

PACHAD DAVID

Emor

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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

"Speak to the Kohanim, the sons of Aharon, and say to them: Let none [of you] defile himself for a dead person among his people" (Vayikra 21:1).

The Gemara explains (Yevamot 114a), "Speak...say:" [This double expression comes] to admonish the adult [Kohanim to be responsible] for the minors [that they must not contaminate themselves]." This needs clarification — why only concerning defiling oneself for a dead person did the Torah feel it necessary to admonish the adult to be responsible for the minors? What is unique about this prohibition, more than the other severe prohibitions of the Torah, such as keeping the Shabbat, which is punishable by stoning, or the prohibition of eating *cheilev* which is punishable by Karet?

It seems to me that we can explain this in the following way: A person was initially formed without a living spirit, as an image molded from earth, and afterward Hashem breathed a soul in him through his nostrils, as it is stated (*Bereishit* 2:7), "And the L-rd G-d formed man of dust from the ground, and He breathed into his nostrils the soul of life, and man became a living soul." Chazal teach (according to the Zohar) "What did He breathe into man — from Him He breathed," signifying that Hashem breathed into man spirit and a soul, and thus he turned into a living person.

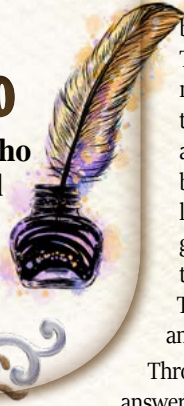
What is the "breath" that Hashem breathed into man?

It is clear that Hashem breathed into him the 248 positive commandments, and the 365 negative commandments, which give life and vitality to the 248 limbs and 365 sinews of a person. The 613 mitzvot correspond to the various parts of a person's body, and when he fulfills Hashem's mitzvot, his limbs and sinews acquire vitality through them. This "breath" of the positive and negative commandments that Hashem breathed into man is what provides life to his limbs and sinews, and without the commandments he is considered dead.

Consequently, anyone who fulfills the Torah's commandments is called "a living person," because the light of the mitzvah illuminates his limbs with energy and provides him with vitality and life. And anyone who violates the Torah is considered dead, because he is lacking the spiritual oxygen, providing life to his limbs and sinews. Therefore, Chazal say (*Berachot* 18b), "These are the wicked who in their lifetime are called dead,"

maskil Le'David

Only One Who Is Connected to Torah Is Considered Alive



because they do not engage in Torah, so the light of the Torah does not provide life to their limbs. On the other hand, "Tzaddikim even after their death are called living," because also after their death their lips mouth words of Torah in the grave when others study the Torah they taught, and the light of this Torah provides life to their limbs and sinews.

Through this introduction we can answer the question we asked above; why only concerning defiling oneself for a dead person did the Torah feel it necessary to admonish the adult to be responsible for the minors? Just as the Kohanim are sanctified in the highest level, and the Torah obligates them to be careful and distance themselves from defilement of the dead, so too it is the obligation of every Jew to sanctify himself through the Torah and its mitzvot and be in the category of a "Kohen," resembling him in his heightened level of sanctity.

By a person engaging in Torah, he provides life to his limbs and sinews and consequently he is not considered dead, and thus he distances himself from defilement of the dead, because the light of Torah emanating from his Torah study and the mitzvot he performs provide life to his limbs. But if, G-d forbid, he does not adhere to Torah and mitzvot, then certainly he does not have from where to draw life, and thus he is considered dead, even in his lifetime. Consequently, he transgresses the prohibition of defiling himself through the dead, because although he is living and breathing and walking on his feet, his spiritual constitution is dead, and his limbs and sinews are lacking their true life force of spirituality. He thereby transgresses the prohibition of "Let none [of you] defile himself for a dead person among his people." In fact, the Torah obligates us to distance ourselves four cubits from an ignoramus, because he is empty of Torah and the defilement of death hovers over him, which may harm others spiritually.

This is the reason a person becomes defiled only after his death, since when he is alive, the Torah he engages in sanctifies and purifies him, and the powers of impurity cannot overcome him because of the light of the Torah which provides his limbs and sinews with life. But when a person dies, he is free of the obligation to perform mitzvot, and he no longer receives the light of Torah which provides life to his limbs, so then the impurity overcomes him.

