

Tablin I' Shabbos

**The open eyes of fish symbolize "כתר"
where the open eyes of Hashem always watch over us**

This week we will work to understand the very deep teaching of the Chozeh of Lublin, in Divrai Emes (parshas Matos), where he provides another reason to eat fish on Shabbos. It is that we want to awaken Hashem's awesomely watching over us with "עינא פקיחא" literally His "open eyes" in the very high world of "כתר". From this place Hashem is always watching over us, even when it appears that he is completely hidden. Dovid hamelech hints at this in Tehilim (121:4): "הנה לא ינום ולא ישן שומר ישראל" - "Behold, He neither slumbers nor sleeps, the Guardian of Israel".

In the Chozeh's words,

"ולכך בשבת יש מצוה לאכול דגים... וגם דג מרמז לעולם היותר גבוה, דהוא העינא פקיחא רצון הקדום שורש השרשים, עינא דלא ניים ונעיר תדירא, כמו דכתיב הנה לא ינום ולא ישן שומר ישראל, כי משם בא שמירה על ישראל".

The words of the Chozeh are deep and perhaps beyond our comprehension, but in honor of Shabbos let's do our best to understand them.

The Zohar in Idra Rabbah (Nuso 129:) discusses the first of the Sefiros, "Kesser" called "רישא חוורא", the "white head". In this heaven there is no din, only Mercy in its purest form, the 13 Midas Harachamim that protect the children of Israel even when they are not worthy, like the Gemoro in Brachos (7A) explains: "וחנתי את אשר" "אחון אף על פי שאינו הגון" - I shall show favor and mercy whom I choose to, even when they are not worthy.

The Zohar teaches us, that the eyes in the world of "כתר" are different than all other eyes, since they have no covering, as it says in the possuk in Thilim: "הנה לא ינום ולא" "וישן שומר ישראל". Whatever comes with Rachamim does not have covered eyes, certainly in "כתר" which is perfect. Rabbi Shimon said to Rabbi Abba: "What is this similar to? And he answered, to fish, which have no coverings on their eyes and never sleep and do not need any protection for their eyes"

The Zohar continues that these perpetually Open Eyes in "כתר" provide protection for all creatures and especially Bnai Yisroel for whom the world was created. If those eyes would close for even a moment, the world could not exist:

"עינא פקיחא, עינא עלאה, עינא קדישא, עינא דאשגחותא, עינא דלא אדמיך ולא נאים, עינא דהוא נטורא דכלא, עינא דהוא קיומא דכלא, ועל האי כתיב (משלי כב ט) טוב עין הוא יבורך, אל תקרי יבורך אלא יבורך, דהאי אתקרי טוב עין, ומניה מברך לכלא".

Open Eyes, Heavenly Eyes, Holy Eyes, Watchful Eyes, Eyes that never sleep, that watch over everything and provide existence to everything. As it says (Mishlai 22:9), A person with a good eye will be blessed, this should be read will bless, because one who is called "good eye" is the source of blessing.

י' ג' מ'כילין ד'רחמי דיג"ם is the abbreviation of

We can now understand the Chozeh's idea, that we eat fish on Shabbos because a fish's eyes are always open reminding us of the Heavenly practice, revealed to us through "Kesser" the source of Mercy, of always having open eyes to shower us with Mercy. We can also see that this workd is revealed to us on Shabbos, by the fact that we say "כתר" in Mussaf on Shabbos.

We can find a source for this idea of the Chozeh in the RMA Mipano, where he praises this who eat fish on Shabbos, in particular at the Third Meal, because it hints at the Open Eyes that watches over and provides so many benefits to the whole world.

This will make us understand better what the son of the Bnai Yisoschor, Rabbi Elazar of Lanzhut, explains in his sefer, "Yodai Bina", that fish were saved from the mabul, with mercy of the 13 Midos shel Rachamim, that we find in the word דיג"ם which is the abbreviation י' ג' מ'כילין ד'רחמי. We can add an explanation, what is the connection between fish and the 13 attributes of Mercy, with the Zohar mentioned above, that the open eyes of the fish symbolize the world of "כתר", which contain the "Open Eyes" that protect the world, with the the 13 attributes of Mercy.

Eating the eyes of the fish as "Open Eyes"

Last week, we learned that the Holy Rishiner Rebbe and other Tzadikim ate the eyes of the fish because fish were not destroyed in the Mabul and they did not defile their eyes. But now we understand that the true source for this holy custom, is to help us awaken the power of the "Open Eyes", therefore Tzadikim ate fish eyes which are always open. The Rishiner, as was his custom also provided a more "revealed" reason, namely that the fish had not sinned at the time of the mabul.

We can add a nice thought that combines the 2 reasons. We eat fish eyes which are always open as a hint to "Kesser" which contains the "Open Eyes", and the merits of the 13 Attributes of Mercy which originate there because the fish's eyes were not defiled at the time of the mabul.

It is amazing to look at the Magen Avrohom who quotes the Mateh Moshe (OC 583:5) that on Rosh Hashono we say Tashlich at a river with live fish. The Shlah explains that this is to waken the "Open Eyes"

The Ktzai Hamateh on the Mateh Ephraim (598:8) writes, that he heard from great Tzadikim that we say Tashlich at a river that has fish because we say "מי אל כמוך נושא עון ועובר על פשע" which focuses on the 13 Attributes of Mercy, so we go to a

river with live fish as reminder of the "Open Eyes" , the source of the 13 Attributes of Mercy.

Let us end by answering the question of why were the fish, of all the creatures in the world, worthy to the open eyes, the reminder to the "Open Eyes" which protects us? We can answer, based on what we learned last week, that fish can only live in water, as a reminder to us who are compared to fish, that we can only live with Torah.

As the holy Mezritsher Magid taught us, the 13 ways in which Torah is interpreted correspond to the 13 Attributes of Mercy and someone who learns Torah awakens the 13 Attributes of Mercy. So Hashem chose fish that only live in water as the reminder of the "Open Eyes" that protect us with Mercy to teach us that if we follow in the ways of fish and remember that we can only survive with Torah which is interpreted in 13 ways, we will awaken the 13 Attribute of Mercy. So we eat fish on Shabbos, the day of the week specifically designated for us to learn Torah.

As we approach Shabbos and have more time to learn Torah, when we eat the fish let's remember the tremendous rachamim that Hashem shows us a reward for being immersed in Torah.