

Chayus

A Shabbos Stimulus

THE EDA AND DAVID SCHOTTENSTEIN EDITION

In Loving Memory of Itta bas Yosef Mordechai ז"ל and Tzvi Daniel ben David ז"ל Ainsworth

Dedicated by David & Eda Schottenstein

הקהל

Hakhel

After a Year of Preparation, We Are Ready for Hakhel

The Mitzvah of *Hakhel*, as ordained in the Torah, is that at the end of every seven years, immediately after the year of *Shemittah*, when Jews make their pilgrimage to the Beis Hamikdosh, during the festival of Succos, all Jews had to be gathered (*hakhel*)—the men, the women, and the children, even babies, and the king read to them sections from the Torah, selected for their content to stimulate Jews in the observance of Mitzvos and strengthen them in their faith and in Yiddishkeit; and it made a profound impression on them, as if they heard it from G-d Himself.

One of the reasons why the mitzvah of *Hakhel* has been reserved for this particular time is the following: Inasmuch as the year of *Shemittah* is a “Shabbos unto

G-d,” when the time that was released from work in the field and orchard (the principal occupation in those days) was dedicated to increased Torah study, and to prayer and Mitzvos, in the fullest measure, it was the proper and fitting preparation to make their pilgrimage, all as one nation, and to make the people most receptive to the Torah reading, “as if they heard it from G-d,” so that it evoked in them a profound soulful experience, as when the Torah was given at Sinai; and the impression was so deeply engraved upon their hearts and minds that it was subsequently reflected in the everyday life throughout all the years ahead.

Excerpt of a Letter by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, 18 Elul, 5740

סיפור חסידי

Once Upon a Chasid

By Yanki Tauber

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The ‘Intimidating’ Toy

You shall have no other gods before Me (Yisro 20:3)

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok of Lubavitch writes: In the summer of 1920, I was summoned to the ‘Tcheka’ (the name ‘GPU’ was not yet in use at the time) of Rostov-on-the-Don. The summons was carried out by the Judaism-hating ‘Jewish section’ of the communist party, the infamous yevsektzia.

The summons was typical to the manner of the Tcheka. I had not yet concluded the morning prayers (I was leading the prayers myself, for it was within the year of mourning after my holy father’s passing) when the three emissaries from the ‘court of death’ entered the room—dressed in their uniforms of red and black, rifles in hand, their belts filled with bullets and hung with a pair of revolvers and another pair of cossack knives, with helmets of copper and their faces aflame. They ap-

proached me and said: “You are summoned to immediately accompany us to the offices of the Tcheka.”

Two of the messengers were from the yevsektzia and the third, a non-Jew. The two Jews wished to strip me of my tallis and tefillin on the spot. When I told them that I must first finish my prayers—we were at the Monday supplement ‘V’hu Rachum’—and the study of mishnayos which follows, they let loose a barrage of curses and yelled at me to remove my tallis and tefillin immediately. (Incidentally, one of them was a refugee from the city of Shavel who had come to me for assistance. I had arranged a position for him at a cigarette business and later I had loaned him money to establish a business of his own. For the next three years—up until the revolution—he earned a respectable living.) Were it not for the

intervention of their non-Jewish colleague, they would have forcefully interrupted my prayers.

When I finished reciting the final kaddish which follows the study of mishnayos, I removed my tallis and tefillin and went along with my armed guardians. One walked on my right, a second on my left, and a third behind me—in the manner that those accused of treason against the regime are led.

When we arrived at the ‘courtyard of death’, they led me to a large chamber in which some fifteen persons sat along both sides of a long table. At the head of the table sat another two, and I was seated opposite them at the foot of the table. My three guards sat behind me, left, right, and center.

One of those seated at the head of the table addressed me: “We are the members of the Party’s Committee to investigate Religions, and are now busy with investigating the Jewish religion. We have various questions. We have already summoned Rabbi Berman and Rabbi Goldenberg—we asked what we asked and they answered what they answered. Now we have summoned Rabbi Schneerson to resolve certain issues pertaining to Kabbala and Chassidism.”

All this was said in the Russian language.

