

Shabbos: Ta'am HaChaim Shemini 5773

(From the archives)

Shabbos in the Parasha

Introduction

ויבא משה ואהרן אל אהל מועד ויצאו ויברכו את העם וירא כבוד ה' אל כל העם, Moshe and Aharon came to the Tent of Meeting, and they went out and they blessed the people – and the glory of HaShem appeared to the entire people (Vayikra 9:23)

The Mishkan, the Tabernacle, which will serve as the resting place for the Divine Presence in the Wilderness, is ready to be erected. The entire Jewish People is anxiously waiting for a fire to descend from heaven, and this revelation would reflect the love that HaShem had for them and would also demonstrate that they had earned atonement for the sin of worshipping the Golden Calf. Unfortunately, it appears as if they have waited in vain. The fire has not descended, and they voiced their complaint to Moshe. What could Moshe do that would satisfy their desire to have the Divine Presence in their midst?

“Am I also preventing the Redemption from occurring?”

The Munkatcher Rebbe, Reb Chaim Elazar Shapiro (1872-1937) had finally arrived in Jerusalem for a historic meeting with the renowned Kabbalist, Rabbi Shlomo Eliezer Alfandri, known as the Saba Kadisha, The Holy Elder

Keep on praying for the Redemption

(1820-1930). For years they had communicated by mail and now a great crowd had gathered to witness the meeting of these two great Torah luminaries. The crowd finally dispersed and only the Rebbe's attendant, Reb Shalom, remained in the room where the two leaders were to meet. The Rebbe gave his attendant a knowing glance and Reb Shalom left the room. Unable to contain his curiosity, however, Reb Shalom remained listening behind the door, curious as to what would transpire in this fateful encounter. At first Reb Shalom could not hear anything, and he assumed that the language barrier was preventing any communication, as the Rebbe only spoke Yiddish and the great Kabbalist spoke in his native Hebrew. Finally the two settled on Hebrew as the spoken language, and Reb Shalom heard the Rebbe ask in a slow but urgent tone, “tell me, please, when will the Messiah finally arrive to redeem us from this long exile?” The Saba Kadisha replied sadly, “there are those who are preventing the redemption from occurring.” Reb Shalom listened eagerly for further conversation, but he could not hear anything. After a few moments he heard the Rebbe crying and then through the tears, he was able to make out the Rebbe's muffled cry, “Am I also among those who is preventing the

redemption?” The Rebbe’s sincere query pierced Reb Shalom’s heart and penetrates the hearts of Jews the world over. Are we doing enough to bring the redemption?

Moshe prays for the Divine Presence to rest on the Mishkan

Moshe was confronted by the Jewish People’s disappointment that they had not yet merited the Divine Presence to rest on their new edifice. Rashi writes that Aharon was also saddened by the fact that despite having offered all the necessary sacrifices to inaugurate the Tabernacle, the Divine Presence had not yet appeared. Moshe then entered the Mishkan together with Aharon and they prayed that the Divine Presence should rest on the handiwork of the Jewish People. Immediately a fire went forth from before HaShem and consumed upon the Altar the burnt-offerings and the fats; the people saw and rejoiced at the revelation of HaShem’s Presence in their midst.

We must keep praying for the Ultimate Redemption

We are constantly praying for the Redemption, and at times we may wonder if there is something more that we need to do to hasten its arrival. In truth, however, just as Moshe did for the Jewish People in the Wilderness, we must keep praying to HaShem to bring the Redemption. HaShem revealed Himself to the Jewish People then, and He will certainly answer our prayers and

bring us the Messiah and the long awaited redemption.

The Shabbos connection

Throughout the week we anticipate the Redemption. On Shabbos, however, we feel that we are so close to redemption, as we recite in the Lecho Dodi prayer, *karvah el nafshi gealah*, draw near to my soul-redeem it! HaShem should give us the strength to keep praying for redemption, and in the merit of our Shabbos observance, he will surely redeem us, with the arrival of Moshiach Tzidkeinu, speedily, in our days.

