



Seeing Him

"The hidden things belong to the Lord, our God, but the revealed things apply to us and to our children forever: that we must fulfill all the words of this Torah"

(Devarim 29:28)

Why did Moshe Rabbeinu need to state that Hashem knows the hidden, while people know what is open? Everyone knows that those things unseen by the human eye belong to Hashem alone, while that which is visible belongs to mankind. What novel idea is Moshe revealing to us?

I would like to share some memories of Rabbi Shlomo Lorincz zt"l, about Rav Shach zy"a, which he recorded in his book:

"In everything, Maran, zt"l saw the magnificent creation of Hakadosh Baruch Hu. When he ate an apple, he would proclaim, 'How wonderful! This apple has a number of seeds. From each individual seed, an entire tree can sprout forth, growing hundreds of succulent apples each year! Apples are a joy to the eye and a delicious treat.' At every opportunity, he would mention this idea to me. He was also wont to say, 'Before I begin praying, I must reinforce my faith in Hashem.' Maran never stopped repeating this over and over again. Before inspiring others, he sought to inspire himself. He would talk about simple faith without letup. He told me that once, before the tefillah on Yom Kippur, he told himself, 'I must clarify emunah in my heart before I begin praying.

'I sat in the corner of the beit midrash,' continued Maran, 'and I considered the wonderful, perfect world that Hashem made. I began talking to myself. How foolish are the atheists who believe that everything came into being on its own, through a big bang. Aside from the question as to where the original matter came from, there is the question as to how a sudden bang can create a world with such precise detail.

'Take the sun, for instance. Its distance from Earth is in exact measurement to our needs. Had it been even a fraction closer, our entire planet would burn to a cinder. The moon, also, is exactly where it must be to serve us. Were it

even a bit closer to Earth, every single creature would die of frost. Additionally, only an utter fool does not tangibly experience the faith that emerges from science and worldly knowledge.' Only after he acknowledged all this, did he feel ready to begin praying."

After reading these passages, the wonderful words of Rav Shach zt"l entered my heart. I was so moved that my entire being cried out, "Hashem, who is like You?!" How great must be our joy that, Baruch Hashem, we have Torah that enables us to recognize Hashem on deeper and deeper levels. It is the Torah that allows us to merit that "He saves the pauper from one stronger than he" (Tehillim 35:10). In the merit of Torah, we are saved from the status of pauper, and from the yetzer hara that threatens to overwhelm us.

There are some things that are clear as day. It is indisputable that the world was made by a Creator with exact precision. It is impossible to claim that the world came into being on its own. The very world proves that it was created by a higher being. In his great kindness, He manages it and renews it daily.

Would any sane person, upon arriving home and finding a table set with the finest foods, say that the food was prepared and set out on its own? Did the cutlery and dishes make their way to the table by themselves? Will the dishes get washed on their own? Who is foolish enough to say such things?

Moshe Rabbeinu warned Bnei Yisrael about the power of the gentile influence that they were about to encounter upon entry into the Land. The gentiles did not have the Torah to guide them and were liable to infiltrate the minds of Bnei Yisrael with their heretical ideas. Thoughts of apostasy could slowly make inroads in their minds, to the extent that even clearly evident proof of the Creator would become blurred and misunderstood.

For this reason, Moshe cautioned Bnei Yisrael to fortify themselves with faith by increasing their Torah study and mitzvah observance. By immersing oneself in the holy words of Torah, he will reinforce his emunah in Hashem in all areas, seeing His hand in every detail of creation.

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Hillulah of Tzaddikim

25 - Rabbi Yechiel Michel, the holy Maggid of Zlotchov

26 - The holy miracle-worker, Rabbeinu Chaim Pinto HaGadol, zy"a

27 - Rabbi Shalom Rokach Sar Shalom, the Admor of Belz

28 - Rabbi Chaim Yehudah Leib Auerbach

29 - Rabbi Shlomo Amarillyu, author of She'elot U'teshuvot Kerem Shlomo

1 - Rabbi Yehudah Iyash

2 - Rabbi Saliman Eliyahu



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

Gems on the Parashah From the Torah Sages

Blessed Returns

"And it will be, when all these things come upon you the blessing and the curse which I have set before you... and you will return to Hashem, your G-d" (Devarim 30:1-2)

What can bring a Jew to the level that he "will return to Hashem"?

The Torah replies in one concise statement: "The blessing and the curse which I have set before you."

It is well-known that difficulties bring a person closer to Hashem. But how can berachah accomplish this? Isn't it the way of abundance to cause a person to sin, as it says, "And Yeshurun got fat and kicked" (ibid. 32:15)?

