

# PACHAD DAVID

Ya'etchanan



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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"l

**"You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor shall you subtract from it" (Devarim 4:2).**

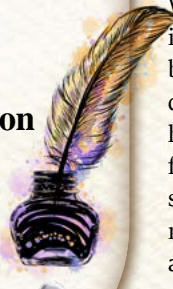
Rashi explains: "You shall not add: such as five parshiot in tefillin, five species in lulav, or five strings of tzitzit (instead of four), and similarly you may not subtract."

The gaon Rabbi Yehonatan Eibeshitz, in his sefer *Tiferet Yehonatan*, poses a question: We can understand the Torah's command not to add to the mitzvot, for the Torah is warning us not to mistakenly think that by adding more and more to the commandments of the Torah one will become a better and more distinguished person. But the other hand? Why it is necessary to command us not to detract from the Torah commandments? This would seem to be clear to any reasonable person! For when a person deviates from the commandments of the Torah, he is not keeping the commandment properly. As an example, someone who takes a lulav, hadas and aravah, but does not take an etrog, has not fulfilled the mitzvah in its entirety and therefore his observance of the mitzvah is lacking.

I would like to suggest the following answer: When Moshe Rabbeinu tells Bnei Yisrael not to detract from the mitzvot, he certainly does not mean to warn them regarding not omitting part of a mitzvah and performing it in an uncomplete way, for it is clear that a mitzvah that is improperly performed intentionally is not worth anything (consult a Rabbi for emergency situations).

Rather, he intended to warn them about detracting from the *intentions* required when performing a mitzvah. For example, it is possible for a man to lay tefillin both on his head and arm, and his tefillin contain four *parshiot* just as the Torah commands, but he performs the mitzvah without the appropriate intentions and awareness. This is the meaning of detracting from a mitzvah.

## maskil Le'David The Obligation to Fulfil Mitzvot in their Entirety



When the mitzvah of mezuzah is carried out in its entirety, it is beneficial to man, for one who does not place a mezuzah on his doorpost lacks protection from harmful spirits. Only someone who observes the mitzvah in its entirety with all the correct intentions merits special protection to be saved from mishaps and harm throughout his life.

Although we have quality mezuzot, and in every doorway in the home we place a mezuzah, all this is the physical act of carrying out the mitzvah. The question we must ask ourselves is if besides this we are also careful with the honor of the mezuzah on which the Name of Hashem, י-ד-ש, is written. Are we careful with all the appropriate intentions of honoring the mezuzah? This is something to think about and instill in our hearts.

This is the meaning of the command not to add or subtract from the mitzvot. It is not referring to omitting a part of the mitzvah itself, since there is no need to warn about this. Rather the commandment refers to not detracting from the dignity of the mitzvah, from its related thoughts; from its completeness.

This can be compared to someone who receives a gift from the king – a most elegant, luxury car worth a fortune. Would this man dare enter this magnificent vehicle in unkempt attire, approaching the palace gates for a meeting with the king in this way? If he would do this, not only would he be showing a lack of respect for the grand car he received, but by not treating the car with due respect, he is also infringing on the honor of the king who gave him this precious gift!

So it is with us. If man performs a mitzvah in an incomplete way or does not give it the respect it deserves, not only is he detracting from the mitzvah itself and its honor, but he also blemishes and offends the honor of the King Who gave him this precious mitzvah! That is why he will be severely punished.

16 Av 5782  
13 August 2022

968

Shabbat Nachamu



## Hilula

16 Av – Rabbi Moshe Pardo,  
author of *Tzedek U'mishpat*

16 Av – Rabbi Yitzchak Meir Levin

17 Av – Rabbi Rafael Yehoshua Ezriel,  
author of *K'fi Aharon*

17 Av – Rabbi Shlomo Chaim Perlow,  
grandson of the Ba'al Shem Tov

18 Av – Rabbi Moshe Bernstein,  
Rosh Yeshiva Kaminetz

18 Av – Rabbi Chanoch Chasson,  
Av Beit Din Chevron

19 Av – Rabbi Yaakov Kuli,  
author of *Me'am Lo'ez*

19 Av – Rabbi Shimon Kalish,  
Admor of Amshinov

20 Av – Rabbi Ben Tzion Alkalai,  
author of *Chemdat Yerushalayim*

20 Av – Rabbi Levi Yitzchak Schneerson,  
author of *Likutim al HaZohar*

21 Av – Rabbi Yaakov Chai Zrihan,  
author of *Bikurei Yaakov*

21 Av – Rabbi Chaim Soloveitchik

22 Av – Rabbi David Ben Margi,  
sage from Morocco

22 Av – Rabbi Eliyahu Dushnitzer





## WORDS OF THE SAGES

### What Reciting Shema Can Accomplish

In this week's Parshah we are given one of the most important commandments in the Torah – one of the symbols of the Jewish nation. This is the mitzvah of reciting “Shema Yisrael.”

