sara Imeinu never allowed herself a moment’s rest. Not when she was a girl of seven, a woman of twenty, or a matriarch of one hundred. She always pushed herself to discover new strengths with which to serve Hashem on a higher level. She conducted herself according to the ways mentioned above. All of her years were equal in perfection, for she constantly set her sights higher, employing the eagerness of youth even in her old age.

May Hashem grant us the help to do His will with willingness and alacrity, each person according to his abilities, Amen.

After writing these words, the train continued on its way. Whether or not the meetings would transpire was in His hands alone. We may not wonder about the ways of Hashem. Everything that happens is a challenge, placed exactly where and when we need it. Our job is to overcome it.

Training Oneself to Think Correctly

While I was making my way from Lyon to Paris on behalf of meetings for our institutions, the train suddenly came to a screeching halt and remained rooted to its spot. I was in the midst of writing an essay regarding the righteousness of Sara Imeinu. Throughout her life, she constantly demanded more of herself in order to advance in Avodat Hashem.

These were my words:

I am sitting on a train, traveling from Lyon to Paris, capital city of France. I am on my way to two critical meetings on behalf of our holy institutions in Lyon. The train has come to a sudden halt, due to some trouble, and has been standing still for a full hour. The meetings will surely be cancelled. This will pose a great challenge to me. I feel that I must strengthen myself with bitachon, trusting that Hashem is the ultimate Stationmaster.

But my Yetzer Hara keeps niggling at me. You put so much effort into traveling from Lyon to Paris, he claims. The month is drawing to an end; how will you manage to pay the avrechim their monthly stipend? What a shame so much time is being wasted here on this train! These types of thoughts hurtle through my mind. I need reinforcement in my bitachon in order to counteract these voices of the Yetzer Hara. I must believe without any doubt that Hashem has His

The Haftarah

The haftarah of the week:

“But the Kohanim, the Levites, descendants of Tzaddok”

The connection to the parashah: The haftarah mentions the laws regarding the sanctity of the Kohanim according to the instructions of the prophet Yechezkiel, which is similar to the parashah in which the laws delineating the sanctified conduct of the Kohanim are discussed.



Guard Your Tongue

The Power of Speech

Praising in Public

If he thinks that the listeners will not disparage him, for example if the listeners do not know him, it is permissible to praise him even in public, as long as he does not praise him excessively.

If he wishes to praise a man who is accepted in the eyes of the people as a righteous man, and has not been found guilty in any way, then even in front of his enemies he can praise him, because no one can disparage him. Even if they will disparage him, it will be clear to everyone that they are not saying the truth.



Chazak U'Baruch

Strengthening Fellowship and Meriting Blessing

Mr. Tohar from Haifa had been married for many years, but did not have children. His father, a well-known salesman of sefarim in Netivot, asked Rabbeinu the “Babba Sali,” zt”l, to bless him, and he did.

A few months later, the father recounted in agony that Rabbeinu’s prayers helped half-way, since his daughter-in-law conceived a child, but then suffered a miscarriage.

Rabbeinu asked his attendant to bring him his tallit. The tallit was brought and Rabbeinu told all those present to answer “Baruch Hu u’varuch Shemo – Blessed is He, and Blessed is His Name” and “Amen” after his blessing. He recited the blessing over the tallit, and all those present answered Amen properly. Afterward, Rabbeinu kissed the tzitzit and told the people present to kiss it.

After reciting the blessing, the tzaddik declared: Now, in the merit of answering Amen, your daughter-in-law will give birth in good health and peace. And so it was.

Treasures

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



Preparing oneself properly

We know that studying the wisdom of the holy Torah is not like studying other external wisdom, since external wisdom does not require any prior preparation before studying it. Regarding the study of Torah, if a person wishes to acquire and absorb the Torah, so that he will be influenced by it and change for the better, thus sanctifying and purifying himself into an exalted person, he must first prepare himself for this and purify his mind and remove from him anything that interferes with the service of Hashem, so that his body can be a proper receptacle for the holy Torah to reside within him. He is obligated to be prepared to sacrifice his life and give up all pleasures of this world in order to study Torah and observe its mitzvot. Therefore, the Torah was given in the Wilderness, where one is disconnected from all other occupation, to teach us that if one wishes to acquire Torah, he must disconnect from all the affairs of this world.

To the extent that one prepares himself, that is how much he will merit acquiring the Torah. For example, let us imagine water being poured into a cup that a person is holding. If he would hold the cup upside down, then only a few drops of water would collect in the hollow found in the bottom of the cup. If he would tilt the cup a little, only a small amount of water would accumulate in the cup. However, if he would hold the cup straight with the opening facing upward, the cup would be filled entirely with water. This characterizes the Festival of Shavuot, since to the extent that one prepares himself for the Receiving of the Torah is how much he will acquire it.

