



דרכים בפרשה

כי תשא



ושמרו בני ישראל את השבת לעשות את השבת לדרתם ברית עולם

The Bnai Yisroel shall keep the Shabbos, observing the Shabbos throughout the ages as a covenant for all time (31:16)

Looking at the choice of words that the Torah uses, we find לעשות את השבת – (lit.) *to make the Shabbos*. The *hayliger* Ohr HaChaim wonders if we are truly the ones that “make” the Shabbos. Hasn’t Shabbos already been established, therefore not depending at all on our own input?

The Ohr HaChaim gives us an answer that is relevant to everyone each and every Shabbos. Assume that the time that Shabbos begins is at 6:00pm and ends at 7:00pm the next night. When we begin Shabbos 30 minutes early, those additional minutes now become a part of Shabbos with the exact same sanctity. The same would apply for one that concludes Shabbos later. The extra time added is also now considered a part of Shabbos. These extra minutes are known as *tosefos Shabbos*, through the principle of *mosifin m’chol al hakodesh* (adding from the mundane to the holiness). When we make this addition, HaShem “accepts” our addition. In this manner, we have “made” the Shabbos.

The Chofetz Chaim used to say, “How foolish are those that are lacking in *emunah*, in that they work on Friday until the very last second, rushing into Shabbos, and are the first to end Shabbos to get back into the daily grind.” It makes no sense! The weekday work that one does is a result of the original *klala* (curse) of בזיעת אפך תאכל לחם (by the sweat of your brow shall you eat your bread). On Shabbos, we are filled with a special

bracha and promise from HaShem. Logic would dictate that we should endeavour to step into the time of blessing and remain there for as long as we could, not even wanting to exit that time (i.e. picture Shabbos as if we are stepping into a time warp). Yet, people seem to do the opposite, trying to run away from it.

It is worth noting that *tosefos Shabbos* is not merely a *minhag* but actually a *halacha min haTorah* (*Shulchan aruch, OC 261*). Adding an extra few minutes of Shabbos, presents us with the opportunity, after the completion of physical preparation, to prepare *ourselves* spiritually, and to don the proper state of mind for Shabbos *kodesh*.

I would like to offer another answer to the Ohr Hachaim’s question, based on comments that I merited to hear from the Vizhnitzer Rebbe, the Yeshuas Moshe zt”l.

The Rebbe asked the following question: Assume you go for a job interview. Of course there is the whole discussion regarding what the job entails, but there really is only one question that is on your mind: how much does it pay? If upon asking the boss, he responds, “Oh don’t worry, the job pays well”, how would you reply? You would most likely say, “Thank you very much, but I need to quantify what exactly “pays well” really means. After all, “pays well” may not actually pay all the bills. No one would

accept the job unless they know its payment. Coming to his point, the Rebbe quoted the beloved words of our *Leil Shabbos zemiros*, כל מקדש שביעי כראוי לו - *whoever sanctifies the Shabbos in the way that is befitting*; כל שומר - *whoever safeguards the Shabbos according to its halachos, refraining from transgressing....* Now the Rebbe looked at us and said, “So nu, how much does Shabbos pay?” He continued, שכרו הרבה מאד - *its reward is ... a lot*. The proverbial, “the job pays well!” But how much is a lot? If it was a job, would you sign up for it? The Rebbe then continued with the next words, and here is the key, על פי פעלו - *according to your work*.

The Rebbe explained that Shabbos is unique in that its reward is dependent on what we put into it. Shabbos is what we make of it. For some people, Shabbos may be a time when they feel locked up, bound down by so many rules and prohibitions that don't allow true living. But for those that have been privileged to truly experience Shabbos; they realize that not only is Shabbos a day of freedom, but it is actually LIFE. It is the one day a week that we can say goodbye to the constant rat race of the week. It is the one day that we can give our physical and spiritual bodies a rest and be one with our Maker.

Accordingly, the possuk is telling us, “don't just be a shomer Shabbos by not doing this that and the other.” That is not enough. The Torah wants us to actually “make” Shabbos, because after all, Shabbos *is* what we make of it!

The possuk states, אך את שבתתי תשמרו - *Nevertheless, you must keep my Shabbos*. The HaKsav Vehakaballah points out that the

word שבתתי is plural referring to two concepts of Shabbos in the commandment. Firstly: ענין הבטול וההפסק ממלאכה - refraining from doing anything deemed work (39 *melachos*). Secondly: ענין ישוב הדעת לענינים -אלקיים the actual tranquility and peace of mind to focus on what Shabbos truly represents, and that is to be involved with Hashem in a deep intimate bond. The purpose of refraining from the physical aspect of *shmiras Shabbos* is to bring one to the mental/spiritual side of it.

In this manner, he explains the well-known words of Chazal (Shabbos 118b) that “if Klal Yisroel would observe Shabbos twice, they would be immediately redeemed” as follows: this is not necessarily referring to every Jew observing Shabbos two weeks in a row (think Shabbos project across the globe for two consecutive weeks), but rather keeping one Shabbos in all of its facets, physically and spiritually, fully connecting to Hashem.

Accordingly, we can now explain our possuk as follows: -ושמרו בני ישראל את השבת - The Bnai Yisroel shall keep the Shabbos, i.e. safeguard all of the 39 forbidden labours, לעשות את השבת - observing the Shabbos, i.e. utilizing the time in a manner that truly brings us closer to Hashem.

מרדכי אפפעל, Good Shabbos,



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