

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

Gatherings In Your Homes and Schools—Your Beis Hamikdash

When the days of *Hakhel* come around (once in seven years), every one of us, including the very small children, must become deeply mindful that our homes and every Jewish home, also the Jewish school that houses the children (and their classmates), should be pure and holy, like being in the Bais HaMikdash; and that in every Jew, young and old, there is a “king” that rules and directs his daily activities, this being our *Emunah* (belief) in G-d, with which we begin our everyday life, as all of us, including the tiny tots, say immediately upon rising in the morning: *Modeh ani*—“I give thanks to You, living and eternal King.” We must listen attentively, with obedience and devotion, to this “king” in us, in order to make sure that everything we do is in keeping with what is written in His Torah.

Everyone should also be involved in *Hakhel*: Starting now and continuing through the year—on suitable occasions, and particularly on Shabbos—to get together for the purpose of learning a portion of Torah or a Torah subject, and encouraging each other in the doing of Mitzvos all the better.

In order that all this should be with still greater Hatzlocho, it would be a good idea for those who can participate more often in such gatherings, to form a *kohol*, a permanent group, or unit, under the same name everywhere “Tzivos Hashem” “G-d’s Army,” to which every Jew already belongs from childhood, all the better to carry out the Divine order: “Fill the earth and master it”—mastering all that is around him/her by filling the environment with true light, the light of Torah and Mitzvos, so that everyone will see and know that the whole world is G-d’s.

Excerpt of a Letter by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Chol-hamo'ed Sukkos, 5741

סיפור חסידי Once Upon a Chasid

By Yanki Tauber
Published by Kehot Publication Society

The Irksome Burden

There we saw giants... and we were in our own eyes as locusts (Sh'lach 13:33)

Someone once asked Rabbi Shmuel of Lubavitch: “What is true learning?”

The Rebbe replied: “When one studies a section of Talmud or an idea in Chabad philosophy, one is there, together with its illustrious author. He is building upon the sage’s wisdom like a dwarf perched upon a giant - he is riding on the giant’s shoulders.

“One must be grateful to the giant that he doesn’t fling the nuisance from his shoulders...”

The Rebbe as Economist

We were in our own eyes as locusts, and so we were in their eyes (Sh'lach 13:33)

Mrs. Kalmenson, wife of the chassid Rabbi Zalman Kalmenson, related:

My father earned his living by running a tavern and inn. Once, a competing tavern opened its doors across the road from his, offering its vodka at a lower price. Slowly his regulars began drifting over to the cheaper establishment.

Father journeyed to Lubavitch to seek the counsel of the Rebbe, Rabbi Sholom DovBer. The Rebbe advised him to set up two barrels of vodka at the bar and to offer drinks both at his regular price and at the lower rate.

Soon the tavern was filled with customers, all clamoring for the more expensive vodka...

Grammar Made Un-Dull

When you eat of the bread of the land, lift up an offering to G-d. The first of your grain-cradle you shall uplift as a challah-offering (Sh'lach 15:19-20)

The best years of your life, the prime hours of your day, the freshest of your energies, the choicest of your talents and abilities—what is first and uppermost in you, devote to G-dly pursuits...

Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchok of Lubavitch writes:

Winter 1891. It is my third term of study with my teacher, Reb Nissan the melamed. My father also hired Reb Yitzchok Gershon (who leads the prayers and reads from the Torah at the synagogue) to teach me. For one hour each day, we study Nach (prophets and scriptures), the meaning of the prayers, hebrew grammar, and the musical notes for the Torah reading.

I greatly enjoyed the Nach; I would review my lessons repeatedly—in the time that I was free from cheder, of course. In fact, my devotion to Nach infringed upon my study of mishnayos, of which I was obliged to review several chapters a day by heart; I would take from the time allotted for the mishnayos to study Nach.

Also my study of the prayers went well—in two weeks I had mastered the meaning of the words. But the technicalities of grammar and the notes were a burden to me. In these studies I showed little progress—by morning, the previous evening's lesson had evaporated as if it never was. I had special difficulty with the upper and lower accents and the stressed and light pronunciations. [In Hebrew Grammar a *mil'ill*, or 'upper accent,' means that the first or middle syllable of a word is stressed; if the accent is on the final syllable, the word is a *milrah*, or 'lower accent.' The *dogush* ('stressed'), and *rofeh* ('light') pronunciations designate a hard or soft consonant respectively. A rule of thumb is that a *mil'ill* is always *dogush*, and a *milrah* always *rofeh*.]

Once, after such a grammar lesson, I poured out my heart to my father. Reb Yitzchok Gershon had tested me and was satisfied with the results, but I knew better: the lesson was merely hovering above my brain. In tears, I confessed my lack of interest in grammar to father, and was prepared to hear words of rebuke. But father took a different approach: he proceeded to explain to me the inner significance of the technicalities of grammar.

"The upper and lower accents are heaven and earth" he said. "Upper' is the Torah and its precepts; the 'lower' represents the material needs and pursuits of man. The 'upper' must always be 'stressed'—strong and intense. But the 'lower' is to be taken lightly. True, we are speaking of permissible things, but these need not be regarded as 'musts' and should be pursued in a negligible and feeble manner—no more than is absolutely necessary."

