

PACHAD DAVID

Acharei Mot

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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" a

"Hashem spoke to Moshe after the death of Aharon's two sons, when they approached before Hashem, and they died" (Vayikra 16:1).

The holy Ohr HaChayim zy" a asks: Why does it say "Hashem spoke" and then not continue with what He actually said? Furthermore, the words "and they died" seem redundant since the verse just said, "after the death of..."?

With siyata di'Shmaya I would like to suggest an answer in line with Chazal's explanation (Yoma 85b) on the words "You shall observe My decrees... and by which he shall live." Chazal say, "...and by which he shall live: And by which he shall not die." The question is, elsewhere it says (Berachot 63b), "Words of Torah only endure in one who kills himself over it." So how is it possible to fulfill both these statements?

By withdrawing from the pleasures of This World, and even eating for the sole purpose of keeping one's body alive, the Torah considers it as if he is killing himself for the Torah. The holy Zohar also says (II, 158b), "Torah only endures in one who kills himself over it: Death refers to poverty since the destitute person is considered dead." The Midrash says that Torah is not found in one who seeks pleasure, temptations, and greatness in This World, but in one who kills himself for it, as it says, "This is the law (תורה) regarding a man who would die in a tent."

However, Nadav and Avihu, Aharon's two sons, took these words literally and actually killed themselves for the sake of the Torah – they were willing to die in order to come closer to the Holy Shechinah. They also did not marry so they could be close to the Shechinah at all times. Due to this the Torah repeats "and they died," signifying that they killed themselves to draw closer to the Shechinah, as it says, "When they approached before Hashem, and they died." What caused them to die? The fact that they wished to come too close to Hashem.

Since they acted against Hashem's wish, He was angry with them and said, "If you wish to draw close to Me, you may not annul even one minute aspect of the Torah, even for a short time, to

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**The Way
to Find Favor
in Hashem's
Eyes**



attain this goal. If you claim the commandments will cause you to be unavailable for My service, there is no substance to your words. Did I give the mitzvot to angels? I gave them to human beings, as Chazal say, 'Torah was not given to the angels.' When you observe the Torah and mitzvot and sanctify your mundane acts, you merit drawing closer to the Shechina and attain a level higher than that of the angels!

Since you wanted to be like angels, I will take your souls.

"Furthermore, since you wanted to kill yourselves for a holy purpose, and refrained from following normal behavior, you are committed to death because I put man in the world to live and not die. Man may not even harm part of his body, all the more so kill his entire body. When you practice normal human conduct and engage in Torah and mitzvot, you gradually rise in levels of holiness. I am therefore not pleased with your practices."

This is why it says here, "Hashem spoke to Moshe *after the death of...*" implying that this very fact is what Hashem spoke to Moshe about. The Jewish people may not disrupt normal family life like Nadav and Avihu who abstained and behaved like angels. On the contrary, observing Torah and mitzvot is the way to attain holiness. Staying away from social conduct is not called abstention. We find this idea in the sefer *Arvei Nachal* (Parshat V'etchanan):

Before the Giving of the Torah, philosophers thought that to enhance their destiny and give eternity to their souls, they must flee to the deserts, eat grass, and give up human affairs. They saw this as the only way to live a spiritual life. But their foolishness brought about their end. The Torah shows us the true way to find favor in Hashem's eyes, achieved by practicing the mitzvot that accompany worldly affairs.

Hashem therefore warned Aharon, "He shall not come at all times into the Sanctuary." Be careful not to do as Nadav and Avihu, who made sure to remain constantly pure and therefore could come at any time to the Sanctuary, for whoever does so will eventually die.

22 Nissan 5782
23 April 2022

952



Hilula

22 Nissan – Rabbi David Papo,
author of *Pnei David*

22 Nissan – Rabbi Reuven Krishevsky

23 Nissan – Rabbi Kamos Amos Yemin,
Av Beit din Loyb

23 Nissan – Rabbi Eliyahu Peretz

24 Nissan – Rabbi Chaim Yitzchak Chaikin,
Rosh Yeshiva Chachmei Tzarfat,
Aix-les-Bains

24 Nissan – Rabbi Avraham HaKohen,
author of *Melel L'Avraham*

25 Nissan – Rabbi Chaim Halberstam,
the Admor of Sanz

26 Nissan – Rabbi Moshe Teitelbaum,
the Admor of Satmar

26 Nissan – Rabbi Ephraim Navon,
author of *Machaneh Ephraim*

27 Nissan – Rabbi Yaakov Chananya Kubo,
Rav of Saloniki

27 Nissan – Rabbi Asher Zelig Margaliot,
author of *Kumi Roni*

28 Nissan – Rabbi Shabtai Horowitz,
author of *Vavai Ha'amudim*

28 Nissan – Rabbi Yichya Tzalach,
author of *Pe' ulai Tzaddik*





WORDS OF THE SAGES

**One who Shows Self-sacrifice Merits
a Gift from Hashem**

The days of the Sefira, which began on Pesach, are also days of mourning for the death of Rabbi Akiva's disciples, as Chazal recount (*Yevamot* 62b): "Rabbi Akiva had twelve thousand pairs of disciples, from Gevat to Antipras, and because they did not accord honor to each other they all died in one period, leaving the world desolate."

