

Chayus

A Shabbos Stimulus

ערב שבת
פרשת חקת-בלק
י"א תמוז, ה'תשפ"ג
שנת הקהל

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

Inspiration For a Lifetime

The verse states that *Hakhel* would influence a Jew “all the days that you live upon the face of the earth” (Devorim 31:13).

The inspiration and the lasting influence of *Hakhel* is even greater than that of the three Pilgrim Festivals enumerated in the Torah: “Three times a year all your males shall appear before the L-rd your G-d in the place where He will choose—on the Festival of Matzos, on the Festival of Shavuos, and on the Festival of Sukkos” (Devorim 16:16). From each of these pilgrimages to the Holy Temple a Jew drew inspiration. This inspiration would last until the next pilgrimage.

The inspiration and the influence that a Jew receives from *Hakhel*, however, he feels for “all the days that you live upon the earth.” And although *Hakhel* occurs once every seven years, it is nonetheless, an ascent onto a higher level of holiness. The holiness and inspiration that the current *Hakhel* provides are in addition to the influences of the previous *Hakhel* which are felt “all the days that you live upon the earth.”

Shabbos Parshas Bereishis, 5741 (1980)

סיפור חסידי

Once Upon a Chasid

By Yanki Tauber

Published by Kehot Publication Society

Wagons and Souls

And G-d happened upon Bil'am... (Balak 23:4)

The hallmark of evil and unholiness is an attitude of “it just happened.” Nothing is coincidental to the Jew; every event is purposeful and significant.

In the words of Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov: “From everything that a Jew sees or hears, he is to derive a lesson in his service of G-d.”

chassidic saying

Rabbi Leib, the ‘Zeideh’ of Shpoli, was blessed with a brilliant mind, a burning desire to serve his Creator, and a heart suffused with love for his fellow Jew. Yet he shunned the role of leader and chassidic master, preferring to conceal these qualities and find his place as one among the many disciples of Rabbi DovBer of Mezeritch.

Once when Rabbi Leib was making his way on foot to Mezeritch, he came upon a heavily laden wagon that had become stuck in the mud. The wagon driver called out to him for assistance, but Rabbi Leib said: “I’m sorry, I wish I could help you. But I am not capable of lifting such a heavy load.”

“You are capable, you are capable” responded the wagon driver. “You just don’t want to!”

Indeed, the task proved far more doable than Rabbi Leib had assumed. No sooner did he apply his hand to the wagon driver’s efforts that the wagon rolled out of the mudhole and on to the road.

For the rest of his journey to Mezeritch Rabbi Leib knew no rest. He felt that the wagon driver’s words must be a message from above, and that they came to address his inner reluctance to assume the role which had been ordained for him. When he arrived in Mezeritch, Rabbi DovBer said to him: “My master, Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov, once said to me concerning you, that ‘he can drag a burdened soul out of its spiritual mud.’ You can and you must be a Rebbe.”

אור תורה

Ohr Torah

Translated by: **Yechiel Krisch**

Adapted from the teachings of the **Mezritcher Maggid**

The Power of Twilight

Ten things were created on the eve of the seventh day of creation, at twilight...the ram of our forefather Avraham [which was sacrificed in place of Yitzchak] (Avos 5:6).

The Sages never determined whether twilight is considered day, night, or a period of time that is half day and half night. This is because twilight mystically represents a unifying force within time itself: the ultimate temporal intermediary, which allows two opposites—day and night—to join.

Two opposites that cannot coexist may only be joined by an intermediary that transcends both. For instance, all physical matter is composed of four elements: fire, water, wind, earth. Elemental water does not quench elemental fire because a transcendent G-dly spirit—known as *Ayin* – “Nothingness” or Divine Wisdom—is invested in all matter, permitting opposite elements to unite. Similarly, it would be impossible to both love and fear

G-d at the same time (given that these are opposite emotions), were it not for the Divine Wisdom that transcends love and fear.

