

PACHAD DAVID

Shofetim

Published by Mosdot "Mikdash Le'David", Israel

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

"You shall surely set over yourself a king" (Devarim 17:15).

The main purpose of man in This World is to proclaim Hashem his King, accept the yoke of Heaven, and observe all His laws and commandments. This is also the essence of the month of Elul.

Beginning from the first day of Elul the shofar is blown daily to arouse us to repentance. As the Rambam writes (*Hilchot Teshuva* 3:4), blowing the shofar comes to arouse the hearts of the Jewish people to repentance, as in "Wake up sleepy ones from your sleep and slumbering ones from your slumber!" A person may have spent the entire year 'slumbering'. Now, during the month of Elul, Hashem turns to every Jew and says, "Wake up from your slumber! Draw closer to Me and seek Me out because at this time of the year I am close to you. Try to rectify your ways and accept My Sovereignty over you. If you do this then I will remember you favorably and inscribe you for a good life and for peace. But if you continue your routine, remain indifferent to your situation, and do not take advantage of My closeness to you, it is as if you are disparaging the King, and then who can fathom your end, r"l." This is the message Hashem sends to every Jew during these auspicious days.

It is hard to understand how a person can remain indifferent and not arouse himself to repent when he knows that in just a few days he will stand trial and have to give an account for all his actions. How can he not feel afraid of standing in front of the Judge with neither lawyers or defenders? David Hamelech was a holy and pure man, free from all sin and iniquity, yet he feared the Day of Judgment and said (*Tehillim* 119:120), "My flesh shuddered from dread of You, and I feared Your judgments!" All the more so we, who have so many iniquities hanging around our necks, must fear the Day of Judgment! Surely it is our duty to prepare properly for the trial and make sure we come accompanied by merits which will serve as attorneys for us in our time of need.

Just a few days ago a woman came to see me. She appeared most frightened and her hands were shaking. I was concerned for her well-being and asked what had happened. The woman began crying bitterly and explained, "The doctors suspect I am suffering from the

maskil Le'David The Essence of the Month of Elul – Accepting the Yoke of Heaven



dreaded disease, so they sent me to conduct several urgent tests. I am now anxiously awaiting the results and am overcome with fear of what the results may reveal... So I have come to ask the rabbi to bless me that the results will be good."

Of course I blessed her wholeheartedly, trying to calm her by offering words of encouragement and faith. At the same time I thought to myself, "Here is this woman who has undergone 'tests' and is waiting for 'results'.

Consequently she is overcome with terror. Yet we too, very soon, will stand trial before Hashem on Rosh Hashanah and will be subjected to 'tests'. Our actions will be examined to see whether they are positive or not. And we too will wait for 'results'; for our verdict. Shouldn't we be just as afraid as this woman? How can we remain indifferent and not properly prepare defense attorneys for ourselves? It is in our power to improve the outcome of our trial! We have the possibility of sweetening our judgment through repentance, prayer and charity which remove the evil decree. So how is it possible for a person to not pay attention to his situation and arouse himself to repent?!" This is what I told myself when faced with this poor woman's fear. And may this awakening I merited thanks to her serve as a merit for her speedy recovery.

Just thinking back about the magnitude of the trials and tribulations we suffered during the last year is enough to make any heart tremble! Look at how many people are no longer with us! And of course everything will be decided on Rosh Hashanah. On this day the Almighty decrees who will live and who will die, who will suffer from poverty and who will be wealthy. Who will live a tranquil life and who will be tormented and overcome by suffering r"l... And as we say in the Mussaf prayer on Rosh Hashanah, "Regarding countries, it is said on this day which is destined for the sword and which for peace, which for hunger and which for abundance; and creatures are recalled on this day to inscribe them for life or death. Who is not remembered on this day?"

Of course, the main area of preparing ourselves should be in the matter of Torah study, meaning that each person should take upon himself to set times for daily Torah study. Whoever comes to the Day of Judgment with this commitment in his hand has no better advocate than this, because "Torah study is equivalent to them all."

