

# SHABBOS IN THE PARASHAH

*by Rabbi Binyomin Adler*

In this weeks parashah the Torah discusses the laws of appointing a king over the Jewish People. It is difficult for us to imagine in our times what it means to have a Jewish king, as the Jewish monarchy has been defunct for some two thousand years. Yet, in some sense we are required to fulfill this mitzvah of appointing a king, as every Jew must attempt to perform the mitzvos that are within his abilities. The Sefer HaChinuch (Mitzvah 497) raises an obvious question. We know that once Dovid HaMelech was anointed as king of the Jewish People, there was no longer a mitzvah to appoint a king. This being the case, how could there be a mitzvah for future generations to anoint a king? The Chinuch answers that the mitzvah is not limited to appointing a king. Rather, included in the mitzvah is to appoint a new king when necessary, to establish the kingship of an heir to the previous king, to fear the king and to conduct oneself with the king according to the Torah's instructions. These facets of the mitzvah are certainly prevalent forever. This idea described by the Chinuch also has its applications in our daily lives. In our current exile we are under the yoke of the local government, and the Gemara (Brachos 17a) states that it is our will to perform HaShem's will. However, we are held back because of the seor shebiisah, the yeast in the dough, i.e. the Evil Inclination, and the subjugation of the gentile kings. On Shabbos, however, we recite in Kegavna the words kad ayil Shabbsa ihi isyachadas viisparashas misitra achara vichol dinin misabrin minah, when the Shabbos arrives, she unified herself in Oneness and divests herself of the Other Side, [any trace of evil] all harsh judgments are removed from her. Thus, the Evil Inclination and the rule of the nations of the world cease to dominate us on the Holy Shabbos. Furthermore, the theme of Shabbos, which is reflected in the prayer of Kabbalas Shabbos which we recite at the onset of Shabbos, is the reign of HaShem, Who is the King of all kings. Thus, every week we are given the opportunity to, so to speak, appoint HaShem as our king, and no force in the world can prevent us from that wonderful opportunity. We are now in the month of Elul and we are preparing ourselves for the upcoming Days of Awe, when we will once again proclaim HaShem as our King and King of the whole world. It is worthwhile to reflect on the meaning of kingship and to realize that our true aspiration should be to have HaShem as our king, as we recite daily in Shemone Esrei hashivah shofteinu kivarishona viyoatzeinu kivatchila vihaseir mimenu yagon vaanacha umloch aleinu miheira atah HaShem livadcho bichesed uvirachamim, restore our judges as in earliest times and our counselors as at first; remove from us sorrow and groan; and speedily reign over us - You, HaShem, alone - with kindness and compassion.

Shabbos in the Zemiros Askinu Seudasa Composed by the Arizal, Rabbi Yitzchak Luria

Kirivu shushvinin avidu sikunin liapasha zinin vinunin im rachashin, draw near, beloved scholars, make preparations. To multiply delicacies, fish and fowl. Fish are deemed to be the prototype of species that multiply. The Medrash (Shochar Tov 92:1) states that on Shabbos everything is double. Thus, we are declaring that like the fish who multiply, so too on Shabbos all of our blessings are increased.

### Shabbos in Tefillah

Shevach nosnim lo kol tziva marom, all the host above bestows praise on Him. We have explained in the past that the word shevach, meaning praise, is similar to the word sheva, literally translated as seven, but which also is similar to the word shefa, meaning abundance (the letters ayin and ches are interchangeable). The word tziva, literally translated as host, can also mean the gathering of the multitudes (See Ramban Bamidbar 1:3). Thus, here we are declaring that on Shabbos, there is a unique requirement that everyone gather to praise HaShem, and these multitudes consist of all the heavenly hosts and the Jewish People on earth.

### Shabbos Story

Rabbi Mordechai Kamenetzky writes: Often the readers of Faxhomily and Drasha send in stories from anthologies or personal reminiscences that I might be able to use in future faxes. Here is one that I received not long ago, though, unfortunately, I do not have the name of the author. He related the following revealing story: I remember my wife's grandfather of blessed memory. He was a shochet (butcher), a Litvishe Yid (Lithuanian Jew). He was a very sincere and honest Jew. He lived in Kentucky, and later in life he moved to Cincinnati. In his old age he came to New York, and that is where he saw Chassidim for the first time. There were not too many Chasidim in Kentucky and Cincinnati. Once he went to a heart doctor in New York. While he was waiting, the door opened and a distinguished Chasidic Rebbe walked in accompanied by his gabbai (personal assistant). It seems that the Rebbe had a very urgent matter to discuss with the doctor, who probably told him to come straight into the office. The gabbai walked straight to the door and ushered the Rebbe in to see the doctor. Before going in, the Rebbe saw my grandfather waiting there. The Rebbe went over to my grandfather and said, "I want to ask you a favor. I am going to be with the doctor just one minute, if it's okay with you. If it's not okay with you, I won't go in. One minute is all I need." My wife's grandfather said okay, and the Rebbe went inside. He was in there for a minute or so, and then he came back out. The gabbai was ready to march straight out the door, but the Rebbe walked over to him again, and said, "Was it okay with you? I tried hard to make it short. I think it was just a minute or two that I was there. Thank you so much. I really appreciate it." Later my wife's grandfather said to me, "I don't know much about Chassidim and Rebbes, but there's one Rebbe that I could tell you is okay."