I answered in Yiddish: “I have already made it clear on the two former occasions on which I was summoned to the Tcheka that I will not budge from my principles. There is yet to be born and never will there be born, the man or demon who will move me in the slightest degree from my principles....”

Before I finished my words I was interrupted by a ‘committee member’ seated on the right side of the table. He lifted the revolver which lay on the table—in addition to the arms which they all wore on their belts, a revolver lay on the table before each of the assembled—and pointed it at me, saying: “This toy does away with ‘principles’. Fear of it has opened many a mouth. Also the dumb have become talkative before it.”

“You are utterly mistaken,” I replied. “This toy impresses only the cowardly atheist, who has but a single world and many gods (ein velt un asach getter)—every hedonist has his many gods. But as for us, who have but a single G-d and believe in two worlds, the toy which you are brandishing not only fails to frighten, it makes no impression whatsoever.”

אור תורה Ohr Torah

Translated by: **Yechiel Krisch**
Adapted from the teachings of the **Mezritcher Maggid**

Remembering Shabbos

The first time we read the Ten Commandments, in Parshas Yisro, we are commanded to “remember” (זכור) Shabbos. When the Ten Commandments are repeated later, in Parshas Vaeschanan, we are commanded to “guard” (שמור) Shabbos. The Talmud explains that there is no contradiction, because one of the miracles of the revelation at Sinai was that G-d spoke both the word “remember” and the word “guard” as a single utterance (Rosh Hashanah 27a).

Given that both words were spoken simultaneously, why does the Torah specifically record the term זכור on first reference and שמור on second reference? The explanation is that the word זכור always describes a first encounter. G-d had never promised to bless our matriarch Rachel with a son, so when He does so, the verse says that G-d remembered (זכור) Rachel. The word שמור, however, is a synonym of פקד, which describes a promise fulfilled. After G-d had previously told our matriarch Sarah that she would have a son, the verse later says that G-d remembered (פקד) Sarah. Similarly, when the Jewish people first defeated the wicked nation of Amalek in the desert, the Torah instructed us to remember that event with the word זכור. Centuries later, when G-d instructed Shmuel and Shaul to fight a decisive war against Amalek, the word used is פקד.

The Zohar explains that these usage rules reflect the essential nature of each word—זכור is masculine, while the words שמור and פקד are feminine. And just as the male is a giver and the female is the receiver (as explained in Kabbalah), the masculine (זכור) actively imposes itself upon a situation, while the feminine (שמור) accepts a previous circumstance.

Ten Commandments follow the aforementioned rules: the first reference commands us to remember Shabbos (זכור), while the second commands us to guard it (שמור).

A Torah Inscribed On Your Heart

The prophet Yirmiyah states, “I will place My Torah in their midst and I will inscribe it upon their hearts” (Yirmiah 31:33).

The original plan for the giving of the Torah was for G-d to inscribe the Torah upon the hearts of the Jewish people so that it would remain forever engraved in their memories and not subject to forgetfulness. When the Jews asked that Moshe speak to them instead of G-d, it became necessary to receive the *luchos*, meaning that the Torah was engraved in stone and later inscribed on parchment instead of being installed within the Jews themselves. However, they did not lose this opportunity altogether, for it was merely postponed to the era of redemption. For in the future, this prophecy will be fulfilled. G-d will inscribe the Torah upon the hearts of all Jews, and they will all know the Torah without forgetting any of it.

Asarah Ma'amaros

לקוטי שיחות A Sicha

By: ProjectLikkuteiSichos.org
Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

The “Extensions” of Shabbos

Two Midrashic Readings: G-d introduces the commandment of Shabbos with the verse, “Remember the Shabbos day and keep it holy” (*Shemos* 20:8). In the repetition of the commandments in *Parshas Va'eschanan* it says “Guard the Shabbos day and keep it holy” (*Devarim* 5:12).

The Mechilta offers two consecutive interpretations of this verse:

“Remember’ and ‘Guard’ were both stated [by G-d] in one pronouncement. [Likewise,] ‘Its (=Shabbos’) profaners shall be put to death’ (*Shemos* 31:14) and ‘on the Shabbos day, (sacrifice) two yearling lambs’ (*Bamidbar* 28:9) were both stated in one pronouncement...”

