

Chayus

A Shabbos Stimulus

ערב שבת
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שנת הקהל

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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**

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Our Diversity is Part of Our Oneness

At *Hakhel*, all segments of Jewish society receive individual attention. The Torah enumerates, “*Gather the nation, the men, the women, the children, and the converts at your gates*” (Devarim 31:11).

This indicates that while *Hakhel* was an experience where the core of the Jewish soul and identity was expressed, it did not override the details. Rather than causing us to ignore our diverse strengths and capacities, *Hakhel* teaches us to embrace them as part of our wholesome, indivisible oneness.

Here, we find that *Hakhel* defies the normative definitions of terms. Absolute oneness and diverse contributions would seem contradictory, but not for *Hakhel*. This is a time when the boundless relationship between G-d and His people comes to the fore, and even the diversity of the Jewish People expresses nothing but unity.

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סיפור חסידי

Once Upon a Chasid

By **Yanki Tauber**

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A Matter of Taste

“*For six days, work shall be done...*” (Vayak'hel 35:2)

The Torah expresses itself in the passive—‘work shall be done’—rather than using the active—‘do work.’ This is to teach us the proper attitude toward our workday pursuits: the necessary mundane involvements of life should be approached in a matter-of-fact and unenthusiastic manner...

Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Rabbi Shlomo of Karlin was expected at the home of Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi. But the visit gave rise to a dispute between The Alter Rebbe’s (Rabbi Schneur Zalman) wife and her daughter, Freidkeh. For several years now, Freidkeh had taken charge of all the cooking in the house; now, in honor of the distinguished guest, the Rebbetzin wanted to retake the kitchen. The Rebbetzin cited seniority and “baalebosteh’s rights.” Her daughter argued that since she always does all the cooking, it is hardly fair that the task be taken from her just when an honored guest arrives.

The case was referred for arbitration to Rabbi Schneur Zalman, who offered the following compromise: The Rebbetzin will prepare the food, but Freidkeh would add the salt. Since the food will be all but tasteless without her contribution, the privilege of feeding Rabbi Shlomo would be equally hers.

But when the much-contested dish finally reached the table, Rabbi Shlomo Karliner found himself unable to continue past the first spoonful. The force of decades-long habit had caused the Rebbetzin to salt the food without even realizing it, and Freidkeh, of course, had not failed to perform her duty. The result was simply impossible to swallow.

But the sodium story of this hapless dish was far from over: a third dash of salt now joined its predecessors, this time cast by the hand of Rabbi Schneur Zalman himself. Upon noticing the neglected plate in front of his guest, the Rebbe figured that perhaps the food is not sufficiently salted to Rabbi Shlomo's taste.

Finally, Rabbi Schneur Zalman asked the Karliner why he wasn't eating; Rabbi Shlomo replied that the food was too salty to eat. Surprised, Rabbi Schneur Zalman took another spoonful from his own plate and swallowed thoughtfully. "You know," he said, "you're right."

"From the time that I journeyed to Mezritch to my Rebbe" the Rebbe explained "I have not sensed the taste of food."

Hypocrisy

They brought the Sanctuary to Moses, the tent and all its furnishings . . . Moses saw all the work, and behold, they had done it as G-d had commanded . . . and Moses blessed them (Pekudei, 39:33–43).

Moses blessed them: He said, "May it be the will of G-d that His presence dwell within the work of your hands."

Rashi's commentary

Often, a person may feel inadequate in the face of a spiritual challenge, and contend that he is simply not equipped to reach for "lofty" attainments. For example, one may argue that while the perfection of his behavior is a matter of choice, he lacks the mental and emotional fortitude to transform his character. This, he maintains, is best left to individuals of a greater spiritual stature than himself.

Says the Torah: You do yours. Apply yourself to constructing the external edifice, and the Almighty will provide the "soul" to dwell therein. Do your utmost to make yourself a fitting vessel, and G-d will fill it with the sublime resources which seem so elusive to you now.

Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi

Once, a certain individual was condemned to Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi as a hypocrite. "He considers himself a chassid ['pious one'];" the rebbe was told, "and has assumed all sorts of pious customs and practices. He acts like a real holy fellow. But it's all superficial: internally, his mind and heart are as coarse and unrefined as ever."

"Well," said the rebbe, "in that case, may he meet the end that the Talmud predicts for such people."

The "informers" were taken aback. They had merely desired to "warn" the rebbe about this individual. But now, what sort of calamity had the rebbe called down upon him?

Rabbi Schneur Zalman explained: In the final mishnah of Tractate Pe'ah, the Talmud discusses the criteria for a pauper to be eligible to receive charity. The section concludes with the warning: "One who is not in need, but takes . . . one who is not lame or blind, but makes himself as such—will not die of old age until he is indeed as such."

"In the same vein," concluded the rebbe, "one who makes of himself more than he is in matters of righteousness and piety, will eventually find that these traits have become ingrained in his character and very being."

The Soul of the Universe

"See, the L-rd has called by name Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. He has imbued him with...talent for all manner of craftsmanship..." (Vayak'hel 35:32).

Bezalel knew how to rearrange the divine letters that G-d used to create heaven and earth, according to the Talmud (Berachos 55a). Why was such spiritual mastery necessary in order to construct the tabernacle? One answer is that the tabernacle is the life-force, or "soul," of all worlds. Just as a soul has no absolute shape but manifests in a defined

form to animate the hand or foot, so too the tabernacle would also need to manifest in a defined form to invest life-force into the world. Bezalel needed intimate knowledge of how G-d created each world in order to fashion the tabernacle to serve as a soul for the entire physical universe.

