

Shabbos with Rabbi Mansour



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Discover the Joy
of Shabbos



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Shabbos is a day of rest, but it shouldn't be a passive day. We should be resting from our weekday activities but active in pursuing *ruchniyus*. There is a fascinating Zohar about what goes on in Shamayim when our *neshamah yeseirah* returns on Motzaei Shabbos.

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Hotza'ah is unique in that it is not creative and only applies in a public domain. We must explore the symbolism behind this *melachah*- what the public and private domain correspond to, and how that teaches us the conceptual essence of Shabbos.

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The Tiferet Shlomo gives medical advice: "*Shemirat Shabbat* is a *refuah*". To understand this advice we must dig deep into the secrets of the creation of the universe, to bring this concept into our *shemiras* Shabbos.



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A Taste of Shabbat

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E1)

Your Shabbat is wonderful. Can you imagine improving your experience?

טעמו וראו כי טוב – Taste and see

There are many ways that we get a 'taste' of Shabbat. One of those is via the study of the ל"ט מלאכות, and many took a step in that direction when they recently learned מסכת שבת. The הלכה gives us a sense and a taste of what Shabbat is meant to be like.

There are also the special שבת foods which give us a taste of what the eternal שבת is like.

סידור של שבת

But there is another source for discovering and enhancing our taste of שבת. That source is the סידור של שבת. The תפילות are designed to give us a glimpse into the depth of what שבת is meant to give us.

The סידור של שבת has been studied and analyzed by some of the greatest תורה thinkers, both literal and Kabbalistic. You will get an enhanced appreciation for קדושת שבת by opening your heart and mind to the explanations being offered.

The קדושת ציון of Bobov

The קדושת ציון of Bobov (the second Bobover Rebbe, R' Ben Zion Halberstam, זצ"ל, הי"ד)

asks how did the Jews fulfil the Mitzvah of מדבר? during their sojourn in the צדקה והסד? After all, everyone had food and clothing. Nobody lacked for anything under the ענני הכבוד.

He answers that a person who was wealthy back in מצרים would think of the delicacies

that he enjoyed there and his מן would taste like those delights that he enjoyed. However, the poor folks had nothing to think of but bread. They thought of bread and their מן tasted like plain stale bread.

The wealthy man was able to invite the poor man to his home to taste some of his מן. In that way the poor man could get a taste of fine food and he could then, if he wished, have his מן taste that way.

A lesson in helping others taste the fine delicacies of שבת applies here as well.

Agudath Israel and Ki Heim Chayeinu

Our good friends at Agudath Israel, through the כי הם חיינו program have introduced בדיבור אחד, a vehicle to enable each of us to taste the flavor of the תפילות and imbibe the

The wealthy man was able to invite the poor man to his home to taste some of his מן.



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atmosphere of שבת קודש through the many insights contained in the שבת של שבת.

Throughout this program we will have an opportunity to engage in זכו טועמיה חיים זכו,

Takeaway: I will try to dedicate a few minutes of my week to learning about the experience of תפילות של שבת and the שבת.

whereby we can learn about the exquisite tastes of שבת and the שבת של שבת and thereby take the flavors of שבת home with us to grace our experience of שבת.



The Power of the Pesukim

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E2)

The more you know about שבת and תורה the more you will grow and enjoy.

The number of פסוקים in שיר השירים

There are 117 פסוקים in שיר השירים. By itself, that number would not raise many eyebrows. This magnificent song with which we usher in the שבת has its proper place at the entrance of שבת even without the significance of the number of its פסוקים. But there is remarkable significance even there.

The hours of גיהנם

The רוקח (Germany 1176-1238), based on the זוהר הק' פ' נח gives us a surprising insight into the number 117. גיהנם is 'open for business' six days of the week = 144 hours. In addition, says the זוהר הק', the fires of גיהנם go off for an hour and a half each day (שעה ופלאגא שעה) for each of the תפילות (the זוהר הק' is assuming that we need that amount of time for each תפילה), which adds up to 4.5 hours per day. That time (4.5 x 6), 27 hours,

comes off the total of 144 hours of גיהנם which leaves 117, the number of פסוקים in שיר השירים.

The 117 that save us from the 117

The רוקח asserts that reciting the 117 פסוקים of שיר השירים on ערב שבת can spare a person from the 117 hours of גיהנם. Here we have significance, indeed tremendous

significance, in the recitation of שיר השירים even before we have begun to understand a word of this magnificent מגילה!

Just a snapshot

Our thanks go out to the Agudah and to the Ki Heim Chayeinu initiative for making it possible for us to gain countless insights into the תפילות של שבת and their meaning, well beyond the taste of their numbers alone!

גיהנם is 'open for business' six days of the week = 144 hours.

Takeaway: *I will try to dedicate a few minutes of my week to learning about the תפילות של שבת.*



Shabbat and Shir HaShirim

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E3)

Do you know how to love? Do you love intensely, deeply, with all your heart? Are you as passionate as an infatuated young lover? If the answer is yes, then Shabbat is for you. And if the answer is not quite, then you need to start using Shabbat properly.

The Minhag to recite Shir HaShirim

Nearly 500 years ago, the AriZ"L instituted the practice of reciting Shir HaShirim upon the onset of Shabbat. That practice can still be found in many communities, some of whom even recite this Megilla in a communal chant when they begin קבלת שבת. What is the connection between this Megilla and שבת?

Holy meets Holy of Holies

A simple answer would be that שבת is called קודש – holy, and Shir HaShirim is called קודש קדשים – holy of holies by R' Akiva in the Midrash. That would explain the 'fit' between the two.

The switch between בה בו כם

To capture the theme of a Jewish Day we look at the Amidah, the designated Tefilah of that day. In the case of Shabbat, we have three עמידות. Each of the עמידות has an opening statement, a proof text which supports the opening statement, and a conclusion, ending with the Bracha, מקדש

השבת. The conclusion is consistent across the three עמידות with one subtle but significant distinction. At night we say וינוחו בה ישראל – the People rest in *her*; in the morning we say וינוחו בו ישראל – the People rest in *him* and in the afternoon, we say וינוחו בם ישראל – the People rest in *them*. What is implied by the switch between the feminine, to the masculine, to the plural in what is otherwise an identical Bracha?

The source of our sustenance

One way of analyzing these words is by checking their Gematria¹. The three references are בה which has the numerical value of 7, בו is 8 and בם is 48. Together they are 57 which is the numerical equivalent of זן, which means sustenance. We refer to Shabbat as the מקור הברכה, the source of the blessing and sustenance of the

whole week. That source of both physical and spiritual sustenance is alluded to by these references adding up to זן, or sustenance.

The Bride, the Groom, and the Union

Shabbat is the place where that longing and love is given expression as bride and groom embrace one another in the sanctity of Shabbat.

¹ ספר שיירי כנסת הגדולה



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Another, less esoteric explanation draws from the fact that Shabbat is referred to as a bride, as we say *בואי כלה* – welcome, bride – when we invoke the Shabbat. The implication is an intimate union on Shabbat between the People and their Creator. We can think of Shabbat as a wedding ceremony. A wedding requires a bride (alluded to by the feminine *בה* on Friday night), a groom (as implied by the masculine *בו* in the morning) and the union between them (the *בם* at the apex of the sanctity of Shabbat towards the end of Shabbat).

The Longing of the Bride and the Groom

Recognizing Shabbat as a wedding gives meaning to the meals as wedding feasts and gives Shir HaShirim its proper place as the first of the wedding songs. This song proclaims and describes the profound love and longing between the People and Hashem. Shabbat is the place where that longing and love is given expression as bride and groom embrace one another in the sanctity of Shabbat. Our observance of Shabbat is not merely a statement of our obedience to the commandment to cease from creative work on Shabbat; it is a declaration of our understanding of the intimate relationship between Hashem and His People.

גאולה and שיר השירים

Another numeric explanation puts *שיר השירים* into the picture. *אברהם אבינו* was told that the sojourn down to Egypt would be 400 years. We know that Hashem back-dated the clock to the birth of Yitzchok and the standard explanation is that the actual time spent in Egypt was 210 years (alluded to in the word *רד"ו* or 'come down' to

me, as Yosef messaged to his father Yaakov). But the Seder Hadoros says that the math will show that they were in Egypt for 117 years. And that is precisely the number of *פסוקים* in Shir HaShirim. The recitation of that Megilla with the onset of Shabbat is meant to recall the incomplete redemption from Egypt (since, after all, there was exile after that redemption) and awaken the yearning for the intimate relationship of the future redemption. That redemption will be eternal and will not be marred by a subsequent exile.

Shabbat and the song of redemption

Shabbat is often associated with our redemption. We find Chazal telling us that our observance of but one more Shabbat would usher in the ultimate redemption. More than just a count of another Mitzvah, this dictum links Shabbat with Geula. When we left Egypt, points out the *חיד"א*, we sang a song at the Sea, the *אז ישיר*. And now, at the onset of Shabbat, when we are looking towards the future redemption, we sing the Song of Songs, the Shir HaShirim.

Arousing the yearning for redemption

And so, adds the *חיד"א*, we should be careful to recite each Pasuk of the Shir HaShirim; they are each signed and numbered with the 117. And, having recited the Shir HaShirim, we are poised as perhaps at no other time, to beseech Hashem to hasten the coming Geula.

סדר ליל פסח and שיר השירים

The connection between Shir HaShirim and the Geula may well explain the custom of many to recite Shir HaShirim at the conclusion of the



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Seder on the night of Pesach. Having celebrated the magnificent redemption from Egypt we turn our attention to the future Geula which will outshine even the great Exodus from Egypt.

Takeaway: Pause before Shabbat begins to acknowledge the intimate relationship with Hashem contained in Shabbat and the connection between Shabbat and the coming perfect Geula – the Song of Songs.



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Lecha-Dodi – A Mixed-up Message?

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E4)

If you could enter the mind of a great מקובל, what would your thoughts be like? Would we be greater than we are if we were to enter his world, or would we remain observers, looking on without internalizing?

The usual role of a literary critic

When a literary critic approaches a poem, he tries to get into the head of the author. That usually means that the critic is 'sane' and objective while the author was in some intense 'mood' that prompted him to write the poem. The critic tries to understand that 'mood' so that he can decide how the poet has captured that mood in the poem.

Learning from a Tefilah

The story changes dramatically when the poet is the 'sane' one and has written the poem to help us latch onto some of his perspective. We are then trying to decode the messages of the poem so that we can meet the poet at his place of clarity. That is what happens when the poet is one of the great Kabbalists of the 16th Century. And that is why we take pains to try and reach some of the truths contained in his most famous poem, Lecha Dodi. ***Introducing Rav Shlomo Alkabetz***

Rabbi Shlomo Halevy Alkabetz lived for the first 76 years of the 16th Century. Most of his adult life was spent in the holy city of צפת, where he, together with his close circle of Kabbalists, had moved from Turkey. His close circle included the great Rav Yosef Caro, the Alschich, and Rav Moshe Cordevero (his

brother-in-law). Rav Alkabetz was a Kabbalist, scholar, and poet and his Lecha Dodi was universally accepted as the poetic welcome to the holy Shabbat. It is part of the welcome for Shabbat all over the world. With an interesting exception:

The Syrian Minhag

***We energize
Shabbat on
Friday night
and we get
back from
Shabbat in
the day.***

Interestingly, the Syrian-Jewish community skips some of the stanzas of Lecha Dodi in their communal recitation. This 'skipping' has its origins in the dark period of Jewish history when false messiahs cropped up, most notably Shabtai Tzvi. The lure of the Sabbatian movement and of messianism in general was strong and the effect on the faith of the Jewish communities that were drawn into them was devastating.

A way to deflect attention from messianism and back to normative Torah Judaism was to talk less about the Messiah. In that spirit, the Syrian-Jewish communal leaders saw fit to skip those stanzas of Lecha Dodi which referred to the coming of the Moshiach and the imminent restoration of the Jewish community to its Homeland and Temple. Now, when you visit a Syrian Shul for Kabolat Shabbat you will not be surprised by the omissions.



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Two renditions of the Ten Commandments

The first stanza of Lecha Dodi opens with the words *שמור וזכור בְּדַבּוּר אֶחָד הַשְּׁמִיעֵנוּ אֱ-לֹהֵי הַמִּצְוֹת*. This is a reference to the fact that the Ten Commandments, are rendered twice in the Torah. The first is in Shemos, in Parshas Yisro, and the second is in Devarim in Vaeschanan. Of interest to us now is the fact that there are differences between them. One of the best-known differences between them (likely because of this line in the Lecha Dodi) is the opening word of the commandment to observe Shabbat. In Shemos the commandment begins with *זכור* (remember) while in Devarim it begins with *שמור* (protect). Note that the first occurrence in the Torah is *זכור* and the second is *שמור*.

Two words B'dibur Echad - simultaneously

Since the revelation at Har Sinai was a singular event, we are left wondering which one was said by Hashem at the revelation, *זכור* or *שמור*? The answer is that the two words were said together, simultaneously. And while a person cannot utter nor hear two words at once, that limitation does not apply to Hashem. Hashem said both words at once and caused us to be able to hear both, as well. Hence the reference in the *פיוט* that the two words were said simultaneously, and Hashem caused us to be able to hear them both, as well.

The order in the Torah is זכור and then שמור

As mentioned, at times *חז"ל* spoke of this miracle as *זכור ושמור*, thus keeping to the order in which they appear in the Torah, and at other times *חז"ל* refer to them in the reverse order, *שמור וזכור*, which is the order that R' Alkabetz chose for this *פיוט*.

