



PRIMETIME SURPRISE

In middle of the Torah's list of Jewish holidays—between Passover and Rosh Hashanah—a societal mitzvah suddenly appears. How does that fit in?

TEACHER'S MANUAL



JEWISH INSIGHTS

A TASTE OF THE REBBE'S TEACHINGS



PARSHAT EMOR

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Shluchim of the Rebbe to Mumbai India



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A. Gifts to the Poor from the Produce.....1

In our Torah portion, the Torah details all the Jewish festivals and the offerings brought on them. Yet, surprisingly, it "inserts" in the middle the commandments of pe'ah (corner) and leket (gleanings), two kinds of agricultural gifts for the poor (Source 1).

Rashi quotes Rabbi Avdimi, who explains that this teaches us that one who properly fulfills the commandments of pe'ah and leket is considered as if they built the Holy Temple and offered sacrifices there (Source 2).

The Rebbe asks:

A. Rashi quotes the name of the author of the teaching—Rabbi Avdimi. Why?

B. In the original source Rashi draws from, the wording is “as if the Holy Temple were standing and he was offering his sacrifices in it,” but Rashi chooses a different phrasing: “it is considered as if he built the Holy Temple and offered sacrifices in it.” Why the change?

C. Later, Rashi explains that the landowner has no discretion in choosing who receives the pe'ah and leket—any poor person can come and take them. This raises a question: these commandments already appeared in the previous Torah portion, so why didn't Rashi provide this explanation there?

B. The Value of Toil.....5

Pe'ah and leket are unique commandments. Unlike a loan, where the money is eventually returned to the lender, these gifts to the poor remain with the recipient. This parallels the offerings brought in the Holy Temple: just as the offering remains there and is not taken outside for personal use, so too, the charity of pe'ah and leket remains with the poor and is not returned to the field owner (as explained by Gur Aryeh, Source 3).

Another unique element in pe'ah and leket, beyond ordinary charity, is the degree of effort involved.

There are two levels of charity:

A. Giving money acquired without much effort.

B. Giving money earned through hard labor.

The Alter Rebbe explains in the Tanya the special virtue of charity given from hard-earned money—because in that case, one’s entire natural soul is elevated to G-d (Source 4).

Since agricultural work requires significant effort—plowing, sowing, and harvesting—when a Jew leaves pe’ah and leket for the poor, it is a higher form of charity, as it comes from money earned through exceptional toil.

Thus, if ordinary charity (not earned through special effort) is equated to bringing a sacrifice to the Holy Temple, then pe’ah and leket, which involve much more effort, are considered as if one “built the Holy Temple,” because the effort invested in this charity is comparable to the labor invested in building the Holy Temple itself. (This answers Question 2.)

C. Pure Giving – Without Personal Interest.....10

When a Jew is commanded to leave grain for the poor, he might be inclined to prioritize his own poor servant or maid—after all, they helped him with the agricultural work. But the Torah explicitly forbids favoring acquaintances in this case. Rather, he must allow all poor people to take from the produce equally.

When pe’ah and leket are given in this impartial way, it is considered “as if he built the Holy Temple,” because this reflects a profound emotional effort—putting the needs of others ahead of one’s own interests and giving away the produce he worked hard to grow, with no personal benefit in return.

This answers Question 3. In line with the verses that emphasize the special effort involved in the commandments of pe’ah and leket, and their equivalence to building the Temple, Rashi highlights the added difficulty—that this is a form of giving completely devoid of self-interest.

To explain this more deeply, Rashi mentions the name of the sage—Rabbi Avdimi.

The Talmud tells of a time when a student asked Rabbi Yosei bar Chalafta why “the poor of your own city take precedence.” Instead of answering himself, Rabbi Yosei bar Chalafta had his son, Rabbi Avardimus (Avdimi), respond—because Rabbi Avardimus was passionate about this, and his answer would touch the heart of the questioner.

Since Rabbi Avardimus had a special excitement for this law, mentioning him here emphasizes the conceptual shift in the case of pe’ah and leket, where that principle is set aside, and the charity must be distributed equally to all.

When we fulfill both of the mitzvot with the same fervor, and transform our natural inclinations, we are truly considered as if we “built the Temple and offered sacrifices in it.”

Introduction

In the reading of Emor, as we read about the Jewish holidays, we're interrupted with the mitzvot of Leket and Pe'ah—giving a portion of our produce to the poor. The Torah pauses the holiday commandments to discuss forgotten stalks in the field.

השיעור לפרשת אמור

משיחת מוצאי שבת קודש פרשת אמור, ה'תשל"ח,
שיחות קודש, ה'תשל"ח ח"ב עמוד 253 (בתרגום המערכת)
ראה גם לקו"ש חי"ז, שיחה ג'

A. Gifts to the Poor from the Produce

The reading of Emor is the eighth portion in the book of Leviticus, dealing with a host of various laws. In this reading, the list of Jewish festivals that we celebrate each year is mentioned for the first time. In the middle of this list, the Torah "inserts" the agricultural commandments of leket and pe'ah, which are not related to the festivals at all. Why?

Source 1 Leviticus 23, 4-5; 15-16; 21-22; 24; 27

Student's
pg. 1

These are G-d's appointed days, holy occasions, which you shall designate in their appointed time.

אלה מועדי ה' מקראי קדש,
אשר תקראו אתם במועדם.

Passover

In the first month, on the fourteenth of the month, in the afternoon, you shall sacrifice the Passover offering to G-d.

בחודש הראשון בארבעה עשר
לחודש בין הערבים פסח לה'.

Shavuot

You shall count for yourselves from the day after the festival, from the day of your bringing of the sheaf of the waving, seven weeks; they shall be complete. Until the day after the seventh week, you shall count fifty days, then, you shall present a new meal offering to G-d...

