

Shabbos: Ta'am HaChaim Bereishis 5773

(From the archives)

Shabbos in the Parasha

This Shabbos is Parashas Bereishis, when we commence the cycle of the Torah reading. Prior to Bereishis we have Shemini Atzeres and Simchas Torah, and there is a time-honored tradition to connect the end of V'Zos Habrachta to the beginning of Bereishis. The Torah ends off with the following verses (Devarim 34:11-12) *velo kam navi od biYisroel kiMoshe asher yidao HaShem panim el panim lechol haosos vihamofsim asher shilacho HaShem lassos bieretz Mitzrayim liPharaoh ulechol avadav ulechol artzo ulechol hayad hachazakah ulechol hamora hagadol asher asah Moshe lieieni kol Yisroel*, never again has there arisen in Israel a prophet like Moshe, whom HaShem had known face to face, as evidenced by all the signs and wonders that HaShem sent him to perform in the land of Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his courtiers and all his land, and by all the strong hand and awesome power that Moshe performed before the eyes of all Israel. Rashi explains that these verses refer to Moshe accepting the Luchos from HaShem and subsequently breaking them upon witnessing the Golden Calf that the Jewish People had created. One has to wonder why the Torah would choose to mention this episode as the conclusion of the Torah. Would it not be fitting to conclude with

an incident that depicts the Jewish People in a positive light? The Sifri actually lists other miracles, such as the slaying of the first born Egyptians, the splitting of the sea, and the giving of the Torah. I would like to suggest an idea based on what I found to be a fascinating insight into Shabbos written by Rabbi Pinchos Winston on www.torah.org. Rabbi Winston explains that HaShem, so to speak, hides Himself in nature, yet, this goes against HaShem's "nature", so hiding is deemed by HaShem to be "work." Shabbos, however, is when HaShem rested, so to speak, from this "work," and revealed His Presence to us, thus allowing Shabbos to be a day of eternity. Using this premise, we can understand why Rashi writes that the Torah concludes with Moshe breaking the Luchos. When the Jewish People created the Golden Calf, they caused that in a sense HaShem should hide His Presence from the Jewish People. The Gemara (Eirubin 54a) states that prior to the Luchos being broken, there was no concept of one forgetting the Torah that one studied. This is akin to HaShem hiding Himself, as the Jewish People, the Torah and HaShem are all one, so if HaShem chose to conceal His Presence from us, He also was required to somewhat conceal the light of Torah from us. Although Moshe breaking the Luchos appeared to be catastrophic, the Torah provides the antidote with

Bereishis, where HaShem created the Original Light. When HaShem saw that the wicked would not be deserving of this great light, HaShem hid the light for the World to Come. Nonetheless, on Shabbos and Yom Tov this light is revealed. We are thus very fortunate to have Shabbos and Yom Tov, when we are keenly aware of the Divine Presence. The Zohar states that on Shabbos, Moshe returns the crowns that the Jewish People forfeited upon worshipping the Golden Calf. Apparently, the crowns reflect the light that was lost when the Jewish People fashioned the Golden Calf, and it is through the Holy Shabbos that we gain back that great light. Hashem should bless us that we merit the great light that is contained within Shabbos and Yom Tov, and we should merit the light of Moshiach Tzidkeinu, speedily, in our days.

Shabbos in the Zemiros

Askinu Seudasa

Composed by the Arizal, Rabbi Yitzchak Luria

Viiturin shavin lah umalka dileila diyisatar kola bikadish kadishin, and the seventy crowns of its wine and Kiddush. Then the King above is completely encrowned with holy sanctification. This passage alludes to the thirty-five words that are recited in the *vayechulu* portion of Kiddush and to the additional thirty-five words in the Kiddush blessing that follows the blessing over the wine.

Furthermore, the word *yayin*, wine, equals in gematria 70. This is a significant idea, as when we recite Kiddush, we are entering into the secrets of the universe, as the word *sod*, secret, is also in gematria 70. It is incumbent on one reciting Kiddush on Shabbos to concentrate on the meaning of the words as the words contain many hidden secrets.

Shabbos in Tefillah

Lakeil asher shavas mikol hamaasim bayom hashevii nisalah viyashav al kisei kivodo, to the G-d Who rested from all works, Who on the Seventh Day was elevated and sat on the Throne of His Glory. This passage implies that throughout the week HaShem is not, so to speak, sitting on His Throne of Glory. How are we to understand that HaShem does not sit on His Throne of Glory during the week, especially in light of the fact that we recite in the prayer of *Asher yatzar* the words *galuy viyadua lifnei chisei chivodecho*, it is obvious and known before Your Throne of Glory. This prayer is recited every day of the week and we declare that HaShem reposes on His Throne of Glory. In The Siddur Otzar HaTefillos, the Anaf Yosef quotes the Kol Bo who writes that the explanation of this passage is that HaShem created an angel for every creation. On the first Shabbos of creation HaShem sat on His Holy Throne and called all the angels together. When the angels arrived, HaShem descended from His Throne and placed the angel of Shabbos on the throne. The angels then

