

PACHAD DAVID

Matot-Masei



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Under the auspices of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu, the Admor Rabbi David Chananya Pinto shlita
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"You shall designate cities for yourselves, cities of refuge shall they be for you, and a killer shall flee there – one who takes a life unintentionally" (*Bamidbar* 35:11).

Chazal say (*Makot* 10b) that at every crossroads there were signs bearing the word 'Refuge' so the killer would know in which direction to go.

In contrast, on each of the three pilgrimages – Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot – Bnei Yisrael would travel to Yerushalayim, to the Beit Hamikdash. But here we did not find that at every crossroads there were signs pointing the way to Yerushalayim or the Beit Hamikdash, directing the Jews how to get to their destination easily. Why this difference?

The gaon Rabbi Ben Zion Brook zt"l answers this question: There is a fundamental difference between the pilgrimage to Yerushalayim and the escape of an unintentional murderer to a city of refuge. Had there not been signs pointing out the way to the cities of refuge, against his will the murderer would have to ask people for directions and explain what happened – how he unintentionally took someone's life.

Concerning the cities of refuge, the Torah says (*Devarim* 19:3) "Prepare the way for yourselves." From these words Chazal derive the command to set up signs. This would prevent people from finding out about the incident and using it as a source of gossip.

However, it is quite a different case in the pilgrimage to Yerushalayim. In this case it is important that people ask and talk about the ascent to the Beit Hamikdash, since this will encourage others to join them. There were no signs pointing out

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Hashem's Compassion for One Who Kills Unintentionally



the way to Yerushalayim so that through asking for directions more people will come to celebrate the festival in the Beit Hamikdash.

Another reason is because if the killer would be delayed by having to ask for directions, the "avenger [lit. redeemer] of the blood," a close relative of the victim, would have

time to hear about it and catch up with the killer before he reaches the city of refuge, in which case the avenger is allowed to kill him.

This illustrates how much compassion the Torah has on one who takes a life inadvertently. We see the extent to which precautions are taken so he not die at the hands of the redeemer before reaching the city of refuge. The Torah cares for his life to such a degree that there is an explicit command "Prepare the way for yourselves" – prepare signs showing the way to the cities of refuge to allow the inadvertent killer to get there with the least possible danger to his life and esteem.

Furthermore, the Torah also instructs us to repair any roads that have become damaged due to the rains, so it should be easier for him to get to safety without the redeemer catching up with him. There is also another command to repair any fallen signs so the way should constantly be clear.

And an additional point regarding the pilgrimages – there were no signs at all showing the way to the Beit Hamikdash because all year round people would go to Yerushalayim to bring offerings, especially on the three festivals, so many people were well acquainted with the roads.

2 Av 5782
30 July 2022

965



Hilula

2 Av – Rabbi Yaakov Kohen Yonatan, author of *Zera Hashalom*

2 Av – Rabbi Moshe Stern, author of *Be'er Moshe*

3 Av – Rabbi Shimshon of Ostropol, hy"l

3 Av – Rabbi Yosef ben Joya, author of *Tal Orot*

4 Av – Rabbi Refael Anakaveh, author of *Karnei Re'em*

4 Av – Rabbi Menachem Azariah, the Rama from Fano

5 Av – Rabbi Yitzchak Luria Ashkenazi, the holy Arizal

5 Av – Rabbi Chaim Ozer Grodzinski, author of *Responsa Achiezer*

5 Av – Rabbi Meir B'Rabbi

6 Av – Rabbi Moshe Ezra Mizrahi, Av Beit Din Aram Tzova

6 Av – Rabbi Yehuda Bariel of Mantova

7 Av – Rabbi Moshe Greenwald, Av Beit Din Khust

7 Av – Rabbi Yosef Dinklis

8 Av – Rabbi Eliezer Chazan, author of *Amudei Arazim*

8 Av – Rabbi Simcha Mordechai Ziskind, the Alter of Kelm





WORDS OF THE SAGES

How the Western Wall Was Discovered

Thousands of years of exile have passed, during which we have continuously been “satiated” by the torments of the nations. The gentiles have always tried to harass us in any way possible; not satisfied with the fact that our Temple was destroyed, but even the Western Wall, the only remnant of the Temple, was a thorn in their eyes. During a certain period, the Western Wall was hidden and its place unknown, until it was discovered by a certain act, described in *Doresh Tzion*, a sefer written by Rabbi Ben Zion Mutzafi shlit”a.