וספרתם לכם ממחרת השבת,
מיום הביאתכם את עמר התנופה,
שבע שבתות תמימות תהיינה.
עד ממחרת השבת השביעת
תספרו חמשים יום, והקרבתם
מנחה חדשה לה'...

You shall proclaim on that very day, a holy occasion it shall be for you; you shall not perform any toilsome labor; it is an eternal statute in all your dwellings for your generations.

וקראתם בעצם היום הזה,
מקרא קדש יהיה לכם, כל
מלאכת עבודה לא תעשו, חקת
עולם בכל מושבתיכם לדורותיכם.

Leket and pe'ah for the Poor

When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not finish the corner (pe'ah) of your field in your reaping; And the gleanings (leket) of your harvest, you shall not gather. For the poor and for the stranger you shall leave them, I am your G-d.

ובקצורכם את קציר ארצכם, לא
תכלה פאת שדה בקצורך ולקט
קצירך לא תלקט, לעני ולגר
תעזב אתם, אני ה' אלקיכם.

Pe'ah

A Jew who harvests his field is obligated to leave a portion of the grain at the edge of the field for the poor, as the verse states: "You shall not finish the corner of your field in your reaping." This portion is called pe'ah. This obligation also applies to gathering fruit from trees – a portion must be left for the poor. According to the Torah, there is no fixed amount for pe'ah, but the Sages established that one must not give less than one-sixtieth (1/60) of the field, whether in the Land of Israel or outside it. This amount should be increased based on the size of the field, the number of poor people in the area, and the blessing of the yield. Anyone who increases their pe'ah offering is rewarded from Heaven.

Leket

During the harvest and gathering of sheaves, a Jew must leave for the poor any stalks that fall during the harvest, as it is stated: "You shall not gather the gleanings of your harvest." Leket refers to stalks that fall from the sickle during cutting, or from the harvester's hand while gathering stalks. It is important to note that leket is defined only when one or two stalks fall at a time. If three stalks fall together at once, all three belong to the field owner and not to the poor.

Rosh Hashanah

Student's
pg. 2

Speak to the children of Israel, saying: In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, shall be a rest for you, a remembrance by means of a shofar blast, a holy occasion.

דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר:
"בְּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּאַחַד לַחֹדֶשׁ
יְהִי־לָכֶם שַׁבָּתוֹן זִכְרוֹן תְּרוּעָה
מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ."

Yom Kippur

However, on the tenth day of this seventh month, is the Day of Atonement. A holy occasion it shall be for you. You shall afflict yourselves, and you shall bring a fire offering to G-d.

"אֵךְ בַּעֲשׂוֹר לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי
הַזֶּה – יוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים הוּא, מִקְרָא
קֹדֶשׁ יְהִי־לָכֶם, וְעִנִּיתֶם אֶת
נַפְשֵׁיכֶם, וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אֹשֶׁה
לַה'."

The Relevance

Rashi

Student's
pg. 2

When you reap the harvest: Rabbi Avdimi the son of Rabbi Yosef says: Why does Scripture place this passage in the

וּבְקִצְרְכֶם: אָמַר ר' אַבְדִּימִי בְרַבִּי יוֹסֵף, מָה רָאָה הַכָּתוּב לְתַנּוּה

very middle of the laws regarding the Festivals—with Passover and Shavuot on one side and Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, and the Festival of Sukkot on the other? To teach you that whoever gives gleanings, forgotten sheaves, and the corners of the field to the poor in the appropriate manner is deemed as if they have built the Holy Temple and offered up their sacrifices within it.

You shall leave: Place the produce before them, and they shall gather it; you are not to assist any one of them

בְּאֶמְצַע הָרִגְלִים, פָּסַח
וַעֲצַרְתָּ מִכָּאן וְרֹאשׁ
הַשָּׁנָה וַיּוֹם הַכַּפּוּרִים
וַיַּחַג מִכָּאן? לְלַמֶּדְךָ
שֶׁכָּל הַנוֹתֵן לְקַט שְׂכַחָהּ
וּפֶאֱהָ לְעֹנֵי כְּרָאיוֹ,
מֵעֲלֵין עָלָיו כְּאֵלוֹ בְּנֵה
בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ וַהֲקָרִיב
קִרְבָּנֹתָיו בְּתוֹכוֹ.

תַּעֲזֹב: הֵנָּח לִפְנֵיהֶם
וְהֵם יִלְקְטוּ, וְאִין לְךָ
לְסַיֵּעַ לְאַחַד מֵהֶם.

>> The Rebbe

Questions on Rashi

We need to understand the following points:

צריך להבין:

A. In his commentary, Rashi quotes the name of the person who made the statement — “Rabbi Avdimi the son of Rabbi Yosef.” As has been discussed several times, when Rashi includes the name of the source, it is in order to add depth to the interpretation. So what insight are we meant to gain from the fact that the statement was made by this particular rabbi?

א) רש"י מצטט בפירושו את שם בעל המאמר - "אמר רבי אבדימי ברבי יוסף". וכפי שדובר כבר כמה פעמים, כאשר רש"י מביא את שם בעל המאמר, זה מוסיף בהבנת הענין. מה אם כן נוסף לנו בהבנת הענין מהעובדה שבעל המאמר הוא "רבי אבדימי ברבי יוסף"?

B. When we look at the source of Rabbi Avdimi's statement in the midrash Torat Kohanim, a major difficulty arises with Rashi's version:

ב) כאשר מעיינים בתורת כוהנים (המקור של מימרת רב אבדימי), צצה קושיא גדולה יותר על רש"י:

The text in the Torat Kohanim says: “To teach that anyone who gives the gleanings, forgotten produce, corners of the field, and the tithe for the poor—it is considered as if *the Temple is in*

בתורת כהנים כתוב "ללמד, שכל מי שהוא מוציא לקט שכחה ופאה ומעשר עני, מעלים עליו כאילו בית המקדש קיים והוא מקריב

existence, and he is offering his sacrifices there." In other words, it's not considered that he has *built* the Temple, but that the Temple already exists and he is bringing offerings there.

