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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 Trial of the Akeida

"And He said: Please take your son, your only one, whom you love, yea, Isaac, and go away to the land of Moriah and bring him up there for a burnt offering on one of the mountains, of which I will tell you" (Bereishit 22:2)

From the trial of the Akeida, which was the last trial that Avraham was tested with, and the most difficult of them all, we see the immense love of Avraham for Hashem, who loved Hashem not only through his devoted service and prayers, but also when it came to sacrificing his very life, and moreover, the life of his son. It is stated (Avot 1:17), "Not study but practice is the main thing." There are people who learn a lot, but do not fulfill what they have learned. If one does not observe what he learned, it is a sign that he does not value it properly, because learning involves effort, and when he observes what he learned, he experiences pleasure and values his studies and this brings him to learn more.

For example, a person who works and earns money from his job, since the purpose of his money is in order to enjoy it, thus when he derives enjoyment from his money it spurs him to work even more so that he can have more enjoyment. However, a person who has money and does not use it, there is no purpose to his money, because there is no point in making money if one does not use it, and he also does not have the incentive to work more because there is no point in working. This is the same regarding the study of Torah. When a person learns in order to fulfill what he learned; for example, when learning the laws of Shabbat, and the person sees that by learning he avoided transgressing prohibitions, it gives him the desire to continue studying.

Chazal say, "I created the Yetzer Hara, I created the Torah as an antidote [lit. spice]" (Kiddushin 30:2). The Torah is referred to as a spice. A spice is not the main part of the food, but rather it adds flavor and enhances the food. So too the Torah does not cancel the Yetzer Hara, because the ways of the Yetzer Hara is that it does not tell a person to do evil, but instead convinces him that what he is doing is good, and most of the world is doing it and its good, etc. Through the Torah we can distinguish between what is truly good, or what we imagine to be good, and we become aware of the vast difference between the "good" of the gentiles and the "good" of the Jews. Regarding non-Jews, who do not possess the Torah, Chazal say, "[If you find] Torah by gentiles, do not believe it" (Eicha Rabba 2:13). A person can be convinced that all his actions are good, but when he learns Torah he realizes that what he thought was good is not good at all, and by learning Torah, he will achieve true "good."

This is what is implied by the words of David Hamelech, a"h, "Shun evil and do good." Truly, how can a person know that he is behaving improperly so that he could change his ways? It is only by doing "good", which is learning Torah, which is called "good." Then he will be able to distinguish between evil and good and will do "good."

Regarding all the Avot, there are two aspects that they personified. Avraham personified the trait of "romemut – superiority," as is implied by his name "Av – ram." Also the name Avraham is a derivative of "Av hamon goyim – father of many nations," because the entire world is contained in him, and that is the attribute of chessed. Yitzchak personified the trait of "simchah – joy," as is implied in his name "Yitzchak – laughter." He also possessed the trait of "pachad – awe," as it is stated "Pachad Yitzchak – awe of Yitzchak" (Bereishit 31:42). Also Yakov possessed the attribute of "Yakov (ekev) – heel", which personified humbleness. He also personified "rosh – Yisrael" (the head of Yisrael), which is also the name that was given to him when he returned from Lavan's house and withstood all his trials.

We say in our prayer, "The G-d of Avraham, the G-d of Yitzchak, and the G-d of Yakov," because the holy Avot paved the way in the world of how to serve Hashem, and as Chazal state, "The world depends on three things – on Torah study, on the service of G-d, and on kind deeds" (Avot 1:2). This is actually the three things we find by the three Avot: Torah is found by Yakov, who personified "ekev – heel" and "rosh – head", since a heel without a head or a head without a heel is totally worthless. This is the ladder of Yakov, which has "legs" on the ground and a head rising up to the sky. How did Yakov merit this? Only in the merit of the Torah, as it is stated, "Yakov was an innocent man, dwelling in tents" (Bereishit 25:27).

Yitzchak possesses the attribute of service, since the service of Hashem must be performed with joy. However, even while joyful, one must not forget that he is standing before the mighty King of the World, which is the aspect of trembling and fear.