"If we study Rabbi Akiva's life and follow the path of growth of this holy Tanna," points out Rabbi Reuven Elbaz shlit"a, "we will see that one who is prepared to sacrifice his entire self for the sake of Torah merits receiving Torah as a gift, as it says, '... a gift from the Wilderness. The gift went to the valley, and from the valley to the heights' (*Bamidbar* 21:18-9). One who makes himself like a wilderness merits the gift of Torah."

"Rabbi Akiva was privileged to be the founder of the entire Torah. He established students who taught Torah to the Jewish people, and we live according to their dictates. Rabbi Akiva was a descendant of converts and only began studying Torah at the age of forty! But the Holy Torah is placed in a corner and anyone who wants can come and take it (*Kiddushin* 66a). No one can say, 'I am not capable of studying Torah!'"

Rabbi Elbaz continues: "I knew illiterate people who could not even read the *aleph beit*! They came to the yeshiva, started from the very beginning – and today they are geniuses! They showed extreme devotion to Torah study, and one who demonstrates self-sacrifice receives a gift from Hashem!"

"People think, Rabbi Akiva was born a tzaddik. So and so was born a tzaddik... But that is not the case! True, Rabbi Akiva possessed a lofty soul, all the angels trembled before him, but from whom did he descend? From a gentile! Who knows what this ancestor ate, drank, and did until he converted?!"

"What was special about Rabbi Akiva was that when he discovered the Torah, he realized he had to wear himself out completely; another drop and another drop would eventually pierce a hole in his heart of stone, and then the water would flow like a flowing river. And what about you? Who says you do not possess a lofty soul?! When a person accepts the yoke of Torah, he suddenly discovers he has abilities he never dreamed of."

"Rabbi Akiva was not afraid of embarrassment. He did not mind studying with young children, he did not mind asking again and again until he understood. He was prepared to undergo repeated humiliation, as long as he could attach himself to Hashem's Torah."

"When a young man approaches me and tells me about all kinds of difficulties he is experiencing, I usually tell him: 'You are obviously a great person! Hashem does not test simple people! Apparently, you have a lofty soul and intense power. It is up to you to decide whether you want to continue living as you have been up until now, or utilize the opportunity for growth!'"

"If this person undertakes to cling to Hashem with all his might, there is no describing the greatness he can achieve! I have seen them becoming Holy of Holies! All the filth that covered them disappears!"

"People say, 'I don't think it's for me.'"

"Oh! How much can one lose from this 'I don't think...' 'How many Gedolei Yisrael, rabbanim and gaonim would Am Yisrael lose if we would listen to this voice of 'I don't think I am capable...' 'The first step is not despair of ourselves."

"This was Rabbi Akiva's power! He was thrown out of Kalba Savu'a's house, slept on a bed of straw, and was completely destitute. But he eventually became a gadol b'Yisrael, an exceedingly great talmid chacham of holy stature."

"For one hundred and twenty years of his life he illuminated the entire world with his teachings!"



WALKING IN THEIR WAYS

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

A Sheep Among Seventy Wolves

In my lectures, I have often mentioned the wonderful incident quoted in the Midrash (*Esther Raba* 10:11) about Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananya and the Roman emperor Andrianus. They were strolling together through a Roman market full of gentiles, when suddenly a Jew sporting a beard and *peyot* walked past. The emperor turned to Rabbi Yehoshua and said:

"See this sheep among seventy wolves, how no one dares to harm it!"

Rabbi Yehoshua, who understood the emperor's intention to praise the polite gentiles, immediately retorted:

"It is certainly true, but you are able to see only the sheep and not the Shepherd who protects it!"

Even though I told over this Midrash many times, I somehow felt the idea was a bit distant from our day and age.

However, in recent years the idea of Am Yisrael being compared to a sheep among seventy wolves is clearer than ever. The Jews comprise only a few million out of the entire population, compared to the many billions of gentiles who despise the Jewish people and want to annihilate them.

