

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**

Published by **Sichos in English**

Hakhel is a Taste of Redemption

Hakhel's themes all surpass the common perception of basic Jewish ideas. The bond between G-d and His people, between Jews and each other, and the religious observance of the individual are all taken up a notch. With *Hakhel*, nothing remains ordinary. Outshining the reality of the present, *Hakhel* is a taste of the future, and all of its accomplishments are reminiscent of the Final *Geulah* (See *Toras Menachem* 5748, Vol. 1, p. 83ff).

In our times, as we stand on the threshold of *Mashiach's* arrival, living *Hakhel* has never been more important. In the words of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, *Hakhel* is meant to become the overarching theme of the year. Every positive activity can be enhanced by bringing it through this "gateway," being saturated with the spirit of *Hakhel* (*Sefer HaSichos* 5748, Vol. 1, p. 9).

סיפור חסידי

Once Upon a Chasid

By **Yanki Tauber**

Published by **Kehot Publication Society**

Jack of all Trades

And they (Korach and his following) converged upon Moses and Aaron and said to them: "Enough! Every one of the congregation is holy, and G-d is amongst them.

Why do you raise yourself above the congregation of G-d?" (Korach 16:3)

There are those who maintain that they have no need of a mentor to guide them through life. They claim, as did Korach, that each and every individual can forge their relationship with G-d unaided. They argue that since the Jewish faith rejects the concept of an intermediary between man and G-d, they have no use for a rebbe or master.

They fail to understand that the entire Jewish people are a single entity, that every individual soul is, in truth, but a limb or organ of the soul of Israel. Just as each limb and organ of the human body has its function at which it excels, so, too, every soul has its role and mission, as well as its limitations. The 'loftiest' of souls is dependant upon the 'lowliest' for the attainment of the single, unified goal. And were any limb to strike out on its own, detaching itself from the 'head,' which provides the entire body with vitality and direction—the results are self-understood.

Said Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok of Lubavitch: When an individual adapts the attitude that he can do it all on his own, he reminds me of the story told about the peasant and the *tefillin*.

Once, a Jew noticed a pair of *tefillin* in the house of a gentile peasant. Upon seeing a holy object in such a place he began to inquire about the *tefillin*, wishing to purchase them from the goy. The peasant, who had looted the *tefillin* in a recent pogrom, grew agitated and defensive. “What do you mean, where did I get them?” he blurted out. “Why, I made them myself! I myself am a shoemaker!”

The Exchange

Thus, you too shall lift up the offering from the grain (‘terumah’) to G-d (Korach 18:28)

From the words “you too” we derive that a person’s agent can act in his stead; that “the agent of a person is as he himself.”

The Talmud, Kedushin 41b

When his eldest son, DovBer, reached cheder age, Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi approached one of his colleagues, a fellow disciple of their late Master, the Maggid of Mezeritch. In his characteristic singsong manner, Rabbi Schneur Zalman said:

“I have a mitzvah to fulfill—the commandment ‘you shall teach them (the words of Torah) to your children.’ You, too, have a mitzvah incumbent upon you—the duty to support your family. Let us make an exchange: I will provide you with the means to fulfill your mitzvah, and you will teach my son Torah.” Rabbi Schneur Zalman then gave the young man a crash course in his approach to early childhood education: “One obviously starts with the Aleph-Bet. What is an Aleph? A dot above, a dot below, and a line in between—this is an Alef. And this is the very Alef of Torah: that the Yud [(resembled by) the dot] above (G-d) and the Yud¹ below (the Jew) are bound by a line of faith.”

1. The Hebrew letter *Yud* is written in the form of a point, and is the first letter of the Divine Name. *Yud*, in Yiddish, also means ‘Jew.’

Everyone Has Something To Contribute

Ben Zoma said: *who is wise? One who learns from everyone, as the verse states (Tehillim 119:99): ‘From all of my teachers, I have become wise’ (Avos 4:1).*

The verse seems to suggest one can learn only from qualified “teachers,” and indeed that may be the case when it comes to academic knowledge. Ben Zoma is adding that one can learn positive qualities and upright mannerisms from not only a qualified Torah teacher but from every individual—even an ignorant or wicked individual, who is not fit to teach Torah.

A wise person is one who seizes the opportunity to learn how best to serve the creator from every single person.

A Leader When Moshiach Comes

Our Sages state that Korach mocked Moshe, saying, “Does a house filled with *sefarim* still need a *mezuzah*? Does a garment colored entirely with *techeiless* (blue dye) still need a string of *techeiless* in its *tzitzis*?” The truth is that even in the era of redemption, where the world will be filled with the knowledge of G-d like a house filled completely with *sefarim*, and when all the Jews will be righteous sages like a garment entirely filled with *techeiless* that represents the heavenly throne, the Jewish people will still need a *mezuzah* at their fore and a single thread of *techeiless* to go before them: They will still require a single leader who is higher than them all and who will guide them all.