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15 Iyar 5783
6 May 2023

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Hilula

15 Iyar
Rabbi David Yehodayoff

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Rabbi Yitzchak Chai Teib

17 Iyar
Rabbi Yaakov Rosental

18 Iyar
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19 Iyar
Rabbi Ezra Attiya

20 Iyar
Rabbi Yosef Valtoch

21 Iyar
Rabbi Shmaryahu Karelitz





FROM THE TREASURY

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

Mind Over Emotion

“And the Kohen who is elevated above his brothers, upon whose head the anointment oil has been poured or who has been inaugurated to wear the garments, he shall not leave his hair unshorn or rend his garments. And he shall not come upon any dead bodies; he shall not defile himself for his father or his mother. He shall not leave the Sanctuary, and he will not desecrate the holy things of his G-d, for the crown of his G-d’s anointing oil is upon him” (Vayikra 21:10-12).

This requires clarification; how come the Torah demands of the Kohen Gadol such a difficult task of refraining from mourning for his relatives, and moreover, also for his father and his mother he may not defile himself?! The grief surfaces and overcomes a person, so how can he be commanded to subdue his feelings and not cry?

The Torah is teaching us that a person who serves Hashem must always be joyous, and if grief will overcome him, his service will be affected, because it is not possible to serve Hashem out of sorrow. Therefore, the Kohen Gadol was commanded not to grieve and not to join a funeral procession even for his father.

“He shall not leave the Sanctuary” because he is sanctified and he serves as a role model for all Jews not to grieve over the body. Even though others may mourn over their parents, they should learn from the Kohen Gadol a fortiori; if he does not mourn even for his father and mother because it disturbs his service of Hashem, how much more so we should not mourn the loss of our money, or other physical discomfort, and of course over forfeiting fleeting pleasures.

Every person experiences hardships, but he must accept them with equanimity. Bnei Yisrael learn from the Kohen Gadol, since they are on a lower level, how to refrain from grieving over minor losses by witnessing the extent of the Kohen Gadol’s tremendous self-control in not mourning even for his father and mother and wife, who are closest to him.

And from here we also learn the basis for admonishing the elders [to be responsible] for the minors. A person will realize that if the Kohen Gadol, who is greater than his fellow [as an elder], has the ability to subdue his feelings and not mourn over his relative’s demise and even remain in the Beit Hamikdash serving Hashem with joy in order to fulfill Hashem’s will, then Bnei Yisrael [who are like minors in comparison] will learn to do likewise. Although they are not admonished over the same obligation of subduing their emotions like the Kohen Gadol, they should learn from him how to deal with the problems in their daily life and not fall into despair, G-d forbid. On the contrary, they should continue serving Hashem with joy and affirm, “All that the Merciful One does is for the good.”

May it be His will that we merit achieving this lofty level and serve Hashem with fervor and joy, Amen.



WALKING IN THEIR WAYS

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

One Shidduch Leads to Another

A certain young man was having difficulty finding his intended. He constantly prayed to Hashem to allow him to build his own home, but no match seemed right. The suffering young man once came to me and asked that I pray for him, in the merit of my ancestors, that he find his life partner soon. Of course, I blessed him warmly. After speaking with him for some time, I got a feel for his personality and suggested a *shidduch* for him with a girl from Toronto.

In order to speed up the process, I helped the young man make travel arrangements to Canada. The parents had already met, and the *shidduch* seemed to be going smoothly.

When the young man arrived in Toronto, he was hosted by a member of the Jewish community. The host had no idea of the boy’s plans and suggested a *shidduch* of his own. At first, the boy demurred, for he wanted to continue with the *shidduch* which had already begun, the one that he came for in the first place. But Heaven ordained that he would meet specifically with this second proposal. The rest, as they say, is history.

The boy called me up with the good news that he was a *chatan*. For a fraction of a second, I felt a stab of disappointment. I had thought that my own suggestion was his true intended. But I immediately pushed all such thoughts aside. Isn’t Hashem the ultimate Matchmaker? In the merit of the match which I had thought of, the boy made the trip to Toronto, where he met his true *zivug*, the one designated for him even before he was born.

Sometime later, when I found myself in Toronto, the father of the girl who I had suggested related that both he and his daughter were despondent that the *shidduch* had not materialized. The girl was still single. It was painful to hear about their suffering. I prayed for Hashem to perform a miracle on their behalf, in the merit of my grandfather, Rabbi Chaim Pinto, *zy”a*. I stipulated that before I left Toronto, which was in another two days, this girl would find her intended life partner.

