



Published by Mosdot "Mikdash Le'David", Israel

Under the auspices of Moreinu v'Rabbeinu, the Admor Rabbi **David Chananya Pinto** shlit'a
Son of the tzaddik Rabbi **Moshe Ahron Pinto** zt"l, and grandson of the holy tzaddik and miracle-worker Rabbi **Chaim Pinto** zy"ta

maskil Le'David

The Greeks' Tactic

Chanukah is almost upon us. At this time period it behooves us to contemplate the period when the Greeks reigned. Delving into this time period leads us to a surprising difficulty. It is well-known that the majority of Am Yisrael ended up following the ways of the Greeks who almost succeeded in their plot "to make them forget Your Torah," G-d forbid. Only a handful of Jewish people remained faithful to Hashem Yitbarach and His Torah.

This fact is most puzzling. For how can it be that right inside Yerushalayim, while the Beit Hamikdash still stood and Am Yisrael merited seeing the Kohanim and the Leviim in their service, in addition to witnessing the ten miracles that were present in the Beit Hamikdash (see *Avot* 5:7), so many Jews became Hellenists and were swayed by the counsel of these wicked people? How is it possible that Jews who saw continuous daily miracles were led astray by empty and futile practices?

The answer lies in understanding the tactic that lay behind the Greeks' method. They did not approach Am Yisrael and demand that they immediately cease observing Shabbat or any of the other central mitzvot and foundations of authentic Judaism. Rather they approached them with small, seemingly innocent, suggestions concerning minor matters, about which the simple Jew says to himself, "What is so bad about this? They are simply offering various gymnasiums and sport games that do not involve any immodesty or debauchery."

Those parents who lacked the wisdom to understand the extent of this stumbling block sat back in serenity and sent their children to participate in all these activities, for on the face of it they did not seem to be of harmful influence. But, they should have realized that although the actual sport may have not involved any prohibitions, it is necessary to inquire about the instructor and find out who is this educator

under whose guidance they are playing, and just as important, with which kind of company are they mixing. Do they have a pure Torah outlook and follow the spirit of tradition, or G-d forbid, the opposite? Being instructed by a teacher or instructor who is a wicked Greek and possesses indecent *middot* and a decadent outlook, will certainly instill false and misleading opinions in the children. Infusing the impressionable children with a negative influence will endanger their entire spirituality, to the extent of uprooting all Torah values and commandments with which they were educated.

The tragic outcome? Parents sacrificed their lives to sanctify Hashem's Name, while their very children were the ones from whom the Greeks succeeded in uprooting any spark of Judaism and attachment to Torah and mitzvot.

In my opinion this is the essence of the game that is customarily played on Chanukah, *sevivon* (spinning top). It serves as a reminder for us that the conniving Greeks "rotated" the outlook of the young Jewish children and diverted them from the straight path, similar to the spinning top which begins its rotation at a certain point and finishes in a different spot.

So too, at first the Greeks approached the Jews with insignificant, petty matters which at face value seem meaningless. They suggested taking Jewish children to various, apparently harmless, activities, but this was only their starting point. Their scheme was to instigate a rotation diverging from the path of the holy Torah and mitzvot. In so doing, they succeeded in instilling their inappropriate views in these children's hearts.

In their innocence, the simple Jews did not comprehend the hidden trap and serenely justified themselves, "What of it? Our children are young..." The outcome was tragic.

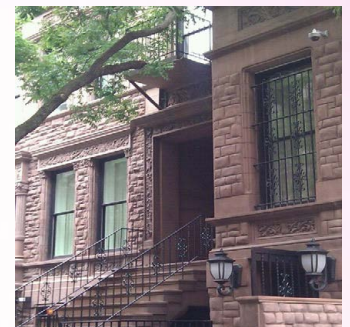
We must take to heart the essential message from the Greeks and the Hellenists. Before attending any event or sending our precious children to participate in any activity of any form, we must investigate the nature of the people managing the event as well as the type of company taking part. We must ensure that all forms of entertainment come from a kosher source and contain only ideas and values congruous with the Torah.

23 Kislev 5786
13 December 2025

1142

Yayeishev

Shabbat Mevorchim



Hilula

23 Kislev
Rabbi Ben Zion Alfass,
author of *Ma'aseh Alfass*

24 Kislev
Rabbi Massod Shitrit,
the Baba Sidi

25 Kislev
Rabbi Avraham Harrari Raful,
a Sage from Aram-Tzova

26 Kislev
Rabbi Avraham Ben David,
the Ra'avad

27 Kislev
Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak
Hakohen Kahen, the Admor
of Toldot Aharon

28 Kislev
Rabbi Ezra Chamou

29 Kislev
Rabbi Yisrael Friedman





PARSHAH PEARLS

Inspiring Reflections

Ya'akov Believed He Would Witness the Resurrection of the Dead

“But his father kept the matter in mind”
(Bereishit 37:11).