However, Rashi writes: "It is considered as if he built the Temple and brought his sacrifices there." This implies that he is *building* the Temple.

A simple answer can be suggested: perhaps Rashi had access to a different version of the text than the one commonly found. But since the wording that appears in our Torat Kohanim is found in most manuscripts and printed editions, why would Rashi choose to quote the less common version?

C. Rashi goes on to explain the verse "You shall leave them for the poor and the stranger" to mean: "Place the produce before them and let them collect it; you are not to assist any one of them."

This raises a question: The laws concerning the parts of the harvest set aside for the poor have already appeared in an earlier section. If so, why didn't Rashi explain this law the first time it was mentioned? Why did he wait until this later passage to comment?

To summarize, the three questions on Rashi are:

A. Why does he mention the name of the author of the statement?

B. Why doesn't he bring the common version ("a person who brings sacrifices to the Temple") and instead chooses to quote an obscure version ("a person who builds the Temple and brings sacrifices")?

C. Why did Rashi wait until this portion to explain that, regarding the commandments of *leket* and *pe'ah*, the field owner is not allowed to decide which poor people may collect the stalks?

קרבנותיו לתוכו" (לא שהוא בונה את בית המקדש, אלא שבית המקדש קיים, והוא מקריב בו קורבנות), ואילו רש"י כותב, "מעלים עליו כאילו בנה בית המקדש והקריב קרבנותיו בתוכו" - בכך הוא בונה את בית המקדש.

בפשטות יש לומר שרש"י מצא גירסא אחרת בתורת כהנים, פחות נפוצה. אולם מכיון שהגירסא ברוב הספרים היא זו שמופיעה בתורת כהנים, מדוע בחר רש"י לצטט דווקא את הגירסא השונה והפחות נפוצה?

ג) בהמשך, מפרש רש"י על המילים "לעני ולגר תעזוב" - "הנח לפניהם והם ילקטו, ואין לך לסייע לאחד מהם".

נשאלת השאלה: הרי מצוות לקט ופאה כתובות כבר בפרשה קודמת, לפיכך, היה רש"י צריך לפרש אותן בפעם הראשונה שהוזכרו. מדוע המתין ופירש אותן בפרשה זו?

B. The Value of Toil

>> The Rebbe

One-Way Charity

What is the meaning of the comparison between the commandments to leave parts of the harvest for the poor and the offering of sacrifices?

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pg. 5

What's unique about the mitzvot of leaving the gleanings and corner of the field is that the produce remains entirely in the hands of the poor. This is similar to charitable giving, where a person gives to someone in need and does not receive anything back in return. This contrasts with giving a loan, which is eventually repaid.

True, lending money is also considered an act of charity. In fact, it is ranked as the highest form of charity—helping someone by giving a gift or a loan before they fall into poverty. Still, the bottom line is that with a loan, the money comes back to the lender, whereas with a charitable gift, it stays with the recipient. The same is true of these agricultural gifts: the produce is left entirely to the poor and does not return to the owner.

Commentators explain that this is the connection between the mitzvot of leaving gleanings and the corner of the field and the offering of sacrifices. The verse says the person is considered as if he “offered his sacrifices within the Temple.” This refers specifically to sacrifices that remain entirely in the Temple, rather than those from which the person takes a portion to eat—such as the peace

הייחודיות במצוות פאה ולקט היא שהשבלים נשארות אצל העני, בדומה למצוות הצדקה שהאדם נותן לעני ואינו מקבל אותה חזרה, ובשונה מהלוואה שאותה מקבל המלווה בחזרה.

אמנם הלוואה אף היא צדקה, ואדרבה, “שמונה מעלות יש בצדקה, זו למעלה מזו, מעלה גדולה שאין למעלה ממנה זה המחזיק ביד ישראל שמך, ונותן מתנה או הלוואה” - אך בסופו של דבר, בהלוואה הוא מקבל את הכסף בחזרה, ואילו צדקה נשארת אצל העני. כך גם בפאה ולקט, השבלים נשארות אצל העני.

וכך מסבירים המפרשים את הקשר בין לקט ופאה לקרבן - “והקריב עליו קרבנותיו בתוכו”. כאן מדובר על קרבן שנשאר בבית המקדש - “בתוכו”, ולא על קרבן שהוא לוקח חלק ממנו

Student's
pg. 5

offering. This is the parallel: just as a sacrifice that stays in the Temple is not consumed by the one who brings it, so too with these commandments—

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the produce remains with the poor, and the owner receives nothing back.

לאכול (כבקרבו שלמים). וזהו הדמיון בין קרבן למצוות פאה ולקט - שהן כמו צדקה הנשארת אצל העני, ובעל הבית אינו מקבל אותה חזרה.

Source 2 Gur Aryeh, ad loc.

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The explanation is known, that bringing a sacrifice is giving one's wealth to G-d, and so too, giving leket, shikecha and pe'ah to the poor is also like bringing a sacrifice, for giving to the poor is akin to giving to G-d. Thus, it is likened to building the Holy Temple and bringing a sacrifice.

הטעם ידוע, כי הקרבת הקרבן הוא שנותן ממונו לה', וכן הנותן לקט שכחה ופאה לעניים נותן ממונו שלו לעניים, שזהו כמו קרבן לה', שגם מתנת העניים — לה' נחשב, ולפיכך כאלו בונה בית המקדש והקריב עליו קרבן.