The sefer Even Shlomo offers a response, quoted in the sefer U'matok Ha'ohr:

Rabbi Shaul Rubin of Bnei Brak served as the Rosh Kahal in Afulah. He had occasion to meet with one of the wardens of the prison services. During the course of their conversation, the warden related that he had a very disturbing problem. Someone was imprisoned for many years for refusing to give his wife a bill of divorce. Perhaps the Rav has a way of dealing with this man?

"I am ready to meet him," the Rav offered. A meeting was quickly arranged. Afterward, the Rav returned to the prison warden and said, "This man will never give his wife a divorce, because he's very comfortable here in jail. He's been here so long, he already forgot the meaning of freedom. If you really want him to surrender, set him free for half a year. Then re-incarcerate him, and you'll see how he cooperates!"

The prison warden took these words to heart. He arranged meetings with the authorities to approve of this unusual "leave of absence." The matter reached the Keneset before it was finally approved. To his utter amazement, the man was told that he was free. After half a year, he was again locked behind bars. And not a week passed before he gave his wife a bill of divorce. The pull of freedom was too strong to resist.

Hashem gives a person suffering in order to bring him back to Him. However, in order that the person not become accustomed to the suffering, He gives blessings from time to time. This reminds the person how much he stands to lose when he suffers hardships for not doing Hashem's will. And it is thus also a means of bringing him back to Him.

Burning with Oil

The Beit Halevi on the Torah (Shemot 12:43) states that at the point where one's intellect cannot grasp or comprehend a matter, it is there that his faith begins. We may add that in this world there are situations which seem logical and natural, which we comprehend. Notwithstanding, the realization of Hashem's Presence is considered faith, since a human being cannot fathom or comprehend it fully; and at the point where one's logic ends is where one's faith begins.

I can testify that ever since I was very young, my esteemed and holy father, zy"a, instilled faith into our very bones; sometimes in a way that was difficult and painful. Because we realized that faith was so vital to our father, zt"l, we also absorbed it and were always aware that we as Jews led a different life than the nations of the world and those who reject the yoke of Heaven, and therefore our outlook was diametrically opposed.

My father, zt"l, had a custom to light candles l'iluy nishmat tzaddikim every day in the Beit Hakneset. Once, father, zt"l, lit all the candles, but when he got to the candle in the memory of Rabbi David ben Baruch Cohen Azug, a"h, his oil ran out and asked my brother Rabbi

Chaim, shlita, to bring him a simple wax candle instead.

However, as father, a"h, placed the burning candle into the cup, he burned himself, and his suit got burned slightly from the dripping wax. When my brother, Rabbi Chaim, shlita, noticed what happened, he told my father, a"h, that perhaps this happened to indicate that Rabbi David ben Baruch was slighted because the candle in his honor was lit by wax, whereas all the other candles were lit with pure olive oil.

When father, a"h, heard this, he accepted the validity of his explanation and sent my brother, shlita, to go buy olive oil. In addition, he begged forgiveness from the tzaddik. My brother, shlita, commented to my father, a"h, that certainly the merits of the tzaddik will stand by him on this day and he will receive a substantial sum of money to distribute to the poor and also a nice suit instead of his suit that got ruined from the wax.

In fact, on that day, my father, a"h, received a large sum of money. But, upon seeing the money he remarked, "True that I got money, but I am still left with a burnt suit."

And then, lo and behold! A half an hour later, knocking was heard at the door, and a man by the name of Assimini presented father with a suit as a gift, with no rational explanation.

The Haftarah

The haftarah of the week:

"I will rejoice with Hashem"

(Yeshayahu 61)

The connection to this Shabbat: This is the seventh and last haftarah of the seven Shabbatot of consolation that are read beginning the Shabbat after Tisha B'Av.

Guard Your Tongue

The Power of Speech

Lashon Hara Kills

One who gossips about his fellow Jew transgresses the negative commandment, "Do not go as a gossip-monger among your nation." This is a terrible sin and can even lead to death. This is why it is followed by the injunction, "Do not stand idly by your friend's blood." Let us learn from the incident with Doeg Ha'Adomi. He spoke rechilus about Nov, the city of Kohanim, and brought about its complete destruction.





May His Memory Be a Blessing

Rabbi Chaim Pinto Ha'Gadol

In honor of the hillula of the holy tzaddik, the miracle-worker, Rabbi Chaim Pinto zy"a, we present excerpts of Rabbi Maimon Abuchbut's, zt"l, eulogy, which was delivered in Trisira:

The name of the great Rav is famous throughout the land. Now he is resting in peace and it is our duty to eulogize him properly. He was a wise Kabbalist of Hashem and it is beyond the scope of this eulogy to fully relate his greatness. His acts of kindness were as many as the pomegranate's seeds. He was crowned with the tiara of Torah, humility, and, most importantly, the crown of a good name.

