

Beha'alotcha

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702

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

Oneg Shabbat through the holy Torah

“When you light the lamps, the seven lamps shall cast their light toward the face of the menorah. Aharon did so”

(Bamidbar 8:2-3)

Rashi writes regarding the words “Aharon did so:” This shows Aharon’s virtue that he did not deviate [from God’s command]. We need to clarify; would we suspect that Aharon would deviate from Hashem’s command? If so, what is the praise that he did not deviate? In order to understand this we must first contemplate Chazal’s words (Shabbat 86b) regarding a dispute between the Rabbis and Rabbi Yosi about which day the Torah was given. The Rabbis taught: On the sixth day of the month [of Sivan] were the Ten Commandments given to Israel. Rabbi Yosi maintained: On the seventh thereof. The Gemara adds: All agree that the Torah was given to Israel on the Shabbat.

Chazal also say (Shabbat 30a) that David asked Hashem to inform him of the day of his death. Hashem did not reveal to him the exact time, but told him that he would die on Shabbat. When David heard this, he begged that he should die a day prior to Shabbat or a day after, but not on Shabbat. However, Hashem did not concede to his request.

Why did David not agree to pass away on Shabbat? What is the disadvantage of dying on this holy day?

In order to resolve these questions, we must first address the importance of Shabbat.

It is important to know that honoring Shabbat is not reflected only through delighting in special food and drink or through relaxed sleep, as is explained that the word “תבש” (Shabbat), which is an acronym of “sleep on Shabbat is a pleasure.” It is a person’s obligation to utilize this holy day for spiritual gains and take delight in the study of Torah and fix set times to learn Torah, which is the main “oneg Shabbat,” as Chazal say (Yerushalmi Shabbat 15:3), “Shabbat and Yom Tov were not only given for eating and drinking, but to engage in the study of Torah.” Similarly it is stated (Tanna Dvei Eliyahu 1): Hashem said to Yisrael; although you work on the six days of the week, on Shabbat designate the entire day for Torah. From this they said: A person should rise early on Shabbat and go to the Beit Haknesset and the Beit Midrash and read in the Torah and study the Prophets, and then go to his house to eat and drink.

Thus we see that the main aspect of the Shabbat is to engage more in Torah, and so Hashem told Moshe (Yalkut Vayakhel 408): Form large congregations and lecture before them in public about the laws of Shabbat, so that the future generations would learn from you to assemble congregations every Shabbat.

In merit of the Torah studied on Shabbat, all the six days of work are blessed, for from the day of Shabbat there is an abundance of sanctity and purity that permeates all the weekdays, as Chazal say (Gittin 77a): The first day of the

week and the second and third are called “after the Shabbat;” the fourth and fifth days and the eve of Shabbat are called “before the Shabbat.” Thus, Shabbat is in the center; in the middle of the weekdays which surround it. Three are on one side and the other three on the other side and the sanctity of Shabbat permeates its light upon both sides.

The Torah says “When you light the lamps;” the lamps allude to the soul, as it is stated (Mishlei 20:27) “Man’s soul is the Lord’s lamp.” This implies that if one desires to “light his lamps,” meaning to elevate his soul to lofty heights, he must light the middle lamp and spread the light of Torah upon his soul on Shabbat and engage in Torah wholeheartedly. Then he will merit having all seven lamps shine, since all the days of the week will be blessed because of Shabbat.

And the days of the week are blessed both with a spiritual loftiness of additional sanctity and purity, and with material abundance of happiness and wealth, livelihood and honor. There is an allusion to this in the word “רתולעה” (Beha'alotcha), which can be read as “רתולעה ב'” (two raises), because if a person will light the middle lamp, which is the lamp of Shabbat, then all the days of the week will be blessed with two types of blessings; both spiritually and physically.

Rashi writes, “This shows Aharon’s virtue that he did not deviate [from God’s command],” which signifies that Aharon HaCohen was a concrete example for Bnei Yisrael of how to behave on the day of Shabbat. He did not deviate from the command of Hashem and lit the lamps exactly as he was commanded; the middle lamp which represents the study of Torah on Shabbat – Aharon lit with the enlightening light of Torah study. He illuminated and spread the light of Torah on Shabbat before the eyes of all the Jews, and thus also illuminated the six days of the week, because when Bnei Yisrael saw the enormous blessings and abundance that Aharon enjoyed during the entire week, they learned how to utilize Shabbat and engage in Torah study and illuminate its lamp. This is because the more one invests in Shabbat, the more one enjoys blessing during the other days of the week.

