

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

Enough Talk!

One can ask a question: Why are we looking to commemorate the commandment of Hakhel, if we do not find that anyone else made a commemoration for this Mitzvah? In fact, we find many commandments where a commemoration was instituted (in the words of the Talmud: *Zecher Lamikdash*), yet none was made for Hakhel!?

This question makes for great discussion, but has nothing to do with the topic at hand. We are not seeking to commemorate Hakhel through an actual

observance of some kind, rather, that we tap in to the spiritual message of Hakhel.

Hakhel is a commandment of the Torah, and like any other commandment contains an eternal message. That message is what we are looking to implement into our lives!

That message is: that we come together to listen and be inspired by the words of the Torah, and come to fear G-d.

(*Sefer Hasichos 5748, vol. 1, p. 17*)

סיפור חסידי

Once Upon a Chasid

By Yanki Tauber

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The German Newspapers

And he was youth-like (Vayeishev 37:2)

Joseph would engage in youthful follies, curling his hair and making-up his eyes.

Rashi's Commentary

Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Horodok was once asked: "You are forever extolling the trait of humility. So why do you dress in such handsome clothes?"

Said Rabbi Mendel: "The surest place in which to conceal a chest of treasure is a pit of mud and slime..."

When the third rebbe and leader of Chabad chassidism, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch, passed away in 1866, he was survived by a number of scholarly and pious sons. Each had a following of disciples who wished to see their mentor assume his father's place.

Rabbi Grunem Estherman, one of the great *mashpi'im*¹ in the annals of Lubavitch, was a young man at the time, and undecided as to which of the Rebbe's sons to turn for leadership and guidance. When he discussed his dilemma with the famed disciple Rabbi Shmuel Ber of Barisov, the latter said to him: "Lis-

1. A mashpia is a spiritual guide and mentor

ten, Grunem. They are all children of the Rebbe. ‘They are all beloved, they are all mighty, they are all holy.’² But let me tell you of one incident, and then you do as you see fit.

“During one of my visits to Lubavitch, there was something in our late Rebbe’s discourse which I found difficult to understand—it seemed to contradict a certain passage in the kabbalistic work of *Eitz Chayim*.³ None of the elder disciples were able to provide an answer satisfactory to me, so that night I made my rounds among the Rebbe’s sons. I visited Rabbi Yehudah Leib, Rabbi Chaim Schneur Zalman, and the others. Each offered an explanation, but, again, none of their ideas satisfied my mind.

“By now it was fairly late at night. I was headed for my lodgings when I noticed a light burning in Rabbi Shmuel’s window. I had not considered asking him—he is the youngest of the sons and, as you know, his behavior is that of a rather ordinary and indistinct individual. However, I was curious to know what he is up to at such a late hour. So I pulled myself up on to his windowsill and looked in. What did I see, but Rabbi Shmuel immersed in the very section of *Eitz Chayim* where my difficulty lay?! So I figured I had best go in and discuss it with him.

“I went round to the door and knocked. ‘Just a minute’ he called out. After a rather long minute the door opened. I took in the scene: newspapers were laid out on the table, German papers, Russian papers. Of the *Eitz Chayim*—not a trace.

“‘Reb Shmuel Ber! It’s rather late, isn’t it?’ he said. ‘How can I help you?’ I told him of my problem with the discourse the Rebbe had delivered that day and the passage in *Eitz Chayim*. ‘Ah, Reb Shmuel Ber’ he said ‘they say you are a smart Jew. Nu, I ask you, you come to me with a question in *Eitz Chayim*...?’

“‘Listen, my friend,’ I said, “your game is up. A few minutes ago I saw you with the *Eitz Chayim*. Now either you tell me how you understand it, or else tomorrow the entire Lubavitch will hear about the interesting tricks you pull with your German papers.’

“We sat and discussed the matter till morning,” Rabbi Shmuel Ber concluded his story, “and I came away thoroughly impressed with the extent and depth of his knowledge. This is what I can tell you, Grunem, now you do as you see fit...”

2. A phrase from the daily morning prayers.

3. A collection of the kabbalistic teachings of Rabbi Issac Luria (the ‘Ari’ 1534-1572) compiled by his disciple, Rabbi Chaim Vital.

Bringing the wayward home

The opening verses of this week’s Torah portion can be interpreted to imply a lesson in Divine service: **“And Yakov settled in the land where his father inhabited, in the land of Canaan. These are the descendants of Yaakov: Yosef...” (Vayeishev 37:1-2).**

The Divine mission given to a Jew and the purpose of his creation is to keep the Creator’s Mitzvos and serve Him. Thus, a person enters the world (“And Yaakov settled”), with the purpose of spending his life cleaving to G-d. Despite the fact that one is surrounded by the physicality and coarseness of this world (“in the land”), one must stand in fear and awe of his father in heaven (“where his father inhabited”). And although one lives among the wicked (“in the land of Canaan”), do not learn from the habits of your evil neighbors. Rather, the sole intent is to increase in Mitzvos and good deeds, which are the spiritual descendants of the righteous (“these are the descendants of Yaakov”) and which add delight and satisfaction to G-d (the name “Yosef” means “may he add”). The truly righteous person constantly remains faithful to this mission.

“...was seventeen years old, he would shepherd sheep with his brothers, and he acted as a young lad with the children of Bilhah and the children of Zilpah, the wives of his father” (37:2).