More than eight hundred years ago, an Arab minister was sitting in ‘Mahkama’ – the Arab court located on the Temple Mount. He noticed an elderly woman barely dragging her feet, as she plodded along holding a sack of garbage. As he followed her with his eyes, to his amazement he noticed that she emptied her trash under his window and then began to walk away.

The minister was furious! He quickly sent his guards to catch her and bring her to him.

A few moments later the old woman stood before him, trembling in terror.

“Who are you?” asked the Arab.

“I am from Bethlehem,” she replied in a low voice.

“And from Bethlehem you came here with your trash, to pour it under my window?” He could not contain his astonishment and anger at her strange behavior.

“Please don’t be angry,” the old woman begged, nearly overcome with fear. “It has been passed down from my ancestors that we must bring the garbage here, and throw it right in this spot.”

“Right here? What is special about this place?”

“I do not know exactly. My family has a tradition that here once lay a house belonging to the Jews, and the day they discover it and rebuild it, we will be evicted from here. We have therefore been covering the place with piles of garbage for many years.”

During this period, friendly relations prevailed between the Jews and the Muslims. We find evidence of this in the words of the Rambam, concerning a proposal the Muslims made to the Jewish sages – to give the Jews the Temple Mount and they would rebuild the Beit Hamikdash. This proposal was rejected, of course, by the sages, for Hashem decreed that we be exiled, and we may not rebuild the Beit Hamikdash until Hashem does so, as it says, “The Builder of Yerushalayim is Hashem.” (*Tehillim* 147:2). We also say in the *Nachem* prayer on Tisha B’Av, “For You, Hashem, with fire You consumed her and with fire You shall rebuild her.”

The minister sent his workers to dig up the mountains of garbage. After intense work, remnants of stones appeared, but there was still much work left. The minister therefore decided on a new course of action: he buried some gold coins among the garbage and sent messengers to spread the word that there were gold coins in the mound under the Mahkama, and anyone who wants can come and take them.

The news spread quickly and ignited the masses. Crowds flocked from Yerushalayim and all the nearby villages and towns. Some came with jugs; some came with barrels. They began digging in the garbage, thereby clearing the waste that had accumulated there over a long time. Once in a while someone shouted: “I found a gold coin!!” and immediately the pace of work increased. People dug and dug with all their might, until it grew dark.

That night the minister went to the site and secretly tossed a few more gold coins. The next day the masses enthusiastically continued their hard work.

The evacuation work continued for many days, and in the end the entire area was cleared. And this is how the location of the Western Wall was once again revealed!

WALKING IN THEIR WAYS

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

A Portentous Read

One evening before retiring, I perused a sefer as is my custom, so my sleep would be imbued with Torah thoughts. I opened to a section describing the prophet Ido (*Melachim* I, 13). The first few verses describe a miracle he performed by the word of Hashem. The next verses relate Hashem’s instruction to him not to eat, drink, or go home the way he had come. But he met a false prophet on the way who convinced him to eat. Since Ido transgressed Hashem’s word, he was killed by a lion.

These were the Torah words I learned that night.

The next morning, a man called me up and told me his wife had given birth to a baby boy eight days earlier. Today was the *brit*, but he could not decide on a name. He said he was wavering between two names. One of the names was Ido, which he was more inclined to give.

I asked why he had chosen this name. He replied that he had been enamored with the good qualities of the prophet Ido who performed miracles according to Hashem’s word.

I liked his explanation and encouraged him to give that name.

I felt that Hashem had led me to respond appropriately to this man by having me read about Ido Hanavi the night before.



FROM THE TREASURY

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

Humility and Submission Essential for the Distinguished

“These are the names of the men who are to take possession of the Land for you: Elazar the Kohen and Yehoshua son of Nun” (Deuteronomy 34:17).