>> The Rebbe

The Farmer's Effort

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pg. 6

The commandments of leket and peah have an added advantage over ordinary charitable giving:

The founder of Chabad, the Alter Rebbe, explains in Tanya (chapter 37) that there is a kind of charity that a person gives from the toil of their own hands. In that case, "the full strength of their natural soul is invested in their labor," and when they give from those earnings to charity, "their entire natural soul is elevated to G-d."

There is also another type of charity—when someone gives from money that they didn't directly work for. Even then, since that money could have been used to purchase necessities for their own physical well-being, the act of giving is still considered as though the person "is offering their very life to G-d."

אך ישנה מעלה בפאה ולקט לגבי צדקה סתם:

אדמו"ר הזקן מבאר בתניא (פרק ל"ז), שישנו אופן של "צדקה שאדם נותן מיגיע כפיו", שאז "כל כח נפשו החיונית מלובש בעשיית מלאכתו", וכשהוא נותן זאת לצדקה, אזי "כל נפשו החיונית עולה לה".

בנוסף לכך, ישנו אופן של נתינת צדקה מכסף שהוא לא ממש התייגע עליו, אלא שמכיון ש"במעוֹת אלו היה יכול לקנות חיי נפשו החיונית" לכן זה נחשב שהוא "נותן חיי נפשו לה".

Source 3 Tanya, chapter 37

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pg. 7

In the light of the above, one can understand why our rabbis, of blessed memory, so strongly emphasized the virtue of charity, declaring that "It is equivalent to all other commandments," ... because it is the core of all practical mitzvot and surpasses them all. For all mitzvot are only intended to elevate the soul to G-d, since it is the soul that performs them and is invested in them, thereby being absorbed into the infinite light which is vested in them.

Hence you can find no commandment in which the natural soul is invested to the same extent as in the commandment of charity. For in all the other commandments only one faculty of the natural soul is invested, and only at the time of the performance of the mitzvah. In the case of charity, however, a person gives out of the toil of their hands. Surely all the strength of their natural soul is embodied in the execution of their work or occupation by which they earned the money. When they give it to charity, their whole natural soul ascends to G-d.

ובזה יובן מה שהפליגו
רבוננו זכרונם לברכה
במאד מאד במעלת
הצדקה, ואמרו ש"שקולה
בנגד כל המצוות" ... מפני
שהיא עיקר המצוות
מעשיות, ועולה על כולן,
שכולן הן רק להעלות נפש
החיונית לה', שהיא היא
המקיימת אותן, ומתלבשת
בהן ליכלל באור אין סוף
פרוה הוא המלוכש בהן.

ואין לה מצוה שנפש
החיונית מתלבשת בה
כל כך במצוות הצדקה,
שכל המצוות אין מתלבש
בהן רק כח אחד מנפש
החיונית בשעת מעשה
המצוה לבד, אבל בצדקה,
שאדם נותן מיגיע כפיו,
הרי כל כח נפשו החיונית
מלוכש בעשיית מלאכתו
או עסק אחר שנשתכר
בו מעות אלו, וכשנותן
לצדקה — הרי כל נפשו
החיונית עולה לה'.

The full power of our natural soul is expressed in the mitzvah of charity; unlike other commandments which involve only a single faculty of the soul. Therefore, there is a greater virtue in charity than in all other commandments.

However, the question arises: What is the status of charity given from money that a person did not work for or toil to obtain—does it possess the same virtue?

The Alter Rebbe explains:

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Even when one does not depend on their own toil for a livelihood, nevertheless, since with this charity money they could have purchased necessities of life, for their soul, hence they are giving their soul's life to G-d.

Therefore our rabbis, of blessed memory, said that

וגם מי שאינו נהנה מיגיעו,
מכל מקום, הואיל ובמעות
אלו היה יכול לקנות חיי
נפשו החיונית — הרי נותן
חיי נפשו לה'.

ולכן אמרו רבוננו זכרונם

Student's pg. 7 charity brings the Redemption nearer. For with one act of charity a person elevates a great part of their soul, in a manner that can't be achieved by performing several other mitzvot.

לְכַרְכָּה שֶׁ"מִקְרַכֶּת אֶת הַגְּאוּלָּה",
לְפִי שֶׁבִצְדָקָה אַחַת מַעֲלֶה הָרִבֵּה
מִנְפֶּשׁ הַחַיּוֹנִית, מֵה שֶׁלֹּא הָיָה יָכוֹל
לְהַעֲלוֹת מִמֶּנָּה כָּל כָּךְ כָּחוֹת וּכְחִינּוֹת
בְּכַמָּה מִצְוֹת מַעֲשִׂיּוֹת אֲחֵרוֹת.

>> The Rebbe

Student's pg. 8 The beginner student observes directly that their father (or an older sibling, or someone similar) works hard to support their family. However, they don't toil every single day to the point of complete exhaustion. That level of extreme exertion happens only occasionally, in unusual circumstances.

But when it comes to the commandments of leaving leket and pe'ah—"Do not finish harvesting the corner of your field..."—these certainly require real effort. The beginner student has already learned the verse, "By the sweat of your brow you shall eat bread." Yes, the rain falls and the wind blows, but for grain to grow, hard work is required.

It is therefore clear that giving the leket and pe'ah to the poor is harder than giving regular charity. Regular charity doesn't always come from money earned through hard labor. But giving from one's produce always involves giving away something produced with great effort, and yet it is still given away to the poor.

Moreover, not only does this person give to the poor after they have already eaten their own bread, but in fact, the law requires them to give to the poor *before* they eat. Only afterwards may they eat from the grain themselves. This is because the obligation to leave parts of the harvest for the poor begins immediately at the

וכפי שה"בן חמש למקרא" רואה בפועל, שאביו (או אחיו המבוגר וכיוצא בזה) מתייגע אמנם לפרנסתו, אך זה לא באופן שבכל יום הוא מתייגע עד מיצוי הנפש ממש - זה קורה רק מזמן לזמן, ובאופן יוצא מן הכלל.

