

# INTEGRAL TO CREATION

by Rabbi Binyomin Adler

In this week's parashah the Torah records the dialogue that the donkey had with Balaam. It is noteworthy that the Mishna in Avos (5:8) states: *asarah devarim nivriu bierev Shabbos bain hashemashos vieilu hein pi haaretz upi habieir pi haason vihakeshes vihaman vihamateh vihashamir hakesav vihamichtav vihaluchos viyeish omrim af hamazikin ukivuraso shel Moshe vieilo shel Avraham Avinu viyeish omrim af tzevas bitzevas asuyah*, ten things were created on Shabbos eve, at twilight. They are: The mouth of the earth; the mouth of the well; the mouth of the donkey; the rainbow [which was Noach's sign that there would be no future floods] the manna; the staff, the shamir worm; the script, the inscription; and the Tablets. Some say also destructive spirits, Moshe's grave, and the ram of our forefather Avraham. And some say also tongs, which are made with tongs.

One must wonder why these items were specifically created immediately prior to the onset of Shabbos. Perhaps we can suggest that these items are associated with Shabbos in some manner. The mouth of the earth was created to swallow up Korach and his assembly. The Zohar (Korach) states that Korach disputed the concept of Shabbos, so it is fitting that the mouth of the earth be created immediately prior to the onset of Shabbos to swallow up Korach and his assembly in the future. Regarding the mouth of the well, it is noteworthy that the Rema writes (Orach Chaim 299:10) that one should drink water from a well on Motzai Shabbos as the well of Miriam circles on Motzai Shabbos and all the water that is in wells is healed at that time. The mouth of the donkey, as we all know, functioned as a vehicle for putting Balaam in his place. The Halacha (see Mishna Berurah Orach Chaim 307:5) is that one should minimize his speech on Shabbos, so the mouth of the donkey teaches us that one should only speak what is necessary. The rainbow symbolized that HaShem would not destroy the world.

In the prayer of Kegavna recited by those who pray Nusach Sefard, we recite that with the onset of Shabbos, all harsh judgments are removed from her. The manna is clearly associated with Shabbos, as it is said (Bereishis 2:3) *Vayivarech Elokim es yom hashevii vayikadeish oso*, Hashem blessed the seventh day and sanctified it. The Medrash (Bereishis Rabbah 11:2) states that HaShem blessed the seventh day by providing a double portion of manna on Friday, and HaShem sanctified the seventh day by not allowing manna to fall on Shabbos. The staff, which belonged to Moshe, reflected the supremacy of Moshe and his prophecy. The Gemara (Shabbos 88a) states that the Jewish People forfeited the crowns that they received when they accepted the Torah. The Zohar states that Moshe returns the crowns to the Jewish People on Shabbos. The shamir worm was used to hew the stone for the construction of the Bais HaMikdash, as the Torah forbids the use of sword or iron to be used

in the construction of the Bais HaMikdash. The reason for this prohibition (see Rashi Shemos 20:22) is because the Bais HaMikdash and the Mizbeiach are symbols of peace and it is improper to use weapons that symbolize war and strife. Similarly, Shabbos is referred to as shalom, peace. The script refers to the form of the Hebrew alphabet and the inscription and the Tablets refer to the inscription on the Luchos, the tablets which had the Ten Commandments inscribed upon them.

In the Shabbos Shacharis prayers we recite the words *yismach Moshe bematnas chelko ki eved neeman karasa lo kelil tiferes birosho nasata lo biamado lifanecho al har Sinai ushnei luchos avanim horid beyado vichasuv bahem shemiras Shabbos vichein kasuv bisorasecho*, Moshe rejoiced in the gift of his portion: that You called him a faithful servant. A crown of splendor You placed on his head when he stood before You on Mount Sinai. He brought down two stone tablets in his hand, on which is inscribed the observance of the Shabbos. So it is written in Your Torah... Destructive spirits alludes to the idea mentioned previously, that with the onset of Shabbos all harsh judgments depart from her. Moshe's grave alludes to the idea that Moshe passed away on Shabbos (see Tur Orach Chaim 292 and commentators ad loc). The ram of our forefather Avraham alludes to the devotion that Avraham displayed for HaShem, as he was ready to slaughter his only son for the sake of HaShem's will. This is akin to the statement of the Gemara (Yoma 28b) that Avraham fulfilled the entire Torah before it was given to the Jewish People at Sinai. Regarding tongs which are made with tongs, perhaps we can suggest that this alludes to the idea that everything in creation has a counterpart. The Medrash (Bereishis Rabbah 11:8) states that every day had a mate except for Shabbos and HaShem told Shabbos that the Jewish People will be its mate. Hashem should allow us to merit preparing for Shabbos properly and deriving benefit from all of the wonders that He created for us.

### **Shabbos in the Zemiros**

Askinu Seudasa - Composed by the Arizal, Rabbi Yitzchak Luria

*Askinu Seudasa dimalka da hi seudasa dachakal tapuchin kadishin*, prepare the feast of the King. This is the feast of the Field of Sacred Apples. What is the association between the feast of the King and the Field of Sacred Apples? *Chakal tapuchin* alludes to the Shechinah, the Divine Presence. The Shabbos feast is HaShem's feast, so to speak, and that feast is manifest through His Presence. What practical application does this have for us? Perhaps the idea is that the Gemara (Brachos 55a) states that one's table is akin to the Mizbeiach, the altar in the Bais HaMikdash. When we partake in the Shabbos meal, we are elevating the mundane to a high spiritual level. We are thus demonstrating that we are aware that HaShem's Presence is manifest in every aspect of our lives.

