

Shvilei Pinches

Parshas Yisroh

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Parshas Yisroh 5771

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The Phenomenal Revelation of the Ramak, Z"l

HKB"Y Created the Shabbos from the Four-hour Donations of Each of the Weekdays

In the Ten Commandments which we read this week, in parshas Yisro, it states (Shemos 20,8):

“זכור את יום השבת לקדשו, ששת ימים תעבוד ועשית כל מלאכתך ויום השביעי שבת לה' אלקיך, לא תעשה כל מלאכה אתה ובנך ובתך עבדך ואמתך ובהמתך וגרך אשר בשעריך, כי ששת ימים עשה ה' את השמים ואת הארץ את הים ואת כל אשר במ וינח ביום השביעי, על כן ברך ה' את יום השבת ויקדשהו.”

Remember the Shabbos day to sanctify it. Six days shall you work and accomplish all your work; but the seventh day is Shabbos to Hashem, your G-d; you shall not do any work—you, your son, your daughter, your slave, your maidservant, your animal, and your convert within your gates—for in six days Hashem made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day. Therefore, Hashem blessed the Shabbos day and sanctified it.

Rashi explains this positive commandment, based on the Mechilta, as follows: **“תנו לב לזכור תמיד—Pay attention to always remember the day of Shabbos, so that if you happen upon an attractive object, you should save it for Shabbos.** The Ramban, however, also based on the Mechilta, explains that it is a positive commandment to mention the Shabbos day on every one of the six weekdays, so as not to confuse it with any other day:

“ועל דרך הפשט אמרו, שהיא מצוה שנזכור תמיד בכל יום את השבת, שלא נשכח וולא יתחלף לנו בשאר הימים, כי בזכרנו אותה תמיד יזכור מעשה בראשית בכל עת, ונודה בכל עת שיש לעולם בורא, והוא צוה אותנו באות הזה כמו שאמר (שמות לא יג), כי אות היא ביני וביניכם, וזה עיקר גדול באמונת האל.”

He adds that when we mention and recall the Shabbos daily, it serves as a constant reminder of the creation—thereby, insuring that we recognize, at all times, that there is a Creator of the universe.

In fact, upon closer consideration, we find that both commentaries—Rashi's and the Ramban's—teach us the same concept; according to both, we are commanded to remember to sanctify the Shabbos during the six weekdays. Hence, the Mechilta, here, juxtaposes both expositions:

“אלעזר בן חנניה בן חזקיה בן חנניה בן גרון אומר, זכור את יום השבת לקדשו, תהא זוכרו מאחד בשבת, שאם יתמנה לך מנה יפה, תהא מתקנו לשם שבת. רבי יצחק אומר, לא תהא מונה כדרך שאחרים מונין, אלא תהא מונה לשם שבת.”

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“Today Is the First Day of the Shabbos” . . .

Rabbi Yitzchak states—in the Mechilta just cited—that we are not to count the days of the week the way that others do; rather, we count the days of the week with reference to Shabbos. Clarifying this point, the Ramban writes (ibid.):

“ופירושה, שהגוים מונין ימי השבוע לשם הימים עצמן, יקראו לכל יום שם בפני עצמו, או על שמות המשרתים כנוצרים, או שמות אחרים שיקראו להם, וישראל מונים כל הימים לשם שבת, אחד בשבת, שני בשבת, כי זו מן המצוה שנצטוינו בו לזכרו תמיד בכל יום וזה פשוטו של מקרא.”

The Goyim count each day of the week as an entity onto itself—each with its own distinct name. Yisroel count the days of the week based on their relationship to Shabbos; for, we were commanded to remember Shabbos daily. In keeping with this dictate, we refer to the days as “the first day of the Shabbos,” “the second day of the Shabbos,” and so on.

Every nation and people of the world has given the days of the week distinct names in their own language. These names have no connection with Shabbos. Yisroel, on the other hand—the children of the living G-d Who created the world in six days and rested on the seventh day—refer to the days of the week based on their relationship to Shabbos.