Shabbos in the Zemiros

Eishes Chayil

Composed by Shlomo HaMelech in Mishlei

סָדִין עֲשָׂתָהּ, וְחָמְכָר וְהָגוֹר, נְתָנָהּ לְפָנָעֵי, she makes a cloak and sells it, and delivers a belt to the peddler. This verse alludes to the requirement that one make the beds and sets the table prior to the onset of Shabbos. Furthermore, the word sadin, when applying mispar katan, digit sum, can be broken down as follows: 6-4-1-5, and by adding these numbers, equal 16. The number 16 is a composite of 1 and 6, which totals 7, alluding to Shabbos, the seventh day of the week. The word vatimkor can be read vatimgor, from the idea of dwelling, as the letters kaf and gimmel are interchangeable (see Rashi to Bereishis 49:5). It is said veshamru bnei yisroel es HaShabbos laasos es HaShabbos ledorosam bris olam, the

Children of Israel shall observe the Shabbos, to make the Shabbos an eternal covenant for their generations. The Zohar states that the word ledorosam can be read as lederosam, for their dwelling places, implying that Shabbos is a state of permanency. Thus, in our verse we can suggest that when Shabbos arrives, one can experience a permanency even in this world, as the Gemara states that Shabbos is one sixtieth of the World to Come.

Shabbos in Tefillah

HaShem's greatness is found next to His humility

Kadosh Kadosh Kadosh HaShem Tzivakos milo chol haaretz kivodo, Holy, holy, holy is HaShem, Master of Legions, the whole world is filled with His glory. One aspect of this verse is the idea that HaShem is holy beyond our understanding, and nonetheless, His glory fills the earth, i.e. the lowly earth where human beings reside. This idea is parallel to the Gemara (Megillah 31a) that states: wherever you find the greatness of the Holy One, Blessed is He, there you find His humility.

Shabbos Stories

Warmed By The Coat

Rav Moshe Schneider once met a renowned doctor who had not only veered off the path of Yiddishkeit, but fiercely opposed Yiddishkeit as well. The doctor told R' Schneider that he would have no hesitations about

converting, except one thing stopped him from taking this drastic step - the warmth of the Chofetz Chaim's coat.

The doctor explained that when he was still a boy, he learned in Radin, and one cold night he fell asleep on a bench in the shul. Suddenly, he was aroused from his sleep, and he saw an elderly man standing above him, removing his coat and covering him and providing him with some much-needed warmth. Later, he realized that the elderly man was the Chofetz Chaim. The doctor added, "This coat warms me until this day, and this is what keeps me from converting." (Shaal Avicha Veyegadcha) (www.Revach.net)

A Worthwhile Meddling

Recently, I had the privilege of meeting Rabbi Rafael Grossman, Rabbi of the West Side Institutional Synagogue in Manhattan and the Senior Rabbi Emeritus of Baron Hirsch Congregation in Memphis, the largest Orthodox congregation in America. Rabbi Grossman is a brilliant scholar and an excellent speaker, with a wealth of precious stories from his fascinating life's many experiences. I took him to visit Migdal Ohr and spent several enjoyable hours with him. The following fantastic story is one of many I heard from him during the trip. Many years ago, a prominent member of Rabbi Grossman's congregation invited the Rabbi to spend Shabbos with him in the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. Suddenly, the Rabbi heard a commotion in the streets below his hotel room. Looking out the window he could see a

