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Adding Because Something is Missing Versus Adding as an Expression of Wholeness

The Root of the Mitzvah of Separating Challah - Repairing the Blemish of the Sin of Adam Harishon

It is an ancient custom (*minhag*) to separate “challah” from the dough on *erev Shabbos kodesh*, rather than some other day. This is codified by the Shulchan Aruch^[1] based on the Talmud Yerushalmi.^[2] Indeed, many women keep this custom today.

It is well known that a Jewish *minhag* is Torah, and this is especially so when the custom has a proper source, and in particular when the source is in *chazal*. This is not a simple *minhag*, and indeed, it has great depth.

Let us attempt to attain a little understanding into the *minhag* of separating *challah* on *erev Shabbos kodesh*.

As we mentioned, the *minhag* to separate challah is a one kept by women. On a simple level, the reason is because it is the women who normally do the baking. It therefore became a *minhag* for women, but this is only a superficial, simple reason.

On a deeper level, there is an additional reason why this is a women’s *minhag*. The Midrash says, “Why was the mitzvah of *challah* given to women? Because she caused the ruination of Adam Harishon, who was the completion of the *challah* of the world, the mitzvah of *challah* was given to her.”^[3] Adam Harishon is called the “*challah* of the world,” and when Chava caused him to sin with the tree of knowledge, she caused a blemish in the *challah* of the world. She was therefore given the mitzvah of *challah*, in order to repair this blemish.

It is therefore understandable why it is a *minhag* to do this mitzvah on *erev Shabbos Kodesh*. Since the sin took place on Friday, the best time to repair the sin is at the same time the sin had been committed.

We therefore learn that the *minhag* to separate *challah* is rooted at the beginning of time. It comes to repair the first *challah* in the world.

The *Yerushalmi* expresses it this way: “Adam Harishon was the pure *challah* of the world... Chava caused him to die. Therefore, the mitzvah of *challah* was given to woman.”^[4] There can be pure *challah* and there can be impure *challah*. When the one separating the *challah* is pure, then the

challah remains pure. But when the one who is separating the *challah* is impure, then the *challah* becomes impure. *Adam Harishon* was a pure *challah*, Chava ruined this, and therefore a repair is required.

The Measure for *Challah* is the Volume of 43 (מג) “Eggs” - Implying “Also,” (“גם”), an Addition

Let us consider the deeper meaning of these ideas.

What is the minimum amount of dough required in order to be obligated to separate *challah*, and how much must one separate?

The Gemara says: “The beginning of your dough’ means the amount of ‘your dough.’ And how much is that? The amount of the volume of the dough of the desert. And what was the volume of the dough of the desert? The verse[5] says, ‘And the *omer* is a tenth of an *aifa*.’”[6] One therefore needs an amount of dough equivalent to a tenth of an *aifa* in order to be obligated in the mitzvah of *challah*. This is the same volume as the *omer* per person of manna.

The volume of a tenth of an *aifa* is 43 and one fifth eggs. Similarly, the numerical value of the word *challah* is 43! So the numerical value of the word *challah* is the same as the volume required for the mitzvah of *challah*, 43.

What is the reason for this? When we reverse the order of the letters that make up the number 43 (מג), it spells the word “also,” (“גם”). The word “also” implies adding something.

There is a well-known principle when deriving things from the Torah: The words “but” and “only” (“אך” and “רק”) indicate that something should be excluded from whatever the verse is saying, and the word “also” (“גם”), comes to add something that otherwise would not have been included in the context of the verse. *Challah*, therefore, which has the numerical value of “also” must, as its essence come to add something that was not there before.

The Root of the Word *Challah* (“חלה”) comes from the word “חל,” Meaning “Empty” and “Lacking,” which is the Opposite of “Adding”

We have learned, therefore, that the essence of *challah* is adding. But adding onto what?

Let us contemplate the root of the word “*challah*,” “חלה.” Is this a word with a two letter root or a three letter root? The letter “ה” at the end of the word ostensibly “falls out” of the word, as we find when we make the word plural: “חלות.” The root of the word is therefore, two letters, “חל.” What does the word “חל” mean in the Torah?

“And Moshe prayed.”[7] The verb used there is “ויחל.” *Rashi* explains there that “ויחל” is a word that means praying and requesting, as explained by the Gemara as well[8] And *Rashi* on another Gemara says: “‘תוחלת’ means prayer, as the verse ‘And Moshe prayed.’”[9] The word *challah*, therefore, means the same thing as its root word means in the verses “And Moshe prayed,” and “I shall request to G-d, and supplicate before Him,”[10] which refer to prayer.

Now we must understand what connection there is between prayer and separating *challah*. While there is a custom to pray at the time one separates *challah* there is, nevertheless, a deeper meaning.

Let us delve further into the meaning of the root word “חל.” The Gemara says “‘And Moshe (‘ויחל’) prayed.’ This teaches that Moshe gave himself up to die for them.”[11] *Rashi* explains there that this is because “ויחל” also means empty and void (“חלל”). The root “חל” therefore also means “empty,”

“void,” and “lacking.” It is also the same root for the words “sickness,” “חולי” and disease, “מחלה.” It can also mean “secular” and mundane as in the words “חול” (“secular”) and “חולין” (non-sanctified meat).

The principle is that all of these root meanings must share one common concept. When one wants to understand something, if he understands its root, he will understand its essence.

Ostensibly, *challah*, meaning “also,” which implies something additional, is the opposite of the other meanings of the word *challah*, which imply emptiness. “Also” implies “adding,” while “emptiness” implies lessening and lacking something. Similarly, “sickness” is a lessening of good health and results from the fact that there is something missing. Initially, a person is healthy, but when he starts to lack something physically, he gets sick. And the word “secular” also implies that something is lacking. Indeed, “חולין,” non-sanctified meat, is designated as such because it is empty and lacking in holiness.