Every day, morning and evening, throughout the ages, the recitation of “Shema Yisrael” has preserved the Jewish people wherever they have been. Unfortunately, today nearly a million Jewish children have no idea that Kriyat Shema exists! We have the duty to restore this mitzvah to its former glory; Jewish children must be taught the virtue and power of reciting Kriyat Shema! Especially since these were the final words recited by Jews being led to the gallows or crematoriums, about to give their lives for the sanctification of Hashem.

“A few years ago,” Rabbi Reuven Elbaz, head of the Or HaChaim Yeshiva, relates, “we were privileged to see with our own eyes how strongly reciting Shema can affect a person.”

The story, printed in the sefer *Mishkani Acharecha*, tells of an incident that took place with a young Jewish woman who was born and raised on a kibbutz, part of a family far from religion. One fine day, this young woman decided to begin observing Torah and mitzvot. After making great progress and adopting a totally religious lifestyle, she became engaged to a G-d-fearing yeshiva bachur. With the consent of the groom, the young woman asked the kibbutz secretary for permission to hold the wedding at the secular kibbutz where she had been raised.

The young woman's father was one of the heads of the kibbutz, and he expended great efforts to ensure the kibbutz members would respond positively to her request. They indeed agreed and a glorious wedding was held in the heart of the kibbutz.

Among those present at the event was a member of the nearby kibbutz. At the culmination of the wedding he approached the bride's father and with a scowl asked him how he ‘merited’ such ‘disgraceful descendants’, who crossed the line and joined the ultra-Orthodox world.

The bride's father answered him patiently and explained that it all started when one of the kibbutz girls travelled to visit her grandmother, and there she found a ‘book’ in which she read about a *segulah* for protection – to recite Kriyat Shema at night. The girl asked her grandmother if she could take the book – it was a siddur – and bring it back with her to the kibbutz. Of course her grandmother agreed to this request.

The girl told her friend [the bride in question] that she had discovered a great *segulah* for protection. The two girls decided that since there are sixty families living in the kibbutz who require protection from shells and missiles sent by enemies, each of them would recite Kriyat Shema every night thirty times, thus together protecting the sixty families in the kibbutz!

This is how this wonderful plant blossomed! Even girls born in a secular kibbutz, far from Torah and mitzvah observance, were inspired to return to Torah observance in the merit of reciting the Shema. Saying these holy words ignited the flame of their Jewish souls!



## WALKING IN THEIR WAYS

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

### Delight in Deciphering Difficulties

A wealthy man once approached me with an offer I could not refuse. “I heard the venerated Rav wishes to build a yeshiva in Ashdod, which will cost a couple of million dollars. I would like to donate one million dollars toward this enterprise, thereby assisting the Rav in disseminating Torah.” He removed a checkbook from his pocket and, with a flourish, scrawled in this huge sum!

When he handed me the check, he noticed I was not smiling from ear to ear, as he had expected. Since his intention was to bring me pleasure, he was surprised not to see any show of joy on my face.

He could not help but ask, “Is the Rav dissatisfied with my donation?”

My reply was forthcoming. “I am extremely happy with your donation. But my face reflects joy only when I succeed in understanding a *sugya* of the Talmud. That is when pure, undiluted joy suffuses my heart. Any other show of joy or laughter is not real happiness.”

The joy I feel when I am steeped in Torah study overflows from my heart. It is contagious and enables me to affect everyone around me. This happened to me once when I finally understood a Torah topic with which I had been having difficulty. Out of unbridled joy at ultimately untangling the complexities of the *sugya*, I asked a passing man to sit beside me so I could share it with him. He was very tired and initially demurred. But I pulled him toward me to hear what was making me so happy. Eventually, he was caught up in my ecstasy and rejoiced with me.