group of Chassidic fellows screaming “Shabbos” at a cab driver, who was yelling back at them, at least as loudly. Rabbi Grossman was afraid that the demonstration might get violent, and declared that he must go down and intervene. His wife suggested that he just butt out of a situation which he probably could not help improve anyway. But the kind hearted Rabbi insisted that it was his religious and moral duty to at least try. By the time Rabbi Grossman arrived on the scene, he found that the cab driver was being accosted by a particularly vocal Chassid who looked like he was about to deliver blows to the Sabbath violator. On the other end, the cab driver seemed quite ready to return every punch he would suffer. The Rabbi stationed himself between the two and asked what in the world was going on. The Chassid stated simply that this man was violating the Holy Shabbos in the midst of the Holy City of Jerusalem. Oddly, the cab driver replied that he sends his children to religious schools, which charge a hefty tuition, rather than send them to free public schools. In order to give them a religious education, he said, he must work on Shabbos. Similarly, in order to buy more expensive, kosher food products for his family, he must work on the Holy Day. Rabbi Grossman exclaimed that the driver was a tzaddik (a righteous man). The Chassid was overwhelmed and asked the Rabbi if he, himself, was religious. “I happen to be a Rabbi,” he responded. “Then how can you possibly declare that a public Sabbath violator is

a tzaddik?” the Chassid asked in exasperation. “According to his frame of mind,” explained the Rabbi, “he is a tzaddik.” He does not understand the Torah as we do, and he thinks he is doing a mitzvah.” “Well, we have to explain to him that what he is doing is a very big aveira (sin),” insisted the Chassid. “Yes, you are right,” agreed the Rabbi. But this is not at all the way to ‘explain’ it to him. King Shlomo said, ‘The words of wise men are heard in quiet more than the shouting of him who rules among fools’ (Koheles 9:17). I have a suggestion. Tomorrow, I am having the Shabbos meal at the Plaza Hotel. Why don’t both of you and your families come and join me as my guests? We can all get to know each other better and share our ideas with each other.” And with that the Rabbi returned to his room. When the Rabbi told his wife what had happened, she asked how the two parties had responded to his suggestion. “They both laughed at me,” he said. “So what did you accomplish by making a fool out of yourself?” she asked. “I prevented two Jews from hitting each other,” he replied. “That alone was enough of an accomplishment for me.” The next day, while eating his Shabbos meal, Rabbi Grossman was amazed to see a familiar man enter the dining room with his wife and children. It was none other than the cab driver he had met the night before. He quickly called them over to his table where the young children declared that they had never seen so much food before and did not know where to begin eating (they

decided to start with the cake). But Rabbi Grossman and his wife were even more overwhelmed when, a few minutes later, the Chassid came in too, with his wife and children! They all sat together at the same table and got to know each other. The women, in particular, became very friendly. The driver's wife had a successful business selling tichels (woman's kerchiefs) and, after Shabbos, she introduced the Chassid's wife to her supplier and she began selling them too. To make a long story short, the families became quite friendly and kept in touch with Rabbi Grossman. The cab driver became more and more religious, and the Chassid became more and more tolerant as his wife's business thrived too. After several years had passed, they informed the Rabbi that their children were becoming engaged to each other! Eventually, they married, and moved to the US where they are presently very successfully involved in kiruv; reaching out to non-religious brothers and sisters and, in a mild-mannered, understanding and loving fashion, bringing them closer to Torah-true Judaism. [Reprinted with permission from the Shema Yisrael Torah Network. For information on subscriptions, archives, and other Shema Yisroel classes, send email to parsha@shemayisrael.co.il]

Shabbos in Navi

Shmuel II Chapter 2

On Shabbos we put aside our differences and show each other love

In this chapter we learn how Dovid was declared ruler over the people of Yehudah while Avner ben Ner made Ish Boshes, son of Shaul, the ruler over Yisroel. Avner and Yoav staged a dual between their men and many of the men died as the fighting got out of hand and culminated in tragedy. Asahel the son of Tzeruyah then chased after Avner and Avner killed Asahel. It is always troubling to read in Tanach how Jews killed each other. While it is difficult to understand how great leaders of the Jewish People reflected hatred towards each other, to the point of allowing their hatred to lead to bloodshed, we must remember that Shabbos is a day of peace. Thus, we should strive to sanctify this Holy Day and allow it to be free of strife and we should only show love towards our fellow Jews.

Shabbos in Agadah

No demons on Shabbos

The Gemara (Megillah 3a) states that one is prohibited from greeting someone with the word *shalom* at night because we are concerned that perhaps the one he is greeting is a demon. We can suggest that for this reason we greet the ministering angels on Friday night with the recital of Shalom Aleichem, as we

are confident that they are good angels and not demons.

