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Under the auspices of Moreinu v' Rabbeinu, the Admor 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"ta

"These are the reckonings of the Mishkan, the Mishkan of Testimony" (Shemot 38:21).

Our sages say: "It is called the Mishkan of Testimony because it was a testimony for all mankind that Am Yisrael had been forgiven for the sin of the Golden Calf." We are also told (*Tanchuma, Pekudei* 2), "Before they made the Golden Calf, Hashem rested His Presence among them. When He grew angry with them, the nations of the world said, 'Hashem will no longer dwell among them.' What did He do? Hashem said, 'They shall make a Sanctuary for Me so I may dwell among them,' and all mankind will know that I forgave Yisrael."

This week's Parshah gives rise to several questions:

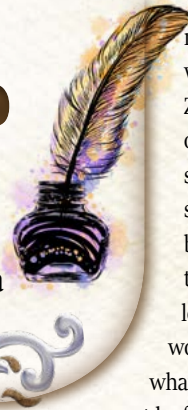
First of all, the command "They shall make a Sanctuary for Me" was told to Moshe before Am Yisrael sinned with the Golden Calf. How could Hashem command them to make a Mishkan that would atone for something they had not yet committed?

Furthermore, the early commentaries expound on the words, "They shall make a Sanctuary for Me so I may dwell among them": it does not say 'inside it' but 'among them', which implies inside each and every one of you" (*Rabbeinu Ephraim, Shemot* 25:8). If Hashem's Presence rests among Bnei Yisrael themselves, why did they need the Mishkan as a place for Hashem to rest His Shechina?

We have often spoken about the importance of praying and studying Torah in a *beit midrash*. One cannot compare studying at home alone to studying in a *beit midrash*. Chazal say (*Yoma* 28b), "From the times of our forefathers they always studied in a yeshiva. When they were in Egypt, they had a yeshiva. When they were in the Wilderness, they had a yeshiva. Even when Avraham Avinu was elderly, he still studied in a yeshiva. Even when Yitzchak Avinu was elderly, he studied in a yeshiva. And Yaakov Avinu too studied in a yeshiva even in his old age."

The question is, could our forefathers not have studied Torah in just any place? Why was it so important for them to establish a yeshiva wherever they went? However, their actions show us the importance of studying Torah in a *beit midrash*. When the Romans

maskil Le'David The Batei Midrash – Shelters from the Yetzer Hara



made a siege around Yerushalayim, what did Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zakai ask Aspasinos? For one thing only: to spare Yavneh and its Torah scholars. He did not just ask him to spare the Torah sages of Yavneh, but the town Yavneh too, because that was where the yeshiva was located. One without the other would not be good enough. This is what would ensure that Torah would not be forgotten from Am Yisrael.

The rule is, the most ideal place to study Torah is in a *beit midrash*, for the Yetzer Hara only leaves a person when he enters the *beit midrash*. This is where we can overcome the Yetzer Hara.

I often see people entering the *beit midrash*, not with the intent of studying Torah but just to look around. But in the end they take a sefer and sit among the students. This is because the sound of Torah triumphs over the Yetzer Hara and ignites a person's heart, kindling the desire to sit and study Torah.

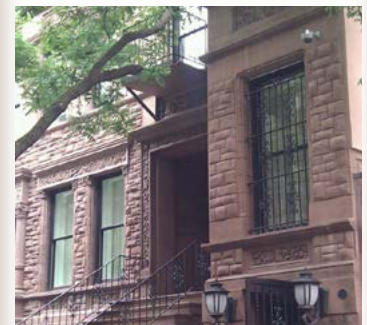
Hashem said to Moshe Rabbeinu: since Yisrael accepted the Torah and their impurity left them at the mountain (*Shabbat* 146a), I will come and rest My Shechina among them, inside each one of them. Despite this, please make a Sanctuary for Me that will serve as a *beit midrash* for them, so they can enter it frequently and thereby distance themselves from the Yetzer Hara. And even though it says "Behold, the heavens and the highest heavens cannot contain You", I ask you to establish a Mishkan in This World so that Am Yisrael should have somewhere to go where the Yetzer Hara has no entry.

Entering the Mishkan and thereby distancing themselves from the Yetzer Hara gave Am Yisrael the merit of Hashem resting His Presence among them, inside each one of them.