The root meanings of *challah* which imply emptiness, sickness, and secular imply that something is missing. But on the other hand, we clarified that the numerical value of *challah* is “also,” which implies multiplicity, adding something.

All Opposites, at their Root, are One

What, then, does “*challah*” mean? Does it mean multiplying and adding, or does it imply lacking, that something has been taken away. On a simple level, these concepts are complete opposites.

There is a deep and fundamental principle that all opposites are, at their root, actually one. For example, a husband and wife are two opposites but their goal is to become one because at their root, they are one. “This time, she is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh.”^[12] It comes, out, then, that anytime two things are opposites, this is a sign that at their root, they are one. If this were not the case, the other would not be its opposite. The root of their opposite-ness is the fact that at their root, they are one, but that when that root became differentiated into its sub-parts in this world, the parts became opposites relative to one another. But something which, at its root, was never one can never become opposite to the other thing.

This is simple to understand. A tree is not the opposite of the moon because at their root, they were never one. But the sun is the opposite of the moon because at their root, they are one, as chazal say: At the beginning, there were two great luminaries, but “The moon said in front of the Creator of the world, ‘Master of the world, is it possible for two kings to wear one crown?!’ He said to her, ‘Go and make yourself small.’”^[13]

Any two things which are essentially opposites actually have a relationship to one another at their root. The opposite-ness shows that there is a connection between them, because if there were no connection between them, they could not be opposites.

The clear principle is that any two things whose physical manifestations are opposite to one another have one root. If this were not the case, they would not be opposites. It is a well established principle that if two things manifest themselves as opposites to one another, this is a proof that at their root, they are one.

A Person Does Things Because he Lacks Something, Which is not the Case with the Creator

When we contemplate the concept of *challah*, and separating *challah*, we see that *challah* has the volume measurement of 43 “eggs,” which is the numerical value of “also,” which means adding something. But on the other hand, the word *challah* implies “non-sanctified meat,” “emptiness,” and

“sickness,” which imply that something is lacking. We must therefore define what “lacking” means and what “adding” means. We will then understand how, and in what way, they are one.

Adam Harishon was called “*challah*.” “*Adam Harishon* was the pure *challah* of the world,” according to the *Yerushalmi* we mentioned earlier.[\[14\]](#) Why was he called “pure *challah*?” Let us consider this deeply.

No one does anything unless he has to because he lacks something. If he lacks something, he acts. If he lacks nothing, he does not act. This is a fundamental principle of human nature.

This starts with desire, with a person wanting something. The word desire (“רצון”) is connected to the word “צר,” meaning “constricted.” In other words, when a person is constricted and lacks something, he wants to fulfill that need. This is why the word for desire (“רצון”) shares its root letters with the words for “constricted” (“צר”) and “running” (“רץ”). Because there is something lacking, the person *desires* to fill that which is missing and *runs* to achieve that goal. A person goes out to work in the morning because he lacks something. And even if he lacks nothing, he desires money, which means that some lacking is created by his desire. One who has 100 wants 200.[\[15\]](#)

It comes out then that every act that a person does is the product of the fact that something is missing. This is a clear principle. The root of every action is desire, and the word “desire” implies that something in the person is missing, as we explained. But if a person would not lack anything physically, spiritually, or emotionally, he would not work to accomplish anything.

In contrast, when the Creator acted, as it were, to create the world, it is obvious and clear that what He did was not done because of something missing, G-d forbid. We believe with perfect faith that Hashem is infinite and perfect in all types of perfection. He lacks nothing at all. Why then did He “need” to create the world? We can never truly know the answer because this is above our ability to understand. Hashem created the world because He desired to do so, but it is impossible to say that He created the world because something was lacking, G-d forbid. Hashem therefore acts and accomplishes even without lacking anything.

Using this understanding, we can identify two types of actions which are done in the world. Everyone can identify how, in their own souls, everything that they do is because of some lacking, something which is missing. If a person would lack nothing he would not act. But when the Creator, as it were, created the world, He did not do so because He lacked anything. He created the world because He is infinite and we can have no concept of this. If anyone says that Hashem created the world because He was lacking something, that is heresy. The Creator lacks nothing, and nevertheless, He created the world.

The Actions of Hashem - The Secret of Adding when Nothing is Missing

We have identified two types of actions, those that flow from the fact that something is missing, and those that come from a source which lacks nothing. These are two basic roots from which actions flow. The type of acts which we are familiar with generally are of the type which flow from something missing within us. But the acts which the Creator of the world, as it were, does, are not done because anything is lacking. This is clear and easy to understand.

The Creator’s actions do not flow from the fact that something is missing. This is the secret of the “also” (“גם”), the secret of “adding” where nothing is missing.

Before the world was created, it can be said, in a manner of speaking that Hashem was one and His name was one. The Creator was alone. But when He created the world, something was “added.” But with this addition, by adding something, an opposite to that “adding” was also created, because by

“adding” the creation of the world, He also formed a void, a lacking.

The explanation of this is that every adding, deep down, comes from something being missing. If one adds onto something, there must be a “something” to add on to. Because that “something” was lacking in some way, something else had to be added to it. As an analogy, when we bring extra courses to a meal because the meal is not complete without them. If the meal were complete, there would be no need for the extra courses.

It comes out, then, that when we define something as “additional,” something lacking must have preceded it. Because if nothing was lacking before, why would anything additional be needed?

Now, if we now view Hashem’s creation of the world as an addition and completion where something had been lacking before in the Creator of the world, G-d forbid, that is called impurity. But if we understand the creation as an addition which did not result from any kind of lacking, that understanding would reflect the true creation.

In contrast, on a human level, every addition is rooted deep down in the fact that something is missing. There are, therefore, two kinds of “additions.”

