

RABBI GOLDBERG'S *Parsha Perspectives* FOR TODAY

Short Divrei Torah on Parshas Vayakhel-Pekudei for your Shabbos Table

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Sponsored by Eli & Sara Malka Neger lilui nishmos Esther Tehila bas R' Gavriel Pinchas & Yitzchok Moshe ben Aaron Yaakov Yehoshua.

DVAR TORAH FOR THE FRIDAY NIGHT MEAL

The Work of Shabbos

ששת ימים תעשה מלאכה וביום השביעי יהיה לכם קודש – “For six days, work shall be done, and the seventh day shall be sacred for you” (35:2).

The Talmud Yerushalmi (35:2) notes that the letter ו at the beginning of the phrase וביום השביעי indicates that this *pasuk* could be read, ששת ימים תעשה מלאכה וביום השביעי – work should be done for six days, **and also** on the seventh. Of course, *melacha* is forbidden on Shabbos. But this reading of the *pasuk* serves as the source for *Beis Hillel's* ruling that one's utensils may continue working on Shabbos. Thus, for example, we can have an urn keeping our water hot, and an air conditioner cooling the home, throughout Shabbos. Although we are forbidden from working, our utensils may continue working. (*Beis Shammai* disagrees, and requires שביתת כלים – that one's utensils rest on Shabbos.) This is the allusion of ששת ימים תעשה מלאכה וביום השביעי – that work may be done on Shabbos by one's possessions.

Rav Yosef Sorotzkin, in *Meged Yosef*, adds further insight into the implication of the letter ו in this *pasuk*, and the notion that work is to be done even on Shabbos. He explains that Shabbos, like the weekdays, is a time for work – but a different kind of work. The “rest” of Shabbos is not defined by the absence of activity; it is not about lying in bed the entire day. The “rest” that we are to experience on Shabbos is actually work – the work of *ruchniyus*, involving ourselves in spiritual pursuits.

Rav Sorotzkin draws two proofs to this perspective. First, he points to the fact that Adam Ha'rishon experienced his first Shabbos shortly after he was created. He came into existence on Friday, and right away, he was given Shabbos. He did not work for six

days to deserve a day of rest; his day of rest came right after he was created. This proves that Shabbos is also a day of work, and not a day of cessation from work.

Secondly, Rashi, commenting on the *pasuk* וכל אלוקים יוכל ביום השביעי מלאכתו מה היה העולם חסר? – “God completed His work on the seventh day” (Bereishis 2:2) – writes, מנוחה. באת שבת, באת מנוחה – “What was the world missing? Rest. When Shabbos came, rest came.” Rashi writes clearly that the rest of Shabbos is a new creation. It is not simply the absence of activity; it is a kind of work.

Properly observing Shabbos takes work. It means running a Shabbos table, with meaningful conversations, *zemiros*, and *divrei Torah*. It means making time for learning. It means investing effort in our relationships. We should not be approaching Shabbos as a day off, as a time to sleep. Shabbos is a day when we are to do the kind of work which we do not always have the opportunity to do amid the pressures of the weekdays.

DVAR TORAH FOR THE SHABBOS DAY MEAL

Maintaining Hope, Faith and Optimism

Parshas Vayakhel tells of the skilled artisans – both men and women – who constructed the *Mishkan* and its various furnishings. The obvious question arises as to how these craftsmen developed such skills. When did they learn and train to be professional builders and artisans?

The *Meshivas Nefesh* (cited in *Otzar Pela'os Ha'Torah*) offers a remarkable explanation – stating that during the years of slavery in Egypt, there were those who anticipated the nation's redemption, and began preparing for the construction of the *Mishkan* already then. Even in the dark period of bondage, these individuals did not lose hope. They maintained their

faith and optimism, and trusted that the redemption would arrive. So much so, that they actually began preparing to build the *Mishkan* by learning the skills needed for this project.

