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Hilula

13 – Rabbeinu Yosef Chaim of Bavel, the
'Ben Ish Chai'

14 – Rabbi Mordechai Bardugo

15 – Rabbi Amram Ben Divan

16 – Rabbi Yehuda Pinto zy"á

17 – Rabbi Daniel Pinto zy"á

18 – Rabbi Abdallah Somech, author of
Zivchei Tzedek

19 – Rabbi Bechor Ahron Alnakaveh,
Av Beit Din Yerushalayim

Weekly Bulletin on the Parshah

Pachad David

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Under the auspices of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu Hagaon Hatzaddik Rabbi David Chananya Pinto, shlita

Son of the tzaddik Rabbi Moshe Ahron Pinto, zt"l, and grandson of the holy tzaddik and miracle-worker Rabbi Chaim Pinto, zy"á



MASKIL LEDAVID

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

The Only Way to Strengthen One's Faith

"If a bird's nest happens to be before you on the road, on any tree or on the ground – young birds or eggs – and the mother is roosting on the young birds or on the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young. You shall surely send away the mother and take the young for yourself, so that it will be good for you and will prolong your days" (Devarim 22:6-7)

The mussar commentaries interpret these verses with a deeper meaning, beyond the actual mitzvah of shiluach haken – sending away a mother bird and taking her young. Inherent in this mitzvah is a wonderful lesson that we must constantly review, particularly during the month of Elul, a time of mercy and forgiveness. In this month we must strengthen both our faith in Hashem and our toil in Torah, because basic faith in Hashem, a true awareness that all emanates from Him, requires constant reinforcement, especially today when the Yetzer Hara tries in every way to cool off our faith.

The only way to strengthen one's faith is through toiling in Torah. The combination of Torah and faith enables man to serve Hashem with complete devotion, and he will then be a source of pride to his surroundings.

Avraham Avinu was the pillar of faith, Ya'akov Avinu was the pillar of Torah, while Yitzchak's attribute was strength, the symbol of self-sacrifice. There were many scoffers in Yitzchak's generation who mocked and despised him for believing in One G-d, but Yitzchak and his household stood as firm as a fortified wall against them.

Our holy forefathers are called "Ivriim – Hebrews" because with their faith in the Creator they stood on one side (ever in Hebrew), while the generation's wicked ones stood on the other side. While Avraham Avinu brought his generation closer to the Shechina through his trait of kindness and hospitality, Ya'akov Avinu aroused their spark of faith by cleaving to the Holy Torah.

The Gemara (Sanhedrin 107a) refers to the Satan as a bird. In the above verses the Torah is warning man that if the Yetzer Hara, compared to a bird, comes and tries to slacken your avodat Hashem, do not follow him. Rather, you should send away this bird and don't be tempted by the Yetzer Hara because he tries to make you lose both This World and the Next. Once you have sent away the 'bird', take the young – the Torah, mitzvot and good deeds, which are always fresh and new. This is how you will merit both long life in This World and an inheritance in the World to Come.

The Yetzer Hara lingers in anticipation for the one who studies Torah, waiting for him to end his learning so he can implant foreign ideas in his heart and cool off his enthusiasm, thereby distancing him from Torah study and mitzvah observance.

The Satan stands to the side and chirps like a bird, trying to distract a person from his Torah study. Or, he chooses to make his life difficult through challenges and suffering. With great impudence he then inserts reservations in his

heart with his questions: "Why do you sit and study Torah when you are surrounded by so many hardships? Do you not see that the Torah you are constantly studying is not protecting you in your time of need? Why continue? Get up and take a look at all those people who are not busy praying or engaging in Torah yet they live successful lives. Look at all those who work on Shabbat and lead good lives, while you and your family who are particular to observe every stringency, live in great poverty!" This is the way of the Yetzer Hara.

When a person arrives in the World of Truth, neither the money or honor he acquired with great toil will accompany him. It is the Torah and mitzvot alone that remain as his eternal acquisitions. Therefore, when you are occupied with studying Torah, "a tree of life for those who grasp it", if the Yetzer Hara (the bird) approaches you and tries to disturb your learning, do not listen to him. Hurry to drive him away "and take the young for yourself." Cleave to the 'young', the talmidei chachamim. "Sit in the dust of their feet" and this will prolong your days and you will see the fulfillment of the Chazal, "Fortunate is the one who arrives in the World to Come with Torah study in his hand."

In the same measure that man hurries to perform a mitzvah, so should he flee from sin and distance himself from any form of it, because "sin rests at the door." If man allows the sin to approach him, even not intending to transgress it, it presents great danger for him because as time passes he will grow accustomed to the presence of this sin and his yirat shamayim will slowly cool off. And then the day will come when he will find himself transgressing this sin against his wish, since the impurity of the sin that was in the air clung to him and eventually succeeded in trapping him in its net. If man does not hurry to flee from sin, he will quickly find his heart cold to the service of Hashem and this coolness will bring him to neglect Torah and mitzvot.