אך כשמדובר על מצוות לקט ופאה - "לא תכלה בפאת שדך בקוצרך וגו'" - בוודאי שהן כרוכות ביגיעתו, כפי שה"בן חמש למקרא" כבר למד, ש"בזעת אפך תאכל לחם". יורד אמנם גשם, ונושבים רוחות וכו', אך כדי שהתבואה תצמח, מוכרחת להיות יגיעה.

ומזה מובן, שהנתינה של פאה ולקט מהשדה לעני קשה יותר מצדקה רגילה, משום שצדקה סתם לא תמיד קשורה עם כסף שהוא התייגע עליו, מה שאין כן בנוגע לתרומת השדה, התבואה תמיד כרוכה ביגיעה, ובכל זאת הוא נותן אותה לעני.

יתירה מכך, לא רק שלאחר שהוא אוכל - "תאכל לחם" - הוא נותן גם לעני, אדרבה, קודם כל עליו לתת לעני, ורק לאחר מכן הוא יכול לאכול בעצמו - "תאכל לחם". משום שהחיוב של לקט ופאה חל מיד

time of harvest. For the field owner to be able to eat bread from that same grain, it must first be ground into flour, sifted, and then baked. Only then can they eat. As a result, "you shall eat bread" comes after he has already given to the poor.

בשעת הקציר, ואילו כדי שיהיה לו לחם לאכול מאותה תבואה, צריך לעבור משך זמן עד שיעשה מזה קמח וסולת, ומהם יאפה לחם, ורק אז יהיה "תאכל לחם".

Effort Builds the Temple

The unique quality of these mitzvot explains why Rashi compares them not just to bringing a sacrifice, but even to building the Temple itself.

These agricultural commandments involve significant labor: after all the effort "by the sweat of your brow"—to get the grain to grow, and to do all the related work—the farmer is instructed to give some of it to the poor. Moreover, the farmer is instructed to first give to the poor, and only then eat. This level of giving takes more out of a person than ordinary charity.

נמצאנו למדים, שמצוות פאה ולקט כרוכה ביגיעה עצומה: לאחר היגיעה של "בזעת אפך" - שהתבואה תצמח, וכל שאר העבודות הכרוכות בכך, אומרים לו שעליו לתת גם לעני. יתירה מזו, עליו לתת קודם לעני, ורק לאחר מכן "תאכל לחם" בעצמו - שזאת יגיעה גדולה יותר מאשר בצדקה רגילה.

Since charitable giving is seen as spiritually equivalent to bringing a sacrifice in the Temple, and these mitzvot of leket and pe'ah involve even more effort, they are on an even higher level. This is why Rashi writes that someone who fulfills these mitzvot is considered as if he "built the Temple"—because his hard labor and struggle are like the effort required to build the Temple itself, not just the effort necessary to bring a sacrifice once the Temple already exists. This great exertion transforms the person completely, building their personal spiritual Temple, about which the verse states "I will dwell among them."

ומזה מובן, שכיון שמצוות הצדקה היא דוגמת הבאת קרבן לבית המקדש, ומצוות הפאה והלקט (שהן יגיעה גדולה יותר מצדקה) חשובה יותר מנתינת צדקה סתם, לכן אומר רש"י, שכל המקיים את מצוות הפאה והלקט "כאילו בנה בית המקדש", משום שעמלו ויגיעתו, נחשבים כמו היגיעה על בנין בית המקדש (ולא רק כהבאת קרבן לבית מקדש בנוי, דוגמת צדקה רגילה). על ידי כך שהוא משנה את עצמו לגמרי באמצעות יגיעה גדולה זו, הוא בונה את בית המקדש הרוחני, עליו נאמר "ושכנתי בתוכם".

This also answers the earlier question: why does Rashi choose the version that gives the highest praise to those who fulfill these commandments? The reason is because they are more demanding than regular charity. If ordinary charity is compared to sacrifices, then these acts—done through such intense effort—are comparable to building the Temple itself.

C. Pure Giving – Without Personal Interest

>> The Rebbe

Student's
pg. 10

Rashi goes on to explain the verse “You shall leave them for the poor and the stranger”—“Place the produce before them, and they shall gather it; you are not to assist any one of them.”

When a person is told that they must leave the leket and pe'ah for the poor, they might respond that they are willing to give to someone in need, but they want to choose who gets it. They prefer to give it to “their servant or maid”

בהמשך לכך מפרש רש"י על "לעני ולגר תעזוב אותם" - "הנח לפניהם והם ילקטו ואין לך לסייע לאחר מהם":

כאשר אומרים ליהודי שעליו לתת לעני פאה ולקט, הוא אומר שהוא מוכן לתת זאת לעני, אך הוא רוצה לתת זאת ל"עבדך ואמתך" (כפי שמוצאים בנוגע למועדות, שיש את "בנך ובתך, עבדך ואמתך", שהם ה"ארבעה שלך", ולאחר מכן ישנם את ה"ארבעה שלי" - "הלוי והגר והיתום והאלמנה").

Source 4 Deuteronomy 16:11

Student's
pg. 10

You shall rejoice before G-d, you, your son, your daughter, your servant, your maid, and the Levite who is within your gates, and the stranger, the orphan, and the widow, who are in your midst; in the place that your G-d shall rest His name there.

וְשִׂמְחָתָּ לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ, אַתָּה וּבִנְךָ וּבִתְךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ וְאִמָּתְךָ, וְהַלְוִי אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ וְהַגֵּר וְהִיתוֹם וְהָאֲלֵמָנָה אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבְּךָ, בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְשָׁכֵן שְׁמוֹ שָׁם.