Ir Giborim

לקוטי שיחות A Sicha

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

Aharon's Claim To Priesthood

The Context

In response to Korach's provocations and challenging of Moshe and Aharon's leadership, G-d performed two miracles to demonstrate that Moshe's decisions were indeed directed by G-d. First the earth opened and swallowed Korach and his conspirators, and then a fire broke out and consumed additional conspirators.

In the following chapter, G-d directs Moshe to perform another demonstration of Aharon's legitimacy as High Priest. All the leaders of the tribes brought a staff etched with their name on it and they were placed in the Tent of Meeting overnight. “On the following day Moshe came to the Tent of Testimony, and behold, Aaron's staff for the house of Levi had blossomed! It gave forth blossoms, sprouted buds, and produced ripe almonds” (*Bamidbar* 17:23). This once again confirmed that Aharon was chosen by G-d.

The Question

Why was the test of the staff necessary after the blatant miracles of the destruction of Korach and his clan?

Preface to the Explanation

We will understand this by investigating Rashi's comments on the above verse.

It gave forth blossoms—in its literal sense.

- 1) Why does Rashi only clarify now that the “blossoms” are meant literally, and not when the Torah first introduces the term blossom three verses earlier, “The staff of the man whom I will choose will blossom”?

Buds—this is the budding of the fruit after the blossom falls off.

- 2) Why is the process of the budding and ripening relevant to the straightforward meaning of the narrative?

*And produced ripe almonds—...why almonds? That is the fruit that blossoms quicker than other fruits. Likewise, whoever opposes the priesthood is punished quickly, as we find in the case of Uzziah: “and the tzara'at shone upon his forehead” (*Divrei Hayamim* II, 26:19).*

The Explanation

Rashi addresses an obvious inconsistency in the narrative: Originally, G-d said “The staff of the man I will choose will blossom.” But then, Aharon's staff did not only blossom, “it gave forth blossoms, sprouted buds, and produced ripe almonds!” Therefore, Rashi understands that the first mention of “blossom” was meant euphemistically to refer to an elaborate growth on the staff. But in verse 23 where the Torah describes the actual growth, blossom is

meant “literally,” referring to the first stage of the growing process.

But why was the entire growing process necessary? When Moshe arrived at the Tent of Meeting, he saw the finished product, the almonds. The people will never have seen the growing process that happened during the night, so why did G-d need to make that whole elaborate miracle?

Rashi therefore explains that blossoms fell off after the almonds began to bud. It follows that Moshe saw the fallen blossoms next to the almond-studded staff and showed them to the Jewish people. This display, of almonds and their blossoms, decisively supported G-d’s appointment of Aharon. How so?

Even after the earlier miracles, it was possible that the people would agree that G-d had chosen Aharon but still harbor suspicions that Aharon is of equal to the other Jewish people, and Moshe had forced G-d’s hand, so to speak, by praying that Aharon be the high-Priest.

The miracle of the almonds showed that G-d implanted in the staff the capacity to naturally grow almonds. Almonds didn’t just appear on the staff, they grew gradually, first with a blossom, then the blossoms gave way to buds which grew into mature almonds. This alluded to the fact that G-d had implanted the priesthood in Aharon as a natural part of his identity. It was not external, forced on him, or incompatible with his essential nature. Bestowing the priesthood on Aharon was G-d’s choice, but it became Aharon’s natural self. Therefore, the choice was eternal and could never be changed, because it was an essential part of Aharon’s constitution.

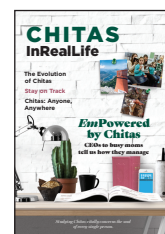
This explains the Talmudic statement that when the Ark was hidden so was Aharon’s staff “with its almonds and its blossoms” (Yoma 52). The blossoms were not just a disposable element. The natural process of the almond’s growth was essential to the demonstration of Aharon’s legitimacy as High Priest.

Likkutei Sichos vol. 23, p. 113ff.

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

Book	Section
Chumash – Rashi*	Korach, 7th Aliyah
Tehillim*	Chapters 29 – 34
Tanya*	Shaar HaYichud VebaEmunah Chapter 12 עד עמ' 178 - מהאותיות עצמן.
Rambam – Sefer Hamitzvos*	Positive Mitzvah #153
Rambam – One Chapter*	Sefer Ahavah, – Hilchos Tefillah U'Birkas Kohanim Chapter 1
Rambam – Three Chapters**	Sefer Zmanim – Hilchos Kidush Hachodesh Chapters 9 – 11

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