It is fitting, therefore, that every Jew, as he recites the daily song, at the end of Shacharis every morning, has the following in mind: I wish to fulfill the positive commandment, the mitzvas aseh, of “**Remember the Shabbos day to sanctify it.**” The Arizal writes in Shaar HaKavanos (page 61, column 2):

“והנה זה סוד מה שאמרו בספרי, זכור את יום השבת, מצוה היא למנות בו ימי השבת, לומר א' בשבת, ב' בשבת כו', וכן כתב הרמב"ן בחידושיו על התורה, והענין הוא להורות כי כל ימי החול תלויים ונקשרים ונמשכים מיום השבת, ומשם נמשכים להם הארתם, וזכור היטב ענין זה כי הוא מכלל רמ"ח מצות עשה, למנות ימי החול על דרך זה א' בשבת ב' בשבת כו'.”

The underlying reason behind this practice is to indicate that all of the weekdays depend on Shabbos. They are bound to Shabbos; they derive their continued existence from Shabbos; they are illuminated by Shabbos. Counting the weekdays based on their relationship to Shabbos is one the two hundred and forty-eight positive commandments.

To Draw Sanctity from Shabbos to the Six Days of the Week

It is still incumbent upon us to delve deeper into the meaning and purpose of the mitzvah of **זכור** “**Remember the Shabbos day to sanctify it.**” Why is it necessary to mention the Shabbos day on every weekday? We learned from the Ramban that this practice serves as a constant reminder of the creation and the fact that there is a Creator. In other words, we must always remember and have in mind that HKB”H created the world in six days and rested on the seventh day.

The Arizal, however, in Shaar HaKavanos taught us that this practice—of mentioning Shabbos every day—demonstrates and indicates that the rest of the week depends on Shabbos and is intimately associated with Shabbos. This sacred idea is founded on the following Zohar hakadosh (Yisro 88.):

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“כל הברכות שלמעלה ולמטה ביום השביעי תלויות... כי מיום ההוא מתברכים ממנו כל ששה ימים עליונים, וכל אחד ואחד נותן מזונתו למטה כל אחד ביומו, מאותה ברכה שנתברכו ביום השביעי—all of the blessings, above and below, depend on Shabbos. . . due to the blessings that they receive from Shabbos, the other six days provide sustenance down below on their respective days.

The possuk specifically teaches us that Shabbos is the source of berocheh and kedushah (Bereishis 2,3): “ויברך אלקים את יום השביעי ויקדש אותו”—G-d blessed the seventh day, and He sanctified it. So, we see from the teaching of the Arizal that by mentioning Shabbos on every weekday, we draw that berocheh and kedushah into the mundane days of the week. This should serve as a clear-cut warning and admonition not to fall prey to laziness at the end of the shacharis service; we must recite the “shir shel yom”—the daily song of praise—with diligence and proper focus. This will accomplish a dual purpose: (1) we will fulfill the mitzvah of “zachor et yom hashabbat l’kodsho” and (2) we will draw blessing and sanctity into each of the six weekdays.

The Six Weekdays Created the Shabbos Day

Let us now delight in the wonders of the Torah as we expand upon this concept: (a) Why did HKB”H command us “זכור את יום השבת לקדשו”? (b) Why do the six weekdays obtain their blessings from Shabbos? (c) Since the six weekdays receive their blessings from Shabbos, why did HKB”H create the six days of the week prior to Shabbos? Why didn’t He first rest on the Shabbos day and then create the world during the following six days?

To address all of these questions, let us introduce a fascinating insight concerning Shabbos. The Shearis Yisroel, written by the great, Rabbi Yisroel Dov Ber of Vilendik, zy”a, (Shaar HaZmanim, Succos, 2), teaches us that HKB”H created the Shabbos from the contributions of the six weekdays; each day contributed four of its hours with which the complete twenty-four hour Shabbos day was formed. Here are his exact words:

“איתא בספר קדמון אחד ששבת נעשה מששת ימי המעשה, דהיינו ד’ שעות מכל יום נעשה מזה כ”ד שעות של שבת קודש. ואמר מורי ז”ל [הרה”ק רבי מרדכי מטשרנוביל זי”ע] פירוש על זה, שהד’ שעות שנעשה מהם שבת הוא, ג’ תפלות שבכל יום, שכל תפלה היא נחשבת לשעה אחת, [כוונתו על המשנה (ברכות ל:): חסידים הראשונים היו שוהין שעה אחת ומתפללין], והשעה הד’ היא (אבות פ”ד מי”ז) יפה שעה אחת בתשובה ומעשים טובים, והיא קריאת שמע שעל המטה שאדם צריך להיות ממארי דחושבנא.”