The joy of Torah is real and infectious. David Hamelech states (*Tehillim* 19:9), “The orders of Hashem are upright, gladdening the heart; the command of Hashem is clear, enlightening the eyes.”



## FROM THE TREASURY

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

### Protecting Our Souls

**“But you shall greatly beware for your souls” (Devarim 4:15).**

This command seems hard to understand. Is man lacking insight or is he foolish to such an extent that the Torah has to warn him to take great care of himself? Every intelligent person realizes he must take measures to look after himself.

The intention however is this: man's body, made up of 248 limbs and 365 sinews, is connected and corresponds to the 613 commandments (248 + 365) of the Torah (*Makot* 24a). Every mitzvah corresponds to a particular limb or sinew. Therefore, it is not enough for a person to observe the mitzvah itself, he must also take care to perform it in its entirety and with the correct intentions. For if something is lacking in the completeness of the mitzvah, something will also be lacking in the completeness of his body respectively, and he may fall ill or be injured.

Therefore the Torah warns man, “But you shall greatly beware for your souls.” Take great care of your souls and bodies by observing the mitzvot in their entirety. In this way your bodies too will be safeguarded properly.

In addition, the Torah emphasizes that caution in observing the mitzvot in their entirety depends on the human soul, as it says, “But you shall greatly beware for your souls.” That is, just as a person is very careful about guarding his soul (body), so too he must be very careful about observing the commandments.

I would like to add an idea in light of the fact that in this context the Torah uses the word “מאד, greatly.” The word מאד can be rearranged to spell מַדָּא, referring to the wicked kingdom of Edom, descendant of the wicked Esav whose intention was to commit all transgressions in the ‘best possible’ way, for his personal enjoyment. The Torah uses the word מאד to instruct us that we, the Jewish people, descendants of Yaakov and chosen by Hashem, must guard ourselves greatly and be careful not to be drawn after the wicked.

Rather we should distance ourselves from the ways of Edom and always be vigilant in our observance of the mitzvot, which have a direct connection to our bodies.

## A DAY OF DELIGHT

### Lighting Shabbat Candles



1. The choicest way to perform the mitzvah of lighting the Shabbat candles is to use olive oil (but we still refer to this mitzvah as Shabbat candles). This merits us with children who will grow up to be talmidei chachamim and illuminate the world with their Torah. Chazal say (*Sanhedrin* 24a) that talmidei chachamim who treat each other pleasantly even when they disagree in halacha, are likened to olive oil. There was an incident with someone who lived a long life, and they found no merit for him other than that he used to light with olive oil (*Sefer Chassidim*).

2. If no olive oil is available one may use a different kind of oil, or candles.

3. On Erev Shabbat one may add water to the glass containing the oil, to raise the level of the oil, or so that the glass does not explode when the flame reaches it.

4. If one has neither oil nor candles, one may turn off an electric light, recite the blessing, and then turn on the light.\*

5. Candle lighting time is about twenty minutes before sunset, but one may light from *plag hamincha* (an hour and a quarter before nightfall). Lighting any earlier than this would not fulfill one's obligation.

6. A woman who is delayed and did not light the candles on time should only light if it is clear that the sun has not yet set (*shkiat hachama*). It is correct not to light at all in the five minutes before sunset, since the calendars and clocks are not always accurate and one must stay far away from even a doubt of desecrating Shabbat.

7. It is correct to turn off other light(s) in the area when lighting the Shabbat candles. Otherwise, when the woman recites the blessing on the candles, their light is not really discernable due to the house being lit up with electricity, and her blessing will be in vain. When reciting the blessing one should also have in mind the light from the electricity. After lighting the candles one should immediately turn on the electricity.\*

The gaon and chassid Rabbi Eliyahu Mani writes:

“I command my household that the woman should first recite the blessing and light the olive oil candles, and after that light the gas light whose light is more significant. For if she first lights the gas candle, she has already fulfilled the mitzvah of adding light and will not be able to recite the blessing over the Shabbat candles since there is already light in the house.”

8. One may not speak from the recitation of the blessing until completing the lighting.\* (Preferably, she should not even speak about matters concerning the lighting, such as asking to bring a match or close the window so the candles will not blow out from the wind.) If she did speak about something not connected to the lighting, it depends: if she spoke before lighting even one candle, she should recite the blessing again. If she has already lit one light there is no need to repeat the blessing since she already began the mitzvah.