The mitzvah of shiluach haken is a mitzvah that demands great faith, because it seemingly contains some form of cruelty towards the mother. Nevertheless, a person should have no qualms about fulfilling it. He should pursue it, and by fulfilling this mitzvah he will continue observing many other mitzvot. On the contrary, particularly because this mitzvah involves the danger of arousing doubts, one must be particular to observe it, strengthening one's faith and not asking questions.

Fulfilling this mitzvah as the Torah specifies, without any doubts, will merit a person the fulfillment of the continuation of the verses, "If you build a new house." He will build himself up well and merit surrounding himself with fences of Torah, rising in levels of Torah and yirat shamayim. He will not serve Hashem as in the concept of "kilayim" (planting forbidden mixtures), sometimes behaving appropriately and sometimes not, but he will be entirely upright. This will merit him with the reward reserved for tzadikim in the World to Come.



Walking in their Ways

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

A Day of Reprieve from Worry and Grief

One Friday, I was very concerned about a certain problem. I walked around the house finding no peace from worry.

"Father, what are you so worried about?" my daughter asked, seeing distress written on my face. "Today is Erev Shabbat." She pointed out that it was getting late in the day. I immediately shook off my worries and went about my Shabbat preparations.

I have a tradition from my father zy"a that Friday is a day designated for helping in the house in honor of Shabbat. Father would do anything necessary in the house, never avoiding even the most unpleasant jobs. He declared that true honor is preparing the house for Shabbat.

One Friday, I worked especially hard to straighten up and clean the house. My wife had pity on me and said, "What a shame to expend so much effort. As soon as you go to the Beit Haknesset for Kabbalat Shabbat, the entire house will be overturned by the children. When you get home, there will be no trace of all your hard work!"

But I replied it was important to me that the house be neat and tidy when I leave, as is fitting for a special guest.

That Friday, as I prepared for Shabbat, I completely forgot about my worries. On Motza'ei Shabbat, when my daughter reminded me about them, I told her I had gotten rid of them completely. The problems did not go away, but the concern surrounding them did.

This is the true solution for all of a Jew's problems. Strengthening oneself in Torah and mitzvot, especially the mitzvah of Shabbat, the source of all blessing, has the power to remove anxiety from man's heart.

The Haftarah

"Sing out, O barren one who has not given birth" (Yeshaya 54)

The connection to Shabbat: This Haftarah is the fifth of the seven special 'Haftarot of Consolation' that are read beginning with the Shabbat following Tisha B'Av. They are chapters of consolation for the Jewish people.

Askenazim continue with the next section, **"O afflicted, storm-tossed one."**

Guard Your Tongue

Alleviating Pain

A person suffering emotionally or mentally can seek help even if it involves speaking about people, which would normally be considered lashon hara. Of course, one must relate only that which is necessary. It is preferable, when possible, to leave out the names of the ones involved.

The Chafetz Chaim raises the possibility that if someone intends to alleviate his concerns and seek relief, this is considered as a beneficial purpose as it says (Mishlei 12:25) "When there is worry in man's heart, he should talk it out." Of course, this refers to particularly challenging situations and not daily occurrences.



In Our Father's Path

Returning Lost Property Includes Lost Souls Too

An innocent person walking down the street suddenly came across a gold necklace abandoned in a corner. He took the precious find and hung up a lost and found notice in central locations in the area. A month passed, two months, but no one claimed the find. He hung up new notices; perhaps the old ones had been covered over or removed, but still to no avail. The months passed and he did not hear from anyone. Suddenly, almost a year later, he received a phone call from a stranger who told him he had lost a necklace in the exact spot detailed on the notice.

The finder asked for identifying details and indeed the description perfectly fit the necklace he had found. "You are invited to my house to retrieve your loss" the finder joyfully exclaimed, and fixed a time.

The day arrived; the stranger came and confirmed the necklace was indeed his. The finder then asked him to wait a moment. He left his home and returned a short time later carrying bags full of delicacies and accompanied by another eight men. He quickly set the table and asked all those present to wash their hands and join him for a seudat mitzvah. As the guests sat around and partook of the feast, they asked their host why he was celebrating. Had he completed a masechet? Maybe he wanted to recite the gomel blessing and it was a thanksgiving celebration?

To their surprise, he replied that the seudah was in honor of the mitzvah he was about to perform: The mitzvah of "You shall surely return them." He took the necklace he had found and joyfully recited the verse, "May the pleasantness of the Lord, our G-d, be upon us; our handiwork, establish for us; our handiwork, establish it" (recited before performing a mitzvah) and then returned the find to its owner.