But despite the great hatred radiated by all the nations from all sides, the Jewish people still exist and endure, observing the Torah and mitzvot without fear, and seek to sanctify the name of Heaven throughout the world.

This is only because Hashem, our great Shepherd, guards us – His little sheep – from the many wolves surrounding us. In all the thousands of years of history they have never been successful in annihilating us.

It is due to the merit of the holy Torah onto which we hold tight. In the merit of observing the Torah with extreme devotion, Hashem protects us throughout the generations.



FROM THE TREASURY

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

Seize Too Much – You Seize Nothing

“Hashem spoke to Moshe after the death of Aharon’s two sons, when they approached before Hashem, and they died” (Vayikra 16:1).

The Parshah of Acharei Mot, which begins by mentioning the death of Aharon’s two sons, is read on Yom Kippur. The order of the service of the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur is also described in this section.

From the fact that this section is read on Yom Kippur, Chazal conclude (*Mo’ed Katan* 28a) that just as Yom Kippur atones for the sins of man, so too does the death of tzaddikim atone.

If we take a moment to think, we will see that there were many people who became famous during their lives because of their talents, such as singing, acting or dancing. People admired them so much, they actually idolized them. And when those cultural gods died, they were mourned for a year or two, but eventually were forgotten as if they had never existed.

L’havdil elef havdalot, after their passing tzaddikim are called “alive”, and just as during their lives they were a magnet for the public, so after their deaths we continue to hold them on a pedestal, respect and cherish their memory, and learn from their Torah and behavior. This is what we find with the sons of Aharon who were great, lofty tzaddikim during their lives, and with their deaths further sanctified and elevated themselves. This is why we mention their deaths every Yom Kippur and they merit atoning for the sins of Am Yisrael.

It is important to realize that in no way does a mitzvah kill a person, for the holy Torah writes, “You shall observe My decrees... and by which he shall live” (*Vayikra* 18:5). If Aharon’s sons died when approaching before Hashem, it means their act was not in accordance with pure *da’at* Torah. Since Hashem is meticulous with the righteous to the degree of a hairsbreadth (*Yevamot* 121b), it was decreed they must die.

It is clear that we simple people do not have the power to understand the “sin” of these lofty souls, but Chazal teach us (*Ohr HaChaim*, *Vayikra* 16:1) that Nadav and Avihu desired to climb to an even higher spiritual level when they had not yet grasped the previous level. Just as an ordinary man cannot carry large stones in his hands and has to rent a truck to transport the bricks so he will not collapse under their weight, so *l’havdil*, the sons of Aharon were not yet on the level where they could bear the magnitude of the holiness they sought for themselves, and therefore they died.

We must understand that the sons of Aharon did not simply enter the Mishkan and sacrifice incense before Hashem; they thought they were on the level of Moshe and Aharon, capable of leading the people after the death of the present leaders (*Tanchuma*, *Acharei Mot*).

Just as Moshe spoke to Hashem face to face, they thought they could, too. Even more, they felt they were required to do so; therefore they sought to enter the Holy of Holies.

We find that after their death Hashem commands Bnei Yisrael (*Vayikra* 10:6), “The entire House of Yisrael shall bewail the conflagration that Hashem ignited.” This shows that Heaven did not hold anything against them, and even after their deaths they were considered complete tzaddikim. The proof is we read of their death on Yom Kippur, and plead to Hashem that their deed should arouse merit for us as we stand before Him in judgement.

THE SABBATICAL YEAR



1. One may eat dairy products even though the animals from which these products are derived eat foods that have *kedushat shevi’it*.

2. Surplus *peiros shevi’it* that will not be eaten must not be thrown away. Rather they should be left to spoil on their own. One may not feed them to animals as long as they are fitting for human consumption. Some permit causing them to rot or using them as animal food.

3. One may not sow *peiros shevit’it* since they are meant for eating and not planting.

4. A *mohel* who wants to use *shevi’it* wine while performing *metzitza* at a circumcision, should ideally not do so since it is considered wasting Shemittah wine. But if he has no other way (medication) to stop the blood, it is certainly permissible to use *shevi’it* wine.

5. One who separates *challah* from Shemittah flour, may burn the *challah* and there is no reason to abstain from doing so because of burning *peiros shevi’it*. It is clear that there is an obligation to take *challah* from dough made from Shemittah flour.

6. One may use Shemittah wine for the Four Cups on Leil HaSeder, if the time of *bi’ur* has not yet arrived, since one normally eats grapes until Pesach (as explained in *Pesachim* 53a). Some are lenient even after the time of *bi’ur*. If one does not have any other wine one may be lenient.