The main preparation is by correcting one’s character traits and improving interpersonal relationships, whereby one uproots all negative traits dwelling within him, such as arrogance, anger, revenge and vengeance, and the like, and acquiring positive traits of righteousness. Otherwise the Torah cannot reside within him. Chazal say (Masechet Avot 6:6) that there are forty-eight qualities through which the Torah is acquired, and a considerable number of those qualities are virtuous character traits and proper conduct between man and his fellow, which are the most basic condition for acquiring the Torah, and when these qualities are lacking, the Torah does not bond and become rooted within him.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Heartfelt Cries

Sincere intentions are an essential part of fulfilling mitzvot. A person can perform the mitzvah of taking the Lullav, but if he will not have intentions to fulfill the mitzvah, he will not have fulfilled it.

“Hashem requires the heart.” It is not sufficient for Hashem

Men of Faith

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

Rabbi Chaim Hagadol was noted for his hospitality. Many guests from all over the world ended up staying in his house. The tzaddik would treat each one with kindness and good cheer. He never turned anyone away for lack of place.

Once, Rabbi Yitzchak Shapira, a shaliach from Eretz Yisrael, came to Rabbi Chaim’s house. He was an outstanding Torah scholar, whose fame had spread far and wide. Rabbi Chaim went out to greet him and received him cordially, as befit his distinction.

Since it was close to Pesach, Rabbi Shapira naturally remained in Rabbi Chaim’s house to celebrate the festival and joined him at the Leil Haseder. Suddenly, the members of the family noticed tears flowing from Rabbi Shapira’s eyes. Rivers of tears fell down his cheeks, accompanied by stifled sobs.

Rabbi Chaim tried to comfort him, but the shaliach continued to cry. “Please, tell us why you are crying and I will try to help you,” Rabbi Chaim told him. “Your pain is our pain. We cannot sit joyfully at the Seder table while you are crying.”

Rabbi Shapira listened, but continued sobbing. Rabbi Chaim tried once again to calm him down, “Rabbi Shapiro, if you are troubled because you need something, I will try to help you. Why should you spend Leil Haseder crying?”

The shaliach calmed down a bit and began to talk, “I left Eretz Yisrael on my own. Every year, I would joyously sit with my family members at the Seder table. When I saw the matzot, wine and the Haggadah, I remembered my family. I do not know how they are doing. Are they happy? Are they distressed that I am not with them? Is everything all right in Eretz Yisrael?”

Rabbi Chaim empathized with his agony and comforted him, “Do not worry. The salvation of Hashem comes speedily, like the blink of an eye. Let us go to my study. I wish to show you something.” The two of them entered Rabbi Chaim’s study, and then Rabbi Chaim said, “Just watch.”

for one to perform acts of mitzvot alone, but the main thing is that one’s heart should be pure.

The Chassidim of Karlin are known to shout during prayers. One Karlin Chassid came to pray by a different Rebbe, and feared that if he would begin to shout, he would raise the wrath of the other congregants. So, he turned to the Rebbe and asked him to allow him to shout during prayers, as he had been accustomed to doing for years.

The Rabbi replied that if he shouted, he would throw him out of the Beit Kneset in the middle of the Services.

At the beginning of the prayers, the Chassid controlled himself and managed to pray quietly. But when he got

to “Nishmat kol chai – the soul of every living being,” he could no longer restrain himself and began to shout...

And nothing happened. They did not throw him out of the Beit Hakeneset....

The Chassid felt he needed to apologize. After Shabbat, he came to the Rebbe to ask for his forgiveness for not being able to restrain himself.

The Rebbe said to him, “On the contrary, I love your shouting.”

The Chassid was astonished. The Rebbe explained: For premeditated shouting – I have no tolerance. However, if it bursts forth spontaneously from within, on the contrary, this constitutes a beautiful prayer...

The man peered in the darkness and suddenly he saw clearly in front of his eyes the figures of his family members, sitting around the Seder table, rejoicing in the festival.

After he recovered from the wonderful spectacle of seeing his family, who were hundreds of miles away, his happiness was restored. He left the room with Rabbi Chaim in order to continue the Seder. However, Rabbi Chaim wanted first to confirm that Rabbi Shapira had fully comprehended the implication of his vision.

“When you return, with Hashem’s help, to Eretz Yisrael, ask your family how they felt at the Seder during your absence and verify that everything you saw in my study, the beautifully set table and festive clothing, was real and not a dream.

In addition, Rabbi Chaim requested, “Please try to recall every detail of what you saw, including the seating order of the family members, how the table was set, and what was on the table. After confirming with your family how they fared on Pesach, especially on the Leil Haseder, send me a letter informing me exactly what they told you.”

At the conclusion of the festival, Rabbi Shapira bade farewell to Rabbi Chaim, thanking him for his outstanding hospitality, which made him feel like a member of the family. He left Morocco, and safely arrived home in Eretz Yisrael. After greeting his family, he asked them how they had fared while he was away and how they had felt at the Leil Haseder.

They recounted to him that right after he left, they had been downhearted about being alone. However, when the Leil Haseder arrived, they suddenly felt uplifted and celebrated the festival with great joy.

Rabbi Shapira listened to their account, and his heart filled with joy. He hurried to send a letter with a detailed description to Rabbi Chaim Pinto in Morocco, as he had promised, emphasizing that everything that he had seen in his study had not been a dream, but had actually transpired (Shenot Chaim).