[Note that *Ayin* and Divine Wisdom are not to be confused with G-d Himself, for wisdom is but G-d’s first attribute, while G-d Himself is One—not first, but utterly singular.]

With this introduction we can now understand why the episode of the binding of Yitzchak could only be concluded by sacrificing a ram created at twilight. For the entire test was, mystically, an attempt to unite the attribute of love with the attribute of fear, per the verse (Bereishis 22:1): “G-d [literally: Elokim] tested Avraham.” The divine name Elokim is associated with fear, while our forefather Avraham is associated with love. In order for love and fear to unite, G-d summoned the ultimate temporal intermediary—a creation wrought of twilight.

Par. 27

גאולה

Geulah

Yalkut Moshiach uGeulah al HaTorah

Translated by **Yaakov Paley**

A Good Friend

A king once gave his son a marvelous but distant territory. The prince set out accompanied by a friend and an enemy. Said the enemy, “See how your father hates you! He gave you a most distant territory.” The prince felt disheartened. Said his friend, “Look! We will soon arrive and enjoy a wonderful life there!” And the prince was encouraged.

G-d is the King, we are His son, and the marvelous territory is Moshiach. Bilam told us, “*I see it, but not now; I behold it, but not soon.*” But Moshe told us, “*For the day of their reckoning is near and their ultimate destiny hastens towards them!*” and he insisted, “*For the matter is very close to you!*” The prophet Yeshayah told us, “*For G-d’s Day is close and it is awesome!*”

Yalkut Shimoni

The Mantle of a Torah Scroll

The Talmud: Tractate Megillah concludes with a discussion about the proper way to handle a Torah scroll:

Rabbi Yochanan said: Anyone who holds onto an uncovered Torah scroll, [meaning, holds the parchment directly] will be punished by being buried uncovered.

Can it enter your mind to say that he will actually be buried uncovered? Why should he be buried in such a disgraceful manner? Rather, say that he will be buried uncovered, without the merit of mitzvos.

Can it enter your mind to say that he will be buried without the merit of having performed mitzvot? Why should he forfeit the merit of all the mitzvot that he performed during his lifetime? Rather, Abaye said: He will be buried without the merit of that mitzva (Megillah 32a).

The Tosfos: Tosfos records two opinions on the Talmud's conclusion that he forfeits the "merit of that mitzvah." Which mitzvah is meant here?

- 1) Some explain that this refers to the mitzvah of holding the Torah scroll itself.

Tosfos challenges this explanation, arguing that it is obvious that he isn't rewarded for holding the Torah since he never performed that mitzvah properly! The mitzvah is to hold it with a mantle, if he held the parchment directly, he simply did not fulfill the mitzvah.

- 2) *Riva* explains that he does not receive reward for the mitzvah he was doing while holding the Torah, such as reading or studying from the Torah, or lifting or dressing the Torah. If he does any of these while gasping the parchment itself, he surrenders the reward for those mitzvos.

Tosfos concludes: "Rather, hold it with a mantle [and the following verse will be fulfilled for you] 'length of days is in its right hand, and wealth and honor in its left.'"

Explaining the Talmud: There are three ways to define the relationship between a Torah scroll and its covering.

- 1) The cover is irrelevant to the scroll itself. It is only there to allow a person to hold the scroll.

- 2) The scroll demands honor and respect, and the cover provides that for the scroll.
- 3) The cover is an extension of the scroll itself. It is not just an accessory, it is an essential part of the scroll.

The Talmud's three proposed explanations correspond to these three conceptions of the Torah scroll's cover:

The first suggested answer sees the cover as external and irrelevant to the scroll itself and only necessary for the person who desires to hold it. Clothing, too, is external and inessential to the human being; it is only needed for the sake of presentation to society. Therefore, the fitting consequence for discarding the scroll's cover is that the person is buried without their actual clothing.