"If this Jew was so delighted to return a material find," Rabbi Reuven Elbaz shlita points out, "how much should we rejoice if we merit returning a spiritual find, a lost soul, to our Father in Heaven!"

With Hashem's help, recent years have seen a great awakening among Am Yisrael and tens of thousands of people wish to begin observing a religious way of life. What have we come to? Where has education and tradition disappeared to? What will be with our children? Questions such as these trouble many Jews and they search for someone to lead them out of the dense, dark forest and return to the high road; to Torah, Shabbat, prayer and modesty.

Together with the great joy every religious Jew feels at the sight of the teshuva movement growing in front of our eyes, it is important that we not forget those who have been left behind. We must search for ways to bring them back.

"You shall surely return them to your brother!"



Pearls of the Parsha

Elevating One's Love for Hashem Over Love of One's Children

"If a man will have a wayward and rebellious son, who does not hearken to the voice of his father and the voice of his mother" (Devarim 21:18)

The Gemara (Sanhedrin 71a) says: "Rabbi Shimon said, there was never a rebellious child and never will be. So why is it written in the Torah? So you can expound on it and receive reward."

Other commentaries offer different explanations as to why the Torah writes about an occurrence that will never take place.

Rabbeinu Bachayai writes that there is great wisdom in this, for it teaches people about the greatness of the obligation to love Hashem. There is no stronger love than the love of a father and mother for their child. But the moment parents see their child transgressing a G-dly command, and behaving like "This is his foolish way..." (Tehillim 49:14), they are obligated to feel that their love for Hashem surmounts their love for their child, to the extent that they are required to bring him to be stoned by the Beit Din.

We learn this concept from Avraham Avinu. Despite his strong love for his only son, Yitzchak, nevertheless when Hashem commanded Avraham to bring Yitzchak as an offering, he immediately went ahead, for his love for Hashem was stronger than his love for his son. This is why Hashem describes him as "Avraham, My beloved." With his devotion he publicized throughout the world the importance of the obligation to love Hashem, which must surmount all other loves.

The Torah deems fit to write about the rebellious child to expound on the great obligation of loving Hashem, to the extent that parents must bring their precious son to be stoned. This is why Chazal say "Expound and receive reward."

The Days of Awe – Days of Building the World

"If you build a new house, you shall make a fence for your roof" (Devarim 22:8)

Rabbeinu Ya'akov Abuchatzera zy"a writes in his sefer Petuchei Chotem that the words "בית – תבנה – if you build a house" have the same numerical value as "זה ראש השנה" – this is Rosh Hashanah. And the word "חדש – new" has the same numerical value as "זה כפר" – this is Yom Kippur. This alludes to the fact that the High Holy Days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are days when we build the world anew.

... The Sabbatical Year ...

1. The laws of Shemittah also apply to public or government-owned land. However, in certain situations, one can be lenient with government-owned land, for example when it comes to trimming hedges and other similar things. One must ask the advice of a Torah sage in each situation.

2. The laws of Shemittah also apply to desert land and ownerless fields. Any work forbidden in the seventh year may not be carried out in these places and its fruits must be treated with the appropriate holiness. Some hold that the laws of Shemittah do not apply to an ownerless field, for the Torah writes "Six years you may sow your field", meaning the field must belong to a specific person.

3. The laws of Shemittah also apply to land that is hekdesch and subsequently to a garden in the courtyard of a Beit Kneset. Some disagree and say that the laws of Shemittah do not apply to land that is definitely hekdesch.

For any questions in practical application of these halachot, please consult a rabbinical authority.

Treasures

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



The Fire of Torah Against the Fire of Temptation

"When you will go out to war against your enemies, and Hashem, your G-d, will deliver him into your hand, and you will capture his captivity" (Devarim 21:10)

The Holy Alshich zy"a writes that this verse alludes to the Yetzer Hara against whom one must initiate war. Only if a person wages war against him does he merit Divine Assistance in prevailing over this enemy, as it says "and Hashem, your G-d, will deliver him into your hand, and you will capture his captivity."

Rabbi Yisrael Salanter in Igeret Mussar, describes at length the imaginary power of the Yetzer Hara. The Yetzer Hara paints a false picture of the enormous pleasure man will derive from the sin he is about to commit. Therefore, the way to wage war against the Yetzer Hara is by painting for oneself a true picture of the great loss one will suffer from this sin, and the great reward one will receive for abstaining.

If a person creates accurate pictures in his mind, Hashem promises that he will be successful in this battle and not only will he prevail over the Yetzer Hara, but he will see the fulfillment of "and you will capture his captivity." This means that all the forces of incitement for evil and forbidden lusts will be given over in his hands, as it says, "the inclination of tzadikim is in their hands." He can then use those powers for holiness, by depicting for himself images of the enormous reward that awaits all those who abstain from sin and observe the mitzvot.