Shabbos in Halacha

Insulating a pot on the blech

Although nowadays it is not common to store food in materials such as salt, peat, lime, sand, wet cotton, grass or straw, there are several common application regarding this prohibition. A pot that one wrapped in a towel and left on the blech or hot plate is deemed to be insulated in a heat-intensifying material as the towel combines with the heat below to allow the temperature of the pot to rise. Thus, one is prohibited from wrapping completely a pot left on the blech or hot plate, even if this was done on Erev Shabbos.

Shabbos Challenge Question

Shabbos Challenge Question

Last week we posed the question: why do we mention in the first Perek of Kabbalas Shabbos that the Jewish People are an errant-hearted people that do not know HaShem's ways? The Pinei Menachem writes that one must prepare for Shabbos. To attain true spiritual perceptions on Shabbos, one must have good character. On Shabbos one can attain the levels of *nefesh*, *ruach*, and *neshamah*. It is for this reason that prior to Shabbos we recite the chapter in Tehillim (107:4) where it is said *tau vamidbar bishimon darech*, they wandered in the wilderness, in the desolation of the path. Furthermore, we

recite the words (Ibid 95:10) *arbaim shanah akut bidor vaomar am toei levav heim viheim lo yadu derachai*, for forty years I was angry with the generation; then I said, "An errant-hearted people are they, and they know not My ways." It is said (Mishlei 21:2) *kol derech ish yashar bieinav visochein libos HaShem*, a man's every way is upright in his eyes; but HaShem resides inside his heart. Shabbos is a propitious time for one to straighten the paths, and to arrive at a state where his mind is at ease and he is accountable for his actions.

This week's question is: The Medrash (Bereishis Rabbah 11:8) states that Shabbos complained to HaShem that every day has a mate and only Shabbos does not have a mate. Hashem responded that the Jewish People will be your mate. The question is, why did Shabbos not have a mate? Shabbos could have been the mate of the sixth day, similar to the fact that the fifth day was deemed to be the mate of the sixth day. 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:

Rav Dan of Radvil (1838)

Rav Chaim Halberstam of Sanz, author of Divrei Chaim (1793-1876), founder of the Sanzer Chasidus. Born in Tarnograd, Poland. At the age of 18, he was appointed Rav of the small town of Rudnick, where he became a close talmid of Rav Naftali Tzvi of Ropshitz. In 1830, he became Rav of Sanz (Tzanz), where he stayed for 46 years. He had 15 children, including Rav Yechezkel of Shinov. His third son, Rav Meir Nosson, died of an epidemic at an early age; his only son was Rav Shloime, who would become the first Bobover Rebbe. Another scion of Sanz, Rav Yekusiel Yehuda Halberstam, the Klausenberger Rav, has erected several towns, yeshivos, and a modern medical center in Israel, as well as yeshivos in New Jersey and New York. The Sanz Chassidim have a yichus document showing how they are descended via the Maharal of Prague from Rav Yosef I of Rome and back to King Dovid.

Rav Moshe Ulman (1899), author of ShU"Y Yeros Shlomo.

Rav Nachum Tzvi (ben Kalman Avraham) Goldberg (1922-2006). Born to the Rav of Vasilkov, he moved with the family to America in 1926. As a bachur, he learned with Rav Shlomo Heiman for 5 years, then moved to

Lakewood to learn with Rav Aharon Kotler for 9 years (1943-1952). As a married man, he moved back to the East Side and taught at Yeshivas Rabbeinu Yaakov Yosef (RJJ) for over 20 years. After his father was niftar in 1968, he replaced him as Rav of Adas Yisrael. In 1973, he also became administrator of Ezras Torah and made out the checks for all the yungeleit. נפטרו כ"ו ניסן, זכר צדיקים וקדושים לברכה, זכותם יגינו עלינו ועל כל ישראל לטובה

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