²רמב"ן על התורה ויקרא יט:ג

The simple answers

It might be simple to dismiss the question of why this order or that since the two words were said and heard simultaneously. If they were both said at the same time, is there really room to wonder about the order? The order would seem to be random given the event that we are describing. Still, we are left to ask if there is significance in the order that the Torah chose to present the words (*שמור* and then *זכור*) versus the order that R' Alkabetz chose for the *פיוט*?

Another simple answer for the order that he chose here is the fact that the *פיוט* is written as an acrostic of the name of the author. His name, *שלמה הלוי* is stamped into the Lecha Dodi as the first letter of each of the stanza. And given that the first stanza is to start with a *ש*, the first letter of *שלמה*, it made sense to choose the wording of *שמור וזכור* rather than the reverse. If we are satisfied with this simple answer, then we need not pursue the question.

A Kabbalistic answer

But there are those who look for more. Is there a deeper level that can be culled from the choice of the poet? Perhaps a bit more digging will yield additional insight into the mind of R' Alkabetz.

The *רמב"ן* understands the words *שמור* and *זכור* as referring to two aspects of Shabbat.² That explains the plural use of *שבתתי* when speaking about Shabbat. While it could refer to many *שבתות*, it can logically refer to two aspects of each Shabbat. Elsewhere the *רמב"ן* cites an early source which identifies *שמור* as the 'service' of the night of Shabbat and *זכור* as the 'service' of the day.³ Thus, in sequence of Shabbat, *שמור*

³רמב"ן על התורה שמות כ:ח



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comes before זכור, and that could explain why many sources, including R' Alkabetz, use that order.

To flesh out what is implied by the night/day division, we could turn to a formulation which is frequently found in Kabbalistic literature. That which receives the impression of something else is called feminine, while that which impresses upon another is called masculine. (The משפיע is זכר and the מקבל is נקבה.)

The nighttime is called לילה. That is an intriguing word. While it is זכר, it is exceptional. Looking at the word לילה one would recognize the feminine ending (ה) and expect it to be נקבה. Indeed, the Vilna Gaon understands the first

question of the Seder night (מה נשתנה הלילה הזה) as asking why לילה is masculine.

If we work with nighttime as feminine (מקבל) we understand that at night, we refer to Shabbat as the כלה – the bride. In a sense, we 'cause' (משפיע) the קדושה of Shabbat on Friday night by reciting Kiddush. By contrast in the day, Shabbat is the male משפיע and 'causes' the קדושה to descend on us.

It would then be logical that R' Alkabetz chose שמור as the version of the Mitzvah of Shabbat for the פיוט of Friday night. He is keeping with the order of night/day. We energize Shabbat on Friday night and we get back from Shabbat in the day.

Takeaway: I will remind myself that there is much more to the words of our תפילות than meets the eye.



The Ultimate Source of Blessing

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E5)

Most of us want blessings. We want Hashem to shower goodness into our lives. What do you do to receive His blessings? Do you try to get righteous people and Torah scholars to do the heavy lifting of blessing you? Do you try to get your money to do the job? Where are you in the story? Where is Shabbat in the story?

Segulot

People are often drawn to Segulot. The underlying message of adherence to a Segula is that:

1. I need/want help.
2. I need blessings to achieve that which I want/need.
3. I do not know how to relate directly to Hashem with my needs/requests.
4. There are those who claim that I can get my needs/requests met doing this or that.
5. What do I have to lose?

The answer to the last question needs to be addressed first. What you stand to lose is the real source of blessing that you are looking for.

Revisit לכה דודי, no matter how many times you have said it

You have said לכה דודי perhaps hundreds of times and so it is hard to imagine that you are going to find anything there that you have not already seen. But give it a try. There may be gold in them hills.

The author of לכה דודי, the great Kabbalist Rav Shlomo Alkabetz, alludes to the real source of blessing when he writes:

לקראת שבת לכו ונלכה כי היא מקור הברכה.

Let us go and greet Shabbat, for it is the Source of Blessing.

I may give to Shabbat but what do I get from it?

In what way is Shabbat the source of blessing? It is certainly enjoyable and refreshing but a simple calculation says that the source of blessing comes from the six days of the work week and if anything, we spend some of that blessing for the sake of having an enjoyable Shabbat. Most would say that it is well worth the expense, but the source for Shabbat is the work week, not the other way around.

Blessing is measured by the degree to which something is not simply good; it is that which showers good on other.

Shabbat is the source of blessing

Rav Alkabetz is alerting us to a paradigm shift. The cycle looks like it starts from the work week and spills over to Shabbat, but the reality is that it starts from Shabbat and spills over to the work week.



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Think of a fountain

You can visualize this in your mind's eye if you follow the instruction of the AriZal who teaches that the fourth, fifth and sixth days of the previous week (Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday) are attendants on one side and the first second and third days of the week (Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday) are attendants on the other side and the 'bride' is in the middle. The fountain of Shabbat fills the days that surround it with its blessing.

The difference between something good and a blessing

Blessing is measured by the degree to which something is not simply good; it is that which showers good on other. Wednesday cannot be a blessing even if it was a great day, because it does not shower anything onto Thursday. However, thinking about the upcoming Shabbat in the latter half of the week gives meaning and direction to those days. And basking in the spiritual bounty of the Shabbat that just passed gives meaning to the first days of the coming week. In that way Shabbat is always showering blessing on every day of every week.

Shabbat does not seem to produce

You may claim that Shabbat has nothing of its own, it does not 'produce' anything; you are not

even permitted to engage in any production on Shabbat. And you would be correct. Shabbat receives anything and everything that you bring to it and converts it from a spend to a blessing.

The Talmid Chacham and Shabbat

An analogy to this model can be found regarding our relationship with a Talmid Chacham – a Torah scholar. We, individually and as members of the community support the scholar. One might claim that the scholar does not 'produce' anything. We spend on him. And while it may seem like a good thing to spend on, it is a drain. And yet, when a person needs a blessing his first thought is to seek out the blessing of a Torah scholar! How does that work? The answer is that the model is the same as Shabbat. Whatever you bring to the Torah scholar is turned into a source of blessing for you and for the world. The world is sustained by the Torah scholar. In the case of R' Chanina ben Dosa, says the Gemara, he was able to convert a mere dried fruit into the sustenance for the whole world. That is the relationship with Shabbat and that is the relationship with the Torah scholar.

The scholar is called Shabbat!

Would it then surprise you to discover that the Zohar⁴ states that תלמיד חכם איקרי שבת – a Torah scholar is called 'Shabbat!'

Takeaway: I will try to shift my focus to see Shabbat and Torah scholars as the source of my blessing rather than as a good thing to spend on.

⁴ זוהר פרשת נשא



A Light in the Darkness

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E6)

Do you feel anything special when Shabbat comes in? Do you sense a spiritual upgrade? The answer likely is tied to how you prepare for Shabbat.

What we got, what we lost

The Ariza"l writes about the mystical gains that we received at Har Sinai and about the losses that we suffered when we built and worshiped the עגל. The standard version of the gain is that each of us was granted two crowns, one for having said נעשה – we will do, and one for נשמע – we will (then) listen and understand. This statement of absolute faith in Hashem and His Torah echoed throughout the upper worlds and we were each granted these two crowns.

The Ariza"l describes the gifts that we were granted as one thousand spiritual lights. That implies a powerful, indeed unimaginably powerful experience of קדושה and closeness with the ultimate source of Light. Those אלף אורות, the thousand lights, were taken away when we did not maintain the allegiance needed to warrant such a gift.

The lights were also taken from משה רבינו

The אריז"ל goes on to report that משה רבינו was also deprived of his thousand lights of sanctity. Though he was not a participant in the sin of the עגל, he suffered collateral damage from the People's drop in sanctity. However, says the אריז"ל, while he lost his lights, he was given the lights that were taken away from the People. His

net experience of קדושה remained the same. He lost his own lights but was given theirs.

Moshe's loss, given that it was not a result of a sin, would be treated differently from then on. Every week, on Erev Shabbat, משה רבינו has his thousand lights restored to him. He is once again able to bask in the spiritual glory that he had prior to the sin of the עגל. But now he has twice the amount of spiritual light. He has his own light and that of the People.

A person who is focused on the coming Shabbat can feel that his spirit is moved; his energy is focused upward.

Lost...and Found!

משה רבינו delights in his restored lights on Shabbat. This is captured in the Tefilah when we say ישמה משה – Moshe rejoices with the gift of his portion.

But עבד נאמן – the faithful servant – as we go on to say in the Tefilah. And so, he does not

hold onto the lights which he was given that were not originally his. Instead, he gifts the light that originally belonged to the People to those who are engaged in preparation for Shabbat.

The gift of spirituality on Erev Shabbat

A person who is engaged in and focused on the coming Shabbat can get a glimpse of other-worldly elevation. His spirit is moved, and his energy is focused upward. He is less



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encumbered by the depressing pull of the mundane world because he is being buoyed by the light the משה רבינו is granting him.

And משה רבינו is smiling. He is joyful over the gift that he received as well as with the gift that he has granted those who are immersed in preparation for Shabbat.

Hints in the מזמור שרי ליום השבת

There is an allusion to this return of the lights in the very name of Shabbat. Its letters ש-ב-ת can also be arranged as תשב – the return and can refer to the thousand spiritual lights that are returned every Erev Shabbat.

The פרק תהילים which proclaims the Shabbat also contains references to this wonderful sequence.

If you check the first letters of the words מזמור שיר ליום השבת, you will find למשה – we are praising Moshe when we proclaim the Shabbat. Those same letters also spell שלמה – a reference not only to the great King of Israel, but a reference to the state of being whole and complete, a glimpse of which we are granted with the entry of Shabbat.

That chapter of Tehillim does not contain any other reference to Shabbat. Rather, its sublime praises are introduced by a reference to how we get the spiritual energy to praise Hashem so wonderfully. We get the fuel from Moshe Rabeinu, allowing us to praise with a full, whole spirit.'

Takeaway: I will be attuned to the spiritual gifts associated with dedicated preparation for Shabbat.



Fire of Anger on Shabbat

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E7)

Changing a Middah is tricky; only the choice few people have done it. But what if we had a great incentive to change our anger into peace? Would we focus on that incentive to help us make the shift from irritable to peaceful?

Learning the Perek במה מדליקין

Many communities, like the Syrian community, have the custom to learn the second Perek of Masechet Shabbat, במה מדליקין, after welcoming the Shabbat with the Perek of Tehillim that invokes the Shabbat – מזמור שיר ליום השבת.

We might wonder why, out of 24 Perakim that are contained in Masechet Shabbat, did חז"ל choose this Perek.

A simple answer might be that since we lit candles just a short while ago it is a דבר בעתו – a timely message – to learn about Hadlaket Neiroi. But that is hardly satisfying. After all, we also just put up a pot to cook over Shabbat (במה טומנין), we checked our pockets to make sure that we are not carrying anything which is forbidden to carry on Shabbat, and so on. Many Perakim are timely as Shabbat begins.

How we are to light the candles

Perhaps the choice of במה מדליקין is so that we can answer the question of *how* we are to light the candles, and the answer to that question

carries on throughout Shabbat. The last Mishna teaches:

שלושה דברים צריך אדם לומר בתוך ביתו ערב שבת עם חשיכה: עישרתם? עירבתם? הדליקו את הנר.

There are three things which a person must say in his home at the onset of Shabbat. (1) Did you take tithes (produce of the land of Israel from which tithes have not been removed are Tevel and may not be consumed; removing the tithes on Shabbat is problematic)? (2) Did you set the Eruv (one may not carry from one private domain to another without having set aside the food for the Eruv)? And (3) 'light the candles' (since one may not light candles on Shabbat and one should not sit in the dark when eating the Shabbat meal).

The last of the three is not a question; it is an instruction. Now that we have checked off the other items which cannot be done once we have welcomed the Shabbat, we are ready to light the candles and invoke the sanctity of the Shabbat.

Give instructions gently

The Gemara points out that this instruction, and by extension, any instruction, must be given gently.⁵ A home needs a leader and decision

*A home needs a
leader and
decision maker –
not a terrorist.*

⁵ צריך למימרינהו בניחותא ומובא בהלכה או"ח סימן ר"ס סעיף ב'.



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maker, not a terrorist.⁶ Presumably, the Gemara draws this from the language of the Mishna which says that these three things should be said 'in one's house.' That means that the words should be contained, restrained, and gentle, as befits one who is 'in one's house.' It also implies that the neighbors are not alerted to what one is saying in one's house. Raised voices do not only disrupt one's home; they disrupt others' homes as well. A wise, gently spoken instruction carries far more weight than a bark. It may be a challenge to realize that in the moment, but the payoff of being aware is endless.

The fire of גיהנום

The של"ה הקדוש comments on the words of the Pasuk:

לא תבערו אש בכל משבתכם ביום השבת (שמות לה:ג)

Do not kindle fire in any of your residences on Shabbat

On the face of it, the Torah is informing us that we may not light a fire on Shabbat. But the words take on additional meaning when we learn from the Zohar that the Pasuk refers to *any* fire, even the spiritual fire of Gehinnom. Hashem, so to speak, also refrains from lighting fire on Shabbat. Even the evildoers who are condemned to Gehinnom get a break on Shabbat.