7 Elul 5782
3 September 2022

971



Hilula

7 Elul – Rabbi Eliyahu Chaim, father of the Ben Ish Chai

7 Elul – Rabbi Yeshua Kohen, author of *Maynei Hayeshua*

8 Elul – Rabbi Ben Tzion Meir Chai Uziel, author of *Mishpetei Uziel*

8 Elul – Rabbi David Halberstam

9 Elul – Rabbi Tzaddok HaKohen of Lublin

9 Elul – Rabbi Refael Troish, author of *Tzach V'adom*

10 Elul – Rabbi Pinchas Shapira of Koritz

10 Elul – Rabbi Yosef Yehoshua Karim, Av Beit Din Yerushalayim

11 Elul – Rabbi Yosef Elmeliach, author of *Tokpo Shel Yosef*

11 Elul – Rabbi Yaakov Yehuda Levi, Rosh Kollel Warsaw

12 Elul – Rabbi Shalom Moshe Chai Gegin, author of *Same'ach Nefesh*

12 Elul – Rabbi Simcha Bunim of Peshischa

13 Elul – Rabbi Yaakov Gezuntheit, author of *Tiferet Yaakov*

13 Elul – Rabbi Yosef Chaim, the Ben Ish Chai





WORDS OF THE SAGES

Who are Your Judges and Police Officers?

An interesting case happened in Bnei Brak: Reuven and Shimon collaborated to buy lottery tickets. Each bought a separate ticket and transferred half the rights to his friend, carrying out the acquisition according to Torah law.

It turned out that Reuven won the grand prize! So now he had to give half the amount to Shimon...

What did he do? He called Shimon and, recording the entire conversation, told him: "It seems to me you haven't yet checked the results of the lottery. I already checked, and I want to inform you that your ticket won! As you know, according to the agreement between us, you must give me half the winning amount..."

Then Shimon's voice could be heard from the other end of the line, shouting hysterically: "It wasn't a proper acquisition! I did not really intend to share with you half the winnings..."

When he finished pouring out all his justifications, explaining why he did not need to share the winnings, Reuven told him: "You should know the story is really the other way around! My ticket won, and you just explained with good reasoning why I have no obligation to give you half my winnings!"

The two went to a din Torah, but the court ruled that nevertheless, despite Shimon's denials, Reuven did have to give Shimon his share since they had made a halachic acquisition.

Hagaon Rabbi Aryeh Shechter zt"l uses this story to teach us a moral lesson: Reuven played a nasty, but definitely interesting, trick on Shimon. A trick that revealed the natural characteristic of every person who does not work on his middot: when the other person gains – he wants to receive half the profit, but when he himself is the one gaining – he finds all the reasons in the world why he is not obliged to give the other person his share.

"Judges and officers shall you appoint" – the Torah teaches us to think without prejudice. It demands from us to permanently place judges and officers in our hearts, so they will implant firmly in our heads: there are certain behaviors which are out of the question for me. Period. The heavens and earth can turn upside down but I still won't do certain things! Even if my heart wishes to lie, steal, or any fall for any other lust – for me this is out of bounds. There is nothing to talk about!

When this idea is sharp and clear in one's mind, there is a chance that when faced with a challenge he will find the strength to withstand it and overcome his lust.

There is a constant war being waged between intellect and emotion, between reason and imagination; usually emotion or imagination wins. The Torah, with its system of laws and mitzvot, teaches us how to make the intellect master over them. Commandments such as "You shall not take revenge and you shall not bear a grudge," or "You shall not hate your brother in your heart," appear to be difficult to implement. It seems that it would have been more appropriate to give them to angels, not to vulnerable and emotional humans. However, the Torah does give us these mitzvot, whose performance trains our mind to control, direct, and dictate our emotions.

A significant point should be added here: in any argument, each side is sure he is one hundred percent right. Each side sees only his own perspective, and regards himself innocent.

Many times, even when a person knows he did something unfair to someone, and this person is rightfully angry with him, he still finds many reasons to claim that the person's anger is disproportionate and he is over-reacting. He has a hundred excuses why the person's response is exaggerated. However, in the opposite case, he does not check if his own anger is indeed proportional, and even if he does he will probably quickly acquit himself. Why? Because a person loves himself and gives himself the benefit of the doubt. Since he loves his friend less, he does not judge him favorably.