Through Hashem’s kindness, that very day, her father phoned me and joyously informed me, “A wonderful match was proposed for my daughter. She is planning to meet with the young man today.”

A few days after I returned to France, I received another call from Toronto. I was told that *bisiyata di'Shemaya*, the *shidduch* went through. The girl was engaged to be married in another three months.

Baruch Hashem, the marriage is a happy one, blessed with a home full of beautiful children.



WORDS OF THE SAGES

No Difference

“And he shall not come upon any dead bodies; he shall not defile himself for his father or his mother”
(Vayikra 21:11).

It is brought in the name of tzaddikim that the reason for this is because a tzaddik, who is the leader of his generation, should not show more closeness and love to his family members than to any other Jew, and the Kohen Gadol is considered the leader of Am Yisrael.

It is told about Rabbi Elimelech of Lizhensk, *zy”a*, who took upon himself an iron-clad rule that every Jew in the world would be equal in his eyes, and he would consider others as he did himself. He would not feel any difference at all, even a tiny bit, between the love for his sons and the love for any other Jew. This difficult task was placed as his goal, and he was prepared to wear himself thin in order to attain it.

Once Rabbi Elimelech returned to his city after a long journey in exile; it had been a long period of not being home and seeing his family, and not being in touch at all. When he reached the gates of the city, a horse-drawn carriage passed by. Without meaning to eavesdrop, Rabbi Elimelech overheard a few words of the conversation between the two businessmen inside the carriage.

“What a fine boy Elazar is...a good soul...it is a mitzvah to make every effort to save his life...one should not spare any efforts in offering money so they can bring the professor to come see him...”

Rabbi Elimelech froze in his tracks and his heart began to pound hard. He broke out in cold sweat all over his body: Elazar was his precious son! Who knows what might have happened to him? Why do they need to save his life? May G-d have mercy!

Soon the carriage disappeared from sight, leaving no one to turn to for more details about what he had heard. Rabbi Elimelech fixed his backpack on his shoulder and hurried toward his house, his heart pounding with anxiety. Further on, he met a few Jews from his city, who were also talking about the critical condition of Elazar. When he drew closer, he realized they were talking about a different Elazar, the son of Yechezkel Havlin. The deep concern and panic that had gripped him relaxed somewhat.

Right away, Rabbi Elimelech grabbed his head between his two hands and began to berate himself bitterly:

“Oy Meilich, Meilich! What is all your wandering in exile worth? What did you gain? What was the point of all your hard work if you still feel a difference between your own son Eliezer and the Eliezer of Yechezkel Havlin...?!”

Rabbi Elimelech did not even enter his house, but immediately turned on his heels and set out for another period of exile...



CHAZAK U'BARUCH

Guarding One's Eyes

In the previous issue, we read about the incredible ruling of Rabbi Vosner to cancel the Bar Mitzvah boy's flight to the Holy Land so the young boy should not defile his eyes by forbidden scenes, since the very act of seeing something immoral can cause irreparable damage.

Sometimes there are those who find themselves ways to justify their actions. They claim that forbidden scenes do not affect them. Regarding this it is brought in the booklet *Yechi Reuvain* that all those who claim it does not influence them, are not aware that it affects them greatly, but since they are physical beings, they do not perceive the deterioration of their spiritual status. They think that because they do not actively commit a crime, then they are all right, but it is not true. They are not all right, because their spiritual radiance is very damaged. The image of G-d, in which they were created, is flawed, and they have no idea what damage they are causing to themselves.

All these people suffer from a decline in spirituality, and their deterioration is not always immediate; it may occur after a period of time. Then when they perceive their corruption, they begin to regret what they did and seek to change, but by then the battle is much harder. They are already overcome with passion and accustomed to covetousness, and it is difficult for them to save themselves from their own hands.

There are references in the Gemara from which one can conclude that seeing defilement impairs and affects a person even when no sin is actively committed. For this reason, it seems to follow that it is not advisable to place pictures of impure animals and birds before infants. Parents innocently assume that this helps the child develop, but really when the child contemplates the image it may harm him, because it draws upon him a spirit of defilement.

The Mishnah (*Avot* 2:8) tells about Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananya, about whose mother it is stated, “Praiseworthy is she who bore him.” Why is this so? Because she would bring him in his cradle to the *beit midrash* so he would hear words of the Torah.