The של"ה הקדוש reminds us that each of our actions causes a reaction. If we kindle the 'fire' of anger on Shabbat, then the spiritual flames of

Gehinnom are also kindled on Shabbat. Those fires affect one while one is still among the living as well as that person when they are no longer among the living.⁷ The incentive for working on shifting aggravation to calm and acceptance is strong, indeed.

Anger brings Tum'ah

The אריז"ל points out that one who gets angry is surrounded with a form of טומאה and he advised one who got angry to immerse in a מקוה. The Gematria of כעס (+1 for the word itself) equals מקוה.

Satan has a stake in the home

The בן איש חי goes to great lengths to remind us that anything which seems to promote discord on ערב שבת should not be attributed to the presenting cause. Things go wrong on ערב שבת. Ask electricians, plumbers, and appliance repair people when the frantic calls come in. The largest number come in on ערב שבת. But, teaches the בן איש חי, do not blame the person or the machine. The presenting cause is nothing but the machinations of Satan who knows what is really at stake.

The Satan wants to force the good angel's hand

If the Satan can disrupt the harmony of the home, then he can force the good angel to answer אמן when the person enters his home on the eve of Shabbat.⁸ The Satan looks for disarray

⁶ לעולם אל יטיל אדם אימה יתירה בתוך ביתו (גיטין ג.)

⁷ ed note: עיין נדרים כב. אמר רבי שמואל בר נחמני אמר רבי יונתן כל הכועס כל מיני גיהנם שולטין בו

⁸ שבת דף קיט: רבי יוסי בר יהודה אומר: שני מלאכי השרת מלוין לו לאדם בערב שבת מבית הכנסת לביתו, אחד טוב ואחד רע. וכשבא לביתו ומצא נר דלוק ושלחן ערוך ומטתו מוצעת, מלאך טוב אומר: יהי רצון שתהא לשבת אחרת כך. ומלאך רע עונה אמן בעל כרחו. ואם



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in the home, and there could hardly be more disarray than disharmony. The moment when a man enters his home on the eve of Shabbat is a potential flash point, and the Satan tries to capitalize on the potential for discord and tension.

Politics in Shul – another flashpoint

Another potential flash point for discord is in Shul. I have often thought that the Satan takes up residence in the thermostat of the Shul. That would explain why so many people are drawn into arguing over getting the temperature right. Again, special attention needs to be given to

Takeaway: I will put special focus on containing my tension on Erev Shabbat so that I can ensure a peaceful environment then and throughout Shabbat.

cooling the 'heat' of discord in Shul to prevent inevitable 'politics' from disrupting the peace of Shabbat.

Shabbat Shalom

Perhaps the reason that we repeat over and again *שלום שבת* is to provide us with steady reminders to keep our sights set on peace and tranquility on the sacred day of Shabbat.

Anger is never a good idea. It wreaks havoc any day of the week. But Shabbat is a guest and if we argue in front of the guest it could cause the guest to be uncomfortable and not want to return to bring its blessings into the home.

לאו, מלאך רע אומר: יהי רצון שתהא לשבת אחרת כך, ומלאך טוב עונה אמן בעל כרחו.



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A Kingly Coronation

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E8)

If everyone in the world marks a seven-day week and takes off a day of rest, what makes us different? What is unique about our Shabbat? Is it simply that we refrain from certain activities?

Acknowledging the King

The notion of a seven-day week draws from Creation. It does not draw from any movement of the Earth or Moon as do the days, months, and years. The seven-day week is a convention which nearly everyone in the world uses and it has its origins in one place – Hashem's creation of the world.

The observant Jew stands, as Avraham did before us, against the whole world. The world looks for the origin of the world all over the place. In Big Bangs, in little evolutionary bangs, and so on. Anything to avoid acknowledging the Creator. We stand at the Shabbat table every week and declare our unwavering confidence in the truth of every word of the Torah. And the first page of the Torah declares that Hashem created the world in six days and created rest on the seventh. Let the world search; we have more important tasks.

Not just a declaration

It is an important first step to declare that Hashem is the King, the Creator and the One who causes everything in His world. It is the essence of our twice-daily declaration of Shema. But just saying that Hashem is the King does not connect one to that fact. It is a truth, but it is not

personal. Is it good news? Am I happy to acknowledge Hashem as my King? For that we follow the recitation of Shema with an exclamation, ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד – May His sovereign Name be declared as King forever! It is not only good news; it is the greatest news, and we wish it to be proclaimed throughout the world forever.

*We are
thrilled to be
the ones who
bear witness
to His
creation and
sovereignty.*

Prepare a feast, get dressed in our finest!

Rav Avigdor Nebenzhal shlita expounds on the great declaration that we make on Shabbat. We do not suffice with saying that Hashem is the King. We announce that we are thrilled to be the ones who bear witness to His creation and sovereignty. We gather as a community and we go home as individuals and as a family, doing everything we can to demonstrate that we are overjoyed with the role we have been granted.

Shabbat in place of the Shofar

The Torah instructs us regarding תקיעת שופר on ראש השנה. It is with the sounds of the שופר that ה' wishes to rise from the throne of justice to the throne of mercy. תקיעת שופר would seem to be our lifeline, indispensable.



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Yet, רבה decreed that when ראש השנה occurs on Shabbat, we must refrain from blowing the Shofar. There is a remote concern. Someone who does not know how to blow the Shofar might also forget that one must not carry anything outside of one's private domain and would thereby violate the sanctity of the Shabbat. But how can we imagine going without the Shofar? And how could such a remote concern outweigh our need for mercy?

Shabbat is the declaration

The answer, explains Rav Nebenzahl, is that רבה understood the real implication of Shabbat. By

being meticulously careful about our Shabbat observance we are underscoring the essence of the Shabbat – our declaration that Hashem is the King and that we rejoice in that declaration. The Nation that observes the Shabbat with such care and devotion have nothing to be concerned over the absence of the Shofar; they have made an even greater sound by observing Shabbat – May His great Name be blessed forever. It is with that sound that Hashem moves from the throne of justice to the throne of mercy.

Takeaway: I will try to recognize that my observance of, and delight in the Shabbat is my joyous declaration that Hashem created Heaven and Earth.



Our Week is Like a Cellphone

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E9)

What would happen if חס ושלום nobody kept Shabbos?

The announcement before the Amidah

Most communities recite Pesukim on Friday night before the Amidah. Indeed, most people even know these Pesukim by heart. They are:

וְשָׁמְרוּ בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת לַעֲשׂוֹת אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת לְדֹרֹתָם בְּרִית
בְּיַד יוֹכֵין בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אוֹת הוּא לְעֹלָם כִּי שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים עָשָׂה . עוֹלָם
ה' אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי שָׁבַת וַיִּנְפָּשׁ.

Let us translate these Pesukim in their simplest form and then take it apart for its lessons.

Bnei Yisrael will observe the Shabbat, to make the Shabbat for all generations as an everlasting covenant. It is a sign between Me and the Bnei Yisrael forever that six days Hashem made Heaven and Earth and on the seventh day He stopped and rested.

Observe the Shabbat

The word ושמרו is typically rendered as 'kept.' People who observe the Mitzvot of Shabbat are called שומרי שבת – keepers of Shabbat. This observance involves both refraining from the prohibited activities associated with Shabbat (Melacha) as well as the required state of mind associated with Shabbat (Oneg).

Shabbat gives back

Shabbat does not only expect observance of us; Shabbat gives back to those who observe it. Protection, both on the material and the spiritual plains, are the way that Shabbat gives back. There is a reciprocal relationship, and we cannot imagine a better protection plan. As the great Rishon, the Ibn Ezra wrote: כי אשמרה שבת אל – as I observe Shabbat, Hashem protects me.

*The battery of
the cosmic
cellphone
runs out as
sunset
approaches
on Friday.*

Protection is built in

Just before reciting these Pesukim we recite the Bracha of השכיבנו. During the week, this Bracha, recited before the Amidah, is filled with requests that Hashem protect us from all sorts of scary occurrences. On Friday night the scary things that we fear are absent in the Sephardic Siddur. And in all Siddurim, the request for protection is absent from the closing Bracha of השכיבנו. Instead of a request for protection, we close with praise of Hashem Who cloaks His People and His Holy City with peace. Where did the request for protection go?

The Chafetz Chaim⁹ explains the change in simple terms. We do not refer to שמירה – protection – on Friday night because Shabbat

⁹ שו"ע סימן רס"ג מ"ב ס"ק ד'



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provides the protection. And when Shabbat gives back it does not just give back on its day; Shabbat observance protects the person all week long.

Another translation for שמרו

The אור החיים הק' refers us back to Yaakov's response to Yosef's grandiose dreams of becoming a king. While trying to play down the dream in order not to incite the jealousy of the brothers, the Pasuk says, וּאֲבִיו שָׁמַר אֶת הַדְּבָר, – his father (Yaakov) was שומר the dream. Here the implication of the word, as Rashi points out, is one of holding on, yearning, longing, anticipating, and looking forward to the fulfillment of the dream.

We now have an alternate reading of 'observe the Shabbat.' It now means the Bnei Yisrael 'yearn and look forward to the Shabbat.' It is this craving for the coming of Shabbat that distinguishes us.

Another language of craving

We can combine the comment of the אור החיים הק' with another comment of his at the end of the account of Creation. There, Hashem's conclusion of the six days of Creation is described with the word וַיִּכַּל, simply translated as 'He concluded.' The word וַיִּכַּל can also refer to yearning, as is found in the Pasuk in Tehillim¹⁰ וַיִּכַּל נַפְשִׁי לְחֶצְרוֹת הַיָּרְדֵן – my soul yearns and pines for the courtyard of Hashem. Our job is not just to guard and observe Shabbat; we are meant to yearn and anticipate its arrival.

¹⁰ תהילים פד: ג

To make the Shabbat

The next words of the Pasuk are a mystery. In what way do we, His People, *make* the Shabbat. Hashem made the Shabbat and did so without any help from us. The sun rises and sets over the course of the six days and the setting sun on Friday brings in the Shabbat. No proclamation on our part is needed. How did we 'make' Shabbat?

Adding a Shabbat

An explanation offered by Rav Shlomo Amar shlita (Sephardic Rav of Jerusalem) refers to the fact that we can transform parts of the weekday and turn it into Shabbat. We can do that prior to the onset of Shabbat and append time onto the end of Shabbat. This time, called תוספת שבת, becomes Shabbat. It is sanctified exactly as is Shabbat. Here is Shabbat that we 'make.'

Through an analysis of the sources, Rav Amar shlita, concludes that the time of תוספת שבת is 15 minutes prior to Shabbat and a 15-minute extension of Shabbat. If we multiply this half-hour by the four Shabbatot of the month we get two hours, which means that over the course of a year we have added 24 hours of Shabbat. The Pasuk can now be read, Bnei Yisrael will 'make' or 'create' a Shabbat! It was not there before and our תוספת has 'made' Shabbat.

Shabbat and the good Hotel

We made the Shabbat by anticipating its arrival. We demonstrate that we are happy to be going into Shabbat the way one might think about



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going to a good hotel. We request early check-in and late check-out!

Six days Hashem made Heaven and Earth

Moving forward in our Pesukim we find a surprising wording. We would have expected the Pasuk to say that Hashem made Heaven and Earth *in* six days (בששת ימים). Instead we read that Hashem made Heaven and Earth six days. What could that mean?

Again, tapping into the אור החיים we discover that Hashem only imbued Heaven and Earth with the capacity to last for six days. The battery of the cosmic cellphone runs out as sunset approaches on Friday. The recharge comes from Shabbat. Shabbat enables another six days. If חס ושלום a Shabbat would go by without שמירת שבת the world would cease to exist. In that sense Hashem gave us the ability to not only 'make' the Shabbat, but also to be a partner in Creation.

Takeaway: I will try to pause when the Tzibbur recites ושמרי to recognize the significance of my Shabbat observance.

We are the maintenance

While we were not involved in the design and manufacture of the universe, we are essential to its maintenance. Hashem's handiwork is maintained via our שמירת שבת. As a tribute to our role, Hashem elevates us to partner – שותף במעשה בראשית.

Summary

In summary, we find compacted into these two Pesukim which we recite Friday night before the Amidah:

1. The protection associated with our careful observance of Shabbat.
2. Our yearning, as well as Hashem's anticipation for the arrival of Shabbat.
3. Our ability to 'make' Shabbat via תוספת.
4. Our observance of Shabbat not only energizes the coming week; it makes us partners in Creation.



Shabbat – Are you Sleeping?

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E10)

What does it mean that Hashem 'created' rest? Rest implies an absence of activity – is that Menucha?

A common error about Creation

Most people, if asked, would say that Hashem created the world in six days and rested on the Seventh. A careful reading of the Pesukim of ויכלו (which we recite repeatedly on Friday night both in the Tefilah and in Kiddush) says ויכלו – אלקים ביום השביעי – that Hashem completed His worked on the Seventh day.

Rashi addresses the seeming contradiction between creation in six days and creation into the Seventh, offering two possibilities.

The first is the view of רבי שמעון. He says that it appeared as though Hashem was still creating when it was already Shabbat. But that is because we are unable to determine the exact moment of sunset. We must add time into Friday to safeguard Shabbat. For Hashem, this is not an issue so Hashem created into the last second which gives us the impression that He created on Shabbat. Creation was completed in six days.