For this reason David Hamelech a”h did not want to leave the world on Shabbat, because David’s desire in life was to study Hashem’s Torah and he begged Hashem (Tehillim 27:4), “That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to see the pleasantness of the Lord and to visit His Temple every morning.” Already from midnight he would rise from his sleep with the strength of a lion and engage in Torah, as it is stated (Tehillim 119:8) “At midnight, I rise to give thanks to You.” If this is the way he conducted himself during the week, how much more so on Shabbat, since he knew very well the tremendous advantage of learning Torah on Shabbat, and he utilized each moment on the holy day for the study of Torah and serving Hashem. Therefore, when he heard about the decree that he would die on Shabbat, he was greatly distressed because it would be a pity to lose out on the enormous advantage inherent in Shabbat, and he strongly desired to light the lamp in his soul; the lamp of the pure Menorah, which is the light of the Torah.

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Hillulah of
Tzaddikim

16 – Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Vorki

16 – Rabbi Sasson Levi

18 – Rabbi Yerucham Levovitz
Mashgiach of the Mir Yeshiva

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19 – Rabbi Yehudah ben Atar Rosh Beit
Din of Fez

20 – Rabbi Chaim Mordechai Luvton

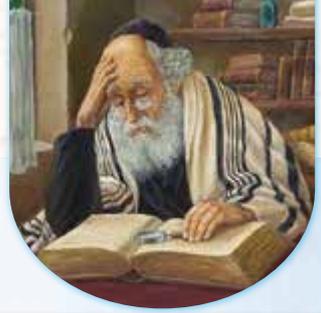
21 – Rabbi Shimon Sofer Author of
“Hitore'rut Teshuva”

22 – Rabbi Itamar Rosenbaum The
Admor of Nadvorna



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

Moving Closer to the Light

One year, Mr. Tourgeman of Belgium spent the festival of Shavuot in France. Together with a friend, he came to visit me. As I escorted them out, I spoke with the second man. Mr. Tourgeman found himself standing on the sidelines, wondering when he would get a turn to speak to me. At that point, he was not yet married. This bothered him very much.

As he was thinking about this, I suddenly turned to him and asked what was on his mind. Dumbstruck, Mr. Tourgeman finally stuttered that he was very depressed that he had not yet found his life partner.

"Where do you live?" I asked.

"The Rav knows that I live in Belgium. Why does the Rav ask?" he replied.

"I meant to ask where your parents live."

"In a settlement called Ohr Akiva, in Eretz Yisrael."

"In that case, you must relocate from Belgium to this settlement. The name Ohr Akiva means the light of Akiva. It is there that the light of Hashem will shine upon you, for your soul-mate is waiting there for you, near your parents."

Mr. Tourgeman, steeped as he was in faith in the Sages, accepted my words without question. After quickly liquidating his business in Belgium, he ascended to the Holy Land and moved in with his parents.

One week later, his mother turned to him with a suggestion of a wonderful girl who lived not far from them. She possessed both fear of Heaven and wonderful character traits. With tremendous *siyata di'Shemaya*, only a short while later, the *shidduch* was finalized. Mr. Tourgeman merited building a Torah-true home.

No Competition

"The people walked about and gathered it. Then they ground it in a mill or crushed it in a mortar" (Bamidbar 11:8)

Whoever trusts in Hashem that he will provide him with his needs, he is happy with his lot and does not worry over what will be tomorrow. The holy Zohar explains that the words "The people walked around and gathered it" can also be understood to state "The fools walked around." This implies that fools are the ones who flocked to the grounds to gather the manna, because whatever belongs, and is destined to belong to a person, will come to him easily, to the extent that he will not even have to bend down for it.

Rabbi Shlomo Cohen, zt"l, of Bnei Brak owned a printing press in his area and made a decent living from it. In those days there were still no competitors in this field.

One day another Jew arrived and opened a printing press a few meters away from his business. The family was angry at the man who dared to invade their territory, but their father, not only was he not angry, but when the new printer arrived at his location, Rabbi Shlomo Cohen greeted him warmly, "Shalom Aleichem" and pleasantly informed him:

"You are new in the area and certainly do not know the customers in this field. Come and I will give you a list of customers." He immediately began to spread out before him long lists of customers that work with him, while heartily assuring him that he allows him to deal with them. And he did not stop there; he went on to say, "Come and I will teach you the tricks to the trade, so that you will be able to fill all the orders that will come to you properly."

His family looked on in amazement: "Not only did you not stop him from opening the same business in your area," they said, "but where does it state that you must help your competitor so generously?"

Thus Rabbi Shlomo replied:

"Well, you admit that one's livelihood is determined for a person by Heaven, and no one can touch that which is decreed for his fellow to earn. If so, it is clear that my actions did not detract from what was allotted to me. The difference is that everyone knows it, but the test is to live by it.

