

CHAYUS

A Shabbos Stimulus

THE EDA AND DAVID SCHOTTENSTEIN EDITION

*In Loving Memory of Itta bas Yosef Mordechai ע"ה and Tzvi Daniel ע"ה ben ע"ה יבדלח"ט David שי' Ainsworth
Dedicated by David & Eda Schottenstein*

Erev Shabbos Parshas Bechukosai, 5782 – May 27, 2022

ערב שבת פרשת בחוקתי, כ"ו אייר, ה'תשפ"ב

כתר שם טוב

PORTIONS OF LIGHT

Adapted from
Keter Shem Tov

The Power of Comedy

Our Sages relate (Ta'anis 22a) that Eliyahu Hanavi showed Rabbi Beroka Choza'ah two people who were deserving of the world to come. Rabbi Beroka discovered that they were professional comedians who would raise the spirits of the crushed and depressed.

These were special individuals, who would strive to elevate the people and refine the physical-

ity they encountered, thereby connecting physicality with divinity. The only kind of person they were unable to spiritually elevate was a depressed person. They would therefore tell jokes until the person laughed and was lifted out of his depression. They were then able to spiritually elevate that person as well.

Keter Shem Tov par. 93c

סיפור חסידי

ONCE UPON A CHASID

By **Yanki Tauber**

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Lost Souls

He shall not exchange it . . . (Bechukosai 27:33)

A wealthy businessman and his coachman arrived in a city one Friday afternoon. The rich man was settled at the best hotel in town, and the coachman went off to his humble lodgings.

Both washed and dressed for the Shabbat, and then set out for the synagogue for the evening prayers. On his way to *shul*, the businessman came across a large wagon which had swerved off the road and was stuck in a ditch. Rushing to help a fellow in need, the businessman climbed down into the ditch and began pushing and pulling at the wagon together with its hapless driver. But for all his finesse at handling the most challenging of business deals, when it came to extracting a wagon and a team of horses from a muddy ditch, our

businessman was hopelessly out of his depth. After struggling for an hour in the knee-deep mud, he succeeded only in ruining his best suit of Shabbat clothes, amassing a most impressive collection of cuts and bruises, and getting the wagon even more impossibly embedded in the mud. Finally, he dragged his limping body to the synagogue, arriving a scant minute before the start of Shabbat.

Meanwhile, the coachman arrived early to the synagogue and sat down to recite a few chapters of Psalms. At the synagogue he found a group of wandering paupers and, being blessed with a most generous nature, the coachman invited them all to share his Shabbat meal. When the synagogue sexton approached the poor and homeless to ar-

range meal placements for them with the town's householders—as is customary in Jewish communities—he received the same reply from them all: “Thank you, but I have already been invited for the Shabbat meal.”

Unfortunately, however, the coachman's budget was hardly equal to his generous heart. It would be most difficult to believe that his dozen guests

left his table with more than a shadow of a meal in their hungry stomachs.

Thus the coachman, with his twenty years of experience in pulling wagons out of mudholes, took it upon himself to feed a small army, while the wealthy businessman, whose Shabbat meal leftovers could easily have fed every hungry man within a ten-mile radius, floundered about in a ditch . . .

Rabbi Yosef Yitzchak of Lubavitch told this story, and explained its lesson: “Every soul is entrusted with a mission unique to her alone, and is granted the specific aptitudes, talents and resources necessary to excel in her ordained role. One must take care not to become one of those lost souls who wander haplessly through life, trying their hand at every field of endeavor except for what is truly and inherently their own.”

אור תורה

OHR TORAH

Translated by: **Yechiel Krisch**

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

The Enthusiastic Prince

“If you [enthusiastically] follow My statutes and guard My commandments and perform them, I will give your rains in their time, the Land will yield its produce, and the tree of the field will give forth its fruit” (Bechukosai 26:3).

Servants never ask for the reasoning behind their king's orders, nor are they permitted to ask—they are expected to blindly follow their master. Out of fear of the king, they obey.

The king's children, on the other hand, are authorized to ask their father for the reasons behind his decisions. Indeed, the king wants his children to ask him questions so that he can explain his strategies, pass along his wisdom, and teach them to one day rule like him. When the children realize that their father is guiding them, not merely ordering them around, their love for their father increases and they become accustomed to following the king's orders even when they do not know the reason.

A servant and a child both heed the king's every command, whether or not they understand his reasoning. But the former acts out of fear, while the latter acts out of love and fiery enthusiasm.

This is the explanation of the verse: *“If you [enthusiastically] follow My statutes and guard My commandments and perform them, I will give your rains*

in their time, the Land will yield its produce, and the tree of the field will give forth its fruit.”

The Jewish people are G-d's own children, confident that the king is guiding them even when they do not understand His reasoning. They are therefore expected to approach even “statutes”—Mitzvot that transcend reason—with enthusiasm. This enthusiasm, however, could engender a cavalier approach to some Mitzvot, particularly those rational instructions that the king has explained to his children. This is why rational Mitzvot (“commandments”) must be “guarded” with fear and awe, lest our great love for our father and enthusiasm for his orders cause us to take too liberal an approach to the details. A healthy dose of fear is necessary to ensure that we perform the Mitzvot, particularly the rational ones, precisely as G-d wishes.

A combination of love and fear is the ideal mode of divine service. And the reward for such behavior is bountiful blessing—rains in their proper time, and a surplus of produce.

Ohr Torah, Par. 124

When A King Rewards!