The *sefer Divrei Shaul* quotes in the name of Rabbi David Asher Zelig Ehrlich *zt”l* that the word “אֵת” comes to include something. Yaakov Avinu said, “Are we to come, me and your mother?” — but Yosef’s mother had already passed away. Nevertheless, Yaakov waited with anticipation for the dream to be fulfilled in its entirety, meaning that Rachel too would come bow down to Yosef. Why was this?

The Midrash (*Bereishit Rabba* 84:10) tells us that Yaakov Avinu thought that the resurrection of the dead would occur in his lifetime. If so, Rachel would also come to bow down to Yosef.

Crisis creates Opportunity for Growth

“But he left his garment in her hand, and he fled, and went outside” (*Bereshit* 39:12).

Adding another implication to the simple meaning of the verse, the Admor of Spinka *shlit”a*, in the name of Rabbi Hershele Lisker *zt”l*, explains that the word “בגדו” (his garment) is related to the word “בוגד” — traitor.

The *yetzer hara* came to Yosef Hatzaddik and whispered in his ear: “Why are you running away? Since when are you such a *tzaddik*? I know exactly who you are deep inside, how much treacherousness (בוגדות) you have within you! What came over you now to act like a *tzaddik*?”

But Yosef Hatzaddik left his garment with her. He answered the *yetzer hara*: “Despite all the treacherousness that I have in me, despite all the downfalls, despite all the times I was not successful... still, my Father in Heaven’s Image stands before me, and I will use this opportunity.”

Yosef Hatzaddik used this situation as an impetus for growth; he did not stumble into a pit of despair.



WORDS OF THE SAGES

When a Secular Jew lights Chanukah Lights

“How can I prove to a secular Jew the existence of a Creator and the truth of the Torah, with just a few words?”

No simple dilemma. The one who brought this question to the Gaon Rabbi Chaim Greineman *zt”l* for the advice of *da’at Torah*, was the *gaon* and *tzaddik*, Rabbi Aryeh Shechter *zt”l*. On one occasion he related: “I used to lecture at many seminars about human relationships and marital harmony, as you might know. I look like someone from bygone days, from the Middle Ages, with a big beard and *peyot*. When I would begin my lecture on these topics to this audience of secular Jews, they regarded me in wonder. “We are apparently at the wrong address,” they thought to themselves. “This type of character will lecture to us about communication and interpersonal relationships?! Nu, indeed!”

And what happened in the end?

“Not more than five minutes would pass and all barriers fell. They were drawn to the content, their previous opinions and prejudices disappeared. One of the reasons that caused these secular Jews to open themselves up to change and eventually return to the correct path was the understanding that they were living a mistake. They realized that up until this time, they had never really understood what Judaism and observant Jews are all about.”

Harav Chaim Greineman *zt”l* answered Harav Shechter’s query by saying, “Tell the secular Jew that we constitute a negligible percentage of humanity, yet nevertheless all of mankind is occupied with us day and night.”

“And I add,” Harav Shechter says (see *sefer Aryeh Sho’eg*), “that would there be a small, marginal group who would do all kinds of strange things, even nonsense and real futilities, would someone pay attention to them?! At most people would chuckle derisively for a moment and then turn back to their own occupations, forgetting all about this strange phenomenon. If so, why do the gentiles care that we — a tiny group — observe customs different to them? Why do they persecute us and go to such lengths to annihilate us physically and spiritually?”

“The answer is that our very existence is proof that their way is incorrect, and it is this proof that they wish to erase. They cannot bear the living and constant proof that the way of the Torah is the correct path.”

Secular Jews joyously celebrate the days of Chanukah just as we do. It could be that in some way these days are more fateful for them than for us, since if not for the Chanukah lights they would fall to the depths.

During the time of the Chozeh of Lublin, there was an informer in the village who caused the Jews much trouble by informing on them to the authorities. One day during Chanukah the *talmidim* brought their Rebbe a *kvitel* (note) on which they had penned their moving request: The Rebbe should use his powers to seriously punish the informer so that he will no longer cause evil to any of the Jews.