From Avraham we learn the attribute of Gemilut Chassadim – loving-kindness, as it is stated, "Forever will it be built with kindness" (Tehillim 89:3). The world cannot exist without chessed – kindness. Chessed that is performed only for private family members is not what supports the world, since the world needs chessed as we found regarding Avraham, whose name Hashem changed from one that signified an individual to one that signifies the general public, in the merit of the chessed done for the entire population, until he was called "the father of many nations" (Bereishit 5:17).

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Hillulah of Tzaddikim

15 – The saintly miracle-worker Rabbi Chaim Pinto (Hakatan), zy"ta

15 – Rabbi Eliezer Menachem Shach

17 – Rabbi Alter Biderman The Admor of Lelov

17 – Rabbi Binyamin Zev Cheshin

18 – Rabbi Refael Baruch Toledano

19 – Rabbi Yitzchak Chai Taib

20 – Rabbi Mordechai Sharabi



Walking in their Ways

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

Robbing Himself of His Own Faith

I once knew a gentile who claimed to be a believer in G-d.

One evening, I left a few bills on my night table, with the purpose of seeing how things would play out. At a very late hour, when all others were in far-off slumber land, I noticed this man enter my room, and, with no qualms whatsoever, take the money and slip it into his pocket.

The next day, I brought up the subject of returning lost objects. The man agreed with everything I said, all the while claiming to be a believer. I could not take his charade a moment longer, and I finally told him that I knew the truth. I revealed to him that I witnessed him taking my money the previous night. In the black of night, he had proven his true colors. He was light years away from any sort of belief. I had tested his faith, and he had failed miserably.

True faith in Hashem translates into mitzvah observance, in public as well as in private. It means believing that Hashem supervises the world at all times, and nothing is hidden from Him. This faith is challenged when the temptations of the Yetzer Hara seize power over him. If he clings to the mitzvot in spite of his temptations and personal interests, he is the true believer. But if he falls into the snare of the Yetzer Hara, he has proven that his faith is shaky and liable to fall, not having been planted on firm ground.

The Haftarah

The haftarah of the week:

"Now a woman, of the wives of the disciples of the prophets"

(Melachim II 4)

The connection to the parashah: The haftarah discusses Elisha's blessing to the Shunamit about the birth of her son, and the fulfillment of the promise when her son was born at the exact time that he had predicted. This is similar to the angel's prediction to Avraham in this parashah, that in a year's time exactly, a son will be born to him.



Guard Your Tongue

The Power of Speech

Not to believe it

One must be very careful when he hears that someone has spoken about him, or done such and such to him, or wishes to do such and such to him, that he should not believe it, only take it as a warning in order to protect himself, since we view everyone as trustworthy, who most probably did not harm him or degrade him.



Words of Our Sages

"Please let a little water be taken" (Bereishit 18:4)

As is well-known, our Sages of blessed memory declared that "there is no water other than Torah." This obligates every Jew in every situation to study and acquire comprehensive knowledge in all parts of the Torah; to study in order to observe and fulfill the will of the Creator.

In general, the knowledge of halachah is something that is most necessary for every Jew, especially the laws of daily life, which are required every day and all the time, as stated by Rabbi Yakov of Lissa, author of the "Netivot" in his will: "Since most of these laws arise at a time when one cannot delve into them or ask a Rabbi."

Many of us have a strong desire to know halachah clearly, but do not know the right way to achieve it.

Rabbi Chaim Pinchas Sheinberg, zt"l, taught regarding the prayer: Lilmod, le-lamed, lishmor, v'lasot, as one of his students related:

When I was a student at Yeshivat Torah Ohr, I found an opportune moment in which I approached the Rosh Yeshiva and asked him: "How does one produce a Rabbi Sheinberg?"...

Instead of answering me, he told me: Bring me the response of Rabbi Akiva Eiger, volume 1. I brought it and opened the sefer at response 20, there Rabbi Akiva Eiger wrote the following:

"There was an incident when I was going on Shabbat through the courtyard of the Beit Haknesset here in the religious community of Lissa. I saw a man pour a little water from a flask out the window into the courtyard, which had an eiruv. As I saw this, it occurred to me that he may be transgressing a prohibition, since the wind spreads the drops apart scattering them, which is similar to what is brought in the Yerushalmi that one who spits into the wind is liable because of winnowing (הרזוה), and anything that is scattered in the wind is prohibited because of winnowing. The "Korban Eida" comments that this is because the wind scatters it and divides it into small particles, which is akin to winnowing.