‘Remember’ and ‘Guard’—Remember it beforehand and guard it afterwards—from this it was ruled that we are to add from the mundane to the holy—as a wolf tears both what is before him and what is behind him” (*Mechilta* 20:8).

This second interpretation teaches that the commands to “remember and guard” the Shabbos obligate one to begin observing Shabbos rest prior to the onset of Shabbos and continue even after its conclusion.

What is the thematic connection between these two interpretations of the Mechilta?

The Preface to the Explanation: There are three ways to conceptualize the command to extend Shabbos rest.

- 1) It is at the individual Jew’s discretion to accept an addition of Shabbos rest upon him or herself.
- 2) It is an obligation on the individual to accept this additional rest.
- 3) It is not an obligation that devolves on the individual at all, but rather, the legal entity of Shabbos itself “preys” upon the moments preceding and following it, and imposes its observance on those “mundane” times.

The Talmud states that whenever the Torah says, “You shall rest [*tishbisu*],” it obligates a person to extend their rest. This applies to Yom Kippur and other Festivals, where this command appears (*Rosh Hashanah* 9a). This would align with the second formulation above, that the **individual** has an obligation to extend his or her rest, as the command “you shall rest” is addressed to the individual.

The Mechilta is making a more radical conclusion, in alignment with the third formulation. Like a “wolf that tears,” Shabbos itself extends its domain over portions of the weekday.

The practical implications are significant: If one

fails to observe additional rest on Yom Kippur or Festivals, they have not fulfilled the positive commandment to add rest. But they have not transgressed a negative injunction against labor on the holidays.

But because Shabbos extends itself over the mundane time, the negative injunction against labor extends there as well. If a person fails to observe additional rest on Shabbos, they have transgressed both a positive and negative commandment.

The Explanation: This is the relevance between the Mechilta's two comments. The meaning of the second comment is as follows: One verse conveys the negative prohibition against labor on Shabbos, which includes burning an animal, another verse commands the Jewish people to offer special sacrifices on Shabbos. When the Mechilta says that "both these verses were stated in one pronouncement" it means to say that the exception to the rule (sacrifices on Shabbos) is integral to, and is a condition of, the rule itself (its profaners shall be put to death). Thus, when we offer sacrifices on Shabbos we are not only fulfilling a positive command, we are also fulfilling the full implication of the negative

command against work **by observing its stated exception.**

The same applies to the extended rest of Shabbos. Not only is it a personal obligation, it is, at the same time, also the fulfillment of Shabbos itself. It is a fulfillment not only of the positive command to rest, it is also the fulfillment of the negative injunction to "guard" and protect the Shabbos.

Deeper still: the offering of the Shabbos sacrifices is part of fulfilling the negative command of Shabbos, for if one would not offer them, one would be desecrating the Shabbos. Meaning, the positive and negative commandments of Shabbos are one, indivisible point. So, too, regarding the extension of Shabbos, that added time is also part of one indivisible point of Shabbos. Thus, one can sanctify the Shabbos with kiddush in the added time of Shabbos.

The wolf is a fitting metaphor for this, for he "tears from before and behind him," his essential behavior is to grab his prey and consume it. Meaning, the "wolf" (Shabbos) naturally takes what is immediately before and after it as part of itself.

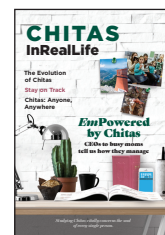
Likkutei Sichos vol. 16, p. 231ff

מורה שיעור לחת"ת ורמב"ם לשבת

Shabbos Chitas / Rambam Guide

Book	Section
Chumash – Rashi*	Yisro, 7th Aliyah
Tehillim*	Chapters 97 – 103
Tanya*	Likutei Amarim Chapter 26. עמ' 64 - פרק כו. ברם... עד עמ' לג - פסוק זה.
Rambam – Sefer Hamitzvos*	Negative Mitzvah #253
Rambam – One Chapter*	Sefer Shoftim – Hilchos Sanhedrin, Chapter 11
Rambam – Three Chapters**	Sefer Kinyan – Hilchos Mechirah Chapters 19 – 21

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