began to sing praises to the angel of Shabbos. HaShem showed this display of joy to Adam HaRishon, and Adam began to recite *Mizmor shir liyom haShabbos*, a psalm, a song for the Shabbos day. HaShem said to Adam, “to the angel of Shabbos you sing praises and not to Me?” When the angel of Shabbos heard from HaShem that it is a good thing in Hashem’s eyes to sing praises, he descended from the Throne of Glory and declared “*tov lehodos laHaShem*,” it is good to thank HaShem, and all the angels responded *ulizameir Lishimcho elyon*, and to sing praise to Your Name, O exalted One. Thus, according to the opinion of the Kol Bo, we are declaring that after allowing the angel of Shabbos to ascend His Throne of Glory, HaShem, so to speak, returned to His Throne of Glory.

Shabbos Stories

At the turn of the 19th century, before the First World War, there were still great rebbes that could heal; there was the Kerestirer Rebbe, Reb Yeshaya. He did not place his hands on a person or speak - but if you ate food in his house, you went away healed. When his wife Sarah died, the Rebbe wept terribly and would not be consoled. He told the Chasidim, “You probably thought that people who ate in my house were healed because of me. That’s not true. It was because of my holy wife, Sarah. Now that she’s gone I can tell you. Listen to this story of what happened. ‘In our younger days we were desperately poor. If we ate one meal a week we would have food to eat on Shabbos, but we wouldn’t be able to have any guests. So

we fasted from Shabbos to Shabbos. Then we had enough food for ourselves and for some guests. One week, my holy wife was cooking on Friday for Shabbos, when a drunkard knocked on the door and was invited in. He was reeking of alcohol but he said to my wife, ‘I’m starving, do you have anything to eat?’ We had not eaten that whole week, but who knows how long he had been without food, and when someone says they’re starving, how can you not feed them? So my wife gave him from the food she had prepared for Shabbos. After finishing what she gave him, however, he asked, ‘Is there more?’ Each time he ate whatever was put before him and asked for more, until she said, ‘There’s not a crumb left.’ She gave him everything she had prepared for our Shabbos meals. She gave him everything gently and respectfully, because she was doing a great mitzvah and good deed. She didn’t judge him by how he looked or for his crude behavior, for who knows what troubles he had suffered? “Then this drunkard did something unusual. He asked, ‘Can I speak to your husband?’ My wife came to my room and told me about his request and, when I agreed, my wife sent him to me. When he came in, he no longer smelled and he didn’t appear drunk. In fact, his face was glowing, and I realized at once that this was Elijah the Prophet. He said to me, ‘I only came here to bless your wife. Her kindness has made a great impression in heaven. But we wanted to give her a final test to see if she was worthy of the great blessing we have in store for her. She passed the test.’ “What was the great blessing? It was the blessing of healing.” And that,” said the Rebbe, “was why the food my holy wife served healed whoever ate it.” [Mai Ber Yeshayahu, pp. 43-44.]

When Rebbe Yeshaya of Kerestirer was on his deathbed and close to his final hours, he called over one of his intimates and whispered, "In a little while there will be a 'funeral' here and many people will be coming from far away. So please put a very big pot on the stove and boil a lot of potatoes, and then cook them with a lot of chicken fat, because I want all those Jews to have some tasty food after their long trip." [Reshumim Bishimcha, p. 360]

Rebbe Yeshaya's greatest pleasure was to host a very elaborate Melave Malka, the meal that follows Shabbos, on Saturday night. Often he would have his chassidim shecht fresh chickens for his meal.

One Motzoai Shabbos, while Reb Shaya'le was eating this special melave malka meal, a chassid came to him with an urgent request. He was a man who had a warehouse full of foodstuffs and he made his living by buying and selling food. For the past number of months, his warehouse had been taken over by mice who were eating his grain and other commodities and his entire livelihood was threatened. He asked Reb Shaya'le for a blessing that the mice should leave his warehouse. At that time, each small town in Europe was ruled by the local church pastor. Some of the pastors were kind towards the Jews and others were very harsh. Reb Shaya'le asked the chassid if the pastor of the town he lived in was kind or harsh. The chassid replied that he was very harsh toward the Jews. Reb Shaya'le then instructed the chassid to go to his warehouse and to tell the mice, "Reb Shaya'le says to go to the estate of the pastor." The chassid followed the Rebbe's advice and instantly hundreds of mice raced out of

the warehouse all heading in the direction of the pastor's estate. The chassid's business was saved and ever since Jews who have been plagued with this problem have used Reb Shaya'le's picture to accomplish the ridding of mice from their homes.