When Moshe Rabbeinu saw that the time of his passing was drawing near and he was about to depart to the Eternal World, he repeated the entire Torah (Mishnah Torah – Sefer Devarim) to the Bnei Yisrael, as it says, “Moshe began explaining this Torah, saying” (*Devarim* 1:5). He also took care that the heads of the tribes who would help Elazar HaKohen and Yehoshua bin Nun distribute the inheritance of the Land, would be righteous people who know how to surrender before Hashem.

He was most careful that they should not be people who would G-d forbid follow in the ways of the spies, who acted with conceit and sought only their own honor (for they wished to continue being leaders in the Wilderness). Because of their conduct both Batei Mikdash were destroyed, as it says (*Bamidbar* 14:1), “The people wept that night.” Chazal explain (*Ta’anit* 29a), “Since you wept for nothing, I will establish that you will weep for all generations [on this night]. Because of this, on Tisha B’Av we cry for both the first and second Batei Mikdash. In addition, due to the sin of the spies, all adults from the age of twenty to sixty died in the Wilderness (*Bamidbar* 14:29).

Because Moshe Rabbeinu wanted these leaders to be more righteous than the spies, he told them: even though you are heads of the tribes, I ask that you not see yourselves foremost as leaders, like those spies who caused the destruction of the Batei Mikdash. Rather see yourselves as simple people, one of Bnei Yisrael.

That is why the Torah precedes “for the tribe of the children of...” before saying “as leader.” This is what Moshe Rabbeinu was implying: first of all see yourself as an ordinary person who belongs to the tribe of Dan or Menashe or Ephraim, and only then see yourself as the leader chosen by Hashem to help Yehoshua and Elazar with the distribution of the Land. You are servants of Hashem, foremost.

Someone who only considers his title will end up arrogant and be punished by Hashem.

a DAY OF DELIGHT

Lighting the Shabbat Candles



1. It is a mitzvah to light a candle in the house in honor of Shabbat. This is considered both honoring and delighting in Shabbat, for light in the house allows people to walk around without stumbling. One should light the candles when dressed in Shabbat clothes, but if one is pressed for time one should light first.

2. It is enough to light one candle in honor of Shabbat but we follow the custom to light two candles, one corresponding to ‘zachor’ and the other corresponding to ‘shamor’. The more lights one adds in honor of Shabbat, the more praiseworthy.

3. It is a commendable to enhance this mitzvah by using beautiful silver or gold candlesticks. Showing love for the mitzvah (with the quality of the oil, wicks, cups, and candlesticks) will merit one with children who are talmidei chachamim, as it says, “For a commandment is a lamp and the Torah is light.” Fulfilling the mitzvah of kindling Shabbat and Chanukah lights will bring the light of Torah. Therefore, after lighting the candles the woman should close her eyes and pray that she and her husband merit longevity and upright children, talmidei chachamim who will enlighten the entire world with Torah and mitzvot, and G-d-fearing, virtuous sons and daughters, and to merit the redemption speedily. For the best time to pray is while performing a mitzvah, as Chazal say (*Tosefta*, Ma’aser Sheini 5:24), “All those who are engaged in mitzvot, their prayers are more readily accepted by Hashem.”

4. It is commendable for the husband to prepare the candles by putting them into the candlestick or filling the cups with oil and wicks, as the holy Zohar explains.

5. When lighting the wick, one should not remove one’s hand until most of the wick is aflame. In this way when removing the match the flame will rise immediately.

6. When one finishes lighting all the wicks, one should not blow on the match to extinguish it. This is an *inyan seguli* – a mystical matter. One should rather put it down in a safe place until the flame is extinguished on its own.

7. The candles should be lit in the room where the Shabbat meal will take place, for included in *oneg* Shabbat (delighting in Shabbat) is to eat in their light. But if it is not possible to light there, one should light in a different room that is being used on Shabbat. During the summer when it is hot in the house, one may eat in the yard even though one cannot see the candles, because we light the candles for *oneg* and not to cause distress. However, one should prepare suitable lighting outdoors before Shabbat, so the meal will be held in the light.