If so, then pouring a small quantity of water in the wind-- which does not constitute a strong flow-- allowing the wind to scatter it, makes one liable because of winnowing.

Rabbi Sheinberg opened the sefer to this response and told me: Read the words of Rabbi Akiva Eiger. So I read.

"What do you see here?" He asked me. I explained to him the question Rabbi Akiva discussed. He repeated: "What do you see here?" And again I answered. When he asked me for a third time, I realized he was referring to something deeper.

I asked: "What does the Rosh Yeshiva mean?"

Then the Rosh Yeshiva, zt"l, taught me a fundamental principle:

"If a person would pass through the street and see someone pouring water out the window; what would he do?"

Even before I could answer, the Rosh Yeshiva told me: "I will tell you what he would do. He would crouch down and pass quickly... However, from the words of Rabbi Akiva Eiger we see that when he observed something like this, he immediately contemplated how this is compatible with halachah!"

This implies that in every small or large incident, we have to think of how to react according to halachah. We should not only learn and know the halachah, but we must translate it into action! (B'netivot Halachah volume 46)



Of Blessed Memory Rabbi Chaim Pinto Ha-Katan

The following is delightful examples of the deeds and the sanctity of the holy Maran Rabbeinu Chaim Pinto (Hakatan), zy" a, on the occasion of his hillula:

For hundreds of years, the holy and saintly name of the tzaddikim of the illustrious Pinto family has been uttered with reverence by the Jews from the West. A glimmer of hope lights up in the eyes of both Jews and gentiles when they hear and relate stories about the golden dynasty of the Pinto family.

The Torah returns to its hosts – as Chazal revealed to us about the secrets of the transmission of the Torah from generation to generation. When we look at the chain of generations, we see clearly how the Torah repeatedly found itself in the Pinto family, generation after generation. In every generation there rose great tzaddikim and chassidim from this illustrious family who illuminated the world with their Torah and righteousness and piety.

In the family tree of the tzaddikim of the Pinto family, only a few are known, some of them who have blazed like the sun from their shining greatness, and merited to bring about salvation and change the order of nature in the power of their Torah and prayer. Among those of blessed memory is Maran the Rif, Rabbi Yoshiyahu Pinto, zya" a, a unique tzaddik, Rabbeinu Chaim Pinto Hagadol, zya" a, and Rabbeinu Chaim Pinto Hakatan, zya" a, whose hillula is celebrated this week. May their merits protect us.

Rabbi Chaim Hakatan, who was like a ladder fixed on the ground, but whose head reached the heavens, and despite his outstanding greatness and his vast knowledge of Torah and good deeds, he never behaved in an arrogant or controlling manner. His door was always open to all people without exception. At all hours of the day and night, people would come to his house for salvation and mercy, requesting his advice or blessing, and so forth.

The days of the tzaddik who was known as the "holy man of G-d" were packed with activity to benefit the public and the individual, delivering Torah lectures, bringing merits to the people, and per-

forming acts of charity and loving-kindness for all who sought and needed it. He was the pillar of Torah and chessed in his generation, and it was no coincidence that his prayers did not return empty and his blessings were fruitful, both in his life and after his death.

In this issue we will try to relate a little about the greatness of the tzaddikim in the section "Men of Faith" and about their great sanctity and powers in their prayer and blessings. On the occasion of the hillula, we will transmit to the coming generation what we heard from Moreinu v' Rabbeinu, who continues the golden dynasty, the gaon and tzaddik, Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlit" a. He related the following:

Rabbi Pinchas Amos, Moreinu v' Rabbeinu's brother-in-law, portrayed the greatness of Rabbi Chaim Hakatan through the following story:

Once Rabbi Amos approached his father and asked him, "Father, I see that every time you encounter a difficulty, you light a candle in the memory of Rabbi Chaim Hakatan and pray to Hashem to help you in the merit of the tzaddik. Are you really confident that Hashem will assist you in his merit? Why do you do this?"