The Creation of Menucha

The second explanation in Rashi is that בא שבת – with the coming of Shabbos something new was created called מנוחה. What is this new creation and why did it need to wait until Shabbos to be created? What needed to be 'made?' If מנוחה is simply rest, then why is it a

creative process and not just the absence of מלאכה?

The Central Theme of Shabbat – Menucha

There is a popular error referring to Shabbat as a day of 'rest.' Menucha can only be experienced when one is awake. As useful as it is for those who toil in Torah all week to get some rest on Shabbat, that is not the Menucha that the Torah is speaking about.

Menucha is the essence of eternity. We ask Hashem for יום שכולו שבת ומנוחה לחיי העולמים – the day that is entirely Shabbat and eternal Menucha. What is that day that we are praying for? It is Olam Haba.

There is a popular error referring to Shabbat as a day of 'rest.'

Proof from Mincha

A quick examination of the Amidah of Mincha will reveal that we are speaking about much more than a good night's rest. Our praise is not part of the Shema before retiring; our Tefilah comes at the pinnacle of the sanctity of Shabbat, the holy of holies, as the day is ending. There we speak of

מנוחה וקדושה לעמך נתת ... מנוחת אהבה ונדבה... מנוחת אמת ואמונה... מנוחה שלמה

You granted your People קדושה and מנוחה. A מנוחה of love and graciousness, a מנוחה of truth and permanence, a complete and perfect מנוחה.



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The place of Menucha is Olam Haba

The *Menucha* that we are extolling is the *Menucha* of *Eloim Haba*, a taste of which we are experiencing on *Shabbat*. This world is bridge to *Eloim Haba* and *Shabbat* is a foretaste of that eternal *Eloim*. No distractions, troubles or worries. Pure connection with *Ha'*. One who experiences *Shabbat* correctly can feel that tranquility. If not right away, then by *Mincha*-time.

Having a taste of Shabbat before Shabbat

One of the misunderstood and therefore frequently abused customs is tasting the *Shabbat* food before *Shabbat*. The message of tasting the food is that we are anticipating the message of *Shabbat* – a taste of what is to come. Everything about *Shabbat* is anticipation, looking forward to the eternal day of *Shabbat*.

The *Arizal* pointed to many of the *halachot* *Shabbat* and saw references to that which is coming. We drink wine and *Chazal* tell us that there will be a preserved wine (a 6,000-year-old perfectly preserved wine – what would the connoisseurs say to that – *Yayin HaMashmur*). There will be meat, a reference to the *Shor HaBar*, and so on. He even said that one must wash in hot water on *Shabbat* to remind one that he is going through *Gehinom*, a necessary preparation for the eternal *Shabbat*.

Kayin and the Na vaNad syndrome

The Torah reports that Kayin was punished for his fratricide, the murder of Hevel. His punishment was to be *Nad*. On one level that means that he would be a nomad, always moving from here to there. But on a more spiritual level it refers to restlessness. It means

that as soon as he would sit down to learn his thoughts would start to wander away from the *Sefer*. That as soon as he was engaging in a serious conversation with his wife or with his child he starts fidgeting and reaching for his phone. It means that he is never experiencing the present moment because he is always looking out for some other moment. He was condemned to suffer from the *Na vaNad* syndrome.

Many, if not most of us are spiritual descendants of Kayin. And thus, there are many who suffer from the *Na vaNad* syndrome. Their restlessness does not know any respite. They cannot put it down, set the restlessness aside and reach for tranquility without using some chemical to calm themselves down.

The antidote to נע ונד is שבת

The Torah tells us that *Kayin* turned to Hashem saying that his punishment of being a *Nad* is unbearable. *Ha'* responds by giving *Kayin* an *Or*. The *Or* that he gave him, says the *Tanhuma*, is *Shabbat*. This is supported by the fact that *Shabbat* is called an *Or*, as we say *כי אור היא ביני וביניכם אור*.

Shabbat Menucha is a מלאכה

It is not simple to shut down the engines of restlessness and engage the *Menucha* of *Shabbat*. It requires focus. And the work is well worth it. But focus requires that we recognize that *Menucha* is the goal. The goal of *Shabbat* is not to collapse from the physical exhaustion of the week; it is to embrace the spiritual tranquility of *Shabbat*.

Making man before and after Shabbat



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Looking at the פסוקים of creation we find that man was created on the 6th day in the image of Hashem and Hashem blessed and charged man to procreate, to dominate the animal kingdom and he was told what foods he could eat. There is no mention of Hashem breathing a soul, a נשמה, into man. With that the 6th day ends and Shabbat begins (ויכלו).

After שבת there is a recap of the history of man. There we learn that ה' fashioned man from the dust of the earth and blew into his nostrils the נשמה. Why is the נשמה absent before שבת and is only mentioned thereafter?

The answer, says רבנו בחיי, is that before שבת there is no meaning to a נשמה. Prior to שבת the instructions only relate to man's physical existence, procreation, dominion over the animal world, and food. That was it before שבת.

On Shabbat Hashem created spirituality

A נשמה can only exist where there is the prospect of eternal מנוחה. Once שבת has passed and with it the entry of מנוחה, it is possible to breathe into man a נשמה. Prior to שבת man could only relate to that which is תחת השמש – beneath the sun, physicality. Having experienced שבת man can now relate to that which is above the sun, spiritual bliss.

Takeaway: I will try to work towards feeling Menucha on Shabbat to feel like a different person after Shabbat than before.

That is what is meant when the Pasuk says that creation only ended on Shabbat. ויכל אלקים ביום השביעי – the real completion of the world was when the spiritual realm was introduced into the physical world.

The שלום זכר

The Ashkenazic custom of making a Seudah on the Friday night prior to the ברית could well reflect this fact. We mark the Shabbat because only then can we speak about a relationship with the Creator. To enter the Covenant, one first needs a Shabbat. Once there is מנוחה in the world then man's spiritual existence is possible.

ברית after 8 days, not 7

The מדרש explains why the Torah requires us to wait eight days before the Brit. It is comparable to servants who wanted to honor their king. They presented their plan to their king and the king was pleased with their honor and accepted. However, the king said, Please, wait for the queen to be here when I receive this honor.

So, too, the Jewish People knows how precious the ברית is to Hashem. But Hashem insists that first the Shabbat Queen be present.

A seven-day wait would not guarantee that a *full* Shabbat has passed. The queen was not here. Only an eight-day period offers that guarantee.



A Separate Species

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E11)

Do you feel at home in your world? Do you sense yourself as separate from the mundane world around you? Let us learn how from the fish.

Learning from customs

There is a lesson hidden in every Halacha, and often a lesson hidden behind every Minhag, as well. Let us try to understand the implications behind the מנהג to eat fish at the Shabbat meals. Early sources refer to eating fish on Shabbat. There is even a popular expression כל האוכל דג ביום ד"ג ניצול מד"ג, which translates to whomever eats fish on the 7th day (ד"ג=7) will be saved from the judgement of Gehinnom (דינו של ד"ג=7). And while this expression has no source and seems rather unreasonable (were that it was so easy to be saved from judgement), it reflects the simple assumption that Jews eat fish on Shabbat.

Incidentally, in addition to דג, many of the foods that are often consumed on Shabbat relate to the number 7. יין=70 (7+0=7), בשר=502 (also =7), חלה=43 (again 7), מרק=340 (once again, 7).

While the Halacha requires that one eat foods that one enjoys on Shabbat, and fish has been a staple good food for all time, there is no requirement to eat fish if one does not have a taste for it. Still, the association of Shabbat and fish bears exploration.

The secret, we will discover, is that fish live in and represent a separate world.

A People That Dwells Apart

If we had to describe the Jewish People in one word it would likely be 'separate.' We dwell apart even when it appears to the bystander that we are but a part of larger society. Our strength lies in our deep core where we are connected to eternity, not to the mundane. And the time where that connection is strengthened is on Shabbat. So, when could there be a better time for fish?

The fish dwell apart

All the animals perished in the Great Flood. All, that is, except for the fish. The other animals were impacted by the corruption of society. They also lost their moral path and they needed to be destroyed.

Fish, however, live in a separate world. The שפח אמת points out that the underwater world is not an extension of land, it is a world unto itself. The fish, therefore, were not subject to the decadent influence of society and they were thus spared the destruction. Human corruption could not 'reach' the fish.

*You cannot
experience water
while remaining on
dry land and you
cannot experience
Shabbat while
remaining in
weekday mode.*



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The otherworldly nature of Shabbat

Our mission is to unplug from the world. We are meant to recall, always, that we are here for a unique calling. We must never lose track of our mission and blend into the 'calling' of society at large. But it is hard to walk, talk and live in the larger society and keep the separate mission in mind.

And that is where Shabbat comes in. On Shabbat we unplug and disconnect from anything that even remotely connects us to our mundane lives. No business – we do not even speak about it. No money – we will not even touch it. We even set aside our everyday clothing in favor of clothing that we only wear on Shabbat. We affirm, with every moment of Shabbat, that we are like fish; we dwell apart. We unplug from עולם הזה and plug into עולם הבא.

The Olam HaTorah

When we think of those who are immersed in the study of Torah, we immediately refer to the 'Yeshiva World' or to the Olam HaTorah – the world of the Torah. Why not just speak of those who learn or those who attend a Yeshiva?

The answer is that learning Torah places a person into a different world. A Jew is either part of that world, in whatever role he can play, or he is out of that world and is dumped back into the mundane world of chasing after materialism.

Being like a fish

When Yaakov Avinu is blessing his precious grandchildren, מנשה ואפרים, he prays that וַיְדַבֵּר לָרֶב

בְּקֶרֶב הָאֲרֶז – that they be like fish – always in a different world. You do not have to eat fish. You do not even need to enjoy fish. But you must learn how to live apart, like a fish. The other choice is the spiritual oblivion of the surrounding culture.

The Torah is not part of the world

When the Gemara refers to a Halacha that is agreed upon by the Rabbis, they say כּוֹלֵי עוֹלָמָא לָא פְּלִיגי – the whole world agrees that... The whole world? Why not just say that the Rabbis agree unanimously? That would describe the fact that they are not arguing over that Halacha. But the Gemara is imparting far more. The Gemara is enclosing us in the surrounding walls of the Torah. Torah is our whole world. And if there is agreement on a certain Halacha then the whole world agrees. And even if nearly everyone else living on the planet has no idea what the argument or the agreement is, we must know that the 'whole world' agrees to this Halacha. Torah is the whole world, something that Shabbat comes every week to remind us.

Fish do not have eyelids

The זוהר הק' points out the spiritual significance of the fish whose eyes never close. They speak of the secret of Hashem's השגחה as being the עין פקיהא – the ever-open and watchful eye.

But there is another aspect to the eyes-open approach of the fish. In the underwater world there is nothing that needs to be shut out. Fish do not need blinders in their world; they can take it all in. We, by contrast, need eyelids. How else can we shut out the materialism of the world in which we walk about? So, too, on Shabbat, we



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take it all in. There is nothing about Shabbat that we wish to filter out. We want every bit of Shabbat.

Shabbat – our refuge like the water

We escape into Shabbat just as we escape into Torah. The fish offers us a perspective that there is another world. It is a handbreadth away, but you must go into it. You cannot experience water while remaining on dry land and you

cannot experience Shabbat while remaining in weekday mode.

The clever fox cannot outsmart the fish

In the language of חז"ל, the fox always has something clever to say. Always, that is, until he is outfoxed by the fish. 'Why don't you come on dry land?' asks the fox of the fish. The fox tries to entice the fish onto dry land because he knows that the success of the fish is owing to their being in their own world.

Takeaway: On Shabbat I will try to think about the fish to enable me to be here in the physical world but plugged into the world of Torah and eternity.



A New World

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E12)

Have you ever felt that you were transcending the mundane world around you? If you have never felt that you were rising above the normal traffic, then it is time to find out some more about Shabbat and Kabbalah.

The ארז"ל and Chamin

The ארז"ל addressed the three times that we are meant to engage with heat. (1) Before Shabbat (the subject of our discussion); (2) on Shabbat (We eat hot food for עונג שבת and to demonstrate our understanding of the Halachot of הטמנה on Shabbat); and (3) after Shabbat (The Gemara¹¹ refers to something hot on Motzei Shabbat as having curative powers. Indeed, the ומחבש כף החיים draws from the Pasuk לעצבותם, where מחב"ש is an acronym for חמין במוצאי שבת, that hot food consumed on מוצאי שבת is also a remedy for depression).

Chamin on Erev Shabbat

Our focus here is on the חמין before Shabbat. In this case, we are not speaking about eating, but about bathing.

Some of the secrets that lie behind bathing in hot water before Shabbat can be found in the בראשית תמן, which is the 48th of the תיקוני הוהר הק' which the ארז"ל instructed his disciples to recite daily. The opening paragraph of the בראשית תמן teaches us that there are two שבתות, one לתתא – down below, and one לעילא – a higher, upper-worldly

Shabbat. To understand what an upper-world Shabbat is and how it relates to a hot bath or shower on Erev Shabbat, we need to take a brief tour of the world of Sefirot.

The שבת ספירות

There are ten ספירות, or emanations, that are described in the זוהר הק'. Those are divided between the three upper Sefirot (כתר and חכמה, בינה) which we generally have no connection to as they are too lofty for our daily existence), and the lower six Sefirot that relate to our daily six-day week (יסוד and חסד, גבורה, תפארת, נצח, הוד). [The Sefira at the bottom, so to speak, that connects us with the upper worlds is called מלכות.]