When a person studies Torah, this gives him the power to put himself aside and think objectively about the other side as well. This ability is based on the mitzvah of "You shall love your fellow as yourself", truly treat him as you wish to be treated. Because love does not mean giving the other person life. On the contrary, in certain situations, such as if you are walking in the desert with a friend and you only have enough water for yourself, "Your own life comes first." It means wanting what is best for him, just as we wish for ourselves.

Most of the problems between man and his friend could be solved if he would try to understand his friend as he understands himself. To his own self a person gives all the credit in the world, but with his friend he makes a careful calculation. The judges and officers we are required to appoint over ourselves teach us to balance our assessment.



WALKING IN THEIR WAYS

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

Eilat – Hothouse of Immodesty

Guarding one's eyes demands great care and supervision. One's sanctity depends on this, and affects his Torah study as well.

A friend of mine once celebrated his son's bar mitzvah in a *beit hakneset* in Eilat. I came to the event, intending to stay for only a few hours.

If it had been up to me, I would never have set foot in that defiled city. But I came with an agenda. I wanted to remind the host, an unaffiliated Jew, that there is a Judge and there is justice, and it is our moral obligation to repent.

This man always felt close to the esteemed Pinto family. I wanted him to know that he could not call himself an admirer of my family without accepting the yoke of Torah. I thought that if I made the effort to attend his *simchah*, my words would be better received.

After spending some time at the bar mitzvah celebration, my escort and I were about to leave. However, man plans but Hashem decides what will be. Our return trip was met with numerous obstacles. The flight was delayed for about two hours and we found ourselves at the Eilat airport, packed together in close quarters with all the other travelers. The immodesty surrounding us was unbearable. We could look neither left nor right. I stood for over two hours facing the wall, afraid to move an inch.

I was filled with remorse for agreeing to attend this bar mitzvah. Only after we reached our destination did I allow myself to breathe easily.

I thanked Hashem for extricating me from this city of filth with my purity intact.



FROM THE TREASURY

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

The Month of Elul - The Inheritance of Yaakov Avinu

Rabbi Yosef Chaim zy"l, the Ben Ish Chai (preface *Devarim*, Year 1), writes that Yaakov Avinu took the months of Nissan, Iyar, and Sivan for himself, while Esav took Tammuz, Av, and Elul. However, Yaakov Avinu overcame Esav and snatched Elul from him, meaning Esav was left with Tammuz and Av alone. That is why these months are ruled by destruction.

I tried to understand why Tammuz and Av remained in Esav's possession, while Elul was taken from him. In my humble opinion, the answer is because everything depends on the power of the Torah. The verse tells us (*Bereishit* 27:22), "The voice is Yaakov's voice, but the hands are Esav's hands." Chazal expound (*Yalkut Shimoni* 115) that as long as Yaakov's voice can be heard in the *batei kneset* and *batei midrashot*, the hands of Esav have no power over us. And since in these months of Tammuz and Av, Bnei Yisrael's engagement in Torah was weakened and they became lax in this area, as it says (*Yirmiyah* 9:11-12), "For what reason did the land perish... But Hashem has said: 'Because of their forsaking My Torah,'" That is why Esav's hand prevailed during the months of Tammuz and Av.

At first Elul was also in Esav's possession, but Yaakov Avinu prayed to Hashem and said, "Master of the World! It is true that during the months of Tammuz and Av we forsook the Torah, but when the month of Elul arrives, the month of preparation for the Day of Judgment, there is no Jewish person who does not arouse himself to repent and accept the yoke of Torah, either by setting times for Torah or by adding Torah shiurim. And if in this month we strengthen our Torah study, then it is right that this month should be our inheritance, because when there is Torah in Yisrael, Yaakov's power overcomes Esav's." This is what Yaakov asked of Hashem, and indeed Hashem heard his prayer and took the month of Elul out of Esav's hands and gave it to Yaakov as an inheritance. This seems to me a fitting explanation.