Shabbos in Navi

Shmuel I Chapter 9

In this chapter we learn of the episode of Shmuel informing Shaul that he will become the first king of the Jewish People. Shaul's father sent him to seek out the lost donkeys and Shaul ends up meeting Shmuel, who invites him to eat with him at a festive meal. Prior to meeting Shmuel it is said that Shaul and his attendant saw maidens going out to draw water, and when Shaul and his attendant asked the maidens if this is where the seer was, the maidens gave a lengthy response. According to one opinion in the Gemara (Brachos 48b) the reason that the maidens elaborated on their answer was so that they could stare at Shaul's beauty. Perhaps there is a lesson to be learned from this, and that is that when someone desires something, he talks about it at length. In a similar vein, Shabbos is referred to as *yom chemdaso*, the day of His desire. Shabbos is the day that HaShem desires, and HaShem desires that we should be constantly talking and thinking about His Holy Shabbos.

Shabbos in Agadah

The Imrei Emes, the Gerrer Rebbe, writes (Rosh Hashanah 5693) that the function of the Shofar is to arouse one to accept on himself the yoke of Heaven, and it is said (Tehillim 89:16) *ashrei haam yodei teruah*, praises to the people who know the shofar's cry. Shabbos also reflects the idea of *daas*, knowledge, and it is said that *daas* refers to one who recognizes his Creator. The Sfas Emes writes that the function of the *tekiah* is to gather all the camps together. Regarding Shabbos it is said *diisachadas biraza diechod*, she unites in the secret of Oneness. Furthermore, it is said that the *tekiah* arouses kindness and compassion, as it is said (Bamidbar 10:7) *uvihakhil es hakahal tiskiu vilo sariu*, when you gather together the congregation, you shall sound a long blast, but not a short blast. The *tekiah* also reflects joy, as it is said (Ibid verse 10) *uvayom simchaschem uvimoadichem uviroshai chodsheichem uskatem bachatzotzros*, on a day of your gladness, and on your festivals, and on your new moons, you shall sound the trumpets. Regarding Shabbos we recite in Shemone Esrei the words *yismichu vimalchuscha shomrei Shabbos vikorei oneg*, they shall rejoice in Your Kingship - those who observe the Shabbos and call it a delight. Through the joy of Shabbos we arouse the compassion of HaShem.

Shabbos in Halacha

The final condition that is required to allow one to return food to the blech is

that one has to have original intent to do so. If when one lifted the pot he intended to remove it permanently, he will then be forbidden to return it. However, if one had no particular intention when lifting the pot, he will be allowed to return the pot, provided that he did not specifically intend to remove it permanently.

Shabbos Challenge Question

We know that many customs that we perform on Shabbos are in pairs, corresponding to the mitzvah of *shamor*, safeguarding the Shabbos, and one corresponding to *zachor*, remembering the Shabbos. Examples of this idea are a woman lighting minimum two candles prior to the onset of Shabbos and reciting hamotzi over two loaves of bread by all three meals on Shabbos. One must wonder, however, why this is so, as the Gemara (Rosh HaShanah 27a) states that *shamor* and *zachor* were uttered by HaShem simultaneously. Furthermore, in the prayer of Kegavna recited by Nusach Sefard on Friday night, it is said that Shabbos is *raza diechod*, the Secret of Unity. These statements would indicate that although prior to Shabbos there was disparity and a lack of unity, on Shabbos everything becomes one. Why, then, do we emphasize on Shabbos the idea of two? If you have a possible answer, please email me at ShabbosTaamHachaim@gmail.com and your answer will be posted in next week's edition of Shabbos: Ta'am HaChaim.

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Is sponsored in memory of Rabbeinu Yitzchak Hazaken bar Shmuel (the Ri Hazaken), of the Baalei Tosfos (1120-1200). The Ri's maternal grandfather was Rashi's son-in-law, Rav Meir ben Shmuel. He was thus a nephew and a disciple of Rabbeinu Tam and the Rashbam (both sons of Rav Meir ben Shmuel). He was also a grandson of one of Rashi's leading students, Rav Simcha of Vitry (author of Machzor Vitry). The Ri directed the yeshiva at Ramerupt after Rabbeinu Tam moved to Troyes. Thereafter, he founded the yeshiva at Dampierre. The Ri Hazaken succeeded Rabbeinu Tam as head of the academy in Ramerupt, France. Among Rav Yitzchak's students were Rav Shimshon of Sens (who edited many of our Tosfos, wrote important works in his own right, and led 300 families to settle in Eretz Yisrael in 1211), Rav Yitzchak ben Avraham ("Ritzba"), and Rav Baruch, author of Sefer Haterumos. The Ri also was a kabbalist who lived an ascetic life and observed two days of Yom Kippur (presumably for the same reason that Jews in the diaspora observe two days of other holidays). Ri had at least two sons, both of whom died in his lifetime: Rabbeinu Elchanan and Rabbeinu Shlomo. (www.matzav.com)

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Monday through Friday 6:00 AM
followed by Shacharis at 6:55 AM

Sunday 8:00 AM followed by Shacharis
at 9:00 AM

Shabbos morning 8:00 AM followed by
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