\*Note: some opinions hold that one should light the candles before reciting the blessing.

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



## Rabbi Yaakov Kuli zt"l, author of *Me'am Lo'ez*

"Once Rabbi Yaakov was in the middle of a three-day fast. Towards the end of the third day he was offered a coffee. He took up the offer and sipped from the cup so his pious acts would not be revealed..."

This is what the Chida, in his sefer *Kisei Rachamim*, wrote about the gaon Rabbi Yaakov Kuli zt"l, describing his efforts to conceal his custom of fasting, an expression of his great piety and holiness.

Rabbi Yaakov was born in Yerushalayim in 5645, to his father, Rabbi Makir Kuli, a son-in-law of the Rishon LeTzion, Chacham Moshe Ben Chaviv, an immigrant from Salonika. From a young age his father raised him to live a life of abstention, to be satisfied with the minimum, even regarding sleep. He studied Torah with diligence and conducted himself with holiness and piety.

Later, Rabbi Yaakov moved to the holy city of Tzefat, where he studied Torah from its many sages. There he undertook to review and publish his grandfather's

sefarim, but since in those days there were no printing presses in Eretz Yisrael, Rabbi Yaakov traveled to Constantinople to print the sefarim. In this country he became acquainted with Rabbi Yehuda Rosanis, author of the sefer *Mishneh L'Melech* on the Rambam. Rabbi Yaakov chose Rabbi Yehuda to be his foremost rabbi, and shortly thereafter Rabbi Yehuda appointed Rabbi Yaakov to be dayan in the *beit din*. After Rabbi Yehuda's passing, Rabbi Yaakov edited and published Rabbi Yehuda's writings as well, including the sefer *Mishneh L'Melech*.

At that time Rabbi Yaakov began writing his own significant work *Me'am Lo'ez*. To this end, he made an agreement with a wealthy gentleman, R' Yehuda Mizrachi, who undertook to finance the printing of the sefarim, while the proceeds from the sale were reserved to be a source of support for the communities of the holy cities of Yerushalayim, Chevron and Tzefat.

His series of sefarim *Me'am Lo'ez* is considered the most significant masterpiece written in Ladino - "The Jewish Spanish"; an important and noteworthy contribution for the Ladino speaking communities. It combined commentaries according to the simple meaning, Midrashim, and laws summarized from previous poskim, while putting an emphasis on and writing at length about the mitzvot between man and his fellow. Rabbi Yaakov chose to print his sefer in this language because it was intended for the common people who did not understand Hebrew or Aramaic. During this period these Jews had begun distancing themselves from religion, and this wonderful series inspired readers to strengthen their mitzvah observance.

His sefer *Me'am Lo'ez* was warmly received among the Spanish communities.

The author's great art was the talent of intertwining the simple meaning with aggadic interpretations, resulting in one commentary which included both the written Torah and the oral Torah. Anyone reading his sefer immediately realized that more than just a commentary, it was also a teacher and guide. All this is beautifully reflected in the ideas the author weaves into his commentaries. Thus, for example, at the beginning of Parshat Vayera, he quotes the Aggadah that Hashem went to visit Avraham Avinu when he was ill after his circumcision, subtly including the laws of visiting the sick:

"Fortunate is the man who cares for the poor who are sick and exerts effort to fulfill this commandment of visiting the sick. And he has people who inform him as to who is sick, so he can send them sugar, flour, chicken and other necessities. In the holy tongue a rich man is called a גביר, because he must possess these four traits: גומל חסד (kind), ביטן (modest), ישר (upright), and רחמן (merciful).

"And of course the main thing is to take care of the poor because they do not have the ability to take care of themselves, so the disease quickly spreads amongst them. A healthy person has the strength to endure everything, but a sick person requires much fluids and medicine, especially in the winter when the cold weather exhausts them and makes them weak. Whoever tries to give them coals will merit great reward. Do not think that he resurrects only one person, for he is resurrecting many souls. For if the patient is poor, all his family will die of starvation, and especially if he is a traveler who has come to spend the night... certainly the Gedolim of that city should appoint someone to take care of him in the best possible way."

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