On Shabbat, we begin to rise through the Sefirot and come ever closer to a pure connection with Hashem. This follows gradations throughout the day starting on Friday night. By Mussaf on Shabbat we are already able to speak about the כתר and lift our feet as we recite קדוש indicating that we are stepping up levels.

When these parasites sense that we are about to elevate our spirit, they try to hitch a ride and pick up some קדושה along the way.

¹¹ שבת קיט:



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The pinnacle of the Shabbat elevation through the Sefirot comes at Mincha-time which is called רצון דרעון – the time of greatest רצון. All the movement that we are describing is experienced as moving out of this world and into the מעין עולם הבא.

Two types of Shabbat

The אריז"ל therefore describes two forms of Shabbat observance. There is the lower observance, which involves physicality (eating, drinking, resting, etc.) and the upper observance, which involves Torah study and Tefilah thereby using Shabbat to step into and get a glimpse of eternity. (The בן איש חי says that one hour of Torah study on Shabbat is equivalent to 1000 hours of learning during the week – in the upper world the metrics are different.) Torah and Tefilah even transform the physical activities which we engage with on Shabbat.

Take-off starts on Erev Shabbat

The 'lift off' which we experience with each activity on Shabbat begins at Mincha-time on Erev Shabbat. But the process is not unimpeded; there is an underworld.

מקטרגים and קליפות

There are negative 'drag' forces in the world that drain קדושה from us. And while we look forward to the day when all the קדושה that remains in those negative forces will be squeezed out and we will arrive at בלע המוות לנצח – there will be no more death, which is essentially the result of those life-draining forces. Meanwhile, though, we need to deal with those drags on our

elevation in קדושה. They are created by our קדושה and they get their energy from our עבירות.

When these parasites sense that we are about to elevate our spirit with the coming Shabbat, they try to hitch a ride and pick up some קדושה along the way. So, they grab on to our feet and get ready for the ride up. The אריז"ל teaches that we need to shake those קליפות off. Stamping our feet will not do the trick.

Fire from above

Hashem releases, ערב שבת, a heavenly fire, called שלהבת י-ה. This fire is sent down to buffer between us and those קליפות that try to tailgate on to our lift. As we begin to rise, the fire keeps them at bay as they cannot penetrate the fire. That heavenly fire, the שלהבת י-ה, is activated by the hot water on Erev Shabbat. The grip of the קליפות becomes loosened. They fall back to their place and we begin our journey upward. All week long those קליפות are right up next to us, but as we move up on Erev Shabbat we need distance from them.

Spiritual vacuum - חלל

When we move up spiritually and the קליפות remain blocked below, a gap or vacuum is created. That gap is called חלל. That gap is meant to be a 25-hour buffer-zone between us and the קליפות.

It is essential that we do not get drawn back into that gap by its pull. It is a profoundly serious spiritual matter to go back into the dark zone after Hashem has lifted you up into the light. Such backsliding into the חלל is called חילול שבת,



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and the person is called a מחלל שבת, referring to being drawn down into that חלל.

The two Shabbatot

We have summarized the בראשית חמץ and described the two שבתות that Hashem created;

the down here, physical Shabbat, and the elevated, spiritual Shabbat above. We should now understand the significance of the hot water on ערב שבת, the חמץ, in facilitating our having an elevated Shabbat.

Takeaway: I will try to be aware that my Neshama is trying to soar on Shabbat and to do that which aids in the elevation of my Neshama.



The Pulse of Shabbat

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E13)

Do you know how to praise and thank Hashem? Have you ever tried? There is an inspired Tefilah called נשמת that is recited at the key moment of Shabbat. Let us learn about the magic.

The Center of the Middle

Rav Chaim Brim זצ"ל, of ירושלים עיה"ק taught that Shabbat is the middle of the week. And if you are looking for the absolute center, the heart of Shabbat, you will find its pulse at the recitation of נשמת on Shabbat morning in שחרית. The center of the middle is the spiritual apex of the week.

The Power of Praise on Shabbat

The Zohar¹² teaches that all the praises and songs that כלל ישראל sing on Shabbat rise to a far higher spiritual place (אצילות) than similar praises can reach during the weekdays.

And of all the praises and songs of Shabbat, teaches the Zohar¹³, every word of נשמת כל חי is measured and numbered, carrying limitless significance.

Special חזן for נשמת כל חי

Here is but one indication of the significance of the נשמת. In the Sephardic custom, there is a special חזן, who is tasked with rendering the נשמת כל חי each week. There are several modalities for this powerful תפילה and the חזן chooses a different one each week. Indeed, there

is no way that we can overstate the significance of נשמת כל חי.

The upgraded נשמה

The נשמה יתירה – the extra Neshama with which we are imbued on Shabbos – does not come at one time; it comes in stages. The בן איש חי, citing the אריז"ל says that at precisely the moment when

we recite נשמת כל חי we get an upgrade, a תוספת נפש.

The Gematria of נשמת כל חי

The abbreviation of נשמת כל חי is נכ"ח which equals 78, which is three times the ineffable Name of Hashem (י-ה-ו-ה).

The בן איש חי asserts that even those without a background in Kabbalah

can, and should, think about the threefold name of Hashem when saying the words נשמת כל חי.

He adds that the two words, כל חי equal 68, which is also three names of Hashem, but this time it is the name א-ה-י-ה, before and after the ineffable name. That same 68 is the Gematria of חיים.

We cannot and therefore we do?

There is a paradox in נשמת כל חי which bears analysis. We open by recognizing that it is

*Every word of
נשמת כל חי
is measured and
numbered,
carrying limitless
significance.*

¹² זוהר פ' ויקהל

¹³ זוהר פ' תרומה



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incumbent on each living soul to praise Hashem. We then state a disclaimer; we cannot do so.

And we state that our inability to properly praise Hashem is owing to our limitations:

אלו פינו מלא שירה פים, ולשוננו רנה כהמון גליו, וּשְׁפִתוֹתֵינוּ שָׁבַח כְּמַרְחָבֵי יָקִיעַ, וְעֵינֵינוּ מְאִירוֹת כְּשֶׁמֶשׁ וְכִנְרָה, וְיָדֵינוּ פְּרוֹשׁוֹת כְּנִשְׂרֵי שָׁמַיִם, וְרַגְלֵינוּ קְלוֹת כְּאַיְלוֹת אֵין אֲנַחְנוּ מְסַפְּקִים לְהוֹדוֹת לְךָ

For even if we had all the capacity imaginable, our mouths were filled with song like the sea, our tongues as full of praise as the multitude of waves ... we still could not the You sufficiently, Hashem, for even one of the millions of kindnesses that you performed for me, for us and for our ancestors.

After declaring that we are inadequate to the task of praising Hashem, it seems odd that we would then proceed to do exactly that:

עַל כֵּן אַבְרָהִים שֶׁפִּלְגֵת בְּנֵי רוּחַ וּנְשָׁמָה שֶׁנִּפְחָת בְּאַפֵּינוּ וְלִשׁוֹן אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַת בְּפִינוּ הֵן הֵם יוֹדוּ וַיְבָרְכוּ וַיִּשְׁבְּחוּ וַיִּפְאָרוּ

Therefore, with the organs that You set within us, and the spirit and soul that You breathed into our nostrils and the tongue You placed in our mouth, all of them shall thank and bless, praise and glorify...

If we just said that we cannot, why do we not concede the game and go home?!

A משל – a parable

A king had a Jewish advisor in whom he placed great trust. That trust earned him the jealousy of the other, non-Jewish advisors who went to great lengths to undermine the king's trust in the Jew.

To demonstrate the Jew's disloyalty to the king the other advisors suggested that the king request of the Jew to honor the king with a banquet. They predicted that the Jew would be unhappy at having spent his personal wealth on the king's honor and would be unable to conceal his displeasure.

Indeed, the king made this request of the Jew and as predicted, the Jew was clearly distressed at the lavish banquet that he set for the king's honor.

The king wanted to test the assertion that the Jew was unhappy with his outlay of funds for the king's honor. He asked the Jew to proffer another banquet in his honor, this time, though, the banquet would be at the king's expense, and he handed the Jew a sum of money to cover the expenses of the dinner.

To the king's chagrin, the Jew came to the second banquet in a joyous spirit, toasting the king and demonstrating great joy. The king could not resist the conclusion that the Jew had been unhappy when he had to spend his own funds on the king's honor and the king confronted the Jew with his findings.

The Jew explained himself to the king. 'When I was putting together the banquet for the king, I was in constant concern that perhaps I had not done enough. And as much as I invested in the banquet, I had the gnawing thought that I could have and should have done more for the king's honor.' 'However,' went on the Jew, 'when the king designated the funds for his honor, then I was no longer concerned. So long as I spent every cent that the king designated, then this



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honor is what he seeks, and not more. Without that worry, I was full of joy and praise.'

That is why we state our inadequacy at the outset. If we were endowed with limitless capacity, we would be stuck. There would be no way to properly honor the King, Hashem. We would have to fall silent. But now that You, Hashem have given us our limited mouth and our human spirit, then we can joyously sing out Your praises, for *You* have shown that ours are the praises that You seek, and not the praises of superhumans.

המנהג עולמו בחסד – the Great Driver

Rabbi Mazouz שליט"א offered a novel understanding of the expression in נשמח where we declare that Hashem is המנהג עולמו בחסד. The standard understanding of those words is true that everything that Hashem does in leading the world is done with חסד – kindness. We deserve none of Hashem's kindnesses and it is correct to point that out.

But, Rabbi Mazouz, said, the expression can also be translated to be that Hashem is 'the Kind Driver of the World' since the word המנהג contains the word נהג – driver. After all, look at how the world is 'driven' by Hashem.

With a circumference of 24,000 miles the Earth rotates on its axis fully every 24 hours. That means that we, on the Earth, are spinning at the speed of 1,000 miles per hour. Does it feel like you are moving along at 1,000 mph? Have you even been on a moving vehicle of any sort, at

any speed, and not felt a bump here and there, some turbulence, some unease? This is no roller coaster ride as some plane rides tend to be. There is no clatter as the train runs over the gaps in the tracks. It is smooth sailing at 1,000 miles per hour! What a Kind Driver!!

Measure the words of נשמח – for your own sake

If we take the joyous task of praising Hashem at נשמח seriously we will discover that we are the big winners in the process.

We conclude נשמח with the words (that are slightly different depending on our customs, but all have this text if only on the ימים נוראים)

תְּתַרְוּם	יְשִׁרִים	בְּפִי
תִּתְבַּרַּךְ	צִדִּיקִים	וּבְשִׁפְתַי
תִּתְקַדְּשׁ	תְּסַיְדִים	וּבְלִשׁוֹן
תִּתְהַלַּל	קְדוֹשִׁים	וּבְקִרְב

You can see יצחק and רבקה embedded into the closing section of נשמח כל חי. Their תפילות were answered and the future of our Nation was granted to them with the birth of Yaakov Avinu. Just as they were answered, so, too, is one who praises properly answered. Divine Mercy is awakened through our praises and songs and even *unspoken* prayers are answered.

תקובל תשבחחנו ושירתנו ברצון אכ"ר

May our praises and songs be received with grace

אמן כן יהי רצון

Takeaway: I will try to focus on the unique opportunity to recite נשמח



The Seventh Wing

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E14)

Singing זמירות is not just for those with good voices or nothing else to do. It is a focal part of the Avodah of שבת.

שבת=שירה בשבת תענוג

Many people are familiar with the acronym of שבת as שינה בשבת תענוג which they translate as sleep. Unfortunately, rest on שבת can come at the expense of שבת. עונג שבת. The person is not aware of שבת, having 'disappeared' into sleep.

One of the lesser-known aspects of עונג שבת is שירה, singing praises to Hashem. Every community in the world has made sure that their tunes and Nigunim are sung and make their way to the next generation.

Song learned from a Pasuk

The Sefer Chasidim¹⁴ draws a surprising parallel. The Pasuk says וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹקִים אֶת יוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי but it is not clear what ברכה was given to שבת. The ספר חסידים learns that with whatever curses שבת was cursed, Hashem blessed the שבת. For example, איוב cursed the day of his birth with darkness and Hashem blessed שבת with אור. And one of his curses was – אל תבוא רננה בו – let there not be song (on that day). Hence, we learn that Hashem blessed שבת with song – מכאן שיש לו לרנן – בשבת בשירות ותשבחות.

The angels would come to listen, until...

The פלא יועץ¹⁵ describes how the angels would come to join the Shabbat table and listen to the זמירות of the saintly נג'ארה זצ"ל. They suddenly departed when, owing to the great heat, ר' ישראל rolled up his sleeve and removed his hat. The level of reverence that is due to the Shabbat table and to the זמירות cannot be overstated.

