

# 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

### What Was Read?

According to Rambam: *He starts from the beginning of the chumash "These are the words..." (i.e., Chumash Devarim) until the end of the passage 'Shema' (6:9). He then skips to the passage 'Vehayah Im Shamo' (11:13-21), and then skips to the passage 'Asair Te'asair' (14:22). He then reads from that passage in order until the end of the blessings and curses, i.e., until the phrase: "besides the covenant He established with them in Choreb" (28:69), where he concludes (Laws of Chagiga 3:3).*

However, in our text of the Talmud, it reads: *He reads from the beginning "These are the words..." (i.e., Chumash Devarim), until Shema (6:4). [He then reads] Shema (6:4-9), Vehayah Im Shamo' (11:13-21), Asair Te'asair (14:22-27), Ki Tichaleh Le'asair (26:12-15), and [he then goes back to read (Rashi)] the passage concerning the appointment of a king (17:14-20), and the blessings and curses (Ch. 28), until he finishes the entire portion (Sotah 41a).*

סיפור חסידי

Once Upon a Chasid

By Yanki Tauber

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### Cold Feet

*For G-d your G-d... is a consuming fire (Eikev 9:3)*

Between coldness and heresy stands an extremely thin wall. It is written: "For G-d your G-d is a consuming fire"—G-dliness is a blazing flame. Torah study and prayer require a flaming heart, so that "all my bones should proclaim" (Psalms 35:10) the words of G-d.

*Rabbi Sholom DovBer of Lubavitch*

Rabbi Nechemia of Dubrovna recounted:

I once saw a Russian soldier being whipped. His crime? While standing watch on a winter night, his feet had frozen in their boots. "Had you remembered the oath you took to serve the czar," his commander berated him, "the memory itself would have kept you warm."

"For 25 years," concluded Reb Nechemia, "this incident inspired my service of the Almighty."

## A Tale of Two Cities

*To love the Lord your G-d and to serve Him with all your heart* (Eikev 11:13)

What is the service of the heart? This is prayer.

*The Talmud, Taanis 2a*

When Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi neared his twentieth year, he decided—with the consent of his wife, Rebbetzin Sterna—to travel to a center of Torah learning and service of G-d.

At that time, circa 1764, Vilna and Mezeritch were the great Jewish capitals of Eastern Europe. Vilna was the seat of Rabbi Eliyahu, the famed Gaon of Vilna, and Mezeritch was the hometown of Rabbi DovBer (the ‘Maggid’), leader of the chassidic movement.

Related Rabbi Schneur Zalman: “I debated as to where I should go. I knew that in Vilna one was taught how to study, and that in Mezeritch one could learn how to pray. To study I was somewhat able, but of prayer I knew very little. So I went to Mezeritch.

“The Almighty blessed me with making the right choice. I became a devoted chassid of the Rebbe’s and, upon my return to Vitebsk, I guided my disciples in the teachings of chassidism, which were well received by them.”

אור תורה  
Ohr Torah

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

### On The Spiral Staircase of Prayer

*“Your clothing did not wear out from upon you, and your foot did not swell these 40 years”* (Eikev 8:4).

It can sometimes be difficult to pray with fiery passion, particularly when one feels physically or emotionally drained. This heaviness occurs because man is composed of the four elements, and while fire, wind, and water are all somewhat light and movable, when the decidedly heavy and immovable element of earth becomes dominant, prayer can be all but impossible. The Baal Shem Tov suggests this was King David’s concern when he beseeched G-d to not cast him aside “at a time of old age.” When I find myself unable to pray because my limbs have figuratively grown heavy like that of an old man, David implored, do not forsake me.

The solution is to pray with as much power as one can muster now, even when the passion is not yet there. Inspiration will soon follow. And when that passion wanes again, do not despair, because such ups and downs are signs of progress, not setbacks.

This concept is illustrated by a following parable from the Baal Shem Tov: One who is walking toward a great light at the top of a spiral staircase will inevitably lose sight of his or her goal as the path winds around and around. But every step, even those steps taken in darkness, brings the individual closer to the

light at the top of the staircase. Similarly, fluctuating levels of love and fear of G-d are typical signs of forward motion along the spiral staircase of prayer.

With this introduction we can understand the deeper meaning behind the verse in this week’s Torah portion: “Your clothing did not wear out from upon you, and your foot did not swell these 40 years” (Eikev 8:4). The verse describes a miracle that took place in the wilderness: the Clouds of Glory that surrounded the Jewish people laundered their clothes, and children’s clothing grew with the wearer, so there was never a need for new garments.

On a mystical level, the cloud represents darkness and an apparent inability to inspire oneself to pray. One may mistake such emotional “cloud cover” for a setback in one’s relationship with G-d, but those apparent low points are in fact laundering our spiritual garments. Whatever lack of enthusiasm we feel now will soon be followed by a fiery passion. And when our passion reasserts itself, our “children will grow with their clothes”—our lackluster meditations, termed “children” due to their immaturity, will join the lofty ranks of our most impassioned prayers.

