

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

An Emphasis On Education

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 Bais Hamikdosh (Temple), during the festival of Succos, all Jews had to be gathered (Hakhel)—the men, and 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...

[It is] obvious how strongly the Mitzvah of Hakhel emphasizes the Torah-education of our children. It follows that also those who are grown in years but still “children” in Yiddishkeit; all those “who know not,” who, for one reason or another, did not get the proper Jewish education, and even those who belong to the category of “one who knows not to ask,” namely, those who do not know, and do not feel, that they miss something and should ask and seek help—these also must be assembled to let them hear and learn what Torah is, what a Mitzvah is, in a manner of learning that would imbue them with the fear of G-d, and, most importantly, that they should “observe and do all the words of this Torah,” the Torah from Sinai that shall never be changed—all of the above with such impact, “as if they heard it from G-d himself.”

From a Letter sent by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, 19th of Kislev, 5748

סיפור חסידי

Once Upon a Chasid

By Yanki Tauber

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Hey...

From where should I have meat to give to this entire nation...? (Beha'alos'cha 11:13)

Moses was unable to lower himself to the task of providing Israel with meat; his soul was far too lofty to deal with so mundane a need.

Rabbi Sholom DovBer of Lubavitch

The surging crowd pressed close to the table at which Rabbi Sholom DovBer of Lubavitch was seated. It was Simchat Torah of 1919, the Rebbe was farbrenging, and everyone wished to hear the Rebbe's words. Soon the table, no longer able to bear the mounting pressure, collapsed.

Not wishing to disturb the Rebbe's talk, the chassidim carefully lifted the splintered table piece by piece, and passed it hand over hand out of the room. Only when he concluded his talk did the Rebbe notice what had happened and exclaimed in surprise: “Where is the table?”

“I will tell you a story” he said. “Rabbi Levi Yitzchok of Barditchov had concluded his study of *shechitah* and was preparing to slaughter his first hen. He took the bird in his left hand, and diligently prepared it for the shechting. In his right he held the chalef. With great concentration and ecstasy, he recited the blessing over the mitzvah which he was privileged to observe for the very first time. In the meantime, the hen decided that, under the circumstances, it was high time she ran for her life...

“The Barditchover concluded the blessing and exclaimed (the Rebbe quoted in Polish-accented Yiddish): ‘Vi is di hin? Where is the hen...?’”

The Agony of Leadership

Moses, my master, annihilate them (Beha'alos'cha 11:28)

“Annihilate them”—Appoint them to a position of leadership, and they will deteriorate of their own accord...

Rashi's commentary

After the passing of Rabbi Shmuel of Lubavitch, the elder chassidim gathered and decided to confer the mantle of leadership on his middle son Rabbi Sholom DovBer. A delegation visited Rabbi Sholom DovBer and requested that he assume his father's place as Rebbe. Rabbi Sholom DovBer heard them out in silence, playing with the chain of his pocket watch, and did not respond in any way.

Soon after they left, Rabbi Dovid Tzvi Chein, an intimate friend of Rabbi Sholom DovBer, entered the room. As soon as the door closed behind him, the new Rebbe burst into tears. “If you are truly a friend of mine,” he wept, “you would tie a rope around my neck, secure it to a heavy stone, and throw me in the river...”

אור תורה
Ohr Torah

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

A Call For Humilty

“**R**ebi says: Which is the upright path that a man should choose for himself? Whatever brings honor to the one who does it, and brings him honor from other people. And be careful about a minor commandment like a major one, because you do not know the reward for Mitzvot” (Avot 2:1).

On a deeper level, Rebi is also asking the opposite question: “Which attributes should a person *abstain* from?” (The word שיבוּר ["should choose"] is related to the phrase שדה בור ["a fallow field"], implying negation). The answer is that one must avoid "whatever brings *pride* to the one who does it and whatever brings *pride* from other people." (The word תפארת ["honor"] is related to the word התפארות ["pride"]). Rebi means to say that one must not do Mitzvot for the purpose of self-aggrandizement—whether that pride comes from one's private feelings of superiority or, worse, from others saying he fears G-d because he performs Mitzvot in front of them.

One who never performs Mitzvot for self-aggrandizement will naturally be careful about even minor commandments, because he or she "does not know the reward for Mitzvot" and ignores all promise of recompense. This individual never weighs the value of a Mitzvah or its reward, because his or her only priority is bringing satisfaction to G-d.

Trumpets For Moshiach

“G-d spoke to Moshe saying: Make yourself two silver trumpets” (10:1-2).

Midrash Tanchuma explains that G-d told Moshe to make these trumpets for his own sake, so that the Jews could sound them before Moshe as is done before a king. Indeed, when Moshe passed away, these trumpets were buried and not used again.