The second answer sees the cover as a significant element of the scroll's honor. Mitzvah observance is part of our soul's beauty and honor. So, the person who discards the scroll's cover deserves to be buried without their adornments of honor—their mitzvos.

The final answer sees the cover as an essential part of the scroll itself. Thus, the person has offended only the scroll itself, and not any other aspect of his mitzvah observance. He therefore forfeits only this mitzvah.

Explaining the Tosfos: We can now understand the foundation of the two differing opinions offered by Tosfos:

The first explanation was that the person forfeits the mitzvah of holding the scroll. Tosfos questioned the novelty of this explanation, but it can now be appreciated. In a similar construct, the Talmud rules that if a mourner tore their shirt on Shabbos when learning of a relative's passing, they have violated the laws of Shabbos but fulfilled the obligation to tear their clothing as a mourner. Thus, we see that it is possible to do something in a prohibited way, yet simultaneously, still fulfill an obligation. Yet, here this is not the case. Because the Talmud's third explanation sees the scroll's cover as an essential part of the scroll, it turns out that the person is not really holding the full and complete Torah scroll. It is missing an essential element—

the cover—and therefore he does “not have that mitzvah” of holding the scroll.

Still, Tosfos is unsatisfied with this explanation because the previous explanations offered by the Talmud suggested that the person forfeits something he previously possessed, such as the right to be buried with clothing, or to take the rewards of his past mitzvos with him to the World to Come. But in this explanation, his punishment is simply that he is not considered to have completed a new mitzvah, but he loses nothing of his previous accomplishments.

Riva therefore suggests that he loses any mitzvah performed while he holds the scroll directly, so that his punishment is consistent with the Talmud’s previous line of thinking.

Alternatively, the Riva has a deeper appreciation of the role of the cover: not only is it an essential part of the scroll, it is an essential part of the scroll and all that is associated with the scroll, such as studying from it, dressing it and lifting it. Therefore, if a person grasps the parchment without a

cover, there is a deficiency in any mitzvah he does with that scroll.

The cover being part of the Torah itself alludes to “external” aspects of Torah study, which, nevertheless, are considered legitimate parts of Torah. Specifically, the practical study of Torah for the sake of knowing how to perform mitzvos. On the one hand, this is not pure study for the sake of study alone, on the other hand, it is legitimate, necessary study, like the “cover” of the scroll that is still part of the scroll.

This is why Tosfos concludes with a cryptic quote of the verse, “length of days is in its right hand, and wealth and honor in its left.” The right side alludes to pure study, the left to utilitarian study for the sake of mitzvah observance. The left side thus corresponds to the “cover” of the scroll that is an essential part of it, yet external at the same time. This study has definite value, “wealth and honor in His left.”

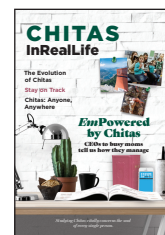
Likkutei Sichos vol. 23, p. 141ff.

מורה שיעור לחת"ת ורמב"ם לשבת

Shabbos Chitas / Rambam Guide

Book	Section
Chumash – Rashi*	Chukas-Balak, 7th Aliyah
Tehillim*	Chapters 66 – 68
Tanya*	Igeres Hateshuvah Chapter 3. עמ' 184 - ומ"מ כל בעל... עד עמ' 186 - לא תמנו).
Rambam – Sefer Hamitzvos*	Positive Mitzvah #213
Rambam – One Chapter*	Sefer Ahavah, – Hilchos Tefillah U'Birkas Kohanim Chapter 8
Rambam – Three Chapters**	Sefer Nashim – Hilchos Ishus Chapters 2 – 4

*Available in the Chayenu Print & App **Available in the Chayenu App and in Chayenu-3



To view our Chitas In RealLife booklet, visit Chayenu.org/Chitas

לעילוי נשמת
שניאור זלמן בן יוסף משה ע"ה
נפטר כ"ג סיון

A PROJECT OF
חיינו
CHAYENU
DAILY TORAH STUDY. DELIVERED.