Midrash Aggadah

Student's
pg. 10

You shall rejoice before G-d: I have four household members: the Levite, the convert, the orphan and the widow. You have four household members: Son, daughter, servant and maid. If you make my household happy, I will make yours happy.

וְשִׂמְחָתָּ לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ: לִי יֵשׁ ד' בְּנֵי בֵּית — לְוִי גֵר יִתוֹם וְאֲלֵמָנָה, לָךְ יֵשׁ ד' בְּנֵי בֵּית — בֵּן וּבַת עַבֵּד וְאִמָּה. אִם אַתָּה מְשַׂמְח אֶת שְׁלִי אֲנִי מְשַׂמְח אֶת שְׁלִיךָ.

>> The Rebbe

Student's
pg. 11

The “servant and maid” who worked the field are also poor—they have nothing of their own. So if the owner is obligated to leave part of the harvest for the poor, why should they prioritize “the poor and the stranger” over their own workers, who labored hard to bring the field to yield its produce?

The owner may argue, “first I’ll give to my workers, and if anything is left, I’ll give to other poor people as well. And even if nothing is left, I’ve still fulfilled the commandment — after all, my workers are also poor...”

But the Torah states clearly: “You shall leave them for the poor and the stranger”—“Place the produce before them, and they shall gather it; you are not to assist any one of them.”

Since the verses emphasize that the owner should receive no personal benefit—as shown by the fact that they must give away produce that they worked hard to grow, even before enjoying any of it themselves—it makes sense that this same idea carries over to the next part of the verse, “You shall leave them for the poor and the stranger,” that they may not gain even the satisfaction of choosing to give to someone he knows, like a relative or a friend.

This resolves the third question: why are these commandments, already mentioned earlier in the Torah, repeated in this week’s portion? The answer is that here they are presented in a context that compares them to building the Temple and offering sacrifices, due to how demanding they are. This is why Rashi emphasizes an additional

ה“עבדך ואמתך” שעבדו את השדה גם הם עניים שאין להם משלהם. אם עליו לתת פאה ולקט - מדוע עליו להקדים את ה“עני וגר” שאינו מכירם, בשעה שהוא יכול לתת זאת ל“עבדך ואמתך” שהתייגעו כדי שהשדה תיתן את יבולה?

קודם הוא יתן להם, ואם ישאר הוא יתן גם “לעני ולגר” אחרים. ואם לא ישאר, הוא עדיין קיים את המצוה, משום ש“עבדך ואמתך” גם הם עניים...

על זה אומרים לו: “לעני ולגר תעזוב אותם - הנח לפניהם והם ילקטו ואין לך לסייע לאחד מהם”:

מכיון שהפסוקים מדגישים את שלילת הנאת עצמו - כפי שמובן מכך שעליו לתת לזולת משהו שעליו התייגע ביגיעה גדולה, ולתת זאת לזולת עוד לפני שהוא עצמו נהנה מכך - מסתבר לומר שהמשך הפסוק ממשיך באותו קו, ש“לעני ולגר תעזוב אותם ואין לך לסייע לאחד מהם”, שאין לו בזה אפילו טובת הנאה בכך שיוכל לתת זאת לעני מקרוביו או ידידיו.

ובזה מתורצת השאלה השלישית: כאשר התורה מביאה בפרשתנו את מצוות לקט ופאה, היא מיקמה אותן בפרשה שבה הן מושוות לבניית בית המקדש והבאת קורבנות - בגלל הקושי שבהם - לכן מוצא רש”י לנכון להדגיש קושי נוסף, והוא,

difficulty: the giver is not allowed any personal gain, even the emotional benefit of helping someone close to him.

It is precisely this kind of giving that is considered truly complete. So much so, that it is said to be "as if he built the Temple," because it involves deep emotional effort: (a) giving to others, (b) before taking for oneself, (c) from something one worked hard to earn, and (d), without even the satisfaction of choosing who receives it.

שאינ לתורם שום הנאה אישית מכך כלל וכלל.

ודווקא אופן נתינה זה של פאה ולקט הוא בתכלית השלימות, עד שנחשב "כאילו בנה בית המקדש", מכיון שזה קשור עם יגיעה נפשית גדולה, כי (א) יתן לזולת, (ב) לפני שלוקח לעצמו, (ג) ענין שעבד עליו קשה, (ד) שלא יהיה לו בזה אפילו טובת הנאה - שיוכל לתת לעני ממכריו.

Story - Pure Charity Adapted from Bava Basra 10. (Teacher's manual only)

Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai saw in a dream that during the coming year, his sister's sons were destined to lose seven hundred dinars.

That year, Rabban Yochanan frequently approached them and repeatedly asked them for large sums of money for charity. By the end of the year, it turned out that they had given him 683 dinars.

On the eve of Yom Kippur, officials from the imperial household arrived and conducted an income tax audit. The nephews became very frightened and went to seek a blessing and advice from their uncle, Rabban Yochanan ben Zakai.

He said to them: Don't worry, they will only take seventeen dinars from you.

They asked: How do you know?

He answered: This is what I saw in a dream—that you were destined to lose seven hundred dinars. Since you gave 683 to charity, only 17 remain to be lost. And indeed, that is exactly what happened.

His nephews asked: If so, why didn't you tell us about the dream from the start? We would have happily given the money to charity ourselves, and you wouldn't have had to chase after us.

Rabban Yochanan replied: I wanted you to give for the sake of the mitzvah, not in order to gain.