The six wings

The Gemara¹⁶ cites the Pasuk¹⁷ מִכַּנְף הָאָרֶץ... זְמֵרָת שְׁמַעֲנֵנוּ... תוספות comments¹⁸ that the angels (חיות) have six wings and each כנף generates the energy for the songs and praises to Hashem for one day. That provides זמירות ותשבחות for the weekdays. When שבת comes, the חיות turn to Hashem and ask, so to speak, for a seventh wing with which they can sing His praise on שבת. Hashem responds that the seventh wing does not come from the חיות but from the songs of בני ישראל. Hence the Pasuk proclaims that מִכַּנְף הָאָרֶץ זְמֵרָת שְׁמַעֲנֵנוּ – the praises and songs were heard from the 'wings' of the Earth. כלל ישראל has a solo on שבת; the People are the seventh wing. This is

*The angels
do not sing
on שבת.
They do not
have a wing
for that.*

¹⁴ ספר חסידים (מרגליות) סימן אלף קמ"ד

¹⁵ פלא יועץ ערך אכילה ושתייה

¹⁶ סנהדרין לו:

¹⁷ ישעיהו כד: טז

¹⁸ סנהדרין שם ד"ה מכנף



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עם זו יצרת לי תהלתי יספור...¹⁹ amplified by the Pasuk – I created this nation to sing My praises... The word 'זו' hints at this special privilege given to שבת on כלל ישראל. The 'ז' and the 'י' alludes to the fact that we not only sing for 'י' six days, but we also sing on the 'ז', in the Seventh, שבת, and this is our special role.

שבת The one time the angels sang on

The Midrash refers to the angels singing Hashem's praises on the first שבת of Creation. Based on what we have just learned, however, the angels do not sing on שבת. They do not have a wing for that.

The answer is that for that very first שבת the angels *did* have a wing for שבת. They were created on יום שני! So, for that first week, and only for that first week, they had a wing available for שבת.

We have the responsibility

What we have learned places a great responsibility on our shoulders. There are no

angels as 'back up,' nobody else to rely on. The calling to praise Hashem on שבת is ours alone.

This is hinted at in one of the פסוקים in which שבת on כלל ישראל is given instructions regarding שבת.

The Pasuk²⁰ reads אַךְ אֵת שַׁבְּתֵי תִשְׁמְרוּ כִּי אוֹת הוּא...
בֵּינֵי וּבֵינֵיכֶם לְדַרְתֵּיכֶם לְדַעַת כִּי אֲנִי ה' מְקַדְּשְׁכֶם.

The word אך is a limiter; it teaches that something is being excluded. The exclusion can refer to the fact that the angels are excluded from the שירה of שבת. That is because they are missing a wing – the word אך can be the abbreviation of אחד – the one wing that the angels are missing whose role we fill.

Our role, continues the Pasuk, is an אות, a sign for us to forever know that Hashem has sanctified us.

Not a talent show

It does not matter if you do not have a great voice. Singing the praise of Hashem is not a talent show. It is an expression of the heart and soul, of one's love and emotion. Hence, it is fitting to say that שבת=שירה בשבת תענוג.

Takeaway: I will consider the significance of singing praise to Hashem on שבת.

¹⁹ ישעיהו מג: כא

²⁰ שמות לא: יג



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A Friday Night Tradition

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E15)

Do you kiss your mother's hand on Friday night? If so, you are part of a distinguished tradition. If not, there is a tradition waiting for you.

A Friday night מנהג

In the Sephardic community, when we come out of the **בית כנסת**, we head over to our mother's home. It could be that we will be eating the **סעודה** there, but even if not, that is our first stop. The mission is not simply to wish her **שבת שלום**. The mission is to kiss her hand and to receive her **ברכה**.

Custom based in קבלה

This tradition is not new. The **מגן אברהם** mentions it²¹ in the name of the **ספר** of R' Chaim Vital, who cites this practice in the name of the holy **ארי ז"ל**. And while the fine tuning of their explanation may be reserved for experts in **קבלה**, we can paint the broad brushstrokes to try to understand what the message behind the custom is.

Elevating ourselves on שבת

The story of kissing one's mother's hand begins with the spiritual elevation which we are meant to experience over the course of **שבת**. We begin on the weekday ground-level which, **על פי קבלה**, is called **נה"י**, an abbreviation of the lower **ספירות** of **יסוד**, **הוד**, **נצח**, **הוד**. We move up on Friday night to **חכמה**, **גבורה**, **תפארת**, **חג"ת**. These

ספירות are considered on the 'right' side and they are called **אמא**.

We thereby give tangible expression to the spiritual opportunity presented by Friday night by kissing the right hand of our **אמא**.

Kisses make the ברכות flow

*The potency of
a ברכה is a
function of the
full heart with
which it is
given.*

When **יצחק אבינו** wanted to bestow his blessings on his son (whom he later learned was **יעקב אבינו**) he asked his son to draw near and kiss him. **ברכה** flows through the medium of a kiss. That is why our request for **ברכות** is preceded with a kiss.

The kiss and ברכה of the ר"י מיגאש

The **ספר שם הגדולים** relates, in his **חיד"א**, an anecdote about the **רמב"ם**. When the **רמב"ם** was six years old he was brought to visit the famous **ר"י מיגאש** (R' Yehosef ben Meir HaLevi 1077-1141, the prized Talmid of the **ר"י** and the Rebbe of, among others, R' Maimon, the father of the **רמב"ם**). The elderly Rav and the youngster shared a kiss, and the young Moshe received a **ברכה**. The **רמב"ם** later ascribed his success in Torah to that **ברכה**. Throughout his life he would refer to the **ר"י מיגאש** as **רבי ומורי** although he

²¹ מגן אברהם או"ח סימן רע"ד



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never learned directly from him. He had received his ברכה.

The ברכה of a parent

There is special weight given to the ברכה of a parent. That is because the ברכה of a parent is given with a full heart, without reservation.

Takeaway: I will try to receive the ברכה of those who care about me and give ברכות to those I care about.

The potency of a ברכה is a function of the full heart with which it is given.

And so, as we wish one another a שבת שלום it is fitting to add, שבת שלום ומבורך!



A Horizontal Testimony

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E16)

The perhaps surprising relationship between Shabbat observance and testifying in court.

מתן תורה is the שבת of שחרית

Each of the three תפילות of שבת echo one of the great שבתות of Jewish history. The תפילה of Friday night reflects the שבת of Creation; the תפילה of שחרית alludes to שבת מתן תורה and the תפילה of מנחה anticipates the שבת לעתיד לבוא.

Surprising wording in שחרית

The חת"ם סופר raises interesting questions²² about the way we refer to שחרית in מתן תורה. We say:

...ושני לוחות אבנים הוריד בקרו וכתוב בהם
שמירת שבת וכן כתוב בתורתך ושמרו בני ישראל
את השבת לעשות את השבת לדורתם ברית עולם
ביני ובין בני ישראל אות הוא לעולם כי ששת ימים
עשה ה' את השמים ואת הארץ וביום השביעי שבת
וינפש

The חת"ם סופר wonders why we need support – from an *additional* פסוק for שבת which is written in the עשרת הדברות? Further, he asks, the number seems incorrect. The תפילה stresses that לוחות משה רבנו brought down *two* לוחות and Shabbat is written בהם – on *them*. But that is not the case. Shabbat is written on the לוח which deals with מצות בין אדם למקום and not בהם, on *both*!

Horizontal לוחות

To explain the reference in the תפילה the חת"ם סופר refers us to the comment of Rashi²³ who teaches us that the לוחות were arranged in parallel columns such that each דברה on the first continues with and is linked to the parallel דברה on the second. For example, the first דברה (אני ה') continues to the sixth דברה of תרצה. The link is that one who murders diminishes the presence of Hashem.

The general asked 'what makes שבת so special?'

R' Akiva responded, what makes you so special?

The דברה of שבת continues with the ninth דברה which forbids us from testifying falsely. One who fails to observe שבת is testifying falsely. He is denying that Hashem Created Heaven and Earth and that He rested on שבת. Thus, שבת is written on *both* לוחות. Our observance of שבת (שמור את יום השבת), and our affirmation made at Kiddush on Friday night (זכור את יום השבת) both certify that we are not testifying falsely. דברה is thus part of the שבת of שמירת שבת.

We can now understand the תפילה which adds וכן in addition to the עשרת הדברות. The פסוק tell us about שבת and לא תענה while the דברות tell us that בני ישראל affirm the link and observe

²² דרשות חת"ם סופר חלק א דף קי-קי: לפרשת יתרו

²³ רש"י על שיר השירים ד:ה



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שבת as testimony that Hashem fashioned the Heaven and Earth in six days and rested on שבת.

שקר and שוא; שמור and זכור

There is more to the story. Not only do the two דברות differ regarding זכור and שמור, but they also each appear with a different word in the דברה about testifying falsely. The word שקר is used with זכור in the first דברות (לא...לא) (זכור את יום השבת...לא) while שמור appears with the word שוא in the second דברות (לא תענה ברעך) (שמור...לא תענה ברעך) (שמור את יום השבת...לא). To understand why זכור aligns with שקר and שמור aligns with שוא we must step back and look at the difference between the two words.

שוא is a blatant, obvious falsehood. Testifying that a book is a pot is clearly false – שוא. By contrast, שקר is more subtle, one that requires some discernment to detect the untruth in what was said.

Applying this difference to שמירת שבת we can say that one who brazenly denies the שבת by doing מלאכה has testified falsely about that which is clear and obvious. Hashem Created the World and rested on שבת. We all know that as we were witness to the miracles of יציאת מצרים where we learned the undeniable truth that Hashem is the Master and Creator of Heaven and Earth whose majesty is absolute. Failure to observe שבת is a blatant denial of an obvious truth. Hence שמור which refers to avoiding מלאכה is associated with עד שוא.

By contrast, one who avoids מלאכה but fails to declare the sanctity of the day with קידוש has not told the whole truth but also has not blatantly

lied. It is more subtle. Hence זכור, which refers to the declaration and affirmation of קידוש, is associated with עד שקר. It is not the truth, but it is not an open lie, either. It is a falsehood, but a more subtle one than doing מלאכה.

We have seen thus far שבת referred to as a testimony. But that is only when we adopt the *horizontal* reading of the דברות. But there is another approach, the *vertical* reading.

Shabbat associated with כיבוד אב

In the vertical reading of the דברות the דברה which follows שבת is not the prohibition of false testimony (the 9th דברה); it is the requirement to honor one's father and mother (the 5th דברה). We are to observe שבת because ה' said that we do so. And if we are obligated to defer to the honor of our parents; how much more so are we obligated to defer to the honor of our Father and King.

מרה of חק

The place of שבת as simply the Will of the Creator is brought out by the incident of מרה. Several weeks prior to מתן תורה there was an incident where the bitter waters of מרה were sweetened and Hashem gave us חק ומשפט.²⁴ There were certain parts of the Torah which Hashem, so to speak, could not wait to give us and they were given to us at מרה. One of those was שבת. In מרה we were given שבת not as a testimony but simply as a חק – the expressed Will of the Creator.

²⁴ שמות טו: כה



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Between a decree and a rational law

When a law carries a rationale, there is room for debate and analysis. Where a law is simply a decree of the King, there is no room for debate; there is only room for loyalty and compliance. And as important as it is for us to testify truthfully; the core of our observance must be loyalty and fidelity to the rule of the King.

Avoiding the debate

The *גמרא* and *מדרשים* relate debates between the Roman senator and provincial governor, Turnus Rufus, and R' Akiva. The former would challenge the beliefs of the Jews and the latter would provoke him with his responses. One of those debates revolved around the Jews' ties to *שבת*.²⁵ Turnus Rufus decried the Jews' loyalty to *שבת*. After all, he argued, what makes *שבת* so special?! *מה יום מיוחדים* – why is one day different than any other?

R' Akiva turned back to Turnus Rufus and said what makes you so special? *מה גבר מגוברין* – why should one person be singled out for honor more than any other? To which Turnus Rufus responded that his honor and designation draws from the fact that he was so chosen by the Ceasar, the Roman Emperor. To which R' Akiva

Takeaway: I will try to relate to שבת as both a testimony and a statement of loyalty to Hashem.

responded that the same holds for *שבת*. Its honor and special significance draw from the Will of the Creator. Had R' Akiva engaged Turnus Rufus in any rationale, there would have been room for debate on those rationales. R' Akiva put a stop to the debate. The *שבת* is a *חק*, the Word and Will of Hashem; the *גזירת מלך*. End of story.

The *נביא* alludes to this²⁶ with the words *וְקָרְאֵתָּ לְשֵׁבֶת עֲנֵג לְקֹדֶשׁ ה' מְכַבֵּד* – for the revered Hashem – we keep *שבת* because Hashem said to.

The Horizontal and Vertical messages

We have seen that *שבת* is a testimony and we must be careful to testify truthfully. We thus avoid *מלאכה* and declare the sanctity of *שבת* in keeping with that sacred testimony. But, at core, *שבת* is a *חק*. It is the designation of the King. There is no room for debate. And as we must defer to the honor of our parents, we most certainly must defer to the honor of our Creator.

The significance of deferring to the Will of the Creator is that it forges a special bond between the Jew and His Creator. That bond brings great, indeed boundless *ברכה* in its wake. *שבת* does not simply demand; it blesses and graces those who adhere to it.

²⁵ בראשית רבה יא:ה וגם סנהדרין סה:

²⁶ ישעיהו נח:יג



The Fourth Meal

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E17)

There is a bridge from שבת to the weekdays, and we cross that bridge with Tefilah and a meal.

שבת does not 'just' end

Just as שבת does not 'just' start (there is much transition in the שבת ערב experience), it does not 'just' end with צאת הכוכבים. There is a lingering effect which, if used properly, spills over into the week. Capturing and transferring the effect of שבת is the key to one's spiritual and material success through the course of the week.

What we call ויהי נועם

Unlike a weekday ערבית, the ערבית recited on שבת מוצאי שבת includes תהלים צ"א which begins with יושב בסתר עליון. But nobody thinks of saying יושב בסתר, everyone refers to it as ויהי נועם. The פסוק of ויהי נועם is the last פסוק of the previous chapter, פרק צ'.

