

1

20. חלה תרימו חרומה - You shall set apart challah as a heave-offering. Following the sin of the spies, (the Torah) also instituted (the mitzvah) of challah, so that they would be worthy that a blessing come to rest in their homes, as it says, *You shall give to the Kohen the first of your dough that he may cause a blessing to rest on your house* (Ezekiel 44:30), and (as we find) regarding Elijah, *עשי לי משם עוגה קטנה בראשונה והוצאת לי*... *פי בה אמר ה'...* *כד הקמחו לא חבלה*... *Make me a little cake of it first and bring it to me...* for thus says **HASHEM**... *the jar of flour shall not be spent* (I Kings 17:13, 14).

במדבר כ ספר

2

And perhaps moreover [this instruction] was taught to the people at this point in time (as opposed to a later time, just prior to their entry into the Land) in order to comfort them and assure them that they would indeed enter the Land. *מי* - *כי היו נושאים לאמר*... *ידע מה יהיה לארץ ומים לסוף ארבעים שנה* - *For after hearing the decree that they would not enter the Land for forty years they were in despair, saying, "Who knows what will happen such a long time in the future, at the end of forty years, or if the children, too, will sin like the parents, and likewise not be permitted to enter the Land?"* - *ואם יחטאו גם הבנים*... *ולכן ראה הקדוש ברוך הוא לנחמם* - *Therefore, the Holy One, blessed is He, saw fit to comfort them by communicating this commandments that were applicable only in the Land.* *כי בצונו אותם במצות הארץ* - *For by commanding [Israel] regarding the commandments that were applicable only in the Land, there is an implied assurance that it is known for a fact to Him that they will indeed come and inherit it.*

במדבר כ"ד רמב"ן

3

15.2. *when you will come to the land of your habitations, etc.* When G'd saw the despondency of the Jewish people over the decree that He had issued against them to wander aimlessly in the desert for forty years, He provided some encouragement for their hearts by instructing them in commandments which would apply only once they lived in the land of Canaan. G'd wanted to keep this prospect before their eyes in order to make their lives more meaningful. If one knows that at the end of a certain period of time one will experience fulfillment of one's hopes then the time lag until then becomes less onerous. G'd made sure to write *אשר אני נותן לכם*, "which I am about to give to you," although the generation He addressed had already been described as carcasses. He taught the people that the accomplishments of the children reflect credit also on their parents seeing the children are meant to be the extension of their parents.

Or Hachaim

4 The obligation of *challah*, on the other hand, takes effect well after the harvesting of the wheat: it takes place only once the dough is being prepared, which requires the intervention of man. Thus, this *mitzvah* reflects God's blessing not only on the land itself, but on man's effort in the Land of Israel as well.

It is not a coincidence that this *mitzvah* appears after the incident of the spies. When they gave their report, the spies emphasized their own feelings of weakness and inadequacy in the face of the

obstacles that allegedly stood in their way in any effort to conquer the land. They argued that the fruit of the land was indeed wonderful, but it would be impossible to enjoy those fruits because of the overwhelming strength of the inhabitants and its impenetrable fortifications. The spies' sin was not their report on the land per se, but rather their perceived inability to partake of its fruits.

As a counterpoint to the spies' argument, God gave us the *mitzvah* of *challah*, which contains within it the power of the land to bestow blessings from above on its inhabitants. Man's efforts will not be for naught: the land as well as the efforts of the people will equally be blessed. (Shiurei Harav - Maseches Challah, pp. 9-10)

The Rav's chumash

5 אבילו למאן דאמר תרומה בזמן הזה - On the contrary! אבילו - Even according to the one who says that nowadays *terumah* is Biblical, ^[20] חלה דרבנן - *challah* is Rabbinic. ^[21] ^[22] - For it was taught in a Baraita: ^[23] - Scripture states that you must separate *challah* UPON YOUR COMING INTO THE LAND. ^[24] - SINCE it states UPON YOUR COMING, - יכול משכונתו לה שנים ושלושה מרגלים - IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN thought that the obligation of *challah* begins ONCE TWO OR THREE TIMES HAVE ENTERED [THE LAND]; ^[25] חלה לומר

"בבאכם" - [THE TORAH] therefore STATES UPON YOUR COMING, which teaches: - בבואת כללכם ארצה - It is only UPON THE ENTRY OF ALL OF YOU that [God] said you must separate *challah*. ולא בבואת מקצתכם - AND NOT UPON THE ENTRY OF only SOME OF YOU. ^[26] The verse thus conveys that all (or most) Jews must be in Eretz Yisrael for the *challah* requirement to apply.