Now we understand that since even before they sinned, Hashem wanted Am Yisrael to frequent the *beit midrash* to distance themselves from the Yetzer Hara, how much more so now after they sinned must they establish a Mishkan to escape the clutches of the Yetzer Hara. By frequenting the Mishkan at all times, their Torah will be preserved and the Shechinah will reside inside them.

2 Adar 2, 5782
5 March 2022

945



Hilula

- 2 Adar 2 – Rabbi Yosef Dov HaLevi Soloveitchik
- 2 Adar 2 – Rabbi Yitzchak Elmaliach, author of *Vayizra Yitzchak*
- 3 Adar 2 – Rabbi Eliezer De Avila, author of *Magen Giborim*
- 3 Adar 2 – Rabbi Mordechai Yaffe, the Levush
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- 6 Adar 2 – Rabbi Yeshaya Azoulai, grandfather of the Chida
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- 7 Adar 2 – Rabbi Yitzchak Isaac Taub, Admor of Kaliv
- 8 Adar 2 – Rabbi Yosef Yedid HaLevi, author of *Yemei Yosef*
- 8 Adar 2 – Rabbi Eliyahu Zlutnick





WORDS OF THE SAGES

Womanly Wisdom

The Holy Torah commends the wise hearted woman who spun the goat hair as part of the construction of the Mishkan. The special wisdom with which women are endowed also finds expression in their innermost abode, inside the Jewish home. With their exceptional intuition, they instill Jewish tradition in their offspring in a clear and wonderful way.

Hagaon Rabbi Yitzchak Zilberstein shlit"a, in his sefer *Aleinu Leshabe'ach*, relates an inspiring story he heard at the shiva for the Nadvorna Rebbe's mother. This is what the Rebbe told him:

The role of endearing Torah to one's children rests with the Jewish mother. She is the one who will make the mitzvot appealing and glorify the honor of Hashem's Torah in the eyes of her tender children, with all this includes.

These impressions will remain in the hearts of her young sons and daughters, and even when they grow up and leave their parents' home, they will be saturated with love of the Torah and thus never desert it all their lives.

The mother must make a 'big deal' about the mitzvot, make them an 'entire event', thereby showing the family that mitzvot are important and precious and have no substitute.

A new immigrant from Russia told those in charge of his spiritual welfare the only thing he knows is that he is a Jew. When the *dayanim* asked him whether he is a Kohen, Levi or Yisrael, he had no idea.

After a lengthy conversation with him, during which they tried to verify details about the home in which he grew up, they asked if he remembered anything his mother had done at home. The man seemed to come to life, and said that before every *chag*, his mother would buy a new pair of socks for his father, and would make it a very exciting event in the home, to the extent that all the children waited for this ceremony long before the *chag*. New socks for father...

The *dayanim* said this is clear evidence that the immigrant is a Kohen. The custom in Chutz L'aretz is for the Kohanim to recite the Priestly Blessing only on the *chagim*, and not daily as is the custom in Eretz Yisrael. The mother, who wanted to instill love for this mitzvah and thereby impart to her children "the Torah of your mother", would buy socks for her husband so he could bless the congregation in new socks (before blessing the congregation, Kohanim remove their shoes).

The Russian immigrant well remembered that joyous event. He also described how his mother would present his father with the socks with special joy and a feeling of sanctity. "Even though as children we did not understand the essence of this ceremony, it was etched in our minds in a very strong way."



WALKING IN THEIR WAYS

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

Gentiles vs. Gentility

When I was once travelling by train, I noticed the gentiles seated near me staring at my strange demeanor. I sat quietly, immersed in writing my Torah thoughts, sporting a long beard and *kippah* which they found cause for ridicule.

In contrast, they behaved no different from the animals of the field. They ate gluttonously and laughed raucously. Their conduct bespoke coarseness, lacking all ethics and any measure of respect.

As I reflected on the vast difference between my restrained and self-possessed manner and their wild ways, I realized that This World is, indeed, "an upside-down world". Instead of *me* mocking them for their unruly, uninhibited behavior, *they* were mocking me. Why was this so?

I understood that their laughter came from a sense of emptiness, with the purpose of covering up their lives of nothingness. When they observed my quiet manners, my diligence in learning, my care in mitzvah performance, and all other aspects of a Torah-true lifestyle, they felt obliged by the diametrical contrast.

