

“BAKING BREAD”

The Rabbis tell the parable of a King who gave two beloved servants gifts of wheat and flax.

One servant took the wheat, sifted it, ground it, kneaded it, baked it and set it on the table with a cloth underneath that he made from the flax. The other did nothing. When the king returned he said “my children, present to me what I have given you.” The first servant brought out the bread on the tablecloth. The other brought out the wheat in a basket and the bundle of flax. Which servant treated the King’s gift with greater reverence?

Similarly, the Midrash teaches, God gave us the Torah. By interpreting it, we render it more beautiful. It does not ruin the text to weave stories around it, to delve into its mysteries, to study its meaning. The history of Judaism is largely a history of the adornment of Torah. Gifted storytellers have written Midrash, legalists expound law, exegetes written penetrating interpretations. The preeminent Jewish code of law is called the shulchan aruch, the “set table.” When we stand before God we present a beautiful feast made of the sacred ingredients we have been given.

Please join us each Thursday morning at 8:15 as we study Torah together to “bake bread” with the rich ingredients of our tradition.