8. If the Shabbat candles blew out, one may use them (or the oil) after Shabbat for any purpose. (Some have the custom to keep the wicks and burn them together with the chametz on Erev Pesach, so that another mitzvah is performed with them.)

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



The Gaon Rabbi Shimshon of Ostropoli Hy"d

Rabbi Shimshon of Ostropoli was born around 5360 to his father the gaon Rabbi Pesach zt"l. He was named after his grandfather, the gaon Rabbi Shimshon who was Av Beit Din of Kremnitz and one of the greatest of his generation. He studied Torah under his father and also under the gaon Rabbi Natan Neta, Av Beit Din of Ostraca. From a young age he began studying Kabballah and the hidden sections of Torah. Rabbi Shimshon served as a maggid (lecturer) in the city of Ostropoli, which lies on the banks of the river Slutch, in the Podolia region of Ukraine. He was therefore known as Rabbi Shimshon Maggid. He would address the congregation with words of mussar, to straighten the hearts of the people and arouse them to repent. In the manner of the holy tzaddikim, he would arouse Hashem's compassion for His children.

Rabbeinu merited studying the secrets of

the Torah together with an angel every day, as the Chida testifies in his sefer *Shem HaGedolim*. His student, Rabbi Yaakov Koppel Zaslower, writes: "It was public knowledge that most of his teachings he received from the maggid (angel) who appeared to him." It is told that the angel revealed to him that there was a great claim in Heaven concerning the Jewish people, and terrible decrees may come upon them if they do not repent fully. Immediately Rabbi Shimshon delivered several sermons to the people, and with fiery words warned them to repent so that suffering should not befall them. His holy words made an impression and there was a great awakening in all the communities. However, although they repented, the decree had already been sealed.

Rabbi Moshe Chaim Lutzato zy"a, in his sefer *Derech Etz HaChaim*, writes about what happened at the time: "As we were told, in the days of the pious mekubal, Rabbi Shimshon Ostropolier, in the year 5408 when there was the decree, the Rav forced the Sitra Achra (Satan) to speak to him and asked him why he was accusing the Jewish people more than any other nation. The Sitra Achra replied, 'If you abolish these three things, I will remove my accusation: Shabbat, *milah*, and Torah.' The Rav immediately replied, 'A large number of Jews should perish rather than abolish one letter of our holy Torah, G-d forbid!'

"Seeing that the decree had already been sealed, Rabbi Shimshon devised a way to prevent the massacre of a large number of Jews. He asked three Gedolei Hador to join him in accepting upon themselves to die, and each would atone for one quarter of the Jewish people. One of them was

Rabbi Yechiel Michel of Namirov, 'who knew the entire Torah by heart and was knowledgeable in all wisdoms' (he indeed was killed on the 20th of Sivan 5408, in sanctification of Hashem's Name). However, this plan did not materialize because one of the Gedolim did not agree, explaining that he had to publish his sefer for the benefit of the public. Nevertheless, those Gedolim who were killed atoned in part and prevented total annihilation, G-d forbid."

Despite his lofty level and the fact that he merited Heavenly revelations, Rabbeinu was humble and considered himself lowly. In several places in his writings he condemns himself greatly. In his introduction to *Dan Yadin* he signed his name, "The dust of the earth, Shimshon of Ostropoli." In a letter to Rabbi Neta he wrote, "Again, my master, please accept with love and willingness the words of your lowly servant, **שקץ מאוס** (abominable, foul, lowly and despised), the first letters of which hint to his name, **שמשון**. In one of his essays he wrote, "To me, the lowly layman, it seems..."

During his lifetime it was revealed that he possessed the soul of Mashiach ben Yosef, as the holy Chozeh of Lublin zt"l later testified. At the outbreak of the pogroms, while standing in the *beit kneset* adorned with tallit and tefillin, the ruthless gentiles took the branch of a tree and with its sharpened point pierced him from behind, from the bottom up. In his outstanding devotion to unifying with Hashem, he felt nothing until the branch split his holy forehead. He then fell to the ground and passed away in Hashem's holy house. It was the third of Av 5408.

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