

## 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

Excerpt from **Hakhel: The Inside Story**  
Published by **Sichos in English**

### *We Are Part of Something Bigger*

The name Hakhel denotes that the very definition of this occasion is the gathering as a kahal, a unified congregation. This is not just about countless individuals from various backgrounds showing up for an extraordinary event; rather, Hakhel has a figurative “magnetic pull” which draws the entire organism of Jews together.

This accords well with an intriguing detail of Hakhel. According to many authorities, the mitzvah of Hakhel is not directly incumbent on every individual as an instruction to gather. Instead, it is the obligation of the king and Beis Din to gather every Jew. The assembled Jews are not fulfilling a personal mandate by showing up, but are rather serving as vital components of a mitzvah bigger than themselves.

*Toras Menachem 5748, Vol. 1, p. 240. Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 19, p. 366ff*

### סיפור חסידי Once Upon a Chasid

By **Yanki Tauber**  
Published by **Kehot Publication Society**

### *“How Was I to Know?”*

“G-d said to Moses: ‘Carve for yourself two tablets of stone like the first; and I will write upon these tablets the words...’”

“Carve for yourself”—G-d revealed to Moses a quarry of sapphire beneath his tent and said to him: the waste from the carving shall belong to you. From this Moses became exceedingly rich (Ki Sisa 34:1).

*Rashi's commentary*

The sapphire blocks upon which the Ten Commandments were inscribed were also a source of material wealth for Moses; but the Torah emphasizes that this was but a side benefit derived from their ‘waste’—something utterly peripheral to the true function of the tablets.

The function of Torah is to inspire and teach. The material benefits which result are a consequence of its all-pervading truth and perfection, but their relative significance is equivalent to the cast-off trimmings of the carver’s work.

*Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch*

A deserted wife (agunah) once came to Lubavitch seeking the help of Rabbi Menachem Mendel. With her was her child, who was a mute. The unfortunate woman asked to be received by the Rebbe, but

was refused. She even had the Rebbe's wife petition him on her behalf (as did many of the women who wished to see him) but to no avail.

Finally, the chassidim advised her to smuggle the child into Rabbi Menachem Mendel's study and have him hand the Rebbe a note asking for his help. She wrote a note describing her situation as a deserted wife, hid the child under the table, and told him to give it to the Rebbe when he entered the room.

When the child handed the note to Rabbi Menachem Mendel, he said: "Go tell your mother that your father is to be found in this and this place."

The child left the room, returned to his mother, and clearly articulated the message. The woman gained a divorce and financial compensation from her husband, and a healthy, speaking child.

When the miraculous results were excitedly reported to the Rebbe, he simply said: "How was I to know that the child was a mute?" The Rebbetzin, too, was unimpressed by the double miracle. She reminded the chassidim of what her grandfather, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, told over about the days when he was a disciple of the Maggid of Mezeritch, Rabbi DovBer. "In Mezeritch" Rabbi Schneur Zalman used to say, "miracles were rolling about under the table and no one even bothered to bend down and lift one up..."

לקוטי שיחות  
A Sicha

By: [ProjectLikkuteiSichos.org](http://ProjectLikkuteiSichos.org)  
Adapted from the works of the **Lubavitcher Rebbe**

## *Purity In Your Temple Service*

### **The Verse:**

One of the prerequisites a Kohen must do before performing the Temple service is the washing of his hands and feet:

*"When they enter the Tent of Meeting, they shall wash with water so that they will not die; or when they approach the altar to serve, to make a fire offering rise up in smoke to G-d (Shemos 30:20).*

Rashi details the scenarios where the Kohen must wash when entering the "Tent of Meeting,"

*When they enter the Tent of Meeting—to bring the incense up in smoke in the morning and in the afternoon, or to sprinkle some of the blood of the bull of the anointed Kohen [Gadol, who erred in his halachic decision and practiced according to that erroneous decision] (Vayikra, 4:3-12), and the blood of the kids for [sin offerings for having engaged in] idolatry (Bamidbar 15:22-26).*

### **The Question:**

Why does Rashi need to specify the services that were performed in the Tent of Meeting? Reading the verse in its plain sense, it is evident that "when they enter the Tent of Meeting" means when the Kohen enters to perform the services whose place is in the Tent of Meeting—because it is highly

unusual to enter the Tent without any service to perform. Why, then, does Rashi need to comment here at all? And if Rashi does find it necessary to mention the specific services, why does he only mention the incense and not include the preparing and lighting of the Menorah, the arranging of the bread on the table, etc.?

### **The Explanation:**

Rashi is perturbed by the verse splicing the directive to wash before the Temple service into two separate clauses: 1) "When they enter the Tent of Meeting, they shall wash with water so that they will not die; 2) or when they approach the altar to serve, to make a fire offering rise up in smoke to G-d." Why not include both scenarios together, "When they enter the Tent of Meeting, or when they approach the altar to serve... they shall wash with water so that they will not die"?