7. One should be careful not to spill out from Shemittah wine, as is the custom, when reciting *D’tzach*, *Adash*, *B’achav*, since Shemittah produce must be eaten and not wasted.

8. Some say that preferably, one should not use Shemittah wine for *havdalah*, for several reasons. One normally fills the cup to overflowing as a sign of blessing, which would be considered wasting Shemittah produce. Also, since women customarily do not drink *havdalah* wine, we are considered to be limiting which people can drink from it. Moreover, the one reciting *havdalah* does not drink the whole cup. Some also put drops of wine on their eyes and use the wine to extinguish the *havdalah* candle, all forms of wasting *peiros shevi’it*. Some say these reasons are not concerns and one may use Shemittah wine for *havdalah*, as long as one drinks the entire cup.

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



The Gaon Rabbi Chaim Yitzchak Chaikin zt"l

Rabbi Chaim Yitzchak Chaikin was born in 5666 in the town of Kosova, Lithuania.

His teenage years coincided with the First World War, and his father, Rabbi Zvi, decided to send him to study Torah with Rabbi Yitzchak Karelitz.

When he was about 21 years old, Rabbi Chaim Yitzchak went to study in the holy yeshiva of Rabbi Yisrael Meir HaKohen of Radin zt"l – the Chafetz Chaim – and the gaon Rabbi Naftali Trop.

In Radin, Rabbi Chaim Yitzchak fulfilled Chazal's directive: "Accept a Rav upon yourself" (Avot 1:6), and regarded the Chafetz Chaim as his Rav. Until the end of his life Rabbi Chaim Yitzchak used to quote various thoughts he heard from the Chafetz Chaim during the time he spent under his wing at the Radin yeshiva. His entire conduct demonstrated that he was a talmid of the Chafetz Chaim.

From the Chafetz Chaim, he learned there

are three reasons to care about those who could be better Jews but do not try to better themselves: 1. Compassion for the Jew himself. 2. Concern for the honor of Heaven. 3. The danger it presents to Am Israel.

When World War II broke out, Rabbi Chaim Yitzchak was captured by the Germans as a French prisoner. In the POW camp, Rabbi Chaim Yitzchak continued serving Hashem with joy, despite the forced labor which broke the body and mind, and the many forms of abuse that were his lot. A sefer mishnayot and pair of tefillin were the sum total of Rabbi Chaim Yitzchak's possessions during his captivity, but these were also his consolation. With true self-sacrifice he would find a hidden corner, wrap himself in his tefillin and diligently study from his mishnayot.

In 5705 at the conclusion of the war, Rabbi Chaim Yitzchak returned to France where he was appointed Rosh Yeshiva of Chachmei Tzarfat in Aix-les-bains. For almost fifty years he served in this position, teaching Torah to thousands of students. His pleasant demeanor and devotion to the truth drew thousands, and these talmidim established a glorious Jewish community near the yeshiva.

Even while in France he remained a "yeshiva bachur of Radin". One of his sons once spoke with the mashgiach Rabbi Shlomo Wolbe zt"l about the French lifestyle and the mashgiach retorted: "Do you think you grew up in France? You grew up in Radin!"

Rabbi Chaim Yitzchak's special love for every Jew helped him do great things for Eastern Jewry. At that time, extensive parts of North Africa were French colonies, and many Jews moved to France

from these places. Many of these Jews had completely abandoned the religious way of life, but Rabbi Chaim Yitzchak, with his pleasant demeanor face and special affection, attracted many of the youth to the yeshiva. Rabbi Chaim Yitzchak would invest hours in each Jewish soul, trying to draw him closer to Torah, until he agreed to remain in the yeshiva, showing complete devotion to Hashem and His Torah and progressing ever higher in Torah and yirat Shamayim.

He had a special fondness for babies. When he would pass a baby, he would linger and observe this marvelous creation, playing with the baby. Of course the babies enjoyed the attention showered on them. When he would see a baby in his mother's arms he would utter in admiration: "Like a suckling child at his mother's side" – this is how we should feel in Hashem hands, peaceful and calm without any worries.

He felt a deep love for young babies; he had to consciously pull himself away and would tell his daughters: "Play with the little ones, it is an important need for their development, but I must go and study Torah!"

Rabbi Chaim would encourage mothers to dedicate themselves to their children's care and told his daughters: "You are exempt from Torah study; your role is to raise your children and protect them from spiritual and physical dangers!"

His love for Torah he gave over to children too. Every little boy who came to his home was seated on his knees and given an apple, and as they spent time together he would repeat to the young child: "You should know the holy Torah is the best and sweetest thing in the world – even sweeter than chocolate and candies..!"

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