Since Yaakov merited having Elul returned to him because he advocated for Yisrael that in this month they increase their Torah study, whoever does not arouse himself in this month to study Torah and instead remains complacent and continues his daily routine, surely Yaakov Avinu will come and claim, "Who knows if because of you this month will return to Esav, for you are not strengthening your Torah studies – the only reason it was given to us!" And what can a person answer to such a compelling claim!?

Therefore, during the month of Elul every Jewish person is obligated to arouse his soul to rectify his ways, and in particular to strengthen his study of Torah. And there is no doubt that these merits will stand for him on the Day of Judgment, he will be vindicated in the trial and inscribed for a good life and for peace.

A DAY OF DELIGHT

The Shabbat Table



1. The holy Zohar tells us (III, 272b): "In honor of Shabbat one should prepare a beautiful place to sit and eat, just as one prepares a *chuppah* for a bride, because Shabbat is the queen and bride." One should therefore set the table in the nicest place in the house. Many people eat in the living room on Shabbat, a more fitting place (than the kitchen).

2. It is appropriate to have a special set of utensils for Shabbat, including nice flatware, plates, serving utensils and glasses, since it is disrespectful to Shabbat to dine using weekday dishes.

The Gemara (*Shabbat* 119a) tells us about Rabbi Nachman who used to prepare the house in honor of Shabbat; he would remove the weekday vessels and bring in the special Shabbat dishes. He would say, "If Rabbi Ami and Rabbi Asi would come to visit me, would I not serve them a meal using my most beautiful dishes?"

3. The table should be set well in advance, just as one sets the table ahead of time in honor of a visit from the queen, and not in the last minute under pressure. It shows we are anticipating the queen's arrival. However, if the husband arrives home from the *beit hakneset* and sees the table is not yet set, he should patiently and tolerantly help set it, with joy.

4. As soon as the husband comes home he should hasten to make kiddush and eat right away, for this shows his fondness for Shabbat. He should therefore not linger in conversation with the worshipers, even if they are discussing Torah, but should quickly make his way home. For this he will be rewarded with longevity.

The Gemara (*Rashi, Shabbat* 119b) says: "When Rabbi Zira would see pairs of talmidei chachamim talking in Torah, he would urge them: 'Please go home and engage in the pleasures of Shabbat, and do not desecrate it by cancelling its pleasures.'"

5. It is extremely important to kiss one's parents' hands and receive a blessing from them on Shabbat. According to *sod*, there is an extra special virtue in kissing the mother's hands. The gaon Rabbi Chaim Plaji writes that with this blessing the parents annul any claim that could harm their children, if G-d forbid the parents held any grievances against their children during the week.

The Yavetz also writes that the custom is to bless one's children on Friday night, because this is the time of abundance and it is appropriate to draw it down for them, since due to their youth they do not have the power to bring it down for themselves. So through the parents the abundance descends and takes hold of the younger ones, for they have not yet tasted the taste of sin. However, even grown children should receive a blessing from their parents.

6. On Friday night even a married son should go to kiss his parents' hands and receive their blessing. The Arizal customarily went to the home of his mother, Rabbanit Sarah a"l, to kiss her hands. However if this delay would cause distress to his wife and children who are hungry, he should go to his parents another time.

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



Rabbeinu Yosef Chaim of Bavel zy"a

Rabbeinu Yosef Chaim of Bavel zy"a was known as the "Reish Galuta d'Bavel" (Chief Rabbi of the Babylonian exile). Gedolei Yisrael from both the East and West admired him greatly, to the extent that the gaon and mekubal Rabbi Yehuda Fatiya zt"l testified about his greatness: "Rabbi Yosef Chaim's soul was worthy of descending to the world in earlier times. But Heaven had mercy on us and he was sent in our time, so he could water the inhabited land and those who dwell in it from the well of his Torah." The gaon Rabbi Yaakov David of Slutsk, the Ridvaz zt"l, who at the end of his life lived in Tzfat, testified: "The scent of holiness and purity wafts from the Reish Galuta d'Bavel's sefarim, and anyone who studies them notices this..."