The Rebbe turned to them and proclaimed, **“Do you not know what this informer is doing now? He is shaking Worlds!”**

The *talmidim* approached the informer and asked him what he had been doing when the Rebbe had uttered those words. The informer looked at them in surprise and said, “What do you mean? I was kindling the Chanukah lights; it was time to light!”

This shows us that even the kindling of Chanukah lights of someone as low as that informer, has a great effect in all the Worlds.



WALKING IN THEIR WAYS

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

The Power of Holiness

I once participated in an event on behalf of a Torah institution in France. The mayor of the city, an atheistic gentile, was also in attendance.

Throughout the evening, many people approached me to receive my blessings for success and *siyata d'Shmaya*, in the merit of my esteemed ancestors. I was surprised to find this agnostic also waiting to receive my blessing. I knew this man to be an out-and-out Communist, a categorical condemner of anything hinting to religion. What was he doing asking for a blessing from a Rabbi, cut from a vastly different cloth than himself?

Unable to contain my curiosity, I asked, "Tell me, please, what makes you ask for the blessing of an Orthodox Rabbi, when you clearly denounce the existence of G-d?"

He enthusiastically replied, "I have been standing at the side, watching you dispense blessings to anyone and everyone who requested. I finally realized that so many people cannot be asking for blessings which are empty. There must, therefore, be validity to your blessings."

As I contemplated the words that this non-Jew had uttered, I strongly felt the power of an event that had taken place for the honor of Torah. It has the ability to breathe sanctity even into non-Jews.

I also realized that this power of holiness is capable of changing even an atheistic outlook of someone who is severed from Hashem, such as this gentile. **Certainly, then, it has the ability to bring back the soul of a Jew, which was hewn from the Heavenly Throne itself.**



FROM THE TREASURY

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

Whoever Stumbles Can Start a New Page!

I saw a question asked by Harav Hagaon Rabbi Ben Zion Abba Shaul *zt"l*. As we know, the Greeks decreed three harsh rulings on Am Yisrael, forbidding them to observe Shabbat, sanctify the new month, and brit milah. However, the reason why they wished to obliterate the sanctification of the new month is unclear. It is easy to understand why they chose Shabbat, for it is the source of blessing and faith in Hashem. For six days a person toils and earns money, and despite his ability to work and earn also on the Shabbat day, he nevertheless closes his business and rests. This serves to implant great faith in Hashem, and to really accept as truth that livelihood and life are from Him alone.

This reminds me of an acquaintance who travelled to Miami to collect funds for a certain *yeshiva*. I gave him the phone number of a certain philanthropist who supports our holy institutions. When my acquaintance approached him, this wealthy man said, "Since Rabbi David *shlit"a* sent you, I am prepared to give you the amount I had designated for his institutions, with his permission, of course". Indeed, I received a call asking for my consent.

At that moment I thought to myself, "Why does it have to be the entire amount? Maybe half is good enough? And anyway, what kind of sum is he talking about — maybe it is a huge amount of money?!" But I immediately strengthened my faith in Hashem, saying that everything is from Him and whatever has been ascribed for me in Heaven will come to me anyway. Hashem has many ways and many messengers. I gave my consent for the philanthropist to give that person the entire amount.

Indeed, "But as for one who trusts in Hashem, kindness surrounds him" (*Tehillim* 32:10). Not half an hour passed and I received another phone call from the philanthropist. He explained that with G-d's help he had just now closed a most lucrative deal and he wishes to donate to our holy institutions from the profits. This donation was so considerable, it was twenty times more than that which he had given my acquaintance! This is a clear lesson of how faith and trust in Hashem Yitbarach brings a person blessing and abundance. All this, the power of faith in Hashem Yitbarach, is what the precious Shabbat implants in us. Therefore, we can understand why the Greeks considered it a thorn in their flesh and wished to abolish it.

We can also understand why they forbade us to observe brit milah. It is a holy sign, the connection and signature in our very flesh that we are Hashem's servants. For this reason the Greeks wished to do away with it.

However, why did they care if we sanctify the new month and recite a blessing over the new moon? How did this mitzvah disturb them more than any of the other mitzvot which they did not abolish?

With *siyata d'Shmaya* I would like to suggest that the essence of Rosh Chodesh is something deep and lofty. The words "Rosh Chodesh" ("ראש חודש") come from the term "ראש חדש" — a new head. Meaning that a Jew can begin a new page for himself, start a new chapter in his life. Although he fell and stumbled, nevertheless he has the power to forget the past, repent for his transgressions, and begin anew. This being the case, Rosh Chodesh manifests the theme of renewal which is an important foundation in *avodat Hashem*. To begin each day anew, not continuing with yesterday's ways. This is the idea behind the renewal of the moon, which slowly becomes smaller and disappears, yet once again appears and shines strongly.