Rashi therefore concludes that the obligation to wash differs when entering the Tent of Meeting and when approaching the altar. When entering the Tent of meeting, there is a law in *the entering*, one enters with purity; When approaching the altar, that is a law pertaining the service, that Temple service demands ritual purity.

The purpose of the ritual washing was to ensure the Kohen was clean and purified before engaging in the Temple service. The outer courtyard was heavily trafficked with Levites and Israelites who were bringing their animals for offerings. The Tent of Meeting, however, was quiet and empty of anyone besides for the Kohen performing the services. Therefore, Rashi concluded, it stands to reason that the Kohen would have to wash before every act of service at the outer altar, because he would come into contact with other people and animals in between each service. Conversely, before entering the Tent of Meeting, a single washing would suffice for all the services performed during that visit.

When Rashi specifies the services performed in the Tent, in explaining the first half of the verse, pertaining the purity demanded when entering the Tent of meeting, he is simply noting the juncture at which the Kohen *enters* the Tent to perform a set of services. “To bring the incense up in smoke in the morning and in the afternoon.” The most important service of the morning was the lighting of incense. Rashi is therefore saying that the Kohen washes himself before entering the Tent in the morning for the first time to light the incense, and that washing suffices for all the subsequent services he would perform during that entry. Then he washes once again in the afternoon, because he is reentering after being outside the Tent for a prolonged duration.

Rashi then adds two additional circumstanc-

es—the blood of the anointed bull and the sacrifice for the sin of idolatry—which are not part of the daily routine, to clarify that when entering during these unplanned times, the kohen would also need to wash.

### **The Deeper Dimension:**

The outer altar—where physical animals were consumed by the Divine fire—represents the dimension of a person when they are “outward facing,” engaged with the material world to refine it and elevate it to G-d. The inner altar—where incense was offered—alludes to the inner dimension of a person which seeks to connect intimately with G-d. The very word for incense is related to the words for connection and bonding.

When we “approach the altar to serve,” i.e., we are engaged with the foreign substance of the material world, we must “wash” ourselves of negative motives and impulses before every interaction. Otherwise, the physical may influence us more than we influence the physical.

When we are focused on deepening our connection with G-d, however, (i.e., when we are entering the Tent of meeting to offer incense,) we only need an initial “washing” of negativity, for in the space that includes only us and G-d, there is no further negativity to tempt us.

*Likkutei Sichos vol. 21, p. 214ff.*

גאולה  
**Geulah**

Yalkut Moshiaich uGeulah al HaTorah  
Translated by Yaakov Paley

## *The Physical Will be Sustained by the Spiritual*

The Torah tells us that when Moshe ascended Mount Sinai, “*He was there with G-d for forty days and forty nights; he ate no bread and drank no water*” (Ki Sisa 34:28). The reason why Moshe neither ate nor drank was because he was “there with G-d,” in proximity to the Divine to the point that his body was sustained entirely by divinity.

It is logical that if a person’s soul can be sustained through the physical food he consumes, then the opposite can also occur—his body can be sustained by the divinity his soul absorbs. In fact, the vitalizing power of food has a cause, and that cause has its origins in a higher cause, which is ultimately traced back to the Cause of all existence, G-d Himself. Since Moshe was attached directly to the ultimate Source, he had no need for the lower forms of vitality. This is precisely how the righteous will be sustained in the future era of redemption.

*Rabbeinu Bachaye*

## No Random Thoughts

Holy sparks exist everywhere, trapped within the depths of impurity, yearning to reunite with their source. But each individual spark only ascends by uniting with the divine thought that most closely reflects its root in holiness.

It is therefore no random occurrence when a mundane thought pops into one's mind during prayer or Torah study. Rather, that particular prayer or Torah passage attracted a compatible spark from the depths of impurity, and drew it into that individual's mind. If the individual focuses intently on the prayer or passage, he or she can elevate that spark to its root.

The reward for an individual who does so is great, for that spark may never have another opportunity to ascend. Perhaps only this particular passage or prayer, considered by this individual at this moment, is capable of activating that spark and drawing it upward.

This is the mystical explanation of the verse in Megillas Esther (2:12): "And when each maiden's turn arrived to come to the king..." A spark trapped in the depths of impurity is called "a maiden," and each spark is eventually given its turn to approach the king.

Par. 123

### מורה שיעור לחת"ת ורמב"ם לשבת Shabbos Chitas / Rambam Guide

Book	Section
Chumash – Rashi*	Ki Sisa, 7th Aliyah
Tehillim*	Chapters 88 – 89
Tanya*	Likutei Amarim Chapter 35. עמ' 88- והנה ענין השראת... עד עמ' מה- וכו'.
Rambam – Sefer Hamitzvos*	Negative Mitzvah #239
Rambam – One Chapter*	Sefer Shoftim – Hilchos Eidus, Chapter 13
Rambam – Three Chapters**	Sefer Mishpatim – Hilchos Malveh V'Loveh Chapters 7 – 9

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