Accordingly, a person must strengthen himself and use every spare minute to study the Holy Torah. He will then comprehend the power of Torah that until now was held captive by the Yetzer Hara. Through going to the Beit Midrash and overcoming his Yetzer Hara, man releases the captive from the hands of the Yetzer Hara. When he begins engaging in Torah with all his strength, he will recognize that it is more precious than pearls; and the more he engages in it, the more his enthusiasm and love for it will grow.

The ability to overcome the temptations of the Yetzer Hara is only through love of Torah. When a person has a true desire to be victorious in this difficult battle, he arouses Heavenly mercy and he will succeed in capturing the Yetzer Hara, even reclaiming the captivity of Torah. Then he will engage in Torah day and night, until he feels a love and desire as strong as that which he feels for his soulmate.



A NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA

Every Good Intention Should Be Preceded by 'Bli Neder'

The mekubalim write that when a person vows to do something, an angel is created. This angel has no soul. It has eyes, ears, and hands but cannot move. It waits until the person fulfills his vow, when it is then granted a soul.

From where is this idea derived? From Avraham Avinu. When he was about to slaughter his son Yitzchak, an angel appeared to him and said, "Do not stretch out your hand against the lad... for now I know that you are a G-d-fearing man, since you have not withheld your son, your only one, from Me" (Bereishit 22:12).

HaGaon Rabbi Ben Tzion Mutzefi shlita writes in his sefer Doresh Tzion, that the angel meant to impart the following: Hashem told you, "bring him up there as an offering." Do not actually slaughter him, but just bring him up there as an offering. And when you brought him up you fulfilled the mitzvah in its entirety. What is the proof? "You have not withheld your son, your only one, from Me." I am the angel created from this mitzvah and I do not lack anything. This proves that you performed the mitzvah completely. From here we learn that if one does not actually fulfil the mitzvah, the angel (resulting from the vow) would be incomplete.

It is important to point out that Chazal say it is incorrect to accustom oneself to making vows.

However, man sometimes finds himself facing adversity and in those moments when he is in need of salvation, he wishes to accept a commitment upon himself. It may be something he is capable of fulfilling, or it may even be something beyond his capabilities.

It happens, Harav Mutzefi shlita points out, that people stumble and promise things without having given it enough thought. Just meeting a chatan and declaring, "You're a chatan? I'll pay for your furniture!" is already considered a vow and one must keep one's word. Or in the face of hardship, a person might promise that if he recovers or merits relief from a certain problem, he accepts upon himself to do such and such. But one must know that if he did not explicitly say 'bli neder' (this is not a promise), it is considered as a vow which cannot always be annulled.

The Gemara says (Nedarim 8a), "One who says I will get up early and study this chapter or this masechet, has vowed a great vow to the G-d of Israel." From here we can derive: If one approaches a friend late at night and says, "Let's learn a daf Gemara/Shulchan Aruch/Chok L'Yisrael" but the friend who is exhausted replies, "I am too tired now. Tomorrow I will get up early and learn!" it is enough that he said he will get up and learn, even without "I promise", and the vow is already in force and he is obligated to fulfil his words.

Rabbi Ben Tzion Mutzefi shlita relates a story on this idea, heard from his father, the tzadik and mekubal Rabbi Salman Mutzefi zt"l. After settling in Israel, he studied Torah under Rabbi Tzedakah Chut-

zin zt"l, in the 'Shemesh Tzedakah' Beit Haknesset in Yerushalayim. This Beit Knesset, established by Rabbi Tzedakah, comprised a G-d fearing community who merited children who were exceptional talmidei chachamim. Among them was Rabbi Ya'akov Ovadiah zt"l, father of Maran Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef zt"l, Rabbi Eliyahu Abba Shaul zt"l, father of Maran Rabbi Ben Tzion Abba Shaul zt"l, and many other righteous individuals.

Rabbi Tzedakah Chutzin liked to vow but was meticulous about keeping his word, and since the verse says "It is better not to vow than to vow and not fulfil" (Kohelet 5:4) he would come to the Beit Knesset and when he saw the gabbai tzedakah collecting money for hachnasat kallah or some other purpose, he would take out ten liras from his pocket and wait. As the gabbai approached him he would announce, "I am hereby vowing to give ten liras to tzedakah!" and while uttering the words he would hand over the money. He did this so as not to risk being hindered from fulfilling his vow in any way!

This custom is culled from a pure, ancient source: from the time of Hillel Hazaken. The Gemara (Nedarim 9b) testifies about him, "In all his days no man desecrated the sanctity of his offering, for he would bring the unconsecrated animal to the courtyard and there he would consecrate it." Out of fear of being prevented from bringing the offering and negating his vow, he would not designate it as a vow or a gift [offering] until right before entering the courtyard of the Beit Hamikdash, when he would declare, "This is a vow [offering]" or "This is a gift [offering]!"