The essence of Rosh Chodesh teaches us very significant matters, both the idea of constant renewal in our *avodat Hashem*, and also repentance from our past ways and the opportunity to begin a new page. The Greeks knew and understood this, and that is why they put a special stress on abolishing the sanctification of the new moon, more than any other mitzvot.

a NOVEL LOOK AT THE PARSHA



The Effects of Kindness

The Chamberlain of the Cupbearers and the Chamberlain of the Bakers were imprisoned together with Yosef the tzaddik. Both dreamt a dream but could not understand its interpretation. That morning Yosef noticed that they were not looking their usual selves and asked them why they appeared downcast.

Hagaon Rabbi Reuven Elbaz *shlit"a* (*Mishkani Acharecha*) points out an interesting concept. Why was Yosef bothered that these people were not in a good mood that day? Why was he concerned? It is reasonable to assume that Yosef was not bored while in prison; surely he was constantly reviewing all the Torah that he studied with his father. The verse says that Yaakov Avinu loved Yosef "since he was a child of his old age." Chazal tell us that Yaakov taught Yosef all the Torah that he studied in the *beit midrash* of Shem and Ever during the fourteen years that he spent there. If so, throughout the time that Yosef was in prison he was occupied with reviewing all he had learnt with his father. So how did he even notice that they were distressed?

Contemplating the matter will enable us to understand how Yosef achieved the eminent role of becoming ruler over the entire land of Egypt.

During his imprisonment, Yosef treated all the inmates pleasantly and courteously. No doubt every morning when he would meet the Chamberlain of the Cupbearers and the Chamberlain of the Bakers, he would smile at them and inquire after their welfare.

On that morning when Yosef met them

and asked how they were feeling, they did not reply with their customary answer; their faces were downcast. Since they felt he was truly interested in their welfare, they opened their hearts to Yosef, each one telling him about the strange dream he had dreamt.

If follows that Yosef's entire salvation and elevation to greatness, which eventually came about through the Chamberlain of the Cupbearers, was founded on his conduct of greeting each person with a smile and pleasant countenance. Yosef the tzaddik was not capable of ignoring someone who looked sad. This is the sign of a true leader. One who wishes to benefit every single person, whether Jew or non-Jew.

Assisting a Non-Jewish child and the Results

Several years ago on Chanukah, there was a gathering in Moscow in which the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin, participated. The Chief Rabbi of Russia, Harav Berel Lazar *shlit"a* was also present.

During the course of the event, the President stood up and began delivering a moving speech. These were his words:

"Listen well, Jews, to a story that took place here in Russia. In a certain neighborhood lived a poor family who had a young child. This child was unfortunate because his parents worked hard for their living, from morning till night. Often they would leave him alone at home, sometimes even without any food.

"There was a Jewish family who lived in this same neighborhood, and when they noticed the young child alone at home,

they asked him if he had what to eat. When he replied in the negative they made sure that he had food to eat each day, and on Shabbatot and Chagim even invited him to eat together with them at their table. And so over a long period of time they "adopted" this non-Jewish child and provided for all his needs."

When Putin finished his moving story he added:

"I am this child who I just told you about! I cannot forget how this Jewish family showed concern for me. Until this day I still remember their rituals of washing hands before the meal, the recital of 'hamotzi' before eating bread and the blessing of 'birkat hamazon' on completion of the meal."

Today this poor child is the president of this large country and his attitude towards the Russian Jews is sympathetic, something almost unprecedented in all European countries. All in the merit of that family who showed concern for the needs of an unfortunate, non-Jewish child.

Who is like Your people Israel!

Bnei Yisrael are benevolent even with non-Jews. Doing good with each and every person is something that we learn from Yosef Hatzaddik, for he inquired about the welfare of those non-Jews who were spending time with him in prison.

That is why the Egyptian king found him suitable to act as ruler of his country and to be "the provider to all the people of the land." **For only one who constantly seeks ways to do good to others, is fitting for leadership.**



"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:

+972733-718-144

Categorized according to the Parshiot, Chagim and other topics

To receive a daily Torah insight

from Moreinu v'Rabbeinu, the esteemed Admor Rabbi David Chananya Pinto *shlit'a*

Send a message

French

+972587929003

English

+16467853001

Hebrew

+972585207103

Spanish

+541141715555