

Chayus

A Shabbos Stimulus

THE EDA AND DAVID SCHOTTENSTEIN EDITION

In Loving Memory of Itta bas Yosef Mordechai ז"ה and Tzvi Daniel ben David ז"ה Ainsworth

Dedicated by David & Eda Schottenstein

הקהל

Hakhel

A Hakhel Moment of Reflection

Every year at this time [Chodesh Elul] the Jew is called upon to take account of all his thoughts, words and deeds during the outgoing year, with a view to prepare himself for Rosh Hashanah when he accepts upon himself the absolute sovereignty of the *Creator of the World* and *King of the World*. If such preparedness is called for in any year, surely this should be done with even greater dedication and devotion at the conclusion of the *Hakhel-Year*. For the significance of *Hakhel*, in a spiritual sense, is that it indicates and demands the gathering of all one's thoughts, words and deeds, in order to orientate them toward, and place them in, one's inner "*Beis Hamikdosh*," with wholehearted submission to the King's command—the Will of G-d.

This year, at the conclusion of the *Hakhel-Year*, every Jew must undertake a special "stock-taking" in the spirit of *Hakhel*, with a firm resolve to:

Change those thoughts, words, and deeds in the daily life which require a change;

Repair and improve those which require more perfection;

And instill more enthusiasm and vitality into those which, though accomplished to perfection in relation to the spiritual level in commonplace months, are yet to be revitalized in the spirit of the present moment, on the eve of the "Coronation" of the King, when all thoughts, words, and deeds must be on quite a different plane of exultation ...

From a Letter of The Lubavitcher Rebbe, from the Days of Selichos, 5727

סיפור חסידי

Once Upon a Chasid

By Yanki Tauber

Published by Kehot Publication Society

Stolen Wisdom

When you go forth to war upon your enemies... and you capture a captive (Ki Seitzei 21:10)

Also from one's spiritual enemies one must "capture a captive." Anything negative in man or in the world can be exploited for the good, if one learns how to derive from it a lesson in the service of the Creator.

Rabbi Yisroel Baal Shem Tov

Rabbi Zusha of Anipoli said:

I learned seven things from the thief:

1. Whatever he does, he keeps to himself.
2. He is willing to take risks to attain his goal.
3. He does not distinguish between 'major' and 'minor' things, but takes equally exacting care of each and every detail.

4. He invests great effort in what he does.
5. He is swift.
6. He is always optimistic.
7. If at first he fails, he is back time and again for another try.

The Cry of a Child

You shall not see your brother's ox or sheep going astray and ignore them; rather, you should restore them to your brother... And so you shall do with every lost thing of your brother—you may not remain oblivious (Ki Seitzei 22:1-3)

When Rabbi DovBer of Lubavitch was a young man, he lived in the same house as his father, Rabbi Schneur Zalman. Rabbi DovBer and his family lived in the ground floor apartment, and Rabbi Schneur Zalman lived on the second floor.

One night, while Rabbi DovBer was deeply engrossed in his studies, his youngest child fell out of his cradle and began to cry. Rabbi DovBer heard nothing. But Rabbi Schneur Zalman, who was also immersed in study in his room on the second floor, heard the infant's cries. The Rebbe came downstairs, lifted the infant from the floor, soothed his tears, replaced him in the cradle, and rocked him to sleep. Rabbi DovBer remained oblivious throughout it all. Later, Rabbi Schneur Zalman admonished his son: "No matter how lofty your involvements, you must never fail to hear the cry of a child."

The Lubavitcher Rebbe told this story to a gathering of community activists in 1962. "To me," said the Rebbe, "this story characterizes the approach of Chabad-Lubavitch. With all the emphasis on self-refinement and one's personal service of the Almighty, one must always hear the cry of a child.

"This is most applicable today, when so many Jewish children of all ages, have fallen out of the cradle of their heritage. Their souls cry out to us, and we must have the sensitivity to hear their cries and to respond. We must interrupt our prayers and our studies and do everything in our power to sooth these desperate souls and restore them to their cradle."

אור תורה
Ohr Torah

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

Falling With Purpose

Before collecting eggs or chicks from a nest, we are commanded to chase away the mother bird. "You must send away the mother [bird], and take the children for yourself" (Ki Teitzei 22:7).

Mystically, this verse describes how to act in a spiritually undesirable situation. When we sense that the "mother"—the Divine presence—has departed from our lives, this is a signal that G-d has sent us into His lowest and most vile worlds with the express intent that we elevate those worlds to holiness. This mission is very important to G-d, and we accomplish it by "taking the children": reinvesting in love and fear of G-d (termed offspring in Kabbalah), in spite of the darkness.

Based on this we can understand why, when a potential convert asked Hillel to teach him the entire Torah while he stood on one foot, Hillel responded: "That which is hateful to you, do not do to others. That is the entire Torah. The rest is commentary. Go study" (Tractate Shabbos 31a).

On a deeper level, the potential convert was asking for a guarantee that he would always remain in a good state, never falling spiritually. Only then would he agree to convert. Hillel responded with a message of loving your neighbor: when you were in a vile, lowly world, G-d made a good person fall just to lift you up. As a Jew you should expect to return that favor, and await the day that G-d casts you down into a lowly, vile world. There, far from the "mother bird," you will reinvest in "the children" (love and fear of G-d) and spiritually rescue someone in need.

Redemption in The Alef Beis

The final redemption is associated with the *alef-beis* in reverse order:

Taf-shin-reish-kuf (תשרק) refers to whistling, as is, “I will whistle to them, and I will gather them, for I have redeemed them” (Zechariah 10:8).