We shared nothing more than a car in the train. But since I behaved according to the Torah's mandates, as it says, "Its ways are ways of pleasantness" (*Mishlei* 3:17), these people became very uncomfortable, realizing maybe they too are required to act with a measure of decorum. But that was too much to ask of them. By ridiculing me, they effectually cast off the impression of my refined behavior. This exonerated them from contemplating their lifestyle and possibly changing.



FROM THE TREASURY

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

Constant Self-Reckoning

“These are the reckonings of the Mishkan, the Mishkan of Testimony, which were reckoned at Moshe’s bidding” (Shemot 38:21).

Chazal say (*Shemot Rabba* 51:3), “Why is the word Mishkan repeated? Rabbi Shmuel Bar Marta says, it was collateral twice.” Due to the sins of Bnei Yisrael, both Batei Mikdash were destroyed. However, it doesn’t seem fitting to mention times of trouble when a person is engaged in something joyful. Why did Moshe wish to hint to the future destruction of the Beit Hamikdash when they were engaged in erecting the Mishkan?

The following explanation sheds light on this question. Taking a look at the verses, we find the Torah does not detail what the gold was used for, as it does with the silver and copper. The reason is as Chazal say (*Shemot Rabba* 51:6), “...the Mishkan of Testimony, which were reckoned at Moshe’s bidding:’ ...He said to them, come and I will make a reckoning before you. Moshe said to them, ‘These are the reckonings of the Mishkan,’ such and such were the expenditures for the Mishkan. He was able to calculate the distribution of every donation but forgot about the 1,775 sockets of silver used to make the hooks for the pillars. He wondered what happened to this amount, and said, ‘Now Yisrael will claim, “Moshe took them for himself.”’ What did he do? Hashem illuminated his eyes and he realized they were used for the hooks of the pillars.”

This is why the word Mishkan is repeated, hinting to the destruction of the two Batei Mikdash. We have no greater suffering than this loss which plagues us throughout the generations. When troubles befall us, we tend to think we have done nothing to deserve them; nevertheless, if we would make a calculation, we would immediately realize we have what to rectify. After some introspection, we will come across areas we would do well to improve, for example neglecting Torah study.

Moshe Rabbeinu made a reckoning of every single item to teach Bnei Yisrael that man can only advance in his avodat Hashem if he constantly evaluates his ways and examines his deeds. Even if initially he thinks he did not sin, he should keep reflecting on his ways for perhaps he forgot some fine point. And if he does all he can to assess his behavior, Hashem then assists

him and illuminates his eyes to realize where he went wrong.

THE SABBATICAL YEAR



1. The laws of *kedushat shevi'it* only applies to fruits owned by a Jewish person, grown on land in Eretz Yisrael that belongs to a Jewish person. Therefore produce grown on land in Eretz Yisrael that belongs to a non-Jew does not have *kedushat shevi'it*. The same law applies to land sold to a non-Jew in advance of the Shemittah year. The *beit din* of Maran the Beit Yosef made a *cherem* against those who were stringent and observed *kedushat shevi'it* on land belonging to gentiles.

2. Fruits and vegetables sold by *otzar beit din* have *kedushat shevi'it*.

3. When buying fruits and vegetables from a store that sells produce both from non-Jews and from *otzar beit din*, if one is unsure of the origin of the produce, one may be stringent and treat it with *kedushat shevi'it* despite the *cherem*, since the *cherem* was not instituted in a place of doubt.

4. *Peirot shevi'it* are supposed to be used for eating or drinking. Since this is the case, anything normally eaten must be eaten, and one must drink anything one normally consumes as a drink. Fruits or vegetables normally eaten fresh must not be cooked, while those eaten cooked should not be eaten raw.

5. The Torah says, «The Shabbat produce of the land shall be yours to eat.» Chazal expound that Shemittah produce is to be eaten *and not wasted*. Therefore as long as *peirot shevi'it* are still fit to be eaten by human beings, or even used as animal food, they must not be wasted, spoiled or destroyed.

6. Therefore, if a significant amount of leftovers remain on a plate or in a pot, for example potatoes, carrots, onion etc. one may not throw them in the garbage as usual, for this would be deliberately making them go to waste. Rather, one should wrap them in paper or plastic and then place them in the garbage can, for this is not considered as deliberately spoiling, but allowing it to happen on its own which is permitted (especially if it is less than a *kezayit*). Some are stringent and designate a special Shemittah bin for *kedushat shevi'it* leftovers, and only once they have begun to rot, do they get thrown into the regular garbage can. Those who follow this stringency will be blessed.