Moreover, the hardships of earning a livelihood is a curse that was decreed upon Adam after he sinned, but if I have a golden opportunity to rid myself of some of the curse and gain time to sit and learn more hours, should I not do so with gladness? After all, we are not lacking, thank G-d, bread to eat and clothes to wear."

The Haftarah

The haftarah of the week:

"Sing and rejoice"

(Zecharia 2:14)

The connection to the parashah: The haftarah mentions the Menorah and the lamps that the navi Zecharia envisioned, and the parashah discusses the commandment to Aharon HaCohen about lighting the lamps toward the face of the Menorah.



Guard Your Tongue

The Power of Speech

Meriting a portion in the World to Come

Even if one hears his young son or daughter speaking *lashon hara*, it is a mitzvah to scold them and distance them from slander, as it is written (Mishlei 22:6), "Train a child according to his way."

A father must make great efforts to always guide his sons from youth against speaking *lashon hara* and other prohibited speech, such as inciting controversy and lies, as the Vilna Gaon wrote. This is because proper speech and positive traits require lots of training, and training results in control. They will ultimately merit a portion in the World to Come, as well as everything good in this world.



Chazak U'Baruch

Strengthening Fellowship and Meriting Blessing

In the previous issue we discussed the importance of the Birkat Kohanim and answering Amen after it.

The following is a vivid account of the Birkat Kohanim that took place during Chol Hamoed of Sukkot in the year 5751 (1991):

In the early morning hours, thousands of Jews had packed into the Western Wall plaza. The enormous minyan of the mass Birkat Kohanim began, and at 8:30 in the morning the traditional announcement was heard: Kohanim! With awe and trepidation, tens and thousands of people stood listening quietly to the blessing recited by hundreds of Kohanim: "Yevarechecha – May Hashem bless you and safeguard you. May Hashem illuminate...May Hashem turn His countenance to you...Amen!!!" It was a thunderous response from thousands of excited congregants. None of them imagined what was taking place at that very moment up on the mountain.

There, too, l'havdil, thousands gathered, but with a completely different purpose. The piles of stones in front of them testified to their malicious intentions. Why were they waiting? Were they not aware of what was going on below; of the opportunity to carry out their plot in the most destructive manner?! It was getting late. The Amidah of Mussaf was drawing to an end, and again the Kohanim come forth to the duchar, and again they recite the historical blessing in unison. The shout of Amen echoed from tens and thousands, and thus the Services ended with the cry of "Shema Yisrael," and "Hashem hu HaElokim."

The miracle became apparent within minutes. The last remaining congregants remained in the square, while the majority of the people made their way up through the Old City. Suddenly the atmosphere was electrified. Stones began raining down upon the plaza. Hundreds of people standing in the plaza began to flee hysterically, trying to take cover under the tunnels and roofs. Those who did not have time to do so were injured... some of the congregants were wounded and called for help, which delayed in coming.

Only after a long time did the commotion subside, through the Grace of Heaven. Thousands of people who were still nearby returned to the Wall with mixed feelings of joy and anxiety. They beheld the plaza, which was strewn with thousands of thousands of stones, and then they clasped the ancient stones and gave a prayer of thanksgiving. A shiver ran through their bodies just contemplating what would have happened if the stones would have rained down just moments earlier, when the plaza was packed with congregants. How many casualties would there have been, G-d forbid! And how many would have been injured trying to flee.

It was a miracle – a miracle that became the talk of the day throughout the entire country and the world.

This is as Chazal taught us (Shir HaShirim Rabbah 3:11): "If a man sees a sword threatening him, he should rise early and go to the Beit Haknesset to hear the Birkat Kohanim and answer Amen after them – then no harm will befall him."

Treasures

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



The diamond wrapped in paper

"When you light the lamps, the seven lamps shall cast their light toward the face of the menorah" (Bamidbar 8:2)

"When you light the lamps." The lamps signify the light of the Torah, as it is stated (Mishlei 6:23), "For a commandment is a candle, and the Torah is light." Hashem commands man to grow in Torah and increase his service of Hashem and always to remain connected to Hashem and not be satisfied with his present achievements, saying, "I did enough." Instead, he should progress constantly and go from strength to strength by the light of the Torah in sanctity and purity.

The word "בהעלותך" (Beha'alotcha) can be divided to read "ב' העלותך," and the letter "ב'" (bet) hints to a "bayit" (house), and it also implies a Beit Midrash. This is because a person must light the lamps in both of these areas, meaning, he must also strengthen the harmony in his home, increasing love and brotherhood within it, and also he must progress in his studies in the Beit Midrash, lighting his spiritual lamp and strengthening his service of Hashem and investing more efforts in his study of Torah and performance of mitzvot and good deeds.

And how can one light the lamps and strengthen Torah?