Rav Huna the son of Rav Yehoshua concludes his proof: ^[27] - ובי אסקינוד קורא - And when Ezra took up [the returnees] from Babylonia to Eretz Yisrael.

6 לאו כוליה עליו - not all of them went up. ^[1] Thus, the Biblical obligation of *challah* does not apply nowadays. ^[2]

25a 25b

7 Rav Huna taught in the name of Rav Matna: The world was created in the merit of three things, in the merit of *Challah*, tithes and first fruits. How do we know? It says "In the beginning, God created," and *Challah* is called beginning as it says "beginning of your kneadings."

At the root of the precept lies the reason that man's sustenance is by food, and most of the world lives on bread. The omnipresent God wished to make us meritorious by a constant *mitzvah* with our bread, so that blessing will dwell on it through the religious good deed, and we shall earn merit for ourselves. As a result, the dough provides food for the body and food for the spirit. [Moreover] it is also in order that the ministering servants of the Eternal Lord should live (be sustained) by it—those who are constantly engaged in His service, namely, the *kohanim*—without any toil at all. For with the *t'rumah* [kohen's portion] from the granary there is toil for them, to pass the grain through a sieve and to grind it. Here, though, their allotted portion comes to them without any difficulty at all. ^[6]

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#365

8

This חלה becomes קודש and is like תרומה in every respect: חייבין עליה תרומה כהן, and it is the property of the כהן — just like תרומה (Challah 1:9; see Vayikra, chap. 22). Neither for תרומה nor for חלה is a minimum quantity stated; one fulfills the obligation of חלה with the tiniest piece of dough (see Commentary, v. 21), just as to meet the obligation of תרומה even a single kernel from the whole pile is sufficient: חטה אחת פוטרת את הכרי. On the other hand, there is a maximum limit for both, as both are called "ראשית," and there can be no ראשית unless a considerable amount remains: בעיני ראשית ששיריה נזכרין. Hence the dictum: "If someone declares his whole barn to be תרומה or the whole of his dough to be חלה, his declaration is invalid and has no effect" (Chullin 136b).

From the foregoing halachah we learn an important lesson about the relationship of the people and of the individual to the Sanctuary of the Torah. No one may consider the priest's relation to the Torah to be a substitute for his own. No one should imagine that the Sanctuary is interested in the priest's existence, but that his own existence is immaterial in God's sight. Rather, the preservation of his own existence for the sake of the Sanctuary of the Torah is the condition for and purpose of maintaining the priest, with which he is charged by the mitzvah of חלה. By separating חלה for the priest, he affirms that his own existence and that of his household are dedicated to God and to His Torah. His gift of חלה becomes חלה only if he leaves something also for himself: ששיריה נזכרין.

Law (Hush

כחזק 15

9

Adam was the "challah" of the world as the verse says, "God created Adam from the dust of the earth." When a woman mixes the flour with water she must take challah to atone for the transgression of Chavah who caused the fall of Adam.

yerushalmi: shabbos 1:6

10

We have two massorot, two traditions Father teaches the son the discipline of thought as well as the discipline of action. Father's tradition is an intellectual-moral one. ... What kind of a Torah does the mother pass on? ... Most of all I learned from [my mother] that Judaism expresses itself not only in formal compliance with the law but also in a living experience. She taught me that there is a flavor, a scent and warmth to the mitzvot. I learned from her the most important thing in life - to feel the presence of the Almighty and the gentle pressure of His hand resting upon my frail shoulders. Without her teachings, which quite often were transmitted to me in silence, I would have grown up a soulless being, dry and insensitive." ("A tribute to the Rebbitzin of Taine," Tradition 17:2 [Spring 1978], pp. 76-77)