The *Tur* (O.C. 417) records the custom that women refrain from work each month on Rosh Chodesh. This quasi holiday, as *Pirkei De'Rabbi Eliezer* (45) teaches, was given to the women in reward for their refusal to participate in the sin of the golden calf. In contrast to their enthusiastic donation of jewelry for the construction of the *Mishkan*, they refused to give their jewelry for the golden calf. They were rewarded with a special holiday each month, on Rosh Chodesh. Rosh Chodesh is the time when the moon is barely visible. But even then, when the moon can hardly be seen, we know with certainty that it will “recover” and grow large and shine brightly once again. *Am Yisrael*, like the moon, endures periods of darkness, when our “light” barely shines, but we maintain our hope that brighter days lay ahead. When Moshe Rabbeinu did not return from the mountaintop when the people expected, the men despaired, and resorted to the worship of a golden calf. The women, however, maintained their faith. They did not panic; they felt hopeful and optimistic that Moshe would yet return. This is why their reward was the holiday of Rosh Chodesh, the day which signifies our nation’s hope and optimism in the face of adversity, the confidence we have even in times of hardship that the light will soon shine brightly, and our redemption will unfold.

DVAR TORAH FOR SHALOSH SEUDOS

The Foundation of Torah Life

In Parshas Pekudei, we read that the *machatzis ha’shekel* – the half-shekel silver coins which *Benei Yisrael* donated – amounted to just over 100 *kikar* of silver. The 100 *kikar* of silver were used to make the 100 אדנים, the sockets that formed the base of the *Mishkan*, in which the wooden planks were inserted and held in place – 38:27) ככר לאדן (מאת אדנים למאת הככר, ככר לאדן).

The *Ba’al Ha’turim* comments that these 100 אדנים correspond to the 100 *berachos* that we are required to recite each day. As the *Shulchan Aruch* rules (O.C. 46), *Chazal* instituted that we should recite at least 100 *berachos* every day¹, and the *Ba’al Ha’turim* writes that this requirement is alluded to by the 100 sockets that formed the foundation of the *Mishkan*.

What is the connection between the אדנים underneath

the *Mishkan* and the requirement to recite 100 *berachos*?

Rav Asher Weiss *shelit”a* explained that just as the removal of a socket would cause the entire structure of the *Mishkan* to collapse, similarly, failing to recite *berachos* causes the “collapse” of religious life. The *Chazon Ish* wrote that reciting *berachos* with concentration is ‘יסוד ועיקר עבודת ה’ – “the foundation and primary component of serving God.” Just as the sockets formed the foundation of the *Mishkan*, the foundation of our religious lives is recognizing how fortunate we are, appreciating all that Hashem has given us, that He cares for us and provides us with our needs. The requirement of 100 *berachos* forces us to stop multiple times throughout each day to appreciate everything we have been blessed with, and this is the foundation of Torah life. Each time we make a *beracha*, we ought to think about what we’re saying, and feel grateful to Hashem for all He has given us.

I believe that this is one of the important lessons to be learned from the recent Covid-19 pandemic, a lesson which, I’m afraid, we have not learned well enough – not to take anything for granted, to feel appreciative for everything we have. Never before in my lifetime has there been a period when we walk into stores and products aren’t on the shelves. Sure, there have always been people without enough money to buy everything they need, but until recently, there has never been a shortage of goods. The supply-chain issues we have experienced should open our eyes to the blessings of the modern world. Every time we drink a cup of coffee, and recite שהכל, we should think about how blessed we are to have access to products like coffee. Every time we sit down to eat a meal, and we recite *berachos*, we should feel grateful that we are able to obtain nourishing food so easily.

The *Chiddushei Ha’Rim* comments that the word אדנים is associated with the word אדון – “master.” The 100 *berachos* we recite each day, which are alluded to by the 100 אדנים, remind us of our Master who provides us with everything we need and who takes care of us at all times. This recognition forms the foundation of Torah life, the basic consciousness that we are to live with as observant Jews and devoted servants of Hashem.

¹ Generally, we easily fulfill this requirement through the recitation of the 19 *berachos* of *Shemona Esrei* (for a total of 57 *berachos*), plus the additional *berachos* in our *davening*, *berachos* over food, *bentching*, אשר יצר, and so on.