His father proceeded to relate to him an incredible story from which he would comprehend the greatness of tzaddikim:

My father earned his livelihood by raising cows. One year, there was a drought throughout southern Morocco, and most of the cows died. Consequently, he had no income. He could not buy any food for his family.

When his wife pressured him about his obligation to provide food for his children, who were liable to perish from starvation, he left his house and headed toward the shore, several kilometers away from the Mellah of the Jews. Facing the raging ocean waves, he began to consider his future, but could find no way out of his predicament.

Suddenly, he saw the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Hakatan from afar, running toward him together with his attendant.

My father was uncomfortable. On the one hand, he did not have money to contribute to the funds that Rabbi Chaim collected for charity. He knew that the tzaddik always asked people for money to distribute to the poor. On the other hand,

he thought to himself that certainly Rabbi Chaim knew through Divine inspiration that he did not have money to buy food for his family. Perhaps he even intended to offer him some money.

Either way, he decided to run away. Rabbi Chaim sensed his intentions and yelled to him from a distance to wait for him and not move.

Rabbi Chaim caught up to him, huffing and puffing from the strain of running (after all, he was already over seventy years old at the time). Rabbi Chaim told him, "I came from far away only in order to encourage you that you have nothing to worry about, since Hashem will help you."

Rabbi Chaim added, "I am bringing you some good tidings. Your wife is pregnant, and when she will give birth to a son, he will bring you good fortune and prosperity. Regarding your lack of funds, here is a sum of money with which you can go buy food and clothing for your children. Hashem will help you that from now on you will encounter success, and your luck will increase exceedingly."

My father was joyful over the good news and kissed Rabbi Chaim's hands. At first he refused to accept the money, because he did not feel comfortable taking it. In the end, he took the money, bought food and provisions and went home. He told his wife about his encounter with Rabbi Chaim and the news that she was pregnant. When his son was born, his luck began to improve, and eventually he became exceedingly wealthy.

Rabbi Amos's father concluded the story and told his son, "Thus, you understand why I love the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim so much. This is why in every difficult situation I cry to Hashem that He should assist me in his merit."

The White Pigeons

A Jewish doctor in Marseille from the Lugasi family, was previously estranged from Torah and mitzvot.

Once, he traveled from Marseille to Morocco and went to the ancient cemetery in Essaouira. There he walked around the thousands of graves looking for the grave of his grandfather, Rabbi Meir Lugasi, zy" a, who is buried there.

During his frantic search among the thousands of graves located in the cemetery, he stopped to pray at the grave of Rabbi Chaim Pinto Hagadol. While



Of Blessed Memory Rabbi Chaim Pinto Ha-Katan

standing at the holy site, he expressed his wish to locate his grandfather's grave and promised that if he would, he would recognize Hashem's existence and do complete teshuvah.

When he finished his prayers, he looked up and noticed a large flock of pigeons in the distance landing on a certain grave. The unusual sight drew his attention, and he followed the birds to the grave. To his great surprise, as he approached the grave, the pigeons circling overhead flew away, except for one pigeon that remained perched on the tombstone.

As he strode toward the grave, the last pigeon also flew off. To his amazement, he found what he was looking for. It was the grave of his grandfather, Rabbi Meir Lugasi, with the exact date of his death – just as his father had told him.

He realized that the tzaddik had helped him find his grandfather's grave, and as a result vowed to do complete teshuvah, and he came to Moreinu v'Rabbeinu to tell him about all that had transpired.

It is interesting to note, that even before he started to tell his wondrous story, Moreinu noticed through the window hundreds of pigeons flying together.

Moreinu and commented, "How wondrous are Hashem's ways. Hundreds of pigeons are flying in unison to satisfy the will of Hashem."

The doctor was rendered speechless. He turned to Moreinu v'Rabbeinu and asked incredulously, "How did the Rabbi know that the pigeons directed me to my grandfather's grave in Mogador?"

Moreinu v'Rabbeinu, who knew nothing about the pigeons in Mogador, did not understand what the doctor was referring to. The wondrous ways of Hashem were impressed upon him by the good doctor's story.