### **Shabbos in Tefillah**

*Yitzaram bidaas bivinah uvihaskail*, He has fashioned them with knowledge, with insight and discernment. It is ironic that idolaters of yore believed that the sun, the moon and the stars had independent powers, as this passage clearly attests to the fact that HaShem did not just create luminaries at random. Rather, HaShem fashioned them with knowledge, insight and discernment. It is

incumbent upon us to realize that everything that HaShem created has a purpose, and HaShem is constantly involved in the welfare of everything that exists in His world.

## **Shabbos Story**

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky writes: On one of the final days of the Six Day War the Israeli troops pierced through enemy fortifications and forged their way through the ancient passageways of Jerusalem. As if Divine gravitational force was pulling them, one group of soldiers dodged the Jordanian bullets and proceeded until there was no reason to continue. They had reached the Kotel HaMaravi, the Western Wall, the holiest place in Judaism, the site of both the First and Second Temples. The young men, some of whom had yeshiva education, others who came from traditional backgrounds, stood in awe and began to cry in unison. The Kotel had been liberated! One young soldier, who grew up on a totally secular kibbutz in the northern portion of the state gazed at the sight of his comrades crying like children as they stared up at the ancient stones. Suddenly, he too began to wail. One of the religious soldiers, who had engaged in countless debates with him, put his arm around him and asked, "I don't understand. To us the Kotel means so much. It is our link with the Temple and the holy service. This is the most moving experience of our lives. But why are you crying?" The young soldier looked at his friend, and amidst the tears simply stated, "I am crying because I am not crying."

Rabbi Kamenetzky writes further: A pious and very talented Jewish scholar was placed on trial in a small Polish town outside of Lvov. The charges, brought by a local miscreant, were based on some trumped-up complaint. The young scholar was beloved to his townsfolk as he served in the capacity of the town's shochet (ritual slaughterer), chazzan (cantor), and cheder rebbe. Thus, many people in town were worried as he appeared before a notoriously anti-Semitic judge. As he presented the charges, the judge mockingly referred to him as Mr. Butcher. In fact all through the preliminary portion of the kangaroo court, the judge kept referring to the beloved teacher and cantor as a butcher, meat vendor or slaughterer. Finally, the young scholar asked permission to speak. "Your honor," he began, "before I begin my defense, I'd like to clarify one point. I serve in many capacities in this shtetl. The people at the synagogue know me as the cantor. The children at the school and all of their parents know me as the teacher. It is only the animals that know me as the butcher!" [Reprinted with permission from Torah.org]

## **Shabbos in Navi**

Shoftim Chapter 20

In this chapter we learn of the terrible civil war that broke out between the Jewish People and the tribe of Binyomin, as a result of the tragedy where the lawless people of Givah violated a woman and she died from the abuse. One must wonder why it is necessary for this incident to be recorded in Scripture. The Navi elaborates on the battle and how the tribe of Binyomin was defeated. This episode is certainly not a badge of honor for the Jewish People. Yet, we learn from here a profound

lesson. We must be cognizant of the fact that internal strife is the catalyst for distancing ourselves from our relationship with HaShem. Throughout the week we are faced with trials and tribulations, both from within and from the outside world. On Shabbos all harsh judgments depart and we are closer to HaShem, and subsequently we are close with every Jew.

### **Shabbos in Agadah**

The Sfas Emes (Bo 5635) writes that during the week one has to arouse the concept of redemption through the mitzvos of the Torah in a physical manner, such as wearing Tefillin. On Shabbos there is also a manifestation of the redemption from Egypt. Nonetheless, there is a distinction between the redemption that is manifest on Shabbos and the redemption that is manifest during the weekday. The Gemara (Avodah Zara 3a) states that one who toils on Erev Shabbos will eat on Shabbos. Thus, during the week the redemption is manifest through toil, whereas on Shabbos the redemption is manifest through peace and serenity. One will merit rest on Shabbos commensurate with ones toil during the weekday.

### **Shabbos in Halacha**

It is proper that one always use a blech, and one should ensure that the liquids have been boiled and are still warm at the onset of Shabbos. It is imperative that one use a blech for a kettle that will be lifted from the flame and replaced. Additionally, as we will learn later, one should make sure that the water has boiled.

### **Shabbos in Numbers and Words**

It is said regarding the manna (Shemos 16:22) *vayehi bayom hashishi laktu lechem mishneh shinei haomer laechad vayavou kol nisiei haeidah vayagidu liMoshe*, it happened on the sixth day that they gathered a double portion of food, two omers for each; and all the princes of the assembly came and told Moshe. It is noteworthy that the words *vayehi bayom hashishi* (704) equal in gematria the word *baShabbos*, as the manna that the Jewish People gathered on Friday served as a portion for Friday and for Shabbos.

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