The wicked, however, ignore their mission in this world and follow the whims of their hearts, thinking only of physical pleasures, filling their stomachs, and bringing evil upon themselves. (The word “seventeen” [שבַּע עֶשְׂרֵה] shares a root with the word “satiating” [שׂוֹבֵעַ], hinting to their full stomachs, while the word “shepherd” [רֹעֵה] shares a root with the word “evil” [רָע]). They abandon their father in heaven (the word “sheep” [צֹאן] is similar to the word for “departing” or “abandoning” [צִאת]) and cast off the yoke of Torah and Mitzvos.

The wicked are small-minded, foolish, and immature (“and he acted as a young lad”), and spend time in the company of gluttons and drunkards. (“Bilhah” is related to the word “swallow” [בֹּלַע], referring to gluttony. “Zilpah” is related to the word “to slosh” [לִזְלוֹן], referring to drunkenness.) This causes the wicked to entirely forget about G-d and their mission. (“The wives” [נָשִׁי] shares a root with the phrase “he has caused me to forget” [נִשְׁכַּח].)

And Yosef brought evil tales about them to their father. And Yisroel loved Yosef more than all of his sons, because he was the son of his old age, and he made him a fine garment” (Vayeishev 37:2-3).

When someone righteous (“Yosef”) sees the “evil tales” of the wickedness perpetrated by their generation, they lament this evil and stand at the spiritual breach, reprove the wicked and inspire them to be better, elevating them to holiness and bringing them back “to their father” in heaven. Because they are involved in returning His children to Him, G-d loves the righteous: “and Yisroel loved Yosef.”

OT, Par. 58

גאולה Geulah

Yalkut Moshiah uGeulah al HaTorah
Translated by Yaakov Paley

A Plea To Live In Tranquility

Our Sages teach that Yaakov pleaded to live in tranquility and therefore G-d sent him the harsh suffering of Yosef’s sale so that his wish could eventually be granted. With us, the very opposite is true. Over the course of our exile, we have suffered countless massacres, pogroms, harsh decrees, and the like, all the way down to the Holocaust. G-d now awaits our urgent and sincere plea to live in the eternal tranquility of the true and complete redemption. If we earnestly beg G-d to send the redemption, He will do so immediately.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe

לקוטי שיחות A Sicha

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

A Stamp and A Seal

The Context: Tamar asked Yehuda to leave her with a security deposit as a guarantee that he would return with payment.

“So he said, ‘What is the pledge that I should give you?’ And she said, ‘Your signet, your cloak, and the staff that is in your hand.’ So he gave them to her, and he came to her, and she conceived his likeness” (*Bereishis* 38:18).

The Rashi: *Your signet, your cloak*—Onkelos renders: עֲזָקְתְּךָ וְשׂוֹשֵׁפֶךָ, your ring with which you seal, and your cloak with which you cover yourself.

The Question: The literal meaning of the Hebrew words used in the verse is “stamp,” and “thread” or “belt.” Why does Rashi depart from the literal meaning of these words as used throughout Tanach, and instead, render them as “your **ring**,

with which you seal, and your **cloak**, with which you cover yourself”?

The Explanation: Tamar wanted items that identified Yehuda as their owner so that when she identified him as the father, he would be unable to deny her claim. She had no reason to assume that Yehuda was carrying his personal stamp, however, because he was on his way to shear his sheep and had no use for a stamp. Rashi, therefore, understands “*chosamcha*” as referring to a ring, which Yehuda would always carry on his finger. But it was the type of ring that Yehuda also used as a seal, which would link it directly to him, as opposed to a simple piece of jewelry.

Similarly, Rashi does not render “*pesilcha*” as a belt or a string, because there is nothing distinctive about those items. Instead, Rashi interprets it as “your **cloak**, with which you cover yourself,” meaning, a unique article of clothing that was known to belong to Yehuda.

The Deeper Dimension: The Midrash likens the addition of Shabbos to the six days of Creation, to

a king who had a ring but no seal. Just as the ring is incomplete without the seal, so is creation incomplete without Shabbos.

Thus, the ring alludes to the natural order, but the natural order alone is incomplete, for it does not disclose its creator, leaving us with the impression that it is an autonomous entity. The seal alludes to Shabbos. Just as a seal reveals the identity of the owner of the seal, so does Shabbos reveal that G-d is the author of Creation.

The ring and its seal is, thus, a metaphor for the fusion of nature and the supernatural.

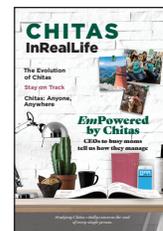
This is the deeper explanation as to why Tamar requested this ring and seal—Tamar represents the Divine faculty of *malchus*, synonymous with the natural order. She requests a ring with a seal, the mark of the Creator, so that awareness of G-d’s transcendence is infused into the natural world. Ultimately, this union gives birth to Moshiach, whose soul will bring about the true fusion between nature and G-d.

Likkutei Sichos vol. 15, p. 331ff.

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

Book	Section
Chumash – Rashi*	Vayeishev, 7th Aliyah
Tehillim*	Chapters 108 – 112
Tanya*	Likkutei Amarim Chapter 1. (עמ' 10 - ושבעים פנים לתורה).
Rambam – Sefer Hamitzvos*	Positive Mitzvah #99
Rambam – One Chapter*	Sefer Mishpatim – Hilchos Malveh V'Loveh, Chapter 9
Rambam – Three Chapters**	Sefer Taharah – Hilchos Metam'ei Mishkav uMoshav 1 – 3

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