Rabbi Avdimi's uniqueness

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A thoughtful beginner student might still raise a question: True, giving the gleanings and the corner involves great effort. But in the end, we're talking about a small amount—just the gleanings, the stalks that happen to fall. It's not the whole field, not even half! And the "corner" that must be left unharvested doesn't have a set minimum size explicit in the verse. Even the guidelines that later sources give (Mishnah, Peah 1:2) dictate a modest amount—certainly far less than half the field. So why make such a big deal of this? Why say not only that it's as if the person brought a sacrifice in the Temple, but moreover, it's as if they built the Temple and brought sacrifices there?

To answer this question, Rashi cites the name of the one who said the teaching—"Rabbi Avdimi the son of Rabbi Yosef." The Jerusalem Talmud tells the following story about this rabbi (referred to in this text with an alternative spelling, "Avardimus"):

מדוע מביא רש"י את שם בעל המאמר?

ה"בן חמש למקרא" (אם הוא תלמיד ממולח) עדיין מקשה: אכן נתינת פאה ולקט קשורה עם יגיעה נפשית גדולה, אך סוף כל סוף, זה בסך הכול "לקט" - מה שנופל (זה לא כל השדה, ואפילו לא חצי שדה), על דרך זה "פאה" שבפשוטו של מקרא אין לזה שיעור, ואפילו השיעור שנכתב בזה (פאה פרק א' משנה ב', וראה במפרשים שם), הוא לא שיעור גדול, והרבה פחות מחצי שדה, מדוע אפוא עושים מזה כזה "שטורעם", שזה לא רק כאילו שהקריב קרבן בבית המקדש, אלא יתירה מזו, "כאילו בנה בית המקדש והקריב קרבנותיו בתוכו"!!

וכדי לתרץ קושיא זו, מביא רש"י את שם בעל המאמר - "רבי אברדימוס ברבי יוסף", עליו מובא בירושלמי המעשה הבא:

Source 5 Jerusalem Talmud, Sheviit 8:5

Student's
pg. 13

Yehudah of Chutzi hid in a cave for three days because he wanted to understand why the lives of this city take precedence over the lives of another city. He came to Rabbi Yosei bar Chalafta, who asked him, "Where were you?"

He said to him, "I hid in a cave for three days because I wanted to find out why the lives of this city take precedence over the lives of another city."

יהודה איש חוצי התחבא במערה שלושה ימים, כי רצה למצא את הטעם מדוע חיי העיר הזאת קודמים לחיי עיר אחרת. הוא הגיע אל רבי יוסי בר חלפתא, ששאל אותו, "היכן היית?"

אמר לו, "התחבאתי במערה שלושה ימים כי רציתי למצא את הטעם מדוע חיי העיר הזאת קודמים לחיי עיר אחרת."

Student's
pg. 13

Rabbi Yosei called for his son, Rabbi Avardimus. He said to him, "Tell him: What is the reason that the lives of this city take precedence over those of another city?"

He replied: "It is written: 'These cities shall be' — each and every city must live, and only afterward: 'and their surrounding open areas.'"

Rabbi Yosei then said to Yehudah of Chutzi, "What caused you not to know the reason? That you didn't study with your peers!"

קרא [רבי יוסי] לרבי אבירודימס
בנו. אמר לו, "אמר לו, מה הטעם
מדוע חיי העיר הזאת קודמים
לחיי עיר אחרת?"

אמר לו: "כתוב 'תהיינה הערים
האלה', כל עיר ועיר תחיה, ורק
אחר כך 'ומגריה סביבותיה'."

אמר לו [רבי יוסי ליהודה
מחוצי], "מה גרם לך [שלא
ידעת את הטעם]? שלא למדת
עם חבריך!"

>> The Rebbe

Student's
pg. 13

At first glance, this is puzzling: Why did Rabbi Yosei call over his son, Rabbi Avdimi, to answer the question? Seemingly, he could have answered it himself.

The explanation is that Rabbi Avdimi was passionately and personally involved in promoting the principle that "the needs of one's own town take precedence over those of another." Because the question needed to be answered in a way that would come from the heart—so that it would truly reach the heart of the questioner—Rabbi Yosei called for his son Rabbi Avdimi. He knew how strongly his son advanced this teaching, so he had him respond by saying, "This is what is written in the verse." This wasn't just a logical argument that can be debated or questioned—it was a direct teaching from the text.

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Rabbi Avdimi passionately promoted the principle that one's local community comes first. This is a teaching rooted in holiness, because it is grounded in an explicit verse. But now we are told that the commandments of

ולכאורה זה לא מובן: בשביל מה
רבי יוסי בן חלפתא קרא לבנו רבי
אברדימוס שיענה על השאלה?
לכאורה הוא היה יכול לענות על כך
בעצמו!

אלא מובן, שרבי אברדימוס התעסק
בלהט בהלכה ש"חיי עיר הזאת
קודמין לחיי עיר אחרת" - ומכיון
שהיה צריך לענות לשואל באופן
שיהיו דברים היוצאים מן הלב, שאז
הם נכנסים אל הלב - לכן הוא קרא
לבנו רבי אברדימוס, בידעו שהוא
מתעסק בלהט בהלכה זו, והוא אמר
לו שכך כתוב בפסוק. זה לא ענין
של סברא שאפשר להתווכח עמה
ולשאול שאלות, אלא כך כתוב
בפסוק.

רבי אברדימוס התעסק בלהט בענין
של "חיי העיר הזאת קודמים" - שזהו
ענין שמגיע מקדושה - משום שהוא
פסק דין מפורש שכתוב בפסוק.
ואילו כעת אומרים לו שמצוות
פאה ולקט יוצאות מן הכלל, שבהן

leaving gleanings and the corner of the field for the poor, are exceptions to this rule. In these specific cases, the rule is: "You shall leave them for the poor and the stranger"—"You are not to assist any one of them." You may not prioritize your own local poor, even though, according to the general rule that "the poor of your town come first," you would have given the gleanings and corner to your workers, who live in your town

When a person acts in this way, changing from what is natural and even what is normally considered correct and holy, and follows this unusual requirement that seems to go against the ordinary structure of values, that act is so significant, it is considered as if they "built the Temple and offered sacrifices within it."