Tzadik-pay-ayin-samech (צפעס) refers to “drip wine,” as in, “It will be on that day that the mountains will drip with wine, and the hills will flow with milk, and all the springs of Yehudah will flow with water, and a spring will emanate from the house of G-d” (Yoel 4:18).

Nun-mem-lamed-chaf (נמלך) refers to kingship, as in, “G-d will become King over the whole earth” (Zechariah 14:9).

Yud-tes-ches-zayin (יטהז) refers to “incline, envision,” for all the nations will incline their shoulder as one to serve G-d, as it is stated, “For then I will convert the peoples to a pure language that all of them call in G-d’s name, to worship Him with one shoulder” (Tzefaniah 3:9), then they will see G-d’s return with their own eyes, as it is stated, “For eye to eye they shall see when G-d returns to Tziyon” (Yeshayah 52:8).

Vav-hei-daled-gimel-beis-alef (והדג בא) means “and the fish comes,” referring to the Leviathan and other rewards of the era of redemption.

Rashi (quoted by Shiblei HaLeket)

Remembering Amalek and Shabbos Together

The Context: G-d famously commands the Jewish people to always recall the evil of Amalek:

“You shall remember what Amalek did to you on the way, when you went out of Egypt.... You shall not forget!” (Devarim 25:17-19)

Rambam (Hilchos Melachim 5:5) teaches that Remembering Amalek is a mitzva that we are constantly obligated to fulfill. Similarly, Ramban (on Shemos 20:8) learns that according to its literal interpretation, the Commandment to remember Shabbos is also a constant obligation.

In a cryptic Midrash (*Pirkei DiRebbi Eliezer*, 44), the sages drew a link between this command and the command to remember the Shabbos:

When the Jewish people first heard the mitzvah to remember Amalek, they asked Moshe, “one verse says to remember what Amalek did to you, another verse says to remember the Shabbos. How are we to fulfill both commands to remember?” Moshe answered with a parable: “This is a cup and this is a cup. A cup of spiced wine is not to be compared to a cup of vinegar. This “Remember” is in order to observe and to sanctify the Shabbos day, and the

other “Remember” is in order to destroy and to cut off all the offspring of Amalek.”

The Questions:

- 1) What was the Jewish people’s question? Why would it be problematic to fulfill both mitzvot to remember?
- 2) Why is remembering Amalek compared to a cup of vinegar?
- 3) What did Moshe mean with his preface that both mitzvos are “cups”?

The Explanation: The commandment to remember something does not mean to simply recall the event absentmindedly or superficially. True remembering is when the person relives the event and it permeates him completely.

If this is the case, then recalling Amalek and Shabbos is a difficult balance to hold, for they represent contradictory themes. Remembering the Shabbos means to know that G-d created the world, and recreates it every moment. Included in this is the idea that G-d directs the world and oversees every detail of every creation.

Amalek represents an ideology of “knowing G-d, and intentionally rebelling against Him.” They were a people who had full knowledge that G-d was the Creator, yet they disregarded this and acted as if there was no master to the world. Remembering Amalek in order to destroy them, entails truly recognizing that an entity that disregards G-d exists.

How, then, the Jewish people asked, could we immerse ourselves simultaneously in these two opposite themes, in the constant creation of the world implied in Shabbos, and in the rejection of G-d, implicit in remembering Amalek?

Moshe answered with a parable of wine and vinegar. Vinegar is bitter, yet the sages teach that it has restorative properties. Vinegar is also not considered its own distinct product, it is derived from wine.

Amalek, Moshe was saying, is plainly bitter, it is a rejection of G-d. Yet, it, too, is derived from G-d, from “wine;” G-d created the capacity for Amalek to exist. Therefore, it must be able to serve some purpose. By recognizing the depth of Amalek’s betrayal and consciously rejecting it and asserting G-d’s reality in the face of cynicism, we use Amalek’s evil for

a positive purpose, the strengthening of our own faith.

Thus, both Shabbos and Amalek are “cups”—vessels that can contain the Divine. Yet this objective is realized with different paths. Shabbos affirms G-d’s existence through holy actions. By recalling Amalek, we affirm G-d’s existence through an act of rejection. They are different “cups,” but not contradictory.

The Lesson: When a person lives in the realm of “Shabbos,” of absolute awareness of the Divine reality, it is possible that they think they are immune to the temptations of Amalek. Therefore, the Midrash teaches that these remembrances go together. We must recall the evil of Amalek even while experiencing Shabbos, because we are always vulnerable.

And if we find ourselves in the realm of Amalek, of denying G-d’s reality in our life, we must know there is always hope to reclaim the consciousness of Shabbos. We can take the vinegar of rebellion and use it to restore our souls.

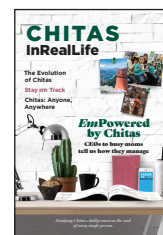
Likkutei Sichos Vol. 19, p. 221ff.

מורה שיעור לחת"ת ורמב"ם לשבת

Shabbos Chitas / Rambam Guide

Book	Section
Chumash – Rashi*	Ki Seitzei, 7th Aliyah
Tehillim*	Chapters 49 – 54
Tanya*	Igeres Hakodesh #12 במצרך וכו'. עמ' קיח- במצרך וכו'. עמ' 234- והנה אתערותא דלעילא... עד עמ' קיח- במצרך וכו'. עמ' 12- Igeres Hakodesh #12
Rambam – Sefer Hamitzvos*	Positive Mitzvah #126 and #129
Rambam – One Chapter*	Sefer Zmanim – Hilchos Shabbos Chapter 18
Rambam – Three Chapters**	Sefer Zeraim – Hilchos Terumos Chapters 1 – 3

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