He was constantly immersed in Torah study, spreading it among the masses. He was like a deer, head bent in humility, but always on the run for all matters of holiness. His mouth spouted words of Gemara like a steady fountain. Every week, he trekked to the homes of philanthropists, collecting money for the poor. He always concerned himself with the plight of the widows and orphans.

How fortunate is his mother who gave birth to this well that never lost a drop of life-giving water! Fortunate is the eye that beheld the beauty of his visage, similar to that of an angel. His sweet voice was sanctified to singing lyrics in praise of Hashem, specifically at the Simchat Beit Hasho'eva. He was a great leader like Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Akiva.

His name preceded him. His name was Chaim (life), and he lived for the Torah, called "the tree of life," as we read, "It is a tree of life to those who hold fast to it" (Mishlei 3:18). He merited length of days and years of life studying the Torah of life that he cherished so dearly.

Preparing for Eternity

This world is compared to Erev Shabbat, while the World to Come is Shabbat. After the efforts invested in Erev Shabbat, one enjoys the respite offered by Shabbat. Likewise, one toils and undergoes hardship in this world in order to earn his reward in the World to Come.

Tzaddikim therefore find repose after they pass on, as opposed to the wicked who find no peace after death. Nevuchadnezzar, for example, lived a life of ease, but his bones rattled in their grave. In order to merit tranquility in Olam Haba, one must prepare "food for the voyage." He does this by offering tzedakah to the poor and compassion upon his fellow Jews. Everyone is expected



to help his fellow in distress. In this manner, he prepares his plot in the future world.

The Midrash relates that some Rabbis were making the rounds, collecting for the poor. They entered a courtyard in order to approach the owner for charity. They overheard him telling his wife to prepare a certain cheap dish of bitter vegetables for their son's breakfast. The Rabbis decided to leave immediately. Such a person who is stingy with his own family surely will not give generously to others.

Meanwhile, the owner heard the Rabbis outside and summoned for them. He donated graciously to their cause. "Why did you run away?" he asked. "We heard you telling your wife to prepare cheap food for your son. We surmised that you are a miser and surely wouldn't be interested in giving charity to others." To this, he replied, "Rabbotai, for a mitzvah, I am never frugal. I give tzedakah generously. This world is like Erev Shabbat and the Next World is like Shabbat. One should make himself only a temporary dwelling in this ephemeral world."

Together with His Fellow Jews

The tzaddik, Rabbeinu the Kabbalist, Rabbi Chaim Pinto zy"a, was outstanding in his charitable acts, even in his old age. He was always involved in acts of kindness. He could often be found escorting the deceased to their final resting place, weeping as he walked.

Rabbi Chaim deeply felt the pain of his fellow Jews, specifically that of talmidei chachamim. During his days, the Jews of the town Tzavira were exiled by cruel Arabs. They suffered hunger and thirst, captivity, and devastation, and Rabbi Chaim suffered the pain of his fellow brethren.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



“And you shall return unto Hashem, your G-d” (Devarim 30:2)

When does one know that his teshuvah was successful?

This question was posed to Rabbi Aharon Leib Steinman shlita. A Jew poured out his heart to the sage, enumerating his many sins. He asked for a formula for teshuvah.

Rabbi Shteinman delineated the details of teshuvah. After listening intently, the man asked, “If I will do all this, will I be able to ‘close the matter,’ as it were?”

“Did you even lose a substantial amount of money, say a thousand shekels, or

even five hundred shekels?” the Rav asked in return.

“When you remember the occasion,” he continued, “you probably feel a pang of pain, right? If you’ll feel at least some twinge of remorse when you recall your previous sins, you have a chance of doing complete teshuvah.”



Men of Faith

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

The Locked Door

On the eve of the twenty-sixth of Elul, the hilula of Rabbi Chaim Hagadol, the following incident occurred:

R' Yitzchak Vanunu from Ashdod, one of the veteran members of the Beit Hakeneset established in memory of Rabbi Chaim, could not sleep. At four a.m., he decided to go to the Beit Hakeneset.

For some inexplicable reason, R' Yitzchak did not go on his usual route, but went around the main street of the city. When he approached the building, in the wee hours of the morning, he heard loud sounds of prayer and supplications issuing from it. The place was entirely lit up. R' Yitzchak was surprised. What was going on at four o'clock in the morning?

R' Yitzchak drew closer to the building and peeked inside. He saw a large crowd of people gathered there to pray. His surprise increased tenfold. He had not heard of any special event taking place. What was going on? If there were Selichot prayers being conducted, why hadn't he been informed about them?

He tried to open the door of the Beit Hakeneset, but to his absolute amazement it was locked. Since he had the key in his pocket, he opened the door. Once inside, he was shocked to find the place pitch dark. There was no light and no congregants. There was no one there.

He fled in panic. Later on, he was taken to the emergency room and hospitalized as a result of shock. (As heard).