Man Draws his Life-force and his Relationships with other People from a Place of “Lacking”

These ideas are very deep. We will try to explain them as best as possible so that they will be clear and simple. Let us first try to characterize our daily emotional lives, and then afterward, to go deeper.

Let us contemplate the human personality. For example, let us consider a husband or a wife who do not feel needed. The wife feels that if she would not visit the house for a long time, her husband would not miss her, or that the husband feels that if he weren’t in the house, that things would go perfectly fine without him. It is obvious that no one could live this way. Everyone, deep down, wants to feel that if he were not there, that there would be nothing! Everyone feels, or at least wants to feel, that people need him.

A person feels alive because of the knowledge that if he would go missing, it would create an empty void. It is natural that when a person dies, it creates an emotional vacuum and sometimes even a practical void as well, for those around him. If a person knew that if he disappeared, it would not interest even one person, not that anyone would disparage him G-d forbid, but that not one would praise him either. It would be like a bird somewhere that lived and died, and when it dies, it is just as if it had never lived. A person could not live in such a way. Every person needs love and to feel that he is needed and wanted.

This is the nature of the human personality, and anyone with even a little knowledge of himself can identify with this internally.

A Connection with the Creator of the World Cannot be Built on the Concept of “Lacking”

A person wants to create a personal and deep connection with the Creator of the world. He might conceive of that relationship in the same way as he understands his relationship with a wife, children and friends. But building a relationship like that with the Creator of the world is fundamentally flawed.[\[16\]](#)

Relationships between people are built on a feeling that one is needed, such that if one of them would disappear, his absence would be felt. This is a sign that the connection between people is real. But if we applied this understanding to the Creator of the world, and wanted to build that relationship on a

feeling that if I did not exist, G-d forbid, then Hashem would, as it were, feel like He was missing something, such a relationship would have no foundation. Indeed, Hashem is omnipotent and needs nothing from those that He created and it is impossible to say that He is lacking anything at all.

If a person thinks that he has built his relationship with the Creator such that Hashem, as it were, needs him, then he is living a mistake and in an imaginary world. Hashem does not need him, or any other created thing. He is “the Master of the world who reigned before any created thing was formed.”[\[17\]](#)

We must, therefore, develop a different kind of relationship with the Creator of the world. We cannot remain with the understanding that our relationship with Hashem is the same as our relationship with other people, and that we can foster our relationship with Hashem the same way that we do with other people. With regard to Hashem, that would be a false connection. While we can say that we have a love for other people and that we need to love the Creator also, the idea that we can build a relationship with Hashem which is analogous to the mutually dependent relationships that exists between people is impossible in our relationship with Hashem. We cannot build a relationship with the Creator in which we feel that if I weren't there, that Hashem would lack something.

Even in Mankind, the Concept of an Action Which Does not Flow From Anything Lacking does Exist, Deep in the Soul

We now understand that we have a deeper perception in the soul. As we explained at the beginning, there are two types of actions, or, more precisely, two motivations for acting. We are personally familiar with one of those motivations, which is that if I do not act, I will be lacking something. On the other hand, we have the concept of the actions of Hashem who created the world, which was an act that did not arise from the fact that anything was lacking. Even had He not acted, He would have been missing nothing. According to this, we have made a distinction that the Creator acts because of one motivation, and created beings act for a different reason. We act as a product of a feeling that something is missing, but the Creator acts although nothing is lacking.

Now we can understand the true connection with the Creator. Based on what we have said so far, it seems that the relationship between us and Hashem is not bilateral, but is, instead, unilateral. We depend on Him because without Him, G-d forbid, we would not exist, but from His perspective, as it were, He is complete in all types of perfection with the things He created or without them.

With regard to the relationships between people, the verse says, “Just as it is with water, a person looks at his own face, so too it is with the heart of one person to another.”[\[18\]](#) The relationship in the heart between two people is bilateral, but this is not the case with the Creator of the world. There, a person feels a dependency on Hashem, such that if, G-d forbid, one did not have Hashem (meaning that the person doesn't feel Hashem's presence in his life), what is the purpose of life!

This is exactly how we should feel; that without Hashem, we would have no life. But the verse about seeing face to face was not said about this. Here, the concept of lacking, or needing another, does not exist with regard to Hashem.

From this, we can understand a deep aspect of the soul. Our connection to Hashem has a deeper aspect to it than the superficial relationship that we can perceive outwardly, a relationship built on lacking. Hashem created the world not out of a sense that He was missing anything, as we said. By doing so, He implanted a deeper kind of action within us. He gave us the ability to act from a place of not lacking anything.

This faculty which Hashem implanted within us is indispensable to our understanding of the

relationship with Him. If we did not have this faculty of acting which does not come from a feeling of missing something, then our actions would only flow from a perception of what we are lacking. This would even include our relationship with the Creator of the world, which could also only be built only on a perception of lacking, meaning a desire that the feeling of lacking something should be bilateral. And this is impossible, as we explained.

It comes out, therefore, that we have some inner ability to act for reasons that are not necessarily based on a feeling of missing something. Certainly the vast majority of the things that we do are because of a feeling of lacking something. But there is capacity, deep within a person, to act not only because he is missing something, but he will also do the same act even if he lacks nothing. This is the secret of the concept called, *lishma*, “for its own sake,” as we will explain G-d willing.

This deeper aspect can be broken down into two parts: 1) that the connection that a person feels with Hashem is a connection that does not depend on Hashem “needing” him, and 2) that even a human being has the ability to act for reasons other than a feeling that he is lacking something.

Natural Forces Act Without any Feeling that Something is Lacking, and we can Learn From Them

We remain with a question: Why would a person do something even though he lacks nothing?