The proof of this is the battle for Yericho that was fought shortly after Moshe’s passing. The Jews sounded many *shofars* but no trumpets. How, then, are we to understand the Torah’s statement, *“If you go to war in your land against an adversary that oppresses you, you shall blow a blast with the trumpets and be remembered before G-d, your G-d, and be saved from your enemies”* (v. 9)? However, the Sifrei explains that the verse, *“If you go to war in your land”* refers to the ultimate war at the start of the Redemption – the war of Gog and Magog (*Panei’ach Raza*).

During the war of Gog and Magog, the trumpets made by Moshe will be revealed. The Jews will sound them and be saved (*Meshech Chochmah*).

“No Chronological Order in the Torah”

The Verse: Torah describes G-d’s commandment to the Jewish people to observe Pesach by bringing the Pesach lamb in the desert, and then continues with the narrative of those who were given a second opportunity to bring the sacrifice, known as the Second Pesach.

The Torah begins by setting the time and place of this communication:

“G-d spoke to Moshe in the Sinai Desert, in the second year of their exodus from the land of Egypt, in the first month, saying” (Bamidbar 9:1).

The Rashi: *In the first month—The portion at the beginning of Bamidbar [the census of the nation] was not said until [the second month of] Iyar. From this, you learn that there is no chronological order in the Torah. But why did Scripture not begin with this chapter? For it is a disgrace to Israel that throughout the forty years the children of Israel were in the desert, they brought only this Passover sacrifice alone.*

The Question: Rashi has introduced us to the principle that “there is no chronological order in the Torah” several times before. Why does he say, “from this you learn...” implying that the placement of this narrative is the primary source for this principle?

The Explanation: In the other narratives where Rashi clarified that the Torah does not follow chronology, the episodes were narrated without dates. Rashi wanted to ensure that the reader did not mistakenly place the episode according to its apparent chronology which would alter its straightforward meaning.

In this case, however, both episodes are prefaced with a specific date. The census, on the first day of the second month in the second year from the Exodus, and the command for Pesach in the first month in the second year from the Exodus. Rashi’s point here is to say that even when the Torah includes dates, which would imply that it wants to place the event chronologically, even then the Torah does not follow chronological order.

The Disgrace of Delaying: Regarding the placement of this narrative, Rashi explains that this was deferred to here because the Torah did not want to highlight the disgrace of the Jewish people in the beginning of the book of Bamidbar.

But upon closer inspection, what was so disgraceful? Rashi explains that there was no command to offer the Pesach sacrifice throughout the

forty-year duration in the desert, besides for the very first year. If there was no command to bring the sacrifice, why was it disgraceful that they did not bring it?

The explanation lies in the narrative of the Second Pesach. Those that missed out on the opportunity to offer the sacrifice that first year clamored to Moshe, “why should we be excluded” from the sacrifice just because we are ritually impure? (*Bamidbar* 9:7). In response, G-d extended to them a second chance. The Jewish people should have looked to this as a precedent that, if they desired it and demanded it, G-d would have given them the opportunity to bring the Pesach sacrifice throughout their desert journey, even if it was not explicitly commanded. Their passive acceptance of the cessation of this mitzvah was their disgrace.

This explains why Moshe and Aharon also did not demand the opportunity to bring the Pesach sacrifice in the desert. As true leaders, they would never seek to satisfy their own spiritual desire at the expense of their people’s dignity. If they would ask for the chance to bring the sacrifice, they would be highlighting the people’s complacency. There-

fore, Moshe and Aharon refrained from asking, so as not to draw further attention to their people’s “disgrace.”

The Deeper Dimension: There is a thematic connection between the Second Pesach and the principle that Torah does not follow chronological order that explains why this principle is expressed specifically in this narrative:

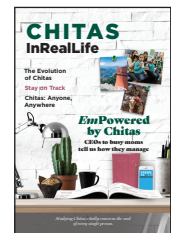
The idea of the Second Pesach is that a person can alter the past; that the mistakes and missed opportunities can be rectified through determination and passion. Teshuva, repentance, is the spiritual expression of “non-chronological order,” of transcending the linear nature of time and changing the past. This was the disgrace of the Jewish people: that they did not demand a suspension of the normative process where the Pesach sacrifice would only be commanded in the Land of Israel. From the Second Pesach they should have learnt that Torah is not bound by chronology, and they could have demanded a mitzvah opportunity even before its time had arrived.

Likkutei Sichos vol. 23, p. 62ff.

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

Book	Section
Chumash – Rashi*	Beha'alos'cha, 7th Aliyah
Tehillim*	Chapters 104 – 105
Tanya*	Shaar HaYichud VebaEmunah Chapter 7 - עמ' 164 עד עמ' 164 לתחתונים.
Rambam – Sefer Hamitzvos*	Negative Mitzvah #321
Rambam – One Chapter*	Sefer HaMada – Hilchos Teshuvah Chapter 1
Rambam – Three Chapters**	Sefer Zmanim – Hilchos Eiruvim Chapters 6 – 8

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