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



Rabbi Eliezer De Avila

There were three important and central Torah cities in Morocco. Marrakesh was known for its sharpness of Torah study, to the extent that most delegates from Eretz Israel skipped going to this town. According to the custom, an emissary in search of donations had to first deliver a lecture in the *beit kneset*, after which an appeal was held in his honor. But would it enter the mind of the emissary to deliver a lecture in the lion's den?! The study rooms were filled with various groups who would fiercely debate the Gemara. They studied with self-sacrifice and love of Torah, toiling to understand the commentaries on the Gemara, such as Rashi, the Tosfot and the Maharsha.

Rabat, which literally means a fortified monastery, is today the capital of Morocco and the second largest city in the country. Rabat was originally a small town called Salah, and only later became a large city. For many years, Jews settled in Rabat and managed their businesses in peace, until they began to suffer from various humiliations from the Muslims. For example, outside the Jewish Quarter they were forced to wear black and walk barefoot, and were

not allowed to leave Morocco without special permission from the Sultan.

Rabbi Eliezer De Avila grew up in this city; his family was among those who fled Spain and settled in Morocco. He grew up in the company of the sages of the city and his parents' home had a great influence on him as well. His uncle, the holy Ohr HaChayim zy"l, followed R' Eliezer's progress from a young age and foresaw that he would grow up to be an exceptional gaon.

He acquired his method of Torah study – in-depth debate – from his father, Rabbi Shmuel, a student of the gaon Rabbi Yosef ben Bahatit zt"l.

The Marrakesh sages related that when they were stumped by the words of a difficult Gemara, they would say: "Bring the sefer of 'our' Maharsha and we will see what he says." The Chida too testifies in the introduction to his sefer, that he heard from his talmidim about Rabbi Eliezer De Avila's depth of study and sharpness.

Why did his contemporaries call him the 'Maharsha'? A wonderful story explaining this phenomenon was preserved by the great sages of Morocco and passed down generation after generation:

As a child, Rabbi Eliezer could not understand the words of the Maharsha on the Tosfot on one of the *masechtot* of Shas. After trying hard and meeting with failure, he began to cry. The door of the *beit midrash* opened, and an elderly distinguished gentleman, dressed in a Jellabiya, the attire of the sages of Morocco at the time, entered.

He turned to the child and asked: "Why are you crying?"

Rabbi Eliezer was sure this elderly gentleman was not familiar with the intricacies of the *sugyot*, certainly not with the words of the Tosafot, and all the more so not with the words of the Maharsha... So he avoided answering him. After much beseeching the child revealed his difficulty and the elderly man explained the words of the Tosfot

in a way that the words of the Maharsha became very clear. Immediately afterwards the old man disappeared.

That night the old man came to him in a dream, and told him that he was the Maharsha. He explained that he had been sent from heaven to explain the Tosfot to him, in appreciation of his toil and labor in the study of the Holy Torah!

When he was seven years old, his uncle, the Ohr HaChayim, visited the family and asked his mother: "Where is Eliezer?" She replied that he was in the yard. The sound of jostling of benches and tables could be heard from outside the locked door. The Ohr Hachaim looked through the keyhole and saw the young Eliezer jumping on the chairs, as is the way of spirited children. When he finished jumping, the Ohr Hachaim asked him, "Every time I visit you are bent over a sefer. What happened this time?"

Eliezer replied that he had never played around like this before, but the neighborhood children had begun to make fun of him for not joining their games. For several days now the Yetzer Hara had been tempting and convincing him that it is worthwhile for him to go outside and play. So he decided to listen just once to the Yetzer Hara, so he would then leave him alone and allow him go to the *beit midrash* and study Torah in peace...

His uncle enjoyed the answer!

Rabbi Eliezer established a yeshiva in Rabat, and served as the Rosh Yeshiva for the sages who came from all over the area to plumb the depths of Torah.

Rabbi Eliezer diligently studied Torah day and night, hardly allowing himself to sleep. As his son-in-law describes in the introduction to his sefer: "From the day he was born, his soul longed to diligently occupy the *beit midrash*. He did not move from the tent [of Torah] from sunrise until the very end of the day."

At the height of his flourishing in Torah, he passed away at the young age of forty-seven and was buried in Rabat.

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