The truth is that there is no explanation for this. It is like the wind which moves. Obviously, this movement is not the result of some feeling that the wind lacks something. Why, then, does it move? Will it be incomplete if it does not move? Similarly, fire burns. Will fire lack something if it does not burn?

Clearly then, the same concept exists, as it were, with regard to the Creator. None of His actions result from a feeling that He is missing something. But that concept exists not only with regard to Hashem, but also, as we said with natural forces like the wind which moves and the fire which burns, which act without a feeling that they lack anything. Why, though, do they act? Wind follows the laws of nature. So too, fire burns because that is its nature. But can man also act without feeling that he is lacking anything?

Here, there is a fundamental point. Sometimes a person must compare himself to the natural forces of creation.

Hashem created the concept of “nature” in the world.^[19] On a simple level, the reason He created it was to enable the existence of the concept of choice, so that we would not necessarily see that everything is from Hashem. We can now also choose to see things that happen as resulting from the laws of nature. The purpose of the laws of nature is to test us. Through this process, we can reach the truth using our own free choice. This explanation is true on a simple level.

But Hashem created nature for an additional reason. He created nature in order that it should teach us about the spiritual capacities that already exist within us!

If the wind can move without feeling that it fulfills any need by moving, and if fire can burn even if it is not doing so because it lacks something, and all of the other natural forces in creation can do the same, we can learn from them that within ourselves, we also have the ability to act even without feeling that we must do so because we lack something. If such an ability exists by inanimate objects, plants and animals, then it certainly exists in the soul of the pinnacle of creation, mankind.

Superficially, we might think that this concept of acting selflessly exists only with regard to the Creator of the world. He created us without any feeling that He was lacking anything. But only

Hashem can do such a thing, and not those that He created.

It is true that man is a created thing and is not a creator. But He who blew our souls into our bodies, did so using His own Essence.^[20] He implanted within us, as it were, His own ability to act without doing so because of a feeling that something is missing.

Acting not out of a Sense of Lacking Something - Serving Hashem *Lishma*

Chazal refer to these two concepts as “*lishma*,” for their own sake, and “not *lishma*,” not for their own sake. “Really a person should busy himself with Torah and mitzvos even though it is not *lishma*, because by doing it not *lishma*, he will eventually come to do it *lishma*.”^[21]

What exactly does “*lishma*” and “not *lishma*” mean?

“Not *lishma*” means that I lack something and I want to fill that void, whether it happens to be a physical or spiritual void, there is some level that I have not yet attained. “*Lishma*” means: I am doing this thing not because I am lacking something and not because it will fulfill me in some way, but I am doing it for the purpose of doing the very act itself. Anything that I do to gain a greater sense of fulfillment is done out of a sense of lacking something. If so, it is not *lishma*. Only something which is not done for fulfillment can be considered not to result from a feeling that something is lacking.

There are two kinds of actions which exist in creation: 1) those that flow from something which is missing and 2) those that come from the same point which is not missing. The Creator, when He created His world clearly did not do so from a sense that He was lacking anything, G-d forbid. Similarly, the natural forces which Hashem placed in the world like wind and fire also do not act based on a sense of lacking. They act because that is how Hashem created them. They do not seek fulfillment and they have no free will.

This is the deeper meaning of the fact that the numerical value of the word “nature” is equal to the numerical value of G-d’s name. Just as Hashem, when He created the world did not, as it were, act out of a sense of lacking something, so too when nature acts, it does not do so in order to make up for some deficiency. It simply acts because Hashem implanted it with the nature to do so.

Man, on the other hand, has the capacity for both aspects. He has the nature which we are familiar with - to act only because of some deficiency. But he also has the ability to act based on a deeper nature which he must reveal - the capacity which exists in all of the forces of nature, which is to act independently from any deficiency. We will explain this further, with G-d’s help.

The Holy “Also” - Adding where there is no Deficiency

We have identified two aspects in man. One is the aspect of acting based on deficiency and the other aspect is acting in the absence of deficiency. We can now understand the concept of “also.” The word “also” implies adding something because of a deficiency and emptiness. But there is also an “also” which is not based on deficiency. Adding, therefore, may sometimes result from deficiency and sometimes come from something other than deficiency. The only question is which aspect we will use.

Challah is also called *teruma*, as it says, “You shall lift up *challah* as *teruma*.”^[22] The act of lifting up *challah* can come from a place of deficiency. Then, on a deeper level, it is called impure *challah*. But *challah* can be taken from a place of no deficiency and then it is called pure *challah*.

What is the deeper meaning of this?

If the taking of *challah* comes from a sense of deficiency, then it itself must be deficient. This

deficiency is the aspect of impurity, as we find with a human corpse, which is the ultimate source of all impurity, which is called a “לול,” empty. When a person achieves the “also” by adding something from a perspective of deficiency, then he creates a world-view of death, of emptiness. In other words, the way that the person views his “adding” creates more emptiness and deficiency, the aspect of a corpse. But when a person adds with a perspective which is the opposite of emptiness and death, then he is called ‘pure challah.’

How can a person measure, within himself, where he is holding in this area?

When I have something, and I accept the fact that people might take it from me. In such a situation, no vacuum will exist in my life when that thing is taken from me. This is the aspect of the “also” of holiness. But if I want something, and it is taken from me, I will feel empty without it. Therefore, even when I still have it, it still creates an emptiness within me.

In simple terms, if someone has an object, how can he measure whether the object is from holiness or not? When, if the object is taken from me, I will feel that I lack something, this is a sign that the “also,” the “adding” of this object in my life is actually rooted in deficiency, and not from a true inner place. Chazal say that the money of *tzadikim* is more precious to them than their bodies.^[23] What, then, is the difference between them and the pleasure-seekers who want money also?

