



## SIMCHAT SHMUEL

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**P**arshat Emor introduces us to one of the most mysterious rituals in the *Beit Hamikdash*. The *Torah* instructs us that we are to prepare and bake the *lechem hapanim*- twelve loaves that are to be placed on each of the twelve drawers of the *Shulchan*, and are to remain there constantly, each week new bread is placed for *Shabbat*, simultaneous to the removal of the previous week's loaves (*Vayikra* 24:5-8).

So too, *Rav Chaim Vital zy'a*, wrote that the practice of the *Arizal* was to have 12 loaves of bread at every *Seudat Shabbat* to parallel the twelve loaves of the *lechem hapanim*.

*The Gemara in Chagiga (26b)* tells us that *Reish Lakish* explained that these 12 loaves were displayed before all those who came to the Temple for each of the three pilgrimage festivals, and that it was stated before them- 'See how much Hashem loves

*the Jewish People, the loaves are as fresh (from the previous week) now as we remove them, as they were when they were placed! 'Rebbe Yehoshua ben Levi stated that a great miracle occurred with the lechem hapanim loaves, they stayed fresh from week to week, they remained as warm as they were when they were placed.'*

*Reb Tzadok HaKohein* of Lublin explains our *Gemara* as teaching a profound eternal message. The twelve loaves of the *lechem hapanim* represent the twelve tribes of the Jewish People. The miracle of the twelve loaves of the *lechem hapanim* staying fresh and warm demonstrated that *Hashem's* love and warmth is equally bestowed on each of the twelve tribes of the Jewish People. This miracle also is meant to teach us an eternal lesson, that if *Hashem* loves each and every Jewish tribe equally, then we too must strive to feel warmth and love for each and every member of *Klal Yisrael*.

May we merit to take to heart these beautiful teachings, to learn to see the beauty and warmth within one another, and to express our love for every member of *Klal Yisrael*. Even if we are not ready to embrace the idea of having twelve *challot* at each *Seudat Shabbat*, may we merit that our *Shabbat* table is indeed a place where every single Jew feels unconditional warmth and love. ■

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