

# CHABAD LUBAVITCH OF CHAUTAUQUA

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## Kabbalah and Meditation - Week 7 – 2021

1. When you besiege a city for many days to wage war against it to capture it, you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an ax against them, for you may eat from them, but you shall not cut them down. For [is] the tree of the field a man, to go into the siege before you?
  2. However, a tree you know is not a food tree, you may destroy and cut down, and you shall build bulwarks against the city that makes war with you, until its submission. (Deuteronomy 20:19-20)
    - a. **RASHI:** *Is the tree of the field a man, [to go into the siege before you]?:* The word פִּי here means “perhaps:” Is the tree of the field perhaps a man who is to go into the siege by you, that it should be punished by the suffering of hunger and thirst like the people of the city? Why should you destroy it?
  3. Rabbi Yirmeya said to Rabbi Zeira: Let the Master come and teach ...us a matter of *aggada*. Rabbi Zeira said to him that Rabbi Yohanan said as follows: What is the meaning of that which is written: “*For man is a tree of the field*” (Deuteronomy 20:19)? And is man actually a tree of the field?
  4. Rather, since it is written: “*You may eat of them but you may not cut them [down],*” (Deuteronomy 20:19) and it is written: “*Them you may destroy and cut [down]*” (ibid, v. 20). How so? If a Torah scholar is worthy: “You may eat of them but you may not cut them [down],” but if he is not worthy: “He, you may destroy and cut down.” [Depart and turn away from them. Rashi, Tosafot] (Talmud, Tractate Ta’anit 7a)
  5. Are there any trees in it or not... (Numbers 13:20)
    - a. **RASHI:** Does it have a worthy man who will protect them with his merit. (Talmud B.B. 15a)
  6. Beit Hillel say: The New Year for trees is on the fifteenth of Shevat. (Talmud, Rosh Hashana 2a)
  7. Man is a “small world,” a microcosm of the universe. (*Tanchuma* , *Pekudei 3*; *Tikkunei Zohar*, *Tikkun 69*)
- | Words          | אותיות            | Mineral   | דומם |
|----------------|-------------------|-----------|------|
| Emotive traits | מדות              | Vegetable | צומח |
| Understanding  | שכל (השייך למדות) | Animal    | חי   |
| Rational       | עצם השכל          | Human     | מדבר |
8. And you shall know this day and consider it in your heart, that the L-rd He is G-d in heaven above, and upon the earth below; there is none else. (Deuteronomy 4:39)
  9. Educate a child according to his way; even when he grows old, he will not turn away from it. (Proverbs 22:6)
  10. One whose wisdom is greater than his deeds, what is he comparable to? To a tree with many branches and few roots; comes a storm and uproots it, and turns it on its face. As is stated, “*He shall be as a lone tree in a wasteland, and shall not see when good comes; he shall dwell parched in the desert, a salt land, uninhabited*” (Jeremiah 17:6). But one whose deeds are greater than his wisdom, to what is he compared? To a tree with many roots and few branches, whom all the storms in the world cannot budge from its place. As is stated: “*He shall be as a tree planted upon water, who spreads his roots by the river; who fears not when comes heat, whose leaf is ever lush; who worries not in a year of drought, and ceases not to yield fruit*” (ibid., v. 8). (Ethics of Our Fathers 3:17)
  11. In describing the unique qualities of humankind, four terms are used: *Adam* refers to the quality of mind and intellect; *ish* to the quality of heart and emotion; *enosh*, weakness in either intellect or emotion or both; *gever*, who overcomes inner weakness and removes obstacles and hindrances to the attainment of an intellectual or emotional quality. I.e. *gever* works upon *enosh* to elevate him to the plane of *ish* or *adam*. Since it is possible to turn *enosh* into *ish* or *adam*, it is obvious that *enosh* already possesses the qualities found in *ish* and *adam*. (Hayom Yom 4 Elul)

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