The answer is simple. The difference between them is apparent when they lose their money. With regard to a *tzadik*, as long as he is in possession of his money, he values and treasures it because it is also holy. But when he loses it, he does not feel that he is lacking anything. But with regard to those who seek pleasure, the moment they lose their money, they feel a deep sense of loss within them. This reveals that even when they had their money, it was built on deficiency.

A Full Vessel Can Hold but an Empty Vessel Cannot - Wisdom is given to the Wise

Therefore, if we want to measure whether a man’s attainment is true or not we see: If he identifies a feeling within himself that if what he has would be taken away that he would feel empty, then even his possession of that thing creates an emptiness within him. But if he identifies within himself that if the thing would be taken away, than he would not feel empty, then it is a vessel for holiness.

If we contemplate these ideas, we see that they are explicit in the words of chazal. “Come and see that Hashem is not like a human being. For a human being, an empty vessel can hold more , but a full vessel cannot. For Hashem, however, this is not so. A full vessel can hold and an empty vessel cannot hold.”^[24] Similarly, they say, “Hashem only gives wisdom to one who has wisdom, as it says, (Daniel 2:21) ‘Give wisdom to the wise.’”^[25]

According to the laws of nature, one can add more liquid to an empty vessel, but when it is full, and one tries to put more liquid into it, it will spill over. But with regard to Hashem, it is exactly the opposite. When the vessel is empty, Hashem will not fill it. But when it is full, Hashem will fill it.

What is the deeper meaning of this teaching?

According to what we have seen above, we can understand. If a person can only receive when he feels deficient, then whatever he receives is based on deficiency. If, when a person is lacking, he receives, and if it were to be taken away, he would be lacking again, then even what he receives creates a continuing deficiency in him. He has thus built a vessel out of deficiency. Even when his “vessel” is full, he is called an “empty vessel.” But the way of Hashem is different. Hashem, as it were, does not fill up such a vessel because Hashem’s creation of the world was not based on a deficiency. So even now, Hashem’s giving has no place in an empty vessel, a vessel built on deficiency.

A “full vessel” is one which is fitting for Hashem’s gifts. “Full vessel” means that one receives from Hashem, but not out of a feeling of deficiency. In other words, the recipient does not need that Divine gift because of some deficiency.

Kindness and Mercy - Giving Because of a Feeling of Deficiency or Without a Feeling of Deficiency

This is the fundamental difference between kindness (*chesed*) and mercy (*rachamim*). The attribute of mercy is awakened within a person when he discerns something lacking. When we see a poor or destitute person whose house is empty, then the feeling of mercy is awakened within us. But when we see a wealthy person who lacks nothing, we do not feel any mercy toward him at all.^[26] We see that deficiency is the thing which awakens mercy.

The trait of kindness is different. Kindness means giving to another person not because of some deficiency, but through the desire to give. Hashem created the world to give to His creatures. But had there been no creatures, the reality of deficiency would not have existed.

Hashem created people in order to give to them, but not because they lacked anything. Indeed, before they were created, His creatures lacked nothing at all. So why did He need to create them? Certainly, after they were created deficient, Hashem gives to them to provide for that which they lack. But this is the second step. But at the beginning, He created them – but not to make up for a deficiency, since it is impossible to have mercy on someone who was not created.

It is therefore clear that the reason for creation was not because it lacked anything, since before creation, there was no one who could have lacked anything. When does a creature lack something? Only after it is created. And why was it created? So that Hashem could give to it. The act of creation was therefore not because anything was lacking. It resulted from a giving without a preceding deficiency, a giving despite the fact that nothing was lacking, a giving for the sake of giving.

This is called “full vessel,” where Hashem’s practice of giving to another is not because He has identified some deficiency. Rather, it is only because He wants to give. And even when He gives to someone with nothing, an “empty vessel,” the recipient is really a “full vessel” on a deeper level. In other words, when one gives to another person because of a desire to give, and not because he has identified that the other person lacks something, then the recipient is called a “full vessel.”

One who says “I will give this *Selah* to *Tzedaka* in order that my Son should live” is a Complete *Tzadik*

We must contemplate further. If it is indeed true that for Hashem, a “full vessel” holds but an “empty vessel” does not hold, and that Hashem gives for reasons other than the deficiency of the recipient, how does Hashem’s Divine influence operate? In general, in all of our prayers to Hashem, we ask Him to give us what we are lacking even though we just explained that Hashem gives not because of the deficiencies of the recipient. What, then, is the nature of Hashem’s giving to mankind?

In other words, if we ask for something only because of a feeling of deficiency, then we are an “empty vessel,” and Hashem will only fill a “full vessel!” How, then, does Divine influence reach us?

The deeper meaning is as the Gemara says, “One who says this *selah* is for *Tzedaka* in order that my son should live, or in order that I merit the world to come is a complete *Tzadik*.”^[27] Even though he has done the mitzvah for his own benefit, Hashem still values his intentions. The Gemara, however, clarifies that this is only true with regard to the Jewish people, but not with regard to the nations of the world. *Rashi* there explains that the reason is that “The intention of Jewish people is toward heaven. Whether his son lives or he does not live, he does not second guess the attribute of justice.

But a gentile only gives [the *tzedaka*] on the condition that his condition is fulfilled, but if it is not, he regrets [the *mitzvah*].”

Let us understand this. Is it not true that even a Jew who gives several hundred thousands of his money to *tzedaka* in order that his son should live, and his son does not live, that he would also feel regret?! It was only for that reason that he agreed to give up all of that wealth. What, then, is the difference for this distinction between Jews and gentiles?

The answer is that a Jew’s heart is directed toward heaven so even if he does regret the loss of his wealth which he spent on *tzedaka*, he will certainly not regret it completely. He would have at least given a penny even knowing that his son might not live. So there was at least some part of what he gave to *tzedaka* which constituted true giving, which he would have given without any hope for any personal benefit at all. He is therefore considered a complete *tzaddik*. And this cannot be said about the nations of the world.