The gaon Rabbi Yehuda Tzadka zt"l, Rosh Yeshiva of Porat Yosef, related: I heard this from a gaon who was a member of the household of the Ridvaz when he was in England. One day he noticed the Ridvaz upset

and crying. He asked him, "Why is Rabbeinu crying?" The Ridvaz answered: "Today the Chief Rabbi of the Diaspora, Rabbeinu Yosef Chaim of Baghdad, returned his soul to his Maker. That is why I am crying."

The Ridvaz added in awe: "Anyone who studies Rabbeinu Yosef Chaim's sefarim feels the holiness hovering over his words!"

The scope of his works was not limited to a specific area; he wrote about both the revealed and hidden aspects of Torah. He authored over sixty sefarim, most of which were printed in recent years. They form a strong base for Halacha, Mussar, and Kabbalah, and have been well-used by the Sephardic sages in the last generations. He also gave many sermons that stemmed from his heart and entered the hearts of his listeners, intertwining Halacha, Aggada, Drush, Remez and Sod (different ways of interpreting the Torah). This complementary approach is demonstrated in his famous sefer, *Ben Ish Chai*, accepted and studied with delight by all sects of Jews in both the Holy Land and the Diaspora.

Rabbi Yosef Chaim's home in Babylon became a center for correspondence from all corners of the world; from Singapore and Bombay, Iran and Kalkolta, Arbistan and Kurdistan cities, Vilna and Tunis, Yerushalayim and Tzfat. These letters dealt with topical issues in all areas of life – in Halacha and Aggada, the revealed Torah and the hidden Torah, and in difficult and complicated scientific wisdoms. For example, he was asked about the location of the Lower Gan Eden, after scientists claimed to have circled the entire earth without detecting this Garden.

These and other hypothetical questions were rushed to the residence of Rabbi Yosef Chaim, who did not hesitate to answer the point of the matter, even on issues with

which he seemingly had no connection. His answers revealed a comprehensive grasp and rare scientific expertise in medicine, astronomy, physics, meteorology and economics, as is reflected in his outstanding sefer of responsa, *Rav Pa'alim*.

The gaon Rabbi Yechezkel Rachamim zt"l, author of *Atzei Haya'ar*, told his students that when the sefer *Ben Ish Chai* appeared in print, he looked through it and found a difficulty with a certain matter. He immediately went to the author's house and explained his question to him. Rabbi Yosef Chaim replied, "You should know that all my rulings in this sefer are 'refined flour' (pure truth), and I merited Heavenly assistance."

"But how is it possible," asked Rabbi Yechezkel, "that in the case of this specific law, Rabbeinu ruled contrary to the opinion of four well-known *poskim*?"

"I know, my son, I know," answered Rabbi Yosef Chaim, "but from the connotations of thirty other *poskim* in different places, I learned they ruled like this." And while speaking to him he began enumerating the *poskim* and their holy words. When he finished, he turned to Rabbi Yechezkel and added: "I just now realized there are other *poskim* who agree with this ruling, do you wish to hear?"

But Rabbi Yechezkel had heard enough; he was convinced.

After visiting the grave of Benayahu ben Yehoyada in the Upper Galilee, Rabbi Yosef Chaim felt a special enlightenment of wonderful holiness, as if right there the springs of wisdom opened up for him, and secrets of the Torah he had never known were revealed to him from Heaven. Since he felt the root of his soul was from this tzaddik, he decided to call all his sefarim after him.

Interested in meriting the public and distributing the Pachad David Bulletin in your area?

Send a mail today to:
mld@hpinto.org.il
and merit the blessing of the tzaddik
Rabbi **David Chananya Pinto** shlita

To receive a daily Torah insight

from Moreinu v'Rabbeinu, the esteemed Admor
Rabbi **David Chananya Pinto** shlita
— Send a message —

English +16467853001 • French +972587929003
Spanish +541141715555 • Hebrew +972585207103



"Contemplate and see that Hashem is good"

Exciting update: With *siyata diShmaya*, the shiurim of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu, the Admor Rabbi **David Chananya Pinto** shlit"a, are now available in Hebrew, English, French and Spanish

on the Kol Halashon site or by calling direct 073-3718144

Coming soon: Detailed catalog with a direct number for each shiur, available by email: **mld@hpinto.org.il**

Categorized according to the weekly Parshiot, Chagim and other topics