Don't Make A Torah Problem

“**I**f one walks along the path, and pauses from his studies and says: ‘how lovely is this tree; how lovely is this furrow’—the Torah considers him responsible for his own death” (Pirkei Avot 3:7).

A mystical interpretation: He who walks an upright path but is egotistical—he “pauses from his studies,” meaning that *because* of his success in his studies he pauses, i.e., separates, himself from G-d—and furthermore he declares “how lovely and accomplished am I”—the Torah likens man to a tree (Devarim 20:19) and a furrow (Yirmiyahu 4:3)—is considered mortally guilty.

Par. 442

Tzitzis: Gathering From the Four Corners of the World

The mystical purpose of the Jewish dispersion is to gather sparks of holiness that are scattered across the globe and among the many nations. At the culmination of this process, the Jews will be regathered. This is alluded to in the prophecy of Yeshayah, “*From the corners [kenaf] of the earth we heard songs, ‘The righteous will be upraised!’*” (24:16).

The *kenaf*, corners, is an allusion to the *kanaf* of the *tzitzis*. The upraising of the righteous is the elevation of the sparks of sanctity.

The same verse continues to speak of treachery, *begeg bog'dim, bag'du*. This is an allusion to the garment that holds the *tzitzis*, for the word for treachery, *bagad*, is the same as the word for garment, *begeg*. Thus, the *mitzvah* of *tzitzis* and its four fringed corners represents the ingathering of the Jewish people from the four corners of the earth and the arrival of the final redemption.

Megaleh Amukos

The Mitzvah of Challah

The Verse: *The first portion of your dough, you shall separate a loaf for a gift; as in the case of the gift of the threshing floor, so shall you separate it (Bamidbar 15:20).*

The Rashi: *As in the case of the gift of the threshing floor—in which no amount is specified, but unlike the gift taken from the tithe [given by Levites to kohanim] for which an amount is specified. However, the Sages did specify an amount—for a householder, one twenty-fourth [of the dough] and for a baker one forty-eighth.*

The Questions: Rashi does not invoke the laws relevant to the verse under discussion unless the law

can clarify the straightforward meaning of the verse. In this scenario, why does Rashi have to mention the law that “the Sages did specify an amount—for a householder, one twenty-fourth [of the dough], and for a baker one forty-eighth”?

Furthermore, the sages’ decision goes against the grain of the verse’s simple meaning as Rashi has just explained it, that the gift of dough has no specified amount, like the gift from the threshing floor. Why, then, does Rashi cite this law?

The Explanation: In the beginning of the verse, “The first portion of your dough, you shall separate

a loaf for a gift,” Rashi commented, “in old French, *tortel*... a round loaf of bread.” This implies that the gift does have some specification of amount, for it has to be comparable to a “round loaf of bread.” Rashi clarifies that even though no amount was biblically specified, the fact that the Torah described the gift as a loaf of bread implies that the gift must have some substance and cannot be mere crumbs. The sages, therefore, gave a specific amount to this gift, conforming to the Torah’s description of the gift as a “round loaf of bread.”

Rashi then has to explain that this gift was set in proportion to the size of the dough. A homeowner bakes larger breads and intends to use all of it for personal use, so his gift is a larger percentage. The baker bakes loaves of various sizes and relies on them for his income, so his percentage is smaller.

The Deeper Dimension: The Midrash states that one who observes the mitzvah of Challah, it is as if he nullified idolatry. And one who transgresses the mitzvah of Challah, it is as if he upholds and maintains idolatry.

Idolatry is the belief that there is an independent existence outside of G-d. Giving Challah is an acknowledgement that our success and profits, the fruits of our labor, are not attributed to our efforts, rather, they belong to G-d who enables us to yield a successful crop. Not giving Challah, not recognizing G-d’s hand in our success, therefore, is tantamount to maintaining the fiction of idolatry, of a world not directed by G-d’s hand.

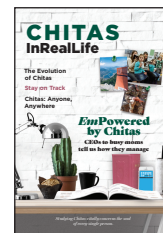
Specifically, a “homeowner” who bakes only for his family alludes to a person who does not often interact with the outside world and therefore has less opportunity to see G-d’s hand in his everyday affairs. Therefore, he must give a higher percentage of his dough to recognize that his wealth derives from G-d. A “baker,” alludes to a person who is enmeshed within the world of commerce and therefore has the opportunity to see G-d’s presence in his interactions; he can suffice with a lower percentage of Challah, because he inherently perceives G-d within his life.

Likkutei Sichos vol. 18, p. 178ff.

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

Book	Section
Chumash – Rashi*	Sh'lach, 7th Aliyah
Tehillim*	Chapters 135 – 139
Tanya*	Shaar HaYichud VahaEmunah Chapter 9. עמ' פו- פרק ט. אבל לגבי... עד עמ' פו- אין קץ.
Rambam – Sefer Hamitzvos*	Positive Mitzvah #157; The Text of the Haggadah
Rambam – One Chapter*	Sefer HaMada – Hilchos Teshuvah Chapter 8
Rambam – Three Chapters**	Sefer Zmanim – Hilchos Chametz uMatzah Chapter 8; Nusach Haggadah. Hilchos Shofar, Sukkah vLulav Chapter 1 – 2

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