With regard to the topic at hand, every single Jew who acts based on a feeling of some deficiency still has some true point in his soul. If our actions were based completely on ulterior motives, it would be impossible for us to connect to the Creator of the world because Hashem is true and His seal is truth. “Seal” (סוּמָן) shares its root letters with the word “territory” (אֶרֶץ). If we want to enter Hashem’s territory, we must have some spark of truth within us.

Hashem only gives to the True Point within the Soul - the *Lishma* Point

If one wants to connect to the Creator of the world by seeking out the fulfillment of that which one is lacking, he can never completely connect to Hashem. This is because Hashem only gives based on the point within us which feels whole. Hashem therefore created us with an inner point which is always true, and with that spark of truth, we can connect to the Creator of the world. It is the conduit through which we receive Divine gifts.

It is therefore clear that without that point of truth hidden within man, he could not receive any Divine benefit. The Divine influence to the nations of the world, therefore, flows through the Jewish people because they have the aspect of *lishma*. Because Divine influence exists in the world through this quality of truth within the Jewish people, it therefore also passes to the other nations. They cannot receive this Divine influence directly from the Creator because they lack any *lishma* point, any kernel of perfect truth.

“Full vessel” does not mean that it lacks nothing. Indeed, no one is perfect. Hashem created us lacking in order that we should perfect ourselves. And we accomplish this self-perfection through this true point that exists within us.

Man is built with a duality: a place of deficiency which requires fulfillment and an inner reality of wholeness. The superficial reality of deficiency cannot exist without the inner reality. But Hashem’s will is that we should have both aspects; the internal and the external, and not merely the internal. This is the secret of creation; a superficial reality which lives off of the internal reality. If one derides the external reality, he is deriding the root form of creation.

The point of truth within us is the point of wholeness within us which wants things only in order to attain perfection and not because of any deficiency. And wholeness comes only through the point of wholeness within us, and not through our feeling of deficiency.

We have, therefore, identified aspects of the world which result from a feeling of deficiency whose fulfillment results in continued deficiency, and we have identified a type of fulfillment, or, more precisely, an “adding” which is not built on deficiency.

This is the secret of Moshiach ben Yosef, who adds to the light of wholeness. In other words, Moshiach means the light of perfection. And Moshiach ben Yosef means an adding which does not exist relative to some deficiency. Instead, it means an adding that builds on wholeness and perfection: Something is already perfect, and nevertheless he comes to add something just as Hashem did when He created the world.

Man Eats the Bread of the Mighty - Eating which is not because of Deficiency

Let us return to the beginning, to the topic of *challah*.

We explained that on one hand, that *challah* comes from the root word meaning corpse, non-sanctified meat, and disease. On the other hand, *challah* has the same numerical value as the word "also," corresponding to the 43 "egg" volume required in order to take *challah*. How do we know that one must have 43 "eggs" volume of dough in order to fulfill the mitzvah of *challah*? We mentioned the Gemara which said that the measurement for *challah* is derived from the Manna, which fell for the Jewish people, which was a tenth *aifa*.

We know that the manna the Jewish people ate in the desert had nothing excess in it. *Chazal* say, "'A man eats the bread of the mighty...' [28] the bread which is absorbed into the two hundred and forty eight limbs..." [29] *Rashi* there explains, "It did not go out of the person's organs." It was not like other types of eating in which case the body absorbs the good part and expels the excess. The manna was entirely usable without any excess.

Let us contemplate. Why do we eat? The simple answer is that we eat because we feel deficient. We either feel hungry or we desire the pleasure of eating. The common denominator is that the eating is based on some deficiency. The eating must, therefore, create a feeling of deficiency within us because the fulfillment of a deficiency perpetuates the deficiency. This is expressed by the excess food which is expelled by the intestines.

It therefore comes out that eating itself arises from a feeling of deficiency, which is why food is lacking and some of it must be expelled. This is because eating is done with a perspective of deficiency. But when one eats from a perspective that there is no deficiency, the product of eating is perfection and wholeness, rather than deficiency. This is why the manna was absorbed in the mighty ones of the generation of the desert, and why there it resulted in no byproducts.

"The Torah was only given to be derived by the eaters of the manna." [30] This was meant as a revelation of the fact that the manna was not eaten because of a feeling of deficiency. Rather, it was eaten because of the light of perfection. Therefore, it did not result in the production of any waste, because it was not consumed with a perspective of deficiency.

The Root of the Creation of Woman - The Understanding that Nothing is Lacking

We mentioned earlier that *Adam Harishon* was called the *challah* of the world. When woman was created, the verse says, "And Hashem caused a sleep to fall upon the man, and he fell asleep, and He took one of his ribs, and He closed up the flesh under it." [31] Why did Hashem put the man to sleep when He separated woman from him? We find many reasons given by *chazal*, including the idea that Hashem wanted to prevent him from taking a negative attitude toward her, among other reasons.

But we can offer another reason based on what we have explained. If he had been awake at that time, he would have seen the taking of his rib as the creation of a deficiency. But because he was sleeping when the rib was taken, it is as if the taking did not create a perspective of deficiency in man since he did not notice that anything had been taken. For example, when we do an operation today, we put a person to sleep because if one would operate without putting the person to sleep, the person

would feel pain, but when we cut when he is asleep, we can cut living flesh and he will not feel anything.

The deeper meaning is that when Hashem created woman, He created her with the perspective that her creation did not create a deficiency. He therefore called her Chava, meaning “mother of all life.” Today, however, woman is called *nekeiva* (נקבה), meaning “hole,” which implies a deficiency. But this is only after the sin.[\[32\]](#)

The creation of man corresponds to the creation of the world. The Creator created the world not out of a sense of deficiency. He created man the same way and He brought forth Chava from him. He did so in order that when He formed her, it should also not be done from a perspective of wholeness, and not from the perspective that something is lacking. Man must therefore realize that woman does not exist because something was taken away from him. Rather, she was created in addition to him so that he would be whole.

