

# Tablin I'Shabbos

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## The connection between fish and Shabbos Shirah

### Fish testify that Hashem will keep his promise: My children borrow for Shabbos and I will repay you!

This Shabbos, Shabbos Shira, we will read the song that Moshe and the Jews said at Krias Yam Suf. This is therefore an appropriate time to reveal another reason to eat fish on Shabbos. The fish played a large role in strengthening the Jew's emunah at the time of Krias Yam Suf. As it says (שמות יד ל):

**“וירא ישראל את מצרים מת על שפת הים, וירא ישראל את היר הגדולה אשר עשה ה' במצרים, וייראו העם את ה' ויאמינו בה' ובמשה עבדו.”**

The Gemara (Psachim 118B) reveals a most interesting story about the role of fish in Krias Yam Suf. Rabbi Noson explains that the Possuk in Thilim (117:2): **“ואמת ה' לעולם”** – “the truth of Hashem is eternal”, the fish said, quoting Rav Huna who said, that the Jews did not have a much emunah, as it says in Thilim (106:7) **“וימרו על ים בים סוף”**, they rebelled at the Sea of reeds, saying: “Just as we are coming up on this side, perhaps the Egyptians are coming up on the other side.” Hashem told the Minister of the Sea, to spit the Egyptians out onto the land, so that the Jews would see that they died. The Minister asked, is it right for a master to take back a gift that he gave to his servant? You had given those bodies to the fish to eat. Hashem answered that I will repay them 150%.

The Minister of the Sea asked; can a Minister demand payment from his master? Hashem said that Nachal Kishon will be the guarantor. The sea spit out the Egyptians and the Jews saw them and believed Moshe and Hashem as it says: ... **“וירא ישראל את מצרים מת על שפת הים”** – **“ויאמינו בה' ובמשה עבדו”** – “Israel saw the great hand that Hashem inflicted upon Egypt... and they had faith in Hashem and in Moses his servant.

The Gemara continues to explain how Hashem repaid the fish 150%. By Paroh it says: “he took 600 chosen chariots” and by Sisrah it says: “he gathered 900 iron chariots”. 900 is one and a half times 600. When Sisrah came with his army, he came upon the Jews with iron spears, Hashem took the stars from their orbit and they fought Sisera. When the stars came down, the spears became hot and Sisera's army went to Nachal Kishon to wash and cool off.

Hashem said to Nachal Kishon “fulfill your pledge”, Nachal Kishon swept them away and threw them into the sea, **“נחל קישון גרפם נחל קדומים”** “Ancient brook”, meaning the brook that was a guarantor in previous times. At that point the fish said: **“ואמת ה' לעולם”** - the truth of

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Hashem is eternal. Hashem has kept his end of the deal and repaid them for the 600 of Paroh's soldiers that they spit out with 900 of Sisera's soldiers, 150% as He promised.

So we see that the fish had a big role in strengthening the Emunah of the Jews, being willing to give up their food so the Jews would see that the Egyptians had really died.

**Hashem promises us:**

**"Borrow for me and I will repay"**

The gemoro in Shabbos (118) teaches us: "כל המענג את השבת נותנין לו נחלה בלי מצרים" and: "כל המענג את השבת נותנין לו משאלות לבו".

The Tur (OC 242) says that a person should scrimp all week for Shabbos and not worry how he will make it up, because Hashem will supplement his earnings. As it says, in Mesechte Bayza (16A) that a person's earnings are determined for the year at Rosh Hashono, except for what he spends on Shabbos and Yom Tov and to teach his children Torah. Because for those things the more you spent, the more Hashem will give. In fact Hashem promises: "לוו עלי ואני פורע" - "borrow for me and I will repay". Don't worry Hashem is trustworthy to fulfill His obligations.

The Chida points out an interesting remez on the posuk (Iyov 34:11): "כי פועל אדם ישלם לו" – ל"ו ע"ל ו"אני פ"ורע ל" is the reverse abbreviation of: ל"ו ע"ל ו"אני פ"ורע ל".

### **We eat fish eyes because they say Hashem keep his promise**

I believe that this is the reason why we eat fish at the beginning of each Shabbos Seudah. As we have learned there is a special mitzvah to enjoy Shabbos, up to the point to borrow money so we can prepare for Shabbos properly. So as a reminder that if we borrow Hashem will repay us we eat fish who provide testimony that Hashem will fulfill His promise. They strengthened our Emunah at Krias Yam Suf by spitting out the Egyptians and were repaid. They in effect, lent the Egyptian bodies back to Hashem and were repaid 1 ½ times. So we eat fish as a reminder that Hashem will repay us for what we spend on Shabbos.

We've previously discussed reasons that Rebbes ate fish eyes on Shabbos, [we mentioned that fish eyes were not defiled, during the mabul, and that fish eyes are always open as a reminder of the "open Eyes" of Hashem]. Now we can add that fish eyes saw Hashem keep his promise to repay a loan, which strengthens our Emunah.

As we prepare for Shabbos, especially this Shabbos, Shabbos Shira, let's remember that our expenditures for Shabbos are on Hashem's account. Furthermore, when we sit at the Shabbos table keeping the custom of eating fish, let us remember the beautiful Zemiroh of the fish while feasting on the army of Sisrah: "ואמת ה' לעולם", to strengthen our Emunah that Hashem always keeps his promise. A lot of years have passed from when the fish gave up on their delicious meal of the drowning Egyptians until they were repaid as promised 150% of Sisrah's army.