The answer is only – through toiling in Torah.

Upon reflection we see that the Torah was not given to us like a gift that a person gives his friend, because usually when a woman gets a gift from her husband, the beauty of the gift is expressed in the fact that it is wrapped in attractive wrapping and decorated beautifully. However, if the giver does not wrap or decorate the gift, then even if the gift is an expensive gold ring, the recipient of the gift will not get excited and be moved by it, because a gift without a decorative wrapping is not a respectable gift. Yet, Hashem intentionally gave us the Torah in this way, without decoration or ornaments. The Torah was given as a diamond that is not processed and not polished. Our obligation is to polish the diamond and labor over it, and only then can we perceive the beauty and splendor of Torah and mitzvot.

Hashem asks of us that we should, through our efforts, create the wrapping and decorate the Torah, and this is possible only by means of toil and labor. Without toil, the Menorah is not perfect, but through toiling in Torah, the Menorah becomes beautiful and complete, because only in this way can we see the beauty and magnificence of the precious gift, which is the holy Torah.

Hashem says that now you and I are partners in the occupation of Torah. I provided you with the Torah without the wrapping, which is a diamond that is not polished, and your obligation is to polish it and bring out the beauty of the diamond by the labor and toil that you invest in it. Therefore, Chazal say (Berachot 6:1) that even when one person engages in the study of Torah, Hashem comes to listen to his Torah. Why is this so? This is because He wishes to see how His partner will fulfill his mission and obligation, and takes pleasure in seeing him toil and labor and polish the gift in order to bring out its true beauty.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



What to do when the coat is short

The Rabbi of a certain community used to tell his congregation the following parable:

In a small town, the members of the community arranged to write a magnificent Torah scroll. At the same time, they announced that there will be a competition among the women; the woman who will embroider the most beautiful cover for the Torah scroll would be rewarded by having her cover placed over the Torah scroll at the celebration of the Hachnassat Sefer Torah to the Beit Haknesset.

When the day came, the beautiful embroidered covers were all brought before the Rabbi, and he chose the nicest one of all. However, when they tried to place the cover over the Torah scroll, it turned out to be too short.

The woman who won the competition was very disappointed. She tried to pull the cover and stretch it, but to no avail. Suddenly she said that she had a good idea: "Let us cut the Torah scroll a little so it should fit into the cover."

The Rabbi was horrified: "Chas v'challilah! It is inconceivable. The cover must be made to fit the Torah scroll and not the opposite."

The Rabbi concluded his lecture and said: There are people who accept the yoke of Torah on Sha-vuot and rejoice with it on Simchat Torah. But the trouble is that they cut off parts of the Torah and adapt it to their lifestyle.

There are students who learn well B"H, and even stem from good families, and they consider themselves true Bnei Torah. We need to be aware that it is not enough to carry this honorable title. If these boys sometimes disdain some fine points of mitzvot, or occasionally disparage their friends and allow themselves to share in gossip, and the like, then they are not truly Bnei Torah. This is because they take the Torah and cut off parts of it, for example: They emphatically decide that some of the things that the Torah demands are not directed at them. It is hard for them to resist; it is difficult for them to overcome, and they do not strive for perfection. Such people follow the path of the Nations, who wanted to cut off parts of the Torah that were not convenient for them, so that it should fit their "cover."

Men of Faith

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

Sara Agopyan and her husband, righteous converts from Grenoble, France, discovered the light of Torah and Judaism on their own. Together they began their journey which ultimately led them to rest under the wings of the Shechinah.

Their efforts succeeded. The Rabbis, sensing their true motives and integrity, eventually converted them according to Jewish law.

A few weeks before she succumbed to death from cancer, Sara traveled with her husband to the grave of Rabbi Chaim Hagadol with an organized tour.

While walking through rows of graves, Sara tripped over a tombstone and got a deep gash in her foot. The flow of blood did not stop. Furthermore, a piece of flesh had nearly become detached from her leg.

In agony, Sara began to cry and scream by the grave of Rabbi Chaim, wailing, "For this I came all

the way from France to Morocco to visit the grave of the tzaddik?"

When she calmed down a bit, she tied a cloth around the wound and immediately felt great relief. She felt as if someone was treating her leg, and suddenly the blood stopped flowing. The flesh that had almost been severed became reattached. In the end, she returned to France safe and sound.

This incident was truly an obvious miracle, taking place before the eyes of many people, who traveled together for the hilula. As a result, the Name of Heaven was sanctified in public.

A few weeks later, Sara departed from this world. She merited having Moreinu v'Rabbeinu eulogize her lengthily, describing her outstanding righteousness, love of Hashem, and dedication to Him until the last moments of her life. May her neshamah reside in Gan Eden.