A person must have the same attitude with regard to having children. He should not do so because he feels that he is missing something without them. Rather, he should do so in order to add onto himself. This is the opposite of the widespread attitude today that someone who has no children feels deeply deficient.

If one perceived the truth of the reality that Hashem created him as an “addition” on top of the wholeness that existed before his creation, and that woman was similarly formed as an addition onto him, and not a reflection of some deficiency, then he would have the perception of holiness. But today, we have the perception that everything in a person’s life is built on deficiency. “To your husband shall be your desire” (and the same thing in reverse) implies an entire structure built on deficiency. This worldview is based on deficiency rather than one of “adding” onto wholeness.

The *challah* that we know today is therefore essentially called “impure *challah*.”[\[33\]](#) This essentially means that *challah* today, after the sin of *Adam Harishon*, is called “impure *challah*.” *Adam Harishon* was “pure *challah*,” and after the sin he was called “impure *challah*.”

What is the practical significance of this? Our perception of reality is that everything is based on deficiency, such that all of daily life is filled with fulfillment and deficiency, fulfillment and deficiency. But a deeper reality exists which is deeply hidden within us. This is a perception of a life where a person does mitzvos, learns Torah, and does more and more in order to add onto wholeness, and not because he feels lacking, or because he wants to feel fulfilled. This is service of G-d *lishma*.

Adding onto Shabbos - the Perception in the soul of Adding onto Perfection

We know that there is a mitzvah of adding onto Shabbos. A person must take a little bit of the weekday and make it part of *Shabbos kodesh* at both the beginning and end of Shabbos. Why do we need to add onto Shabbos? Are we somehow compensating for some kind of deficiency in Shabbos?

Shabbos is a microcosm of the world to come, which is perfect and without deficiency. It is therefore clear and obvious that nothing whatsoever is lacking in *Shabbos kodesh*. And that aspect itself is the definition of the mitzvah to add onto Shabbos. It means adding onto something that is already whole. It is an adding which is not built on deficiency and by doing this mitzvah, we acquire an inner understanding of an adding which is not based on deficiency. During the week we view “adding” as doing something to complete something which is lacking. But the light of Shabbos illuminates us so that we can understand the concept of adding onto perfection.

Shabbos kodesh is perfect and lacks nothing. We are nevertheless commanded to take a little bit of Friday and Sunday and add them onto Shabbos. The idea, then, is that we are commanded through

this mitzvah to receive an inner understanding of an adding which does not create dependency or deficiency. Had the mitzvah of adding onto Shabbos implied a deficiency, then it would not be defined as truly adding anything. The mitzvah to add onto Shabbos is built on the perspective that Shabbos is perfect, without any deficiency. This Torah mitzvah to add onto Shabbos has the ability to deeply implant the capacity to add onto perfection in one's soul.

This is the essential repair of the sin of Adam Harishon.

Separating Challah - Separation which Creates Deficiency versus Separation as the Source of Multiplicity

Let us return to the beginning to the *minhag*, and, in particular, the *minhag* of Jewish women, to fulfill the mitzvah of separating *challah* on *erev Shabbos*. When we separate the *challah* from the dough, is there some deficiency? Ostensibly, there clearly is, since when we separate *challah*, we take away some of the dough!

What is the mitzvah of separating challah? The deeper meaning of separating challah is the following: When challah was pure from a halachic perspective, this separation did not create one portion which was fit to eat and one portion which was not fit to eat. Rather, all of the dough was fit to eat because the one who separated the challah gave the separated dough to the *kohain* (priest in the *Beis Hamikdash*) when it was pure. But when the *challah* is impure, it may not be eaten and the separated piece has to be burned.

What is the deeper meaning of this? There are two aspects when one separates one thing from another thing. There can be a separation which does not create a deficiency in that from which one separates and there is a separation which does create a deficiency.

For example, when Yaakov separated the sheep of Lavan, we find that this separation created multiplicity, rather than deficiency. But there is also a separating which creates a deficiency where I perceive that I separated something from that which I had, and now I have less. But separating which does not create a deficiency, creates the opposite and is actually the source of multiplicity.

"Tithe, in order that you become wealthy."^[34] Tithing is a type of separation which is the source of blessing and creates no deficiency. "Bring all of the tithes to the treasure house. And let it be plunder in my house and in my shop, if it will not be as Hashem the L-rd of Hosts has said, if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and give you more blessing until you say "enough!"^[35] The sages use this verse to teach that it is forbidden to test Hashem in anything but this. With regard to tithing, it is permissible to test whether Hashem will fulfill His promise. This itself is the source of blessing. This is a separating which does not create a deficiency, but instead creates a source for an outpouring of the Divine influence of "adding."

Chava was created in a similar way. The Creator separated one of Adam's ribs from him, "bone of my bone," which He used to create woman. This was a separation which created a source for "adding" to the world, because if there is no woman, there are no children. The result is that this separation created the "adding" of children, of multiplicity. This was a separation for the sake of adding and not because something was lacking.

The simple, superficial understanding is that all separation creates deficiency. But the deeper inner reality is that woman was separated from him and then she reunited with him in order to "add." This is the concept of the "also" which creates wholeness and not deficiency.

On a deeper level, when we separate something from man, if he feels deficient, this is a separation of deficiency which cannot be a source of blessing. But if, after the separation, he does not feel

deficient, then he remains whole. In this case, the person feels whole, but there has also been an addition into the world. This is the root of Divine giving and the root of “adding.”