There is much to say, mystically, about פרק צ"א and with some background we should be able to begin to understand how it 'adopted' the last פסוק of the previous פרק.

שיר של פגעים

The Gemara²⁷ refers to this פרק (תהלים צ"א) as the שיר של פגעים. The שיר אריז"ל explains the mystical message of that name. Each נשמות our שבת are elevated and we have less to do with the forces of negativity in the world called חיצונים. We are

afforded a buffer or gap between us and them throughout שבת. However, with the departure of שבת we come 'down' closer to where the חיצונים reside and that is a dangerous zone. It is all too easy to fall prey to negative forces when we are suddenly back in the bad neighborhood.

The שיר של פגעים is designed to ask for or invoke heavenly protection from those forces. We therefore find this פרק recited not only on מוצאי שבת but also when one goes to sleep (since sleep,

1/60th of death, brings one into proximity with חיצונים) as well as when a body is being brought out for burial ר"ל.

*The more 'fuss'
one makes
over a
'spiritual' meal
the better.*

Start before and repeat after

Rav Yisroel Chaim Menashe Friedman זצ"ל wrote a collection of insights into our מנהגים called ליקוטי מהרי"ח²⁸. There²⁹ he discusses the various customs as to how this פרק is to be read. In nearly all communities, the last פסוק of the previous פרק, beginning with ויהי נועם is inserted prior to reciting פרק צ"א with some communities even reciting it twice. Similarly, nearly all have the מנהג to repeat the last פסוק of the פרק upon ארץ ימים אשביעהו וְאֶרְאֶהוּ בִישׁוּעָתִי, פרק conclusion.

He quotes the אבודרהם who tallies up the words of the פרק and comes to 124, including the added

²⁷ שבועות טו:

²⁸ He was the Rockover Rav and later Satmar Dayan.

²⁹ ליקוטי מהרי"ח חלק ב' דף



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words of נועם. Adding (and, per some, doubling) the first and last פסוקים create a doubling or repeat effect such that it is as if one has said the words twice, or 248 words – the same as the number of limbs in one's body. We are asking for the above-mentioned protection for every limb in our bodies.

So far, our spiritual lives

The ויהי נועם or impact of our recitation of סגולה is a request to carry the ברכה of שבת into our weekday spiritual lives. A תפילה recited on Tuesday afternoon becomes infused with קדושת שבת. And, as we know, everything associated with שבת carries with it ברכה – כי היא מקור הברכה –

The ברכה into our material lives

To draw the קדושת שבת and its associated ברכה into our material or mundane lives, says the אריז"ל, we must eat מלכה מלוחה. He cites the Gemara which teaches that the fourth meal is associated with protection from משיח – the unrest right before the birth of the משיח. The merit of this, and the third meal, סעודה שלישית, are both enhanced precisely because we are not generally inclined to eating at that time. Most of us are fully sated from the main סעודה שבת and have little appetite to eat a third, much less a fourth meal. Therein lies the spiritual power of eating לשם שמים. When a mundane act is performed with more spiritual focus and less animal drive it is greatly elevated. Hence, the ability of the מלוחה מלכה to carry שבת into our week is strong, indeed.

The more 'fuss' one makes over a 'spiritual' meal the better. Wearing בגדי שבת, setting the table, serving a special dish are all ways to capitalize on the meal that is spiritually driven and not stomach driven.

Significance cannot be overstated

The בן איש חי asserts that if people knew the lofty spiritual significance of מלוחה מלכה they would surely give it great honor. Alas, that is often not the case as most people do not grab the gift which could keep giving throughout the week. He finds an allusion to this challenge in the פסוק. We read, in the dream of יעקב אבינו, about a סולם. If you allow that the word סולם refers to סעודת לויית מלכה, we find an allusion to our problem. The סולם is resting on the ground, treated as though it were a simple matter, but its head is in the heavens, referring to the lofty nature of the מלוחה מלכה.

סעודת דוד המלך

The סעודת דוד מלוחה מלכה is traditionally called the סעודת דוד. On one level, this name reflects the celebration which דוד המלך made, together with כלל ישראל, when שבת ended and he was still alive. Since he knew that he would pass into the next world on שבת, the end of שבת signaled that he would be with us for yet another week.

Another 'hint' at his name draws from the Midrash.³⁰ The Midrash interprets the פסוק³¹ which says מצאתי דוד עבדי and explains, somewhat cryptically, that Hashem proclaims that He 'found' His servant דוד. Where did He

³⁰ בראשית רבה מא: ד וגם נ:י

³¹ תהילים פט: כא



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find him, asks the Midrash? In סדום (where רות originated). Homiletically, the word סדום can be understood as סעודת דוד מלכה – the meal associated with דוד המלך.

Many סגולות

There are many סגולות associated with מלוה מלכה. R' Elimech of Lizhensk taught that pregnant women should partake of this meal as a סגולה for an easier childbirth.

It is also a סגולה לפרנסה. This is a play on the words אם כסף תלוה which simply translate to mean 'if you lend money.' It can also be read homiletically as אם כסף – if you want פרנסה – then תלוה – escort the Shabbat Queen on her way.

The לז

We know from the Midrash³² that תחיית המתים is associated with a metaphysical bone called the לז. This remarkable 'bone' draws its sustenance from סעודת מלוה מלכה. The implications, then, of this meal are quite cosmic. One would be quite foolish to fail to give sustenance to that which sparks one's eternal resurrection.

If we needed further support for the significance of מלוה מלכה we could add two anecdotes from the גר"א. The Vilna Gaon's wife would fast the entire week (ערב שבת to מוצאי שבת) as do some of the צדיקים even until our times. However, the

גר"א told her to not skip מלוה מלכה and to only begin her fasting thereafter. He asserted that all the fasts throughout the week do not 'add up' to the קדושה of this special meal.

The גר"א himself would spare no effort to eat מלוה מלכה. Digestive problems would at times prevent him from eating right after שבת without first resting. He would rest until the pain subsided and then get up to eat the מלוה מלכה even if was three o'clock in the morning!

Try to have something hot

The Gemara,³³ when discussing the obligation to eat מלוה מלכה teaches that a hot drink and/or hot bread on מוצאי שבת is curative. We do not need to consult medical books to understand this חז"ל, nor do we need to discard our medications. But we should recognize that there is much spiritual activity on מוצאי שבת. The same hot drink at that time has a unique effect which is greater than the same drink at another time.

It has even been suggested that these curative powers extend to one's psychological state. They point to the פסוק which says that Hashem is מחבש לעצבותם – literally 'He binds up their sorrows'³⁴ – can also be understood as an allusion to מחבש – חמין במוצאי שבת מלוגמא – that one's sorrows can be addressed by that spiritually warm drink.

Takeaway: I will try to upgrade the attention that I give to מלוה מלכה

³² בראשית רבה כח: ג.

³³ שבת קיט:

³⁴ תהלים קמז: ג.



Multifaceted

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E18)

The Spiritual Side of שבת is the Main Course.

Passive and Active

It is common to characterize שבת as a day of rest. Eat, sleep, socialize, repeat. And while there is certainly an aspect of שבת which involves physical rejuvenation, that description of שבת is passive (cessation of activity) and is certainly not the central theme of שבת. שבת is active.

The ירושלמי teaches³⁵ that:

לא ניתנו שבתות וימים טובים לישראל אלא לעסוק בהן בדברי תורה.

Shabbat and Yom Tov were only given to the People so that they can (be free to) delve into the Torah.

The cessation of physical work is designed to free us to nurture our spirits. (שבת is active – לעשות את השבת)

Perhaps that is why שבת is introduced as שבתות (plural). There is a שבת if the גוף and the נשמה of the נשמה. The נשמה rests by ceasing physical labor, relaxing, eating and enjoying. But the נשמה gets its renewal energy by immersion in Torah.

Cannot work for more days

The רמח"ל writes that the תורה is teaching us spiritual physics. And part of that physics is that a person cannot labor for more than six days. If a person were to be involved in business pursuits

for more than six days, the body/soul balance would tilt. Shifting the balance towards the body means that the soul begins to atrophy. The person would be called a חולה נפש – an ill soul. By analogy, the body suffers from malnutrition and the soul, if not properly fed a rich diet of spiritual nourishment will become ill. It is a spiritual scurvy or anemia.

After six days the נשמה needs intensive rejuvenation. (The urgency for this rejuvenation is greater for those who are not involved in full-time learning during the week.) As such, one who is involved in business pursuits during the week must be certain to have a learning סדר during שבת.

More to the learning on שבת

The Zohar³⁶ reveals that there is far more at stake when one learns on שבת than just keeping the נשמה in tune. The Zohar teaches that each נשמה which spent שבת on Earth returns to שמיים after שבת and is asked by Hashem if it had a new Torah thought, a חידוש תורה, over the course of its שבת learning. The Zohar describes what happens when the נשמה responds in the affirmative and announces the newly-clarified thought.

What does he do when שבת comes? What are his priorities?

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The Zohar describes the heavenly celebration. Praises are heaped on the נשמה and the heavenly court bursts into joy. The celebration then spills over into a visit to the souls of the *parents* of the one who learned that Torah on שבת. The righteous who have been summoned to the great celebration crowd around the souls of the parents and kiss them for the great merit that their child accrued. With their kisses they proclaim the good fortune of the parents of one who studied Torah on the Holy שבת.

Stopping and thinking is also spiritual

A חידוש תורה does not imply only that which was never heard before, but a clarification for the one learning. Something became clearer through one's learning on שבת.

The ספר יסוד ושורש העבודה says that even one who cannot learn or grasp what he has learned to say it over on מוצאי שבת can still benefit from this connection to Torah. Thinking about one's Middot and behaviors is also a part of Torah. Thus, one who considered his spiritual life understood with greater clarity some aspect of his obligations in life and thereby accepted upon himself some enhancement for the coming week is also included in the profit-sharing that the Zohar describes. Examples are endless, but the ספר יסוד ושורש העבודה mentions several. A resolve to be a bit more careful with ברכות or with the recitation of קריאת שמע, davening with a Minyan, curbing one's anger, etc. Those are all parts of the spiritual side of the person and are linked with the purpose for which we were given the שבת.

Why the parents?

Per the above Zohar one who learns תורה on שבת gives boundless respect to one's parents, even if they are no longer among the living. This may explain why the פסוק joins the two, seemingly unconnected מצות, as it says איש אמו ואביו תיראו ואת שבתותי תשמרו.

You may wonder why the parents benefit from the Torah that their child learns?

The key shareholders in the company

We can understand the benefits accrued to the parents of the one who learns by thinking of equal partners in a company. When there is a profit all the partners are invited to share those profits.

Hashem has taken a mother and father as His partners in the formation of a person. The priorities of a person determine if his spiritual component was given at least equal weight to his physical needs. That means that the portion that Hashem has infused is being given priority as befits the partnership.

The test of the success of the endeavor is how the person's priorities are demonstrated when the person is relieved of physical demands. That is where we will see his priorities. What does he do when שבת comes? If he only indulges his physical side in eating and sleeping, then he demonstrates that he does not make matters of the spirit his priority. This is a badge of shame for the other partners, his parents.

But if the person demonstrates the priority of the spirit, then the partnership is deemed a success and all the partners join to share in the dividends. And we know that *actions express*



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priorities. Talk is cheap. Priorities are visible.
And when the priorities are in the right place,
then Hashem shares the profits with His
partners.

The linkage of שבת and תורה – from day one

There is a discussion in the Gemara as to what
day in Sivan the Torah was given on Har Sinai.

Takeaway: I will try to emphasize the spiritual side of שבת.

Was it the sixth of Sivan or the seventh? But all
opinions agree that the Torah was given on שבת!
The natural and unbreakable connection between
Torah and שבת is unmistakable.

The שבת was only given...



Dimensions and Domains

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E19)

What message am I meant to carry away from מלאכת הוצאה?

Disproportionate focus on הוצאה והעברה

Without suggesting a ‘competition’ between the ל”ט מלאכות, we would surely find that the volume of writing and focus on the details of הוצאה (transferring an article between one רשות and another) and העברה (carrying ד’ אמות in the רשות הרבים) seems disproportionate. Much of מסכת שבת deals with this מלאכה, followed by the entire מסכת עירובין.

A Surprising level of priority

But, even after the extensive discussion about the Halachic details associated with הוצאה, we find an attitude towards this one מלאכה even more striking. חז”ל saw fit to cancel two of our central, once-in-a-year מצות שופר, מצות לולב, if the first day of Rosh Hashana or of Sukkot fall on שבת. And we are not speaking about מצות that can be ‘made up’ the next day. There is no way to fulfil the דאורייתא on those years! And all why? Because חז”ל were concerned that the בעל תוקע (usually a knowledgeable person to start with) might find a שופר in the רשות הרבים and, forgetting that it was שבת, might carry it ד’ אמות through the רשות הרבים! The unlikelihood of such a thing happening only serves to highlight that

something else is at work here. חז”ל are talking to us and we must tune in and hear the message.

The origins of the מלאכת הוצאה

Some hints about the centrality of הוצאה in our outlook on שבת can be found by asking the question of how did הוצאה become a מלאכה? After all, it is unlike any of the other 38 מלאכות in two significant ways. First, it is the only מלאכה whose prohibition varies based on where the

activity takes place. Every other מלאכה is simply אסור, wherever one is. In addition, every other מלאכה is essentially creative. Something about the object is changed; turned into something more refined, more suited for purpose. Not so with הוצאה. Nothing has happened to the object. It was simply positioned there and now it is here.