Rabbi Kamenetzky writes further: Rav Yosef Poesner, was the son-in-law of the Nodeh B'Yehuda, the esteemed Rav of Prague. He was a brilliant scholar and an amazingly righteous individual. During

his entire life, he seemed to be plagued by a nagging wife who would belittle him at every opportunity. After a brilliant lecture, she would come into the room, and belittle him. During meetings at which his opinion was prominently sought, she would serve the company food, but at the same time she made sure to deride him. During all these outbursts, he never said a word. He never defended himself. In fact, he hung his head low, as if to agree with her words of derision. Then, suddenly, he passed away. Hundreds came to the funeral. All of the gathered contrasted his greatness to the difficult life he had led, by being married to a shrew of a wife who was about to bury him. After the eulogies, his wife suddenly appeared before the coffin, crying uncontrollably. She begged his permission to speak and then burst into tears. "All these years," she cried, "I fulfilled the adage that a loyal wife fulfills the wishes of her husband. And due to my loyalty and respect to you and your greatness, I did whatever you had asked me to. But now that you are in the world of the truth, I can finally say the truth." She began to declare her respect for his greatness and humility, his piety and patience, his kindness and compassion. The people near the coffin were shocked to see this woman transformed into a loving, grieving widow. And then the true shock came. She continued her soliloquy. "Despite how difficult it was for me, I kept the promise and commitment you had asked me to make. Any time you were treated honorably, or were asked to fulfill a prestigious role, you told me to come in and belittle you as strongly as possible. You were afraid that the honor they afforded you would make you haughty. I only complied because that was your will!" "But now I can finally say the truth!" But that was only in front of people! "You know how much I appreciated and cherished you!" She continued to cry over the great tzaddik and lifelong companion she lost. The stunned grieverers were shocked at the tremendous devotion of the Rebbetzin, who deemed herself a harrying nag all for the sake of her husband's wishes. [Reprinted with permission from Torah.org]

### Shabbos in Navi Shmuel I Chapter 7

In this chapter we learn that following the return of the Aron, the Holy Ark, to Kiryas Yearim, the Jewish People were drawn after HaShem for twenty years. Shmuel then exhorted the people to forsake the idols that they had worshipped and to direct their hearts to HaShem alone. In this way they would be saved from the hands of the Plishtim. Shmuel then gathered the people together at Mitzpah and he prayed for them there, and the Jewish People drew water there and poured it out before HaShem, symbolic of their pouring out their hearts to HaShem. They fasted and confessed their sins to HaShem. The Plishtim heard that the Jewish People had gathered at Mitzpah and the Plishtim came to fight with the Jewish People. The Jewish People were afraid and requested that Shmuel pray to HaShem on their behalf. Shmuel offered a sacrifice and cried out to HaShem and HaShem answered him. Hashem thundered with a great noise and this confounded the Plishtim, and the Jewish People chased the Plishtim and struck them down. The Plishtim were defeated and all the days of Shmuel they no longer entered the borders of Israel. We see from this chapter how important it is to rely on HaShem to save us from our enemies. The Jewish People in the times of Shmuel had an army, but they were still afraid of the Plishtim. We must employ the special tool of

prayer that is unique to the Jewish People to win over our enemies. Shabbos is a time when our enemies cannot penetrate our aura of holiness. The Zohar states that a Torah scholar is in the category of Shabbos. Shabbos and our Torah leaders serve as our protection from all evil.

### Shabbos in Agadah

The Bais Yisroel, the Gerrer Rebbe, writes (Shoftim 5719) that the Chiddushei HaRim said that it is said (Shir HaShirim 6:3) ani lidodi vidodi li, I am to my Beloved and My Beloved is to me. The first letters of these four words spell the word Elul. The last letters are all the letter yud, which equal in gematria 40, and this alludes to the forty days from the beginning of Elul through Yom Kippur. Shabbos has a special power to bring one closer to HaShem, and Shabbos is the Name of HaShem. This idea is alluded to in the verse that states (Devarim 18:7) visheires bisheim HaShem Elokav, then he shall minister in the Name of HaShem. This can be interpreted to mean that he will reach a high level of spirituality. It is said ani lidodi, and perhaps the arousal from below is the catalyst for the arousal from Above and this is the meaning of ani lidodi vidodi li. It is also said (Shir HaShirim 2:16) dodi li vaani lo, my Beloved is to me and I am to my Beloved. Perhaps this alludes to Shabbos as on Shabbos the arousal from Above precedes the arousal from below. Through dodi li vaani lo comes the arousal from below, and this alludes to the first Shabbos in the month of Elul.

### Shabbos in Halacha

One can only return a pot to the blech if the food has been completely cooked. 'Completely cooked' means that the food has been cooked to the degree that most people would eat it without requiring further cooking. One cannot return partially cooked food to a blech once it has been removed. This includes even food that has reached an edible state, known as the food of Ben Drusoai. One who returns such food to a blech violates the Biblical prohibition of cooking.

### Shabbos in Numbers and Words

From the beginning of the month of Elul and continuing on through Sukkos we recite the chapter of Tehillim that begins with the words LeDovid HaShem ori, by Dovid, HaShem is my light. It is said (Tehillim 27:8) lecho amar libi bakishu fanai es panecho HaShem avakeish, in Your behalf, my heart has said, "Seek My Presence." Your Presence, HaShem, do I seek. It is noteworthy that the words fanai es panecho equal in gematria the word Shabbos. This alludes to the idea that on Shabbos we are, so to speak, face to face with HaShem.

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