

SICHA STORY

PROJECT LIKKUTEI SICHOS | 5783 - YEAR OF HAKHEL



Likkutei Sichos, Volume 19

Vayelech, Sicha 4 (First Sicha of the week)

- Rabbi Yossi Nemes, Metairie, Louisiana

לזכות חנה בת רבקה מירל, ליום הולדתה כ"א אלול, שנת הצלחה בכל

The lesson at the end of this Hakhel Sicha: 1. Hakhel in Avoda is not allowing הנפש but rather having our thoughts, speech and actions aligned. 2. This can be accomplished only VIA the Melech, representing 3. ביטול וקבלת עול. Fear of Hashem and Kabbalas Ol can bring one to feel downtrodden, which is why the King was on a Bima, representing והתנשאות feeling elevated. 4. This pride is tempered by limitations learned from the Bima being of wood and in the Azara.

A Rebbe inspires to have every aspect permeated with Torah

In one of the earliest Sichos of the Rebbe after Yud Shevat (5710), the Rebbe brings out the theme of the first two lessons above, utilizing two stories. Stories in bold:

The Rebbe [Rayatz] earnestly asks and expects that building a home on the foundations of the Torah should not refer only to the holy aspects of the home, but that all of its mundane aspects too should be permeated with Torah.

The distinction between these two conceptions is highlighted in a story which the Rebbe [Rayatz] once told:

There were once two brothers. One was a chassid; he was poor, of course, and had a few daughters. The other was misnaged; he was wealthy and had several sons. When the daughters approached marriageable age, the chassid decided to ask his brother for help with the cost of marrying them off.

For a start, the host gave him a guided tour of his spacious mansion: "This is my private study; in this room I sleep; in this room I dine; in this room I receive guests;" and so on.

This done, he asked his brother: “Nu, what do you have to say about my home?”

Replied the chassid: “I am impressed by your ability to live amidst such a scattering of the soul. In one special room you sleep, in one special room you dine, in one special room you study Torah and observe mitzvos. I have only two rooms: I am unable to allocate separate places for sleeping and eating and observing the Torah and its mitzvos....”

A Jewish home is not divided into separate sections, with one section set apart for holy matters, and the rest for mundane affairs. Rather, the Torah should permeate - and it does permeate - the home in its entirety.

A model of this ideal may be found in the particular avodah of every day: the avodah of davening should permeate and activate the entire day.

It was the custom of Harav Yosef Yitzchak, son of the Tzemach Tzedek, after whom the Rebbe [Rayatz] was named, [and who in true Chabad tradition sought to accompany his prayers with protracted meditation on appropriate teachings of Chassidus], to first go to shul to hear Barchu, Kedushah, and the Repetition of the Shemoneh Esreh. He would then pray privately.

When he was asked how he discharged his obligation of praying with a congregation, he replied that he endeavored to congregate and marshal all ten faculties of his soul - and with this “congregation” he would pray.

The strength required to accomplish this - so that the Torah will permeate one’s entire household, and so that one’s davenen will permeate everything one does in the course of the day - is drawn down and directed to every individual by the Rebbe, by means of the teachings of Chassidus.

(Sichos Shabbos Teruma, 5710)

The Breitkeit of an Ish Pashut

Pesach 1930, when the previous Rebbe was in America, he asked Rabbi Zalman Havlin, who was visiting from Israel, if he remembered what happened in the year 1898, when his father, the Rebbe Rashab was at Dacha.

Reb Zalman shared what had occurred: R’ Berel Bishenkovitz walked from his hometown to Lubavitch, for his annual pilgrimage to hear Chassidus from the Rebbe. When he arrived in Lubavitch he found out that the Rebbe was in dacha. He took his belongings and walked the long Trek to the Dacha. When he arrived, he heard that the Rebbe would not be saying Chassidus. Berel was severely disappointed that after walking all this way, he would have to go this year without hearing a Maamor from the rebbe...

There was a simple Jew, in that village, who everyday brought dairy products, that he himself produced, for the rebbe and his family. This person would also gather people twice a day to ensure that the Rebbe would have a Minyan for Davening.

When this person saw that Berel was distraught he thought there must be something majorly wrong. He asked Berel if he needed help, or if he needed a place to sleep. Berel assured him that he was fine. "I have everything I need, the reason I am so distraught is because I will not be hearing a Maamor from the Rebbe. I worked so hard to get here and it means so much to me, but it was not meant to be."

This simple Yid, without giving it much thought, utilized his privilege of constant access to the Rebbe, to go into the rebbe and share about Berel's pain that he cannot hear Chassidus from the rebbe. The yid continued, "When I see that a Jew is in pain and I can do something about it, I always help them. If they lack eggs I bring them eggs, and same with butter or milk. Now you, my dear Rebbe, can help Berel by reciting Chassidus, so why not help him? A short while later they were notified that the Rebbe would recite a Maamor .

After that Maamor, Berel's face was shining, and he was in a state of joy. When the simple Yid saw this, he went back into the Rebbe's room and shared with emotion what an immense pleasure the Rebbe gave Berel, by reciting the Maamor . He then asked a Bracha from the Rebbe that he, at least in Gan Eden, should have the same joy and pleasure as Berel. The Rebbe responded that every time you finish Tehilim in this world, you will be rewarded in the world to come, by being taught the entire Tehilim with a new commentary. After this person heard this from the Rebbe, he started saying Tehilim with great emotion.

This simple Yid was not sophisticated and had a powerful sense of Kabbalas Ol, but he also had the Breitkeit to walk into the Rebbe and make a 'demand' on behalf of another Yid.

(Shmuos V'Sipurim, Chelek Gimmel)