This is why Rashi includes the name of the one who said this teaching—Rabbi Avdimi the son of Rabbi Yosei. Specifically someone so dedicated to the principle that "your town's poor come first" can highlight the great importance of the gleanings and corners, embodying the transformation of natural and holy inclinations.

In other words: On one hand, we are taught that the law requires us to care first for those closest to us. On the other hand, that same "Torah of truth" tells us that when it comes to these particular commandments—gleanings and the corner of the field—we must act differently. No reason is given. And yet, we must fulfill both commandments with the same passion.

Even if we are not great scholars or deep thinkers, and we just know the rule that "the needs of

המצווה היא - "לעני ולגר תעזוב אותם - אין לך לסייע לאחד מהם" - שאסור לתת קדימה לעניי עירך (על אף שמצד הכלל של "חיי עניי עיר הזאת קודמין" הוא היה צריך לתת את הלקט והפאה "לעבדך ואמתך" - שהם בגדר של עניי עירך) - הנה בשעה שאדם נוהג באופן כזה, הוא משנה את הטבע ואת המדות שבקדושה - ומוכן שיגיעה כזאת נחשבת "כאילו בנה בית המקדש והקריב עליו קרבנותיו בתוכו".

ולכן מביא רש"י את שם בעל המאמר - רבי אברדימוס ברבי יוסי, משום שדוקא אותו אחד שמתעסק בלהט בענין של "עניי עירך קודמין", הוא יכול להדגיש את גודל החשיבות שישנה בלקט ופאה - השינוי של מדות וטבע של קדושה.

היינו, שמצד אחד אומרים ליהודי, שיש דין בתורה ש"חיי עיר הזאת קודמין", ומצד שני אומרים לו שאותה "תורת אמת" אומרת, שבמקרה של פאה ולקט - צריך לנהוג באופן יוצא מן הכלל (ולא מביאים שום סיבה לכך), ועליו לקיים את שתי המצוות באותו להט.

אפילו כשהוא לא שייך להבנה והשגה גדולה ולהתבוננות עמוקה, והוא רק יודע את הדין של "חיי עיר הזאת קודמין", והוא יודע גם את הדין השני (באותן הלכות צדקה), שבנוגע לפאה ולקט צריכה להיות ההנהגה של "לעני ולגר תעזור אותם", והוא עוסק בלהט בשניהם - במצוה קלה

one's own town take precedence," and also the other mitzvah that the gleanings and corner should be left to any poor person, if we pursue them both passionately—whether it's a "light" commandment or a "weighty" one, whether it aligns with our natural instincts or contradicts them—we are transforming our natural and holy instincts. Then it can truly be said of us that it is as if we built the Temple and offered sacrifices there.

ובמצוה החמורה, במצוה שהיא לפי טבעו ובמצוה שאינה לפי טבעו, עם אותו להט - הנה בשעה שהוא נוהג באופן כזה, הוא משנה את טבע מדותיו שבקדושה - ואז אומרים עליו שהוא "כאילו בנה בית המקדש והקריב עליו קרבנותיו בתוכו".

משיחת מוצאי שבת קודש פרשת אמור, ה'תשל"ח
שיחות קודש, ה'תשל"ח ח"ב עמוד 253 (בתרגום המערכת)

Key Points:

- In middle of the verses dealing with the Jewish festivals and the offerings brought on them, the Torah plants the commandments of pe'ah and leket—gifts for the poor from an agricultural field. From this, the Sages derive that one who properly fulfills these commandments is considered as if he built the Temple and offered sacrifices in it.
- The uniqueness of the commandments of pe'ah and leket—similar to the general mitzvah of charity—is that the money (or produce) reaches the poor and remains with them, unlike a loan which is eventually returned to its owner. In this sense, they resemble a sacrifice, which remains in the Temple and is not consumed by the owner.
- Another special aspect of pe'ah and leket, beyond ordinary charity, is the degree of effort involved. The Tanya extols one who gives charity from money earned through hard labor, for through that he sanctifies his soul to G-d. Pe'ah and leket are given after much toil and hard work in the field, and therefore the merit of the donor is considered as if he labored to build the Temple. That is why Rashi chose the version that emphasizes the merit in the effort of building the Temple.
- A natural tendency of a landowner is to favor the poor who are close to him—his servant or maid—and give them the gifts for the poor. But Rashi emphasizes in our portion that the Torah rejects any personal interest in these mitzvot. They must be performed in complete anonymity, without any

personal consideration, and given to a random poor person. This further highlights the difficulty of leket and pe'ah, and explains why one who fulfills them is compared to one who builds the Temple.

- The Talmud tells us that Rav Avdimi—the author of the statement—was passionately dedicated to the halachah “The poor of your city take precedence.” Rashi quotes his name to teach us that only someone who deeply understands the principle of prioritizing those close to you can convey to us how much emotional effort is required to give to random poor individuals.

- When a Jew overcomes his nature and, with effort and without any personal connection, gives charity to an unknown poor person, the Torah equates and values that effort as the merit of actually building the Holy Temple.

Takeaway:

We are accustomed to giving charity to causes and organizations that are close to our hearts—and this is important and commendable. But sometimes, it's worth trying something different: giving charity in complete secrecy—an anonymous donation that reaches someone truly in need, without us knowing who they are, and without them knowing who gave it.

Precisely this act of forgoing the personal satisfaction that often comes with giving charity is something deeply cherished by G-d, and such charity is considered as if we ourselves built the Holy Temple!