From then on this Jew took upon himself to come each year to the hillula of the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Pinto, zya"u, in Morocco, and Baruch Hashem had the good fortune of finding his true match, especially on the day of the hillula. He merited establishing a fine Jewish family.

Ten years later, on the eighth of Av, at 3:00 in the morning, his wife, Mrs.

Lugasi, called me and told me that her four year old son, who just a year earlier came to me to have his hair cut on his "chalaka" – went out to the family pool without adult supervision. Suddenly, the family members noticed that the child was missing and hurried outside and found him floating in the pool after falling in.

When the mother saw her son drowned, she began screaming and shouting that the merits of Rabbi Chaim Pinto, zy"u, should save the child who had his hair cut by his grandson, Rabbi David Pinto, shlit"u, at the "chalaka" and that the child should not die, G-d forbid.

Her prayers flowing from the depths of her heart were accepted, and suddenly a man appeared and jumped into the pool. He pulled out the child from the water and drained from his body huge quantities of water. Afterward, he resuscitated the child until he regained consciousness. When he saw that the child had recovered, he left.

Meanwhile, Hatzalah members arrived and they declared that the child had experienced an extraordinary miracle, since under natural circumstances the child had no chance to live.

However, the prayers of the mother which emanated from the depths of her heart and rose to the Heavenly Throne, overcame the laws of nature, and in the merit of the tzaddik, Rabbi Chaim Pinto, zya"u, the child merited to survive.

The continuation of the lineage of the tzaddikim is followed by the gaon and tzaddik, one of outstanding deeds, the miracle-worker, Rabbi Chaim Pinto "Hakatan," zt"l. He, too, like his father and grandfather, left all the vanities of this world and sat in the "tent of Torah." He also engaged in acts of charity and kindness, as will be explained further on.

When the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Hakatan encountered economic hardships, he would borrow money from his acquaintances so that he should be able to continue providing for the poor and needy. When his financial situation would improve, he would return the loan.

Once, Rabbi Chaim borrowed a substantial sum of money from a poultry merchant by the name of Chasan Zafrani. However, when the time came to return the money, Rabbi Chaim did not have from where to obtain it.

The lender, who was not Jewish, threatened the Rav, "If you will not pay me back the money that I lent you, I will not hesitate to kill you!"

At that time, the tzaddik was still young and did not recognize his extraordinary powers, which stemmed from his exceptional holiness. In all innocence, he truly believed that the non-Jew would kill him if he did not return the money.

Rabbi Chaim requested that the non-Jew go with him to the cemetery and wait for him at the gate, until he would come to give him his money. The man indeed accompanied Rabbi Chaim to the cemetery. When he arrived there, Rabbi Chaim approached the grave of his grandmother, Rabbanit Miriam, a"u, the wife of his holy grandfather, the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Hagadol. He prostrated himself over her grave and cried to his grandmother, "Rise and see your pitiful grandson, who does not have a way to repay his debt."

When Rabbi Chaim finished praying for salvation, he noticed a woman standing in front of him, dressed in splendid clothing, commanding respect.

"Why are you crying?" she asked the tzaddik. Rabbi Chaim confided his troubles to her, explaining that he did not have a way to repay his debt to the non-Jew, who was waiting for him at the gates of the cemetery.

The strange woman took out a red kerchief from her pocket and placed a substantial sum of money in it. Then, she disappeared without a trace.

Rabbi Chaim fingered the money, totally amazed by the tremendous miracle that had occurred. He then repaid the poultry merchant, Hassan, in full.

Rabbi Chaim returned to the house of his father Rabbi Hadan, who was nearing death at the time, and recounted the whole episode to him. Rabbi Hadan told him, "Know, my son, that the woman you met was none other than your grandmother, Miriam, a"u. She perceived your intense distress. When you told her, 'Rise and see your grandson,' she immediately descended from the heavens in order to save your life."

One who fulfills the verse "You shall be wholehearted with Hashem, your G-d" and trusts in Him merits seeing much Divine assistance. He will ultimately succeed in all his endeavors

(Shenot Chaim).