

Kindert Torah

בס"ד

Parashas Beshalach

In loving memory of Devora Bas Aharon o"ח ❖ Mrs. Doris Weiner ❖ A Woman of Valor

The Day of Emunah

Safeguard the Shabbos to sanctify it, as Hashem, your G-d has commanded you" (Devarim 5: 12). This verse is from the passage that reviews the Aseres HaDibros, in parashas Voeschanan. Why does it add the words, "as Hashem, your G-d has commanded you?" Rashi answers that the Bnei Yisrael were commanded to observe the Shabbos at Mara, before Matan Torah. The Bnei Yisrael came to Mara three days after Kriyas Yam Suf. It was their first stop after witnessing the awesome miracles at the sea. The Auruch HaShulchan (Orach Chaim 242:1) relates that this was the perfect time to receive the mitzvah of Shabbos. Why?

Hashem Himself sanctified the seventh day from the very beginning of creation. "Hashem blessed the seventh day and sanctified it" (Bereshis 2:3). Its holiness and blessing is greater than any other day. It is also a remembrance of the act of creation. Klal Yisrael, His Holy Nation, are the ones entrusted with keeping the Shabbos. Every Shabbos, we refrain from *melacha*, and by doing so we demonstrate that Hashem created the universe.

The miracles of Yetzias Mitzraim, which culminated in Kriyas Yam Suf, proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that Hashem is running the world. He is The Mashgiach of everything. This was the pinnacle of *emunah*. Therefore, three days later was the perfect time to lay down another cornerstone in the foundation of *emunah*. The knowledge that The Almighty created the world in six days, and rested on the seventh is equal in weight to the whole Torah. One who violates the Shabbos is compared to an idol worshipper. Therefore, the observance of Shabbos is both a testimony, and a method to strengthen our *emunah* in Hashem's creation of the world.

Kinderlach . . .

We have a very important job. To testify that Hashem created the world. How do we do this? By guarding the holiness of Shabbos. Learn the halachos well and review them. It is a lifetime study. Your emunah will grow along with your knowledge. You will find your observance of Shabbos improving. You will also notice an increase in your appreciation of the kedusha of Shabbos. And you may also notice an increase in the blessing from the Shabbos. What a wonderful gift Hashem has given us!

Ki Eshmera Shabbos

A bba, which *zemer* are we going to learn this week?"
"We are up to 'Ki Eshmera Shabbos', kinderlach. This beautiful *zemer*, written by

Avraham ibn Ezra, teaches us many halachos of Shabbos."

"That is wonderful, Abba. We get to learn halachos, sing a lovely *zemer*, and connect *shomayim vi'aretz* (heaven and earth) all at once!"

"Correct, kinderlach. Let us begin. 'When I guard the Shabbos, Hashem will guard me.' This first line is an awesome statement, kinderlach. Klal Yisrael has been in many dangerous situations throughout our 3400-year history. We are one people (who is compared to a sheep) alone among seventy nations (who are compared to wolves.) We need constant Divine protection to even exist. We see throughout our history that we have flourished in the most difficult circumstances. How did we merit such *Siyata Di'Shmaya* (Heavenly Assistance)? One reason is our guarding of the Shabbos. Today is no different. The world is full of many dangers for the Jewish people. We need heavenly protection! We need to guard the Shabbos!"

"We're ready, Abba!"



"Okay, kinderlach, let's continue. 'It is a sign forever between Him and me.' This is based on a verse in the Torah, 'You shall nevertheless keep My Shabbos, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations' (Shemos 31:13). We, the Jewish people, and Hashem, the Creator of the Universe, have a special sign between us. Just as He 'rested' (so to speak) on the seventh day (from creating the world), so too we rest from all creative activity on the seventh day. This special private sign that He gave only to us, demonstrates our closeness."

"Therefore, Abba, Shabbos both protects us and shows how special we are to Hashem!"

Correct, kinderlach. Now, the *zemer* teaches us halachos of guarding the Shabbos. The first stanza deals with our speech on Shabbos. The day's conversation must reflect its loftiness. 'It is forbidden to pursue mundane desires, or to engage in doing them. Even to converse about ones needs, business, or political talk (is also not permitted). I will contemplate Hashem's Torah and it will make me wise.' The Gemora (Yerushalmi Shabbos 15:3) states

that Shabbos and Yomim Tovim were given to Klal Yisrael to toil in Torah.

The next stanza speaks about the serenity of Shabbos, kinderlach. 'I find in Shabbos refreshment for my soul. My Holy One performed a miracle for the first generation (who left Mitzrayim) by giving them a double portion of bread on the sixth day. So too, may He double my food every sixth day (Erev Shabbos).'

"Hashem decreed that on Shabbos the Kohanim should arrange the Lechem Hapanim on the Shulchan in the Beis HaMikdash. (It was left there for a week and eaten the next Shabbos. Miraculously, it never became stale or spoiled.) Therefore, we are prohibited from fasting on Shabbos, with the exception of Yom Kippur. The next stanza also describes how we honor the Shabbos by partaking of its pleasures – bread, good wine, meat, and fish. Our sages and teachers went to great lengths in detailing the mitzvah of *oneg* (delighting in) Shabbos. Even a mourner must withdraw from his *minhagim* of mourning on this day. 'For it is a day of joy, and it will gladden me.'"

"We are so happy, Abba! Does the *zemer* mention anything about those who do not guard the Shabbos?"

"Yes, kinderlach. They will suffer the punishment of *kores* (spiritual detachment). 'Therefore I will cleanse my heart, as if with soap, (on this holy day,) pray to Hashem Maariv, Shacharis, Mussaf, and Mincha and He will answer me.'"

"Amen, Abba! May all of our tefillos be answered!"

"And may we all guard the Shabbos and enjoy all of its blessings."

Kinderlach . . .

We have a wonderful relationship with Shabbos – we guard it, and it guards us. It is the special sign that Hashem gave only to the Jewish people. Our speech is exalted on Shabbos, befitting the holiness of the day. My soul finds rest on the day that Hashem rested. I receive double the food on Erev Shabbos, just as my ancestors received in the desert. We allow no sadness on this day, just physical and spiritual pleasures. We turn our attention to Hashem, pray to Him, knowing that He will answer us. That is the Shabbos – a day of holiness – a day of delight. A precious jewel for us to guard with all our might.

Parasha Questions:

- How does Hashem fight wars? (Rashi 15:3)
- How did Hashem toss the Mitzrim around in the sea? (Rashi 15:8 at the end)
- Were the bodies of the Mitzrim buried? Why? (Rashi 15:12)

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