Put another way: If, at the time of the separation, I feel that some of the principal has been depleted, then the separating caused a deficiency. And if it created a deficiency, it cannot be a source of true fulfillment, of blessing. But if at the time of the separation, I feel that the principal is not lacking, and that the object from which the separation was made remains whole, then that which was separated is called “adding.” And if it is called “adding,” then it is the source of all adding.

It is the same thing with regard to *tzedaka*. When a person gives a certain sum to *tzedaka*, he sometimes feel that this causes him a loss, but a person of understanding will discern that in essence, he is lacking nothing because whatever is his, is his, and that which he gave is not his, but was instead “added” to him. The result is that not only is the amount that he gave not missing; it becomes the source of Divine blessing and “addition” for him because the extra amount he receives will be an “addition” onto whatever he already has.[\[36\]](#)

The Sin of Adam Harishon - the Perspective of Deficiency

Adam Harishon himself was an “addition” onto the Creator’s perfection. When He took the rib, Chava, from him, he had to understand that she was an “addition” onto him and not as something separated from him which caused him to be lacking. This is because although she was indeed taken from him, he was not lacking. Then she became only a source of blessing for him. But when he began to understand her as something missing from him, then she did indeed cause him to be deficient. And who was deficient? He himself! This was the sin of the tree of knowledge.

If man views woman as an addition onto wholeness, she can never create any deficiency in him. She could never cause him to sin because he was perfect and whole. But when he began to view her as something missing from him because she had been taken from him and that he was now deficient, then she became a source of deficiency. If she is the source of his deficiency, then she can also become the source of his sins. She thereby caused him greater deficiency time after time.

Adam Harishon was the “pure *challah*.” Pure *challah* is fit to eat and it creates no deficiency. Because Adam’s sin was viewing woman as a deficiency, rather than an addition, that perception created an actual deficiency in *Adam Harishon* and he then became an “impure *challah*,” which was not fit to eat. *Challah* itself became an aspect of deficiency.

Our job on *Shabbos kodesh* is to “add!” Therefore, the custom is to make many, many foods and additions on *Shabbos*.

The Jewish People Add and Add - Addition onto Perfection - In Contrast to the Nations

This explains the Gemara’s statement that “all of a person’s food is predetermined for him from Rosh Hashana to Rosh Hashana, except for the expenses of *Shabbosim* and the expenses for holidays.”[\[37\]](#) Whenever there is a fixed amount, and I take from it, I have created a deficiency. But the secret of *Shabbos kodesh* is adding onto the principal. When an addition creates no deficiency, there is no fixed amount. Indeed, something like that is above the concept of fixed amounts. This is the secret of “adding.”[\[38\]](#)

The deeper meaning of the matter is to return to where we add without creating deficiency. This is the difference between the Jewish people and the nations of the world. When the nations of the world feel that something is complete, they stop working and do nothing because the matter is already complete. But the Jewish people believe that we must perfect something with every type of perfection,, and then when we are done, we go back and add on more to that perfection.

Hashem should help us to merit to fulfill the aspect of continually adding, not in order to complete some deficiency, but in order to add onto perfection by constantly adding more and more.

[1] *Orach Chaim* 242, in *Rama*.

[2] *Shabbos* 2:6. This custom is also quoted in the *Magen Avraham* and *Machtzis Hashekel* on *Orach Chaim* 242.

[3] *Bereishis Raba* 14:2.

[4] *Shabbos* 2:6.

[5] *Shmos* 16.

[6] *Eiruvin* 83b.

[7] *Shmos* 32:11.

[8] *Brachos* 32a.

[9] *Brachos* 55a.

[10] Source needed.

[11] *Brachos* 32a.

[12] *Bereishis* 2:33.

[13] *Chulin* 60b.

[14] *Shabbos* 2:6. Tangentially, we can say that *Adam Harishon* had no personal name. The word "Adam" is a general name for all of mankind. He was called "*Rishon*," meaning "first," because he was literally the first "Adam." But he had no personal name of his own. Chava was the first person with a personal name. *Chazal*, here, are ostensibly giving *Adam Harishon* the name "*Challah*."

[15] Source needed.

[16] At the beginning of a person's spiritual journey, one may understand his relationship with Hashem this way, but this is not the end goal.

[17] From the *Adon Olam* prayer.

[18] Mishlei 27:19.

[19] And the Hebrew word for “nature” has the same numerical value as one of G-d’s names, as we know from the *Kuzari*.

[20] Source needed. Tanya quotes Zohar?

[21] Pesachim 50b.

[22] Bamidbar 15:20.

[23] Sota 12a.

[24] Brachos 40a.

[25] *Id.* at 55a.

[26] It could be that in his private life, he may have something that makes him worthy of mercy, but outwardly, he has everything.

[27] Bava Basra 10b.

[28] Tehillim 78:25.

[29] Yuma 75b.

[30] Midrash Tanchuma Parshas Beshalach 20.

[31] Bereishis 2:21.

[32] It is noteworthy that even before the sin, she was called *nekeiva*, as in the verse “male and female (“נקבה”) He created them.” But at that time, the term was used in the sense of a puzzle which is not missing any pieces. But after the sin, when Chava became separated from man, there was then a “hole” (“נקב”), implying that something was then lacking.

[33] Certainly, there have been times in history where the *challah* is pure from a *halachic* perspective. We, however, are now speaking in different terms.

[34] Taanis 9a.

[35] Malachi 3.

[36] See also, Kesubos 66b, where it says “Deficiency is the salt of money,” which *Rashi* explains means that “One who wants to salt his money, meaning to cause his money to last, should make his money ‘deficient’ by constantly giving it to *tzedaka*, and its ‘deficiency’ will give it staying power.”

[37] Beitza 16a.

[38] See also the chapter two, which explains a different aspect of this concept.

Source: <https://bilvavi.net/english/shabbos-kodesh-03-separating-challah>