In general, it is important to ensure that young children, whose souls are pure, be exposed as little as possible to immorality. Likewise, when choosing a yeshiva, the issue of guarding one's eyes must also be taken into account when deciding upon the location. If there are two options for yeshivot, and one of them is in a place that is more conducive to guarding one's eyes, it is preferable to go to the yeshiva where it is possible to guard his eyes, even if the other yeshiva is more prominent, since guarding one's eyes is paramount.

cont. from p. 1 >>>

Therefore, when a person rises from his bed in the morning, *halachah* obligates him to purify himself by washing his hands, because sleep is one sixtieth of death. Since during this time one ceases to learn Torah, there is no flow of life to his limbs. Since one who does not possess Torah is considered dead, he has to purify himself upon awakening by washing his hands. Also, one who sits idle is as if he was sleeping, and anyone who wastes time from Torah study, is therefore considered dead. So a person should take care of himself and provide his body and soul with life through the light of the Torah and mitzvot, which is like dew that resurrects both body and soul.



MEN OF FAITH

Your Luck Will Increase Exceedingly

Rabbi Pinchas Amos, Moreinu v'Rabbeinu's brother-in-law, portrayed the greatness of Rabbi Chaim Hakatan through the following story:

Once Rabbi Amos approached his father and asked him, "Father, I see that every time you encounter a difficulty, you light a candle in memory of Rabbi Chaim Hakatan and pray to Hashem to help you in the merit of the tzaddik. Are you really confident that Hashem will assist you in his merit? Why do you do this?"

His father proceeded to relate to him an incredible story from which he would comprehend the greatness of tzaddikim:

My father earned his livelihood by raising cows. One year, there was a drought throughout southern Morocco, and most of the cows died. Consequently, he had no income and no money to buy food for his family.

When his wife pressured him about his obligation to provide food for his children who were liable to perish from starvation, he left his house and headed toward the shore, several kilometers away from the Jewish Mellah (quarter). Facing the raging ocean waves, he began to consider his future, but could find no way out of his predicament.

Suddenly, he saw the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim Hakatan from afar, running toward him together with his attendant.

My father was uncomfortable. On the one hand, he did not have money to contribute to the funds Rabbi Chaim collected for charity. He knew that the tzaddik always asked people for money to distribute to the poor. On the other hand, he thought to himself that certainly Rabbi Chaim knew through Divine inspiration that he did not

have money to buy food for his family. Perhaps he even intended to offer him some money.

Either way, he decided to run away. Rabbi Chaim sensed his intentions and yelled to him from a distance to wait for him and not move.

Rabbi Chaim caught up to him, huffing and puffing from the strain of running (after all, he was already over seventy years old). Rabbi Chaim told him, "I came from far away only to encourage you that you have nothing to worry about, since Hashem will help you."

Rabbi Chaim added, "I am bringing you some good tidings. Your wife is pregnant, and when she will give birth to a son, he will bring you good fortune and prosperity. Regarding your lack of funds, here is a sum of money with which you can go buy food and clothing for your children. Hashem will help you that from now on you will encounter success, and your luck will increase exceedingly."

My father was joyful over the good news and kissed Rabbi Chaim's hands. At first he refused to accept the money, because he did not feel comfortable taking it. In the end, he took the money, bought food and provisions and went home. He told his wife about his encounter with Rabbi Chaim and the news that she was pregnant. When his son was born, his luck began to improve, and eventually he became exceeding wealthy.

Rabbi Amos's father concluded the story and told his son, "Thus, you understand why I love the tzaddik Rabbi Chaim so much. This is why in every difficult situation I cry to Hashem that He should assist me in his merit."

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



How Are They Distinguished?

"They shall not make bald patches on their heads, nor shall they shave the edge of their beard" (Vayikra 21:5).

In this week's Parshah there is a commandment for the Kohanim that "they shall not make bald patches on their heads, nor shall they shave the edge of their beard" (Vayikra 21:5).

The Maharil Diskin, zt"l, explains that the non-Jewish priests would change their appearance so they should be distinguished from the rest of the common people, since there was no difference in their inner qualities or virtues to indicate their superiority, therefore they needed external signs.

However, our Holy Torah commanded the Kohanim that they should be thoroughly sanctified; namely, through their exalted conduct and righteousness they would be upraised and glorified, and people would readily perceive their supreme sanctity. They did not need to make bald patches on their heads or make cuts in their flesh.

So too throughout the generations tzaddikim and chassidim are recognized by their exalted deeds and lofty way of life. Their sanctity is evident for all to perceive, so they do not need any external signs to distinguish them from others.

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