## The Story of Our Heart

*“Behold, days are coming, says G-d, and I will form a covenant with the house of Yisrael and with the house of Yehudah, a new covenant. Not like the covenant that I formed with their forefathers on the day I took them by the hand to take them out of the land of Egypt ... For this is the covenant that I will form with the house of Yisrael after those days, says G-d: I will place My law in their midst and I will inscribe it upon their hearts” (Yirmiyah 31:30-32).*

We received the Torah at Sinai by way of command. Until today, we must compel ourselves to obey the Torah’s laws. In the era of redemption, we will have an entirely new relationship with the Torah. G-d will inscribe it on our hearts, meaning that we will all desire to implement that Torah’s laws, and there will no longer be an inner struggle. In fact, the very concept of being commanded to do something in that era will be solely for the purpose of enhancing our *mitzvos* and our reward, due to the superiority of one who is commanded and obeys.

Nachalas Yaakov

## לקוטי שיחות A Sicha

By: [ProjectLikkuteiSichos.org](http://ProjectLikkuteiSichos.org)  
Adapted from the works of the Lubavitcher Rebbe

## The Commandment of Food Blessings

**The Formulations:** In his “Order of Blessings,” a guide for the proper manner of reciting blessings before and after food, included in his Siddur, the Alter Rebbe formulates the obligation to recite grace after meals as follows:

*“There is a positive mitzvah in the Torah to bless [i.e., recite grace] after meals. As it says, “you will eat and you will be satisfied and you shall bless G-d.”*

In his Code of Jewish Law, however, he formulates this slightly differently, writing,

*“It is a positive mitzvah... to bless G-d after meals. As it says, “you will eat and you will be satisfied and you shall bless G-d etc.”*

This language is drawn from Rambam, but it again appears there with a slight alteration. Rambam writes,

*“It is a positive mitzvah to bless [i.e., recite grace] after meals. As it says, “you will eat and you will be satisfied and shall bless G-d your G-d...”*

Rambam does not say there is a positive mitzvah to “bless G-d,” only, to “bless,” unlike the Alter Rebbe in his code. But Rambam does include in his citation from the verse the continuation “bless G-d your G-d,” while the Alter Rebbe only includes the portion “bless G-d,” and alludes to the rest of the verse with “etc.”

**The Explanation:** The Rambam and the Alter Rebbe’s Code are comprehensive treatments of halacha, while the Order of Blessings in the Siddur are meant to be instructions for how to practically observe each obligation as it arises throughout the day. Consequently, in the Code the Alter Rebbe addresses halachic issues and concerns which may be related to the topic at hand, while in the Siddur he will only narrowly concern himself with the obligation under discussion.

In the verse “you shall bless G-d” there is a conjunctive word “*es*” from which the Talmud derives an ancillary obligation for the guest to bless the host, in addition to his obligation to bless G-d.

In order to emphasize that this obligation is only rabbinic, and not included in the biblical obligation of grace after meals, the Alter Rebbe and Rambam therefore say “there is a positive mitzvah to *bless G-d*,” thereby excluding the implication of the verse of an additional obligation to bless the host.

This is a concern only in the broader discussion of the laws of grace. In the strictly practical discussion of the Siddur, the Alter Rebbe does not need to address such halachic issues, especially since the law of blessing the host is not included in the Siddur.

Another distinction between the Code and the Siddur: In the Code the Alter Rebbe provides robust reasoning behind each law, so the student's grasp of the law is deep and complete. In the Siddur, the Alter Rebbe only provides minimal reasons behind the law, if that reason can elevate the practical observance of the law.

The verse "you shall bless," continues, "for the good land that G-d has given you." The sages derive from this that grace after meals should include a blessing thanking G-d for the Land of Israel. In his Code, therefore, the Alter Rebbe alludes to this continuation by including "etc." so the student will have the additional knowledge that this verse is the source for the format of grace after meals.

In the Siddur, however, the Alter Rebbe only provides the portion of the verse that explains why a person should say grace, since the food that has sated you comes from G-d, it is proper to give thanks. The continuation of the verse that sheds light on the format of grace after meals is not important.

**A Final Distinction:** This explains a contrasting

distinction: In the Siddur, the Alter Rebbe continues, "Whoever derives pleasure from this world without a blessing, it is considered as if he gained private use from Heavenly offerings, as it says, 'to G-d is the land and its fullness etc.'"

In the Code, however, the Alter Rebbe does not include the "etc."

The continuation of that verse is "the world and those who dwell within it." Thus the first half of the verse states that the land of Israel and its fullness belong to G-d, and the second half of the verse adds that the entire universe with all its inhabitants belong to G-d.

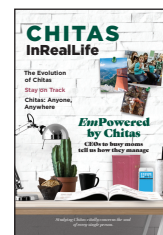
Because the Alter Rebbe is concerned with practical observance in the Siddur, he goes out of his way to highlight obligations which may be self-understood, a practice which he does not follow in his Code. Therefore, concerning this theme of blessing G-d before partaking of His possessions, the Alter Rebbe adds the "etc," to allude to the obvious, that this applies to everything in this world, not just the materials of the Land of Israel.

*Likkutei Sichos vol. 24, p. 67ff.*

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

Book	Section
Chumash – Rashi*	Eikev, 7th Aliyah
Tehillim*	Chapters 88 – 89
Tanya*	Igeres Hakodesh #5. ממנה ח"ו. קט- עד עמ' 216 - והנה באדם התחתון... עד עמ' 216
Rambam – Sefer Hamitzvos*	Negative Mitzvah #61
Rambam – One Chapter*	Sefer Ahavah – The Order of Prayer for the Entire Year (I)
Rambam – Three Chapters**	Sefer Hafla'ah – Hilchos Shevuos Chapters 1 – 3

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



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