

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

Excerpt from **Hakhel: The Inside Story**

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A Revelation From On High

In the Jew's development of fear of G-d, there are two modalities. In the first, the person takes the steps to develop fear of G-d. [Some experiences are more intense than others, and the person can achieve *yirah tata'a* and then advance to *yirah ila'a*, gaining in the degree of immersion into G-dliness. However, the person can never leave behind the fact that this is what "I" was working to achieve.]

Contrastingly, the second type of *yirah* comes from Above. It is G-d who takes the first step and summons the person into a place of overwhelming closeness. There, devotion to G-d is the only reality, and nothing else has any presence whatsoever.

In the second circumstance, the fear is formless. It does not follow a self-imagined style or theme, as it came from above, not from below. In this state, the *yirah* is beyond typical definition and can embrace opposing possibilities.

Hakhel is a time when fear of G-d is highlighted, not as a personal endeavor, but rather as a revelation from on High. It is G-d who summons the people to the Temple, and it is his agent to inspire this fear, the Jewish king, who reads the messages of the Torah. The resulting fear does not follow the normal pattern of how fear works. Instead, it is boundless and also embraces joy.

סיפור חסידי

Once Upon a Chasid

By **Yanki Tauber**

Published by **Kehot Publication Society**

The Light Slap

Speak to the Kohanim, the sons of Aaron, and say to them (Emor 21:1)

"Speak... and say to them"—warn the elders to warn the youngsters

Talmud, Yevamot 114a (cited as a biblical source for the concept of education)

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok of Lubavitch told over:

Once, when I was about six years old, my father called me to his room and told me to make the blessing on the tzitzis. I replied that I had already made the blessing earlier in the day. "Nevertheless, say the blessing," said father. I refused.

Father slapped me lightly—this was the only slap I ever received from him—and said: "When I tell you to do something, you must obey." Tearfully, I burst out: "If one must recite the blessing for G-d, then I have already done so; and if one must recite the blessing because of your command... well..."

Father replied: “One must recite the blessing for G-d. But every father has been entrusted with the task to educate his children, and he must be obeyed.”

Grounded

Any man from the house of Israel... who shall offer an offering to G-d... an animal that has a blemish you shall not offer, for it will not be found desirable... (Emor 22:18- 20)

While in the city of Slutzk, Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov once passed a study hall. The large room was filled with Talmudic scholars, all studying with great fervor and gusto.

“This room is filled to capacity with Torah,” said the Baal Shem Tov. “In fact, it is so full that I cannot enter—there is no room left even to squeeze myself in.”

The Baal Shem Tov later explained his remark: “The Zohar tells us that the love and awe of G-d are the two wings of the mitzvah, the means by which we imbue our every positive act with the ability to ‘fly’ heavenward and be received as a desirable offering to G-d. One may perform a mitzvah in the most technically impeccable manner, so that the ‘body’ of the deed is fully developed; but if it is not motivated by, and permeated with, the love and awe of G-d, it lacks the two wings needed to carry it aloft. So it remains very much below and part of the person’s pedestrian, self-bound existence.”

לקוטי שיחות

A Sicha

By: ProjectLikkuteiSichos.org

Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Doing A Mitzva With Zeal

The Mishnah: *Ben Azzai would say: Run to pursue a minor mitzvah, and flee from a transgression. For a mitzvah brings another mitzvah, and a transgression brings another transgression. For the reward of a mitzvah is a mitzvah, and the reward of transgression is transgression (Pirkei Avos 4:2).*

The General Question: There are several sources that encourage alacrity in fulfilling mitzvos. One is enshrined in the Alter Rebbe’s Shulchan Aruch, the Code of Jewish law:

“It is a mitzvah to run to the synagogue and to any other activity involving a mitzvah, as it is written, ‘Let us run in pursuit of the knowledge of G-d’” (Hoshea 6:3; Shulchan Aruch Harav, Orach Chaim, 90:13).

And another appears in the following chapter of Pirkei Avos:

“Yehudah the son of Teima would say: Be... fleeing as a deer...to do the will of your Father in Heaven” (Pirkei Avos 5:20). This teaching is also cited in the beginning of the Shulchan Aruch.

What distinguishes these directives from each other? Why are some forms of alacrity included within the manual for Jewish practice, and others

left in the pietistic realm of Pirkei Avos?

The Nuanced Questions:

- 1) Why does Ben Azzai only encourage a person to run after a “minor mitzvah” and not all mitzvos?
- 2) Why does he provide two justifications for pursuing mitzvos with zeal, “For a mitzvah brings another mitzvah.... For the reward of a mitzvah is a mitzvah...?”

The Explanation: Running to perform a mitzvah is an expression of suprarational joy in fulfilling G-d’s will. It arises out of a sense of *bittul*, of self-transcendence, that allows a person to shed any inhibitions and free themselves from their limitations to joyfully run after a mitzvah opportunity.

This is alluded to in the verse that the Alter Rebbe uses to support the principle of zeal, “And let us know. Let us run in pursuit of the knowledge of G-d.” The two expressions of “knowledge” in the verse allude to two levels of perception of G-d’s unity. The first, unqualified “let us know” refers to the lower level of Divine knowledge, that perceives the world as contingent upon G-d, yet recognizes it

as a distinct entity. The phrase, “knowledge of G-d” refers to the higher level of knowledge, the perception that G-d and the world are totally one.