Indeed, the differences between הוצאה and the other מלאכות earned it the term מלאכה – an ‘inferior’ מלאכה.³⁷ But, before it can be called a מלאכה גרועה, we are still left asking how it became a מלאכה altogether.

The basics

The Gemara³⁸ learns the מלאכת הוצאה from the פסוקים which describe the conclusion of the collection project for the Mishkan. In what may

*One who
thinks that one
can afford to
allow cracks
in the walls of
on רשות היחיד
is terribly
mistaken.*

³⁷ עיין תוספות שבת ב. ד”ה פשט בעה”ב

³⁸ שבת צו:



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be unique to the annals of building campaigns, in just a couple of days the campaign was called off as the collections had exceeded the goal:

וַיֵּצֵא מֹשֶׁה וַיַּעֲבִירוּ קוֹל בְּמַחֲנֵה לֵאמֹר אִישׁ וְאִשָּׁה אֵל יַעֲשׂוּ עוֹד מִלְאכָה לְתְרוּמַת הַקֹּדֶשׁ וַיִּפְּלֵא הָעָם מְהֵבִיא. וְהַמְּלָאכָה הַזֹּאת דָּיִם לְכָל הַמְּלָאכָה לַעֲשׂוֹת אֹתָהּ וְהוֹתֵר.³⁹

Moshe instructed that an announcement be made in the camp instructing that no man nor woman should make additional מלאכה for the holy donation; and the People stopped bringing. The מלאכה was sufficient for producing all the מלאכה and more.

The Gemara infers from the context of the story and from the multiple uses of the word מלאכה in these two פסוקים that הוצאה is called a מלאכה. After all, Moshe was in the מחנה לווייה (where the לויים resided around the משכן, an area which is רשות הרבים) and the People were in their homes (רשות היחיד). The instruction was given on שבת (derived elsewhere). The מלאכה which was sufficient was the מלאכה of bringing the goods, or הוצאה מרשות היחיד לרשות הרבים. Clearly, חז"ל had 'insider' information that led them to label הוצאה as a מלאכה.

Right from the outset, then, there was something compelling about considering הוצאה as a מלאכה, even given that it doesn't look or feel like a מלאכה, and it is derived rather 'creatively' from the פסוקים.

Rav Schwab adds a hint

Rav Shimon Schwab זצ"ל added a hint which could bolster the case that הוצאה is a מלאכה. When יעקב אבינו ע"ה turns down Esav's offer to accompany him on the way, יעקב אבינו says that

Esav should go ahead. 'I will go slowly, לרגל מלאכה – with the pace of the מלאכה that is upon me.' The מלאכה that he is referring to is the transfer of all the goods needed for his large household. Rav Schwab sees that transferring goods can be called הוצאה.

The 2nd דברות – only about הוצאה

When speaking about שבת in the עשרת הדברות in עשרת הברות, פרשת יתרו, the Torah gives the rationale for שבת – זכר למעשה בראשית. By contrast, in the עשרת הדברות in פרשת ואתחנן the rationale for שבת is our having been slaves and redeemed – זכר ליציאת מצרים.

Rav S.R. Hirsh זצ"ל points out that if שבת was only to recall and celebrate Hashem's Creation, as implied by the language of the first דברות, then only creative מלאכות would be prohibited. That would not include הוצאה which, as mentioned, is not a creative act.

However, part of our endless tasks in מצרים was lugging things back and forth. Refraining from הוצאה is part of our celebration of Hashem redeeming us from מצרים. In that sense, the 1st set of דברות cover 38 מלאכות while the 2nd set of דברות is 'designed' to cover and included one הוצאה – הוצאה.

Why

By now we should be scratching our heads at how a מלאכה גרועה can lie at the center of the 2nd דברות? What makes it so important to (a) consider הוצאה as a מלאכה; and (b) to protect it so carefully?

³⁹ שמות לו: ו-ז



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The Arizal reveals the secret

We were blessed to have a great teacher, the ארי ז"ל, who opened up many pathways in Torah and קבלה. One of them is to understand some of the meanings behind the Names of Hashem.

The 4x10 Name

The four-letter Name (generally referred to as Y-K-V-K) can be written as we see it in the Torah, as 4 letters. However, every Hebrew letter is made up on additional letters which give us the pronunciation of the original letter. Thus, the letter Yud, or י is really 'hiding' the additional letters Vav-Dalet since, as pronounced, the letter is יו"ד, not just י as we are used to writing it. That turns the one-letter י into the three-letter יו"ד. Similarly, the ה becomes ה"א and the ו becomes ו"א. Given that 'full' writing of the Name, we get ה"א ו"א, ו"א י"א, ה"א ו"א or a ten-letter Name built on the base of the four-letter name. With that perspective, we can refer to the Name of Hashem as a 4x10 Name.

The dimensions of a רשות היחיד are an area of four-by-four Tefachim with a height of 10 Tefachim. You are getting closer to the core of the story. Because the term רשות היחיד does not only refer to the private domain as owned by a single person, but it is a reference to the domain of the Single One – the יחיד ומיוחד. רשות היחיד is not just the private domain, it is the spiritual domain; it is the 'space' where the Jewish soul encounters its Creator.

The secret of שבת is all tied in with רשות היחיד. That is where the heart and soul of a Jew must be for 25 hours. The רשות הרבים has no intimacy.

Jew and non-Jew alike can traverse in the רשות הרבים and the non-Jew can bring his world of politics and sports and business and nonsense there. Indeed, the רשות הרבים is filled with such things since that is their place.

But beware of the רשות הרבים שבת קודש. During the designated time of communion between His People the Creator one dare not open the door of the רשות היחיד and expose the priceless רשות היחיד to the soot and grime of the רשות הרבים. One must be intimately bound up in the רשות היחיד without stepping out into the רשות הרבים.

Understanding the significant of the 4x10 רשות היחיד is the key to understanding the soul of the Jew and the essence of the connection called שבת. And one who thinks that one can afford to allow cracks in the walls of רשות היחיד שבת is terribly mistaken. They think that a little glance at the headlines here, overhearing a secular conversation there, checking a business report here, listening for a sports score there, glancing at a message here, speaking about mundane matters there; all just little cracks. They fail to realize that with those little cracks the intimacy of the רשות היחיד is lost. The essence of שבת is swept out through the cracks and with it the Jewish Soul.

There is no such thing as too much when it comes to protecting that which is priceless. And just as we do not allow any non-Jew into the private domain of שבת קודש (see the עמידה לשחרית for more details, especially the paragraph בלוא נתת), we dare not step out from the private domain into the public thoroughfare.



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לז"ל were so keenly aware of the spiritual center-of-gravity that שבת represents that even the most remote chance that one might trespass the boundary of רשות היחיד into the רשות הרבים was enough for them to suspend even great once-a-year מצות like Shofar and Lulav.

When we tune into the רשות היחיד, we invoke the full 4x10 Name of הקב"ה as a ברכה into our homes and lives.

Takeaway: I will try to add a degree of protection to the רשות היחיד of my שבת.



Permission to Heal

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E20)

There are hospitals and doctors and medicine...and there is שבת

From damage compensation to healing

The Torah teaches us the required compensation for personal injury. Compensation always includes the cost of the medical treatment and loss of work for that treatment but then depends on the victim's ability to function. Where the victim can get up and walk the פסוק says: רק שָׁבְתוּ יָתֵן וְרָפָא יִרְפָּא⁴⁰ – literally: [the damager] only compensates for the victim's loss of work and 'heal he shall heal' – he must also pay for the cost of medical treatment.

The Gemara⁴¹ understands this double wording – ורפא ירפא – as giving permission for a physician to heal. Intervening in the Divine plan is called השתדלות which always requires permission. This permission is limited. One's primary response to pain and injury, even if inflicted by another person, is to turn to the רופא כל בשר in prayer for healing.

A remedy of שבת

The תפארת ישראל sees an additional hint in the פסוק. The Torah uses the word שָׁבְתוּ when speaking of the victim's loss of work. This word, שָׁבַח, can also spell שָׁבַח – Shabbat.⁴² The שבת is a source of healing. A sick or injured person needs a serious dose of שבת. He needs to

connect heaven and earth and draw into his physical life the great sanctity of the שבת. The food that one eats for the sake of כבוד שבת can be more effective than the best medicine as it is a spiritual healing that elevates the person.

The Tzadikim go further

One of the tools that the Tzadikim, who have access to the world of קבלה, use is based on the Hebrew letters. They have taught us that Hebrew

letters are unlike the letters of other languages. All languages use letters to form words which describe reality. But the relationship between those letters/words and the reality that they describe is simply a matter of convention. The word 'table' describes that upon which one places one's food

because society uses that word consistently. There is nothing about 'table' that must describe that surface upon which we eat. Another word could do the same job. For example, we say *tisch* in German. It is simply a convention with which we communicate. The reality exists in the world; we just need a word to describe it.

לשון הקודש is Constructive

The Holy Tongue, לשון הקודש, operates in the reverse. An object exists because ה' used that

*We each
can use an
upgrade in
health
protection.*

⁴⁰ שמות כא: יט

⁴¹ בבא קמא פה.

⁴² תפארת ישראל שמות כא: יט



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word and the reality flows from that word. A table is the product of the creative energy which flows from the letters ש-ל-ה-ן. If one knows how to unleash the creative capacity of each letter one could then create. Indeed, חז"ל tell us that בצלאל, the architect and builder of the Mishkan, knew the combinations which Hashem used to create Heaven and Earth. Release of the energy of the words is alluded to in the דבר ה' – פסוק שמים נעשו – the Heavens were created via the 'word' of Hashem.⁴³

Over and over

The word-creating with which Hashem created the world happens again and again all the time. This is one of the many hidden realities of the world. – המחדש בטובו בכל יום תמיד מעשה בראשית. Hashem, in His Goodness, renews the act of creation continuously. Everything that we experience is happening in the present moment. The past does not insist that the present will be a certain way. There could have been light a moment ago and now there is darkness. There is no contradiction for it to be daylight for one person and pitch darkness for another. That was revealed in the plague of חשך in מצרים. The same holds for illness. The existence of illness now does not dictate its existence tomorrow.

Inside the word שבת

A careful look at each of the letters will reveal that the Holy Name (הויה) appears as the nucleus of every letter. (For example, the letter אֵלֶּף is comprised of a ה' with two letters י' attached.) The שם הויה is numerically 26. There are 27

letters in לשון הקודש, the 22 basic letters and 5 מן ק"ך (מנצפ"ך or final letters, referred to as מן ק"ך at the end of a word).

With that in mind, the letters can be said to be 27 (letters) times 26 (the שם) or 702. The word שבת also adds up to 702. Shabbat is not just a special day; it is *the* day, the sum of the building blocks of creation. When thinking about שבת we should fully disconnect from any prior assumptions about creation. What existed on ערב שבת is not what can exist on מוצאי שבת. The one who has an illness does not need more medicine; he needs more שבת. This is hidden in a mystical play on the words יתן ורפא ירפא – just give him שבת and he will surely be healed.

Yet a step deeper

The Gemara mentioned above derived from the פסוק the permission for a doctor to practice medicine – מכאן שניתן רשות לרופא לרפאות – As with most words of חז"ל there is more to the word רשות than meets the eye.

There is a 42-letter name of Hashem which we refer to as אַנָּה בָּכָה. It is called that because we have a word for each of the 42 letters. In most Siddurim you will see those letters lined up in 7 rows of six words. Often the six letters are printed to the side of the six words so that one can focus on the part of the Name associated with that line. The 7 lines correspond to the days of the week. The 7th line, which is the Holy Name associated with שבת, is שְׁקוּצִיּוֹת which expands to שוּעַתְנוּ קַבֵּל וּשְׁמַע צַעֲקוֹתֵנוּ יוֹדַע תַּעֲלוּמוֹת 'May He receive our entreaties and hear our

⁴³ תהלים לג: ו'



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cries, He Who knows that which is hidden.’ These words reflect the confidence that שבת is curative. Hashem, Who knows our illnesses far better than we do, hears our cries to such an extent that no cries are needed.

The Gematria of the Holy Name שקוצי"ת (921) is the same as the Gematria of רשוי"ת. The Kabbalists understand from here that hidden in the ‘permission’ to seek the aid of a physician is the ‘permission’ to rely on the שבת קודש as a healer. While the physician is permitted to heal, the שבת is designed to heal. The Holy Name of שקוצי"ת is attached to it.⁴⁴

Takeaway: I will try to keep שבת on the forefront of my mind when I think about my health.

We each can use an upgrade in health protection. It is a part of the השגחה of the times that we are living in. We must bear in mind that part of our upgrade in health protection must include an upgrade in our relationship with שבת קודש. Taking a closer look at any aspect of Shabbat observance and committing to that observance is a significant upgrade in our relationship with שבת קודש. We could not ask for better protection.

This is part of what Ibn Ezra intended when he wrote כי אשמרה שבת א-ל-ל ישמרני – when I observe and heed the שבת קודש, the שבת turns back around and heeds and protects us.

⁴⁴ ספר סור מרע ועשה טוב מהאדמו"ר מזידיטשוב עם הוספות מהרצ"א אות קנ"ו