We Will Experience a Higher Form of Shabbos

One who is entirely devoted to G-d experiences a form of Shabbos every day of the week. When an actual Shabbos arrives, he attains a higher level—*shabbos shabbason*. He honors the Shabbos with pleasurable foods and the like, but he experiences no corporeal pleasure; it is all in the honor of his Creator, and he delights exclusively in his divine service.

Moshe gathered the entire nation and announced, “*These are the things that G-d commanded to do*” (Vayak’hel 35:1), referring to all of the *mitzvos*. Then, as a result, “*For six days work will be done*”—not that you will do your work, but rather, “*work will be done*” by others on your behalf. This refers to the era of redemption, in which the nations will work on behalf of the Jewish people, who will experience every day as a form of Shabbos.

“*And on the seventh day, a day of complete rest [shabbos shabbason] to G-d*” (*ibid* v. 2). Since every day in the redemption will be a form of Shabbos, when an actual day of Shabbos arrives it will be experienced as *shabbos shabbason*. Every material pleasure and corporeal delight will be entirely “*to G-d*,” a wondrous experience in divine service.

Chasam Sofer

לקוטי שיחות A Sicha

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

Spinning Goats Hair

Two Questions on Two Rashis:

In parshas Vayakhel, the Torah relates the unique contribution of the women in the construction of the Mishkan:

“*And all the women whose hearts uplifted them with wisdom, spun the goat hair*” (*Shemos* 35:26).

Rashi explains: “*Spun the goat hair—This constituted a superior skill, for they spun it on the backs of the goats.*”

What Rashi does not explain is the significance of this skill. Why is it important, noteworthy, or advantageous to have the goat hair spun while still attached to the goat?

In parshas Pekudei, Rashi records a conversation between Moshe and Betzalel concerning the correct order for the Mishkan’s construction. In the end, Moshe agrees with Betzalel that “*It is common practice to first make a house and then to put furniture into it*” (Rashi to *Shemos* 38:22).

Common practice dictates that the walls be made before the ceiling. Yet in the construction of

the Mishkan, the curtains for the roof were made before the pillars and the walls (*Shemos* 36:8). If Betzalel was correct that the Mishkan should follow common building practice, why was the covering made before the walls?

Because Rashi does not clearly address either of these two issues, the resolution must be plain and evident from the straightforward reading of the narratives.

The Explanation:

In describing the work of the women artisans, the Torah first states, “*And every wise hearted woman spun with her hands, and they brought spun material: blue, purple, and crimson wool, and linen,*” and then continues in our verse, “*and all the women whose hearts uplifted them with wisdom, spun the goat hair.*”

Because these two acts of spinning wool are divided into two separate verses, it is clear that they were performed differently. The wool in the previ-

ous verse had to be dyed “blue, purple and crimson,” therefore, it had to be sheared from the animal before being spun. This implies that the wool in our verse, which did not have to be dyed, could be spun on the backs of the goats.

There are two reasons why this is advantageous: 1) The donation is considered to be from a living animal, being that the wool is still attached to the goat, which is a loftier form of donation than inanimate material, such as sheared wool. 2) When the wool is still attached to the animal, it retains more moisture and therefore results in better quality wool.

This also explains why the curtains for the roof made from the wool were made before the walls: Because the women had spun the wool while still attached to the goats, if the builders would wait to weave the coverings until the pillars were done, the hair would grow longer and no longer be spun wool. Additionally, the discomfort of the animals having their wool spun tightly on their bodies would be unnecessarily prolonged. Out of concern for the animal’s well-being, the wool was sheared

immediately and the curtains were woven before the pillars.

The Lesson:

The women who possessed this talent to spin wool while still attached to the goats were not commanded to do so. It was their own initiative and inspiration to use their fullest potential in the construction of a home for G-d. So, too, every person is blessed with resources or talents that must be used to their fullest potential in making this world into a home for G-d.

Secondly, just as the correct order for the construction of the Mishkan was upended due to the consideration of the animal’s discomfort, so, too, must we upend the conventional priorities when a Jew is suffering from material or spiritual pain. Instead of following the conventional schedule of first tending to our own needs and then thinking about others, we must urgently “feed and dress” the hungry and unclothed souls who need spiritual nourishment.

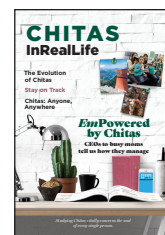
Likkutei Sichos vol. 16, p. 449ff.

מורה שיעור לחת"ת ורמב"ם לשבת

Shabbos Chitas / Rambam Guide

Book	Section
Chumash – Rashi*	Vayak'hel-Pekudei, 7th Aliyah
Tehillim*	Chapter 119 First-Half
Tanya*	Likutei Amarim Chapter 37. עמ' 94 - ומאחר שכללות נפש... עד עמ' מח- יצירה עש"י.
Rambam – Sefer Hamitzvos*	Positive Mitzvah #246
Rambam – One Chapter*	Sefer Shoftim – Hilchos Eidus, Chapter 20
Rambam – Three Chapters**	Sefer Mishpatim – Hilchos To'en V'Nit'an Chapters 1 – 3

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