The Verse: “I will turn to you, I will make you fruitful, and I will increase you” (*Vayikra* 26:9).

The Rashi: *I will turn to you*—I will turn away from all My duties to pay your reward. To what can this be compared? To a king who hired workers, etc., as recorded in *Toras Kohanim*.

I will make you fruitful—With fruitfulness and proliferation.

And I will increase you—with a dignified posture.

The Questions:

- 1) What is unclear about the phrase “I will turn to you” that necessitates Rashi’s explanation?
- 2) How does the parable of the king aid in our understanding of the verse?
- 3) In *Bereishis*, Rashi explains that the word “fruitful” refers to a person having one offspring, and the word “proliferate” to mean having many children (*Rashi to Bereishis* 1:22). How, then, does Rashi interpret the phrase here, “I will make you fruitful” as meaning “with fruitfulness and **proliferation**?”

The Explanation: The difficulty with the phrase “I will turn to you” is that this verse should have introduced all the Divine promises in our *parshah*, immediately following the opening verse, “*If you will go in My statutes and observe My commandments and perform them...*” (*Vayikra* 26:3).

To explain why this verse was placed in the middle of the promises and rewards for fulfilling Torah and *mitzvos*, Rashi presents the parable of “a king who hired workers.”

A king has no need to hire workers, as he can command the citizens to do as he wishes. A king only “hires” and remunerates generously when citizens perform non-essential tasks that go beyond the call of duty.

In the analogue, the *parshah* opens with G-d promising reward for those who “*will go in My statutes and observe My commandments*,” which means, as Rashi explains, “you shall toil in Torah” more than is required, and “toil in Torah in order to safeguard and fulfill...”

Thus, two forms of reward are due to the Jewish people for going “*in My statutes...*”: a) The reward for their basic observance of Torah and *mitzvos*; and b) the special reward for toiling in Torah beyond the parameters of the obligation.

First the Torah enumerates the reward for basic observance, “*I will grant your rain in its time*” (*ibid*, 26:4), alongside the nations of the world who also are in line to receive reward for the fulfillment of their basic obligations. Then the Torah introduces the second type of reward for going beyond the letter of the law, “*I will turn to you.*” Being that this reward is uniquely set aside for those who perform tasks for the king that go beyond their obligations, it is given with special attention, “I will turn away from all My duties to pay your reward.”

This explains Rashi’s interpretation of “*I will make you fruitful*” as “fruitfulness and proliferation.” Because this reward is in recognition of the Jewish people’s striving beyond the obligatory, the blessing of fertility, too, is beyond the normative blessing. In this case, within the “fruitfulness,” which normally means having one child, there is the promise of “proliferation,” meaning, the guarantee of having children who will be fertile, ensuring a proliferation of descendants until the end of time.

The Meaning of Work: A deeper question can be asked: By saying “I will turn away from **all My duties** to pay your reward,” Rashi implies that rewarding the Jewish people is not among “My (G-d’s) duties.” Why would rewarding the Jewish people not be included in G-d’s duties?

A “duty” is something someone does for some external purpose, it is not reflective of a person’s true essence. When G-d interacts with Creation, He acts out of “duty,” His essence is not manifest, it is only His diffused light that is present in Creation. But when a Jew goes beyond his obligation and toils in Torah with his very essence, it elicits a parallel reaction from G-d, “I will turn away from all My duties to pay your reward.” This reward is expressed in physical terms, because when G-d’s Essence is manifest the distinctions between matter

and spirit are dissolved, and G-d's blessing is found in material things as well.

Lingering Self: Yet, this blessing is still referred to as a "reward" which implies a distinct sense of self which is being rewarded. This is because even when a Jew serves G-d and studies Torah with the intention of becoming one with G-d, it is still possible that he is being driven by a spiritually "selfish"

desire, to be one with G-d. Therefore, he is "rewarded" as a distinct being.

But when a Jew performs his service without calculations, then the promise, "I will turn to you" is given optimally, as this section of our *parshah* concludes, "I led you erect." Meaning, G-d's "stature" and the Jewish people's "stature" become one.

Likkutei Sichos vol. 17, p. 321ff.

גאולה GEULAH

Yalkut Moshiach uGeulah al HaTorah
Translated by Yaakov Paley

Love The Rain

"I will give your rains in their time" (Bechukosai 26:4).

At present, rains can be a nuisance to the world. They cause suffering for travelers, anguish for sea voyagers, and they trouble [outdoor] wine press operators and those who work on rooftops. But in the Future Era, the Holy One blessed be He will send rains that will fall entirely as blessings,

as promised in the verse, *"I will make them dwell around My mountain for a blessing, and I will bring down rain in its time; they will be rains of blessing"* (Yechezkel 34:26).

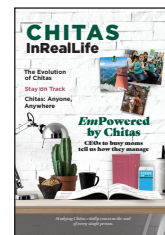
Midrash Rabbah

מורה שיעור לחת"ת ורמב"ם לשבת

SHABBOS CHITAS / RAMBAM GUIDE

BOOK	SECTION
Chumash – Rashi*	Bechukosai, 7th Aliyah
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Rambam – Sefer Hamitzvos*	Negative Mitzvah #256, #301, #304 and #305
Rambam – One Chapter*	Sefer Taharah – Hilchos Keilim, Chapter 3
Rambam – Three Chapters**	Sefer HaMada – Hilchos Deos, Chapters 6 – 7; Hilchos Talmud Torah Chapter 1

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