Thus, the implication is that it is this higher perception of G-d’s unity that causes a person to “run in pursuit” of a mitzvah. When a person becomes aware that he and this worldly existence have no independent identity, when he loses his sense of autonomy, then he will be able to transcend his limitations and “run” to a mitzvah.

The Alter Rebbe includes this imperative in his universal code of law, even though this is a lofty standard that cannot be expected of the average person, because the practical aspect of running to do a mitzvah is easily available to all. And even though the internal state of *bittul* is hard to achieve, the physical alacrity itself can lead to a person developing that internal state, as implied by the verse, “let us run,” then we will acquire “the knowledge of G-d,” the elevated perception of Divine unity.

Thus, the bare-bones requirement of physical pursuit is included in the Code of Jewish law.

Yehuda the son of Teima refers to a higher form of alacrity, “Be... fleeting as a deer...to do the will of your Father in Heaven.” Here, he is not speaking of a mere physical action, but of a general internal state of desire “to do the will of your Father in Heaven.” Meaning the alacrity is in response to feeling the urgent appeal of G-d’s will. However, this is still a general appreciation of the importance of mitzvos,

of the “will of your Father in Heaven.” This macro awareness of the imperative of G-d’s will is more approachable, and is therefore included in the beginning of Shulchan Aruch not as law, but as a general preface to fulfilling Jewish law.

Higher still is the level of alacrity demanded by Ben Azai, “to pursue a minor mitzvah.” Even in the “smallest” of mitzvos, which seem to not hold immense spiritual value and significance, he detects the full, awesome force of the will of G-d which causes him to pursue it with zeal and urgency.

There are two levels of spiritual awareness that can lead him to this desire.

1) “For a mitzvah brings another mitzvah,” he knows that every mitzvah, even this minor one, is a means of connection (*tzavsa*) with G-d. 2) If he is not at the level of selflessness that sees the mitzvah itself as having infinite value, he can be moved by the idea that “the reward of a mitzvah is a mitzvah,” he can appreciate the tangible spiritual satisfaction, the “reward,” that the mitzvah provides.

It is Ben Azai who is moved to such passion even when considering a “small mitzvah,” for he was a person who was always moved to spiritual extremes: he refused to marry for “his soul desired only Torah.” In every mitzvah, even one that would seem pedestrian to most, he saw the undiluted Divine will, and therefore exhorts us to run and pursue each opportunity for connection with G-d.

Likkutei Sichos vol. 17, p. 371ff.

גאולה Geulah

Yalkut Moshiah uGeulah al HaTorah
Translated by Yaakov Paley

“On-Call” For The Redemption

The phrase, “*Speak to the kohanim, the sons of Aharon*” (Emor 21:1) implies that the subsequent law applies equally to every male descendant of Aharon, including those who are unable to serve in the *beis hamikdash* due to physical disqualifications.

Every *kohen*, including one whose disability prevents him from active service, must avoid contracting ritual impurity from contact with a corpse. For the redemption can arrive at any moment along with the third *beis hamikdash*. All Jews will be healed and relieved from ailments and disabilities, as occurred at the Giving of the Torah, and as stated regarding the final redemption, “*Then the eyes of one who is blind will be opened, and the ears of one who is deaf will be unstopped. Then one who is lame will skip like a hart, and the tongue of one who is mute shall sing*” (Yeshayah 35:5-6).

The 50th Gate

The Talmud (Rosh Hashana 21a) teaches that there are 50 Gates of Understanding, all of which were revealed to Moshe, besides for the 50th Gate. The Zohar writes (II:110b) that what eluded Moshe was a level called *eisan* (איתן).

Moshe had the key to every Gate, serving G-d with every attribute, but not to the Gate that corresponds to Divine pleasure. (The word איתן contains אין, the Primordial Nothing, and ת, an abbreviation for תענוג, pleasure.) For Moshe was perpetually connected to G-d, so his constant presence did not inspire a feeling of exceptional pleasure. Moshe's father-in-law Yisro, however, did reach a level that touches on this 50th Gate by abandoning idolatry—like a captured prince who, upon returning to his father, inspires exceptional joy.

To better understand the 49 Gates, first consider G-d's seven cardinal attributes: love, fear, glory, victory, splendor, connection, and kingship. Each of these attributes contains all of the rest. For instance, if you love someone then you will also hate whomever he hates, glorify him, conquer his enemies, and seek to connect with him. In any event, the seven cardinal attributes combine in seven permutations, giving rise to 49 attributes.

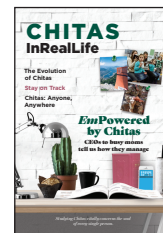
These are the 49 Gates, and their attainment is the goal of Counting the Omer for “seven complete weeks” (Emor 23:15). The weeks must be “complete” weeks, in that it also contains from the 50th Gate, the gate of transformation.

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

Book	Section
Chumash – Rashi*	Emor, 7th Aliyah
Tehillim*	Chapters 77 – 78
Tanya*	עמ' 134 - והנה פרטיות הצמצומים... עד עמ' סח-ותכלית. Likutei Amarim Chapter 48.
Rambam – Sefer Hamitzvos*	Negative Mitzvah #16 – 21, #26 – 29, #14, #7 – 9
Rambam – One Chapter*	Sefer HaMada – Hilchos Yesodei Hatorah Chapter 2
Rambam – Three Chapters**	Sefer HaMada – Hilchos Avodas Kochavim Chapters 4 – 6

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