Shabbos was formed from the other six days of the week. Each day contributed four hours—resulting in the twenty-four hours of Shabbos kodesh. His teacher, Rabbi Mordechai of Chernoble, zy”a, clarifies the matter with regard to the nature of the four specific hours that each donated. They were the three hours of the daily prayer services—each tefillah represented one hour based on the Mishnah (Berachos 30:)—and the fourth hour was the time of the nightly krias shema recited before retiring.

This Concept Originates with the Divine Kabbalist the Ramak Z”l

After much research into the matter, I found the original source for this concept in the sefer Gevul Binyamin written by the heavenly kabbalist Rabbi Binyamin Hakohen, printed in Amsterdam in the

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year 5487; he attributes the concept to the Ramak, the heavenly kabbalist Rabbi Moshe Cordoverao, z"l. Seeing as the Gevul Binyamin appears to be the original and lone source for this concept of the Ramak's, and since he adds several fascinating points not mentioned elsewhere, it is worthwhile presenting his actual text:

"הקדמה אחת ששמעתי מאדם גדול, הוא כמהור"ר יהודה כהן נרו בנו של בעל שער אפרים זלה"ה, שאמר לי בשם המקובל האלקי כמהור"ר יהודה חביליו זצ"ל ראש ישיבת חברון תוב"ב, שהיה אומר משמו של [המקובל האלקי] הרמ"ק זלה"ה, שמתחילת בריאתו של עולם היו ראויים הימים להיות מכ"ח שעות לכל אחד.

ולהיות שהיו ששת ימים שוים, ולא היה להם מושל וקצין, ביקשו מהקב"ה שיתן להם מלך גדול על כולם, ואמר להם [הקב"ה], רצונכם שאתן לכם יום אחד שיהא לכם מלך, צריך שתגדלוהו משלכם ותתנו לו ד' שעות מכל יום, ובזה יהיה לו שליטה עליכם, והוא השבת שנתנו לו ששת ימי המעשה כל אחד ד' שעות הרי כ"ד שעות של יום השבת."

He points out that at the beginning of creation, the days were each supposed to last twenty-eight hours; however, since each of the six days were equal to one another, they lacked a leader and dominant force. They requested that HKB"H appoint a king to reign over them. HKB"H responded that the king must arise from among themselves. By receiving four hours from each day, the king will have dominion over them. These donations resulted in the formation of the twenty-hour day of Shabbos.

Furthermore, the Gevul Binyamin explains the meaning behind the formula found in our three Shabbos prayers: **"חמדת ימים אותו קראת"**—**You called it the most coveted of days.** Shabbos is referred to as "the most coveted of days," because the other days longed to make it their king.

A Time to Be Silent and a Time a Time to Speak

The Gevul Binyamin also explains why the six days of the week originally consisted of twenty-eight hours each. The hours in a day corresponded to the twenty-eight times, "itim," enumerated by Shlomo HaMelech in megilas Koheles (Chapter 3): **"לכל זמן ועת לכל חפץ תחת השמים"**—**Everything has its season, and there is a time for everything under the heaven.** Note that the twenty-eight "itim" are separated into two categories—fourteen negative and fourteen positive.

HKB"H created the six days of the week, consisting of twenty-eight hours, to correspond to these twenty-eight "itim." The fourteen hours of the day, during which there was light, represented the fourteen positive or good times; whereas, the fourteen hours of the night, ruled by darkness, represented the fourteen bad or negative times. Afterwards, however, each of the days contributed four of its hours—two from the day and two from the night—to form the day of Shabbos.

In honor of Shabbos, we can conjecture that the two positive times from the daylight hours and the two negative times from the nighttime hours were (ibid. 3,7): **"עת לחשות ועת לדבר, עת לאהוב, עת לשנוא"**—**a time to be silent and a time to speak, a time to love and a time to hate.** We know from the Gemorah (Shabbos 113.) that one should refrain on Shabbos from engaging in conversations pertaining to mundane everyday matters; on the other hand, it is a mitzvah to speak divrei-Torah and words of prayer on Shabbos. It is a time to be silent and a time to speak!

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Additionally, Shabbos is **"עת לאהוב"**—**a time to love**—a time to worship and serve Hashem out of love. The Noam Elimelech (beginning of parshas Vayigash) teaches us that the method of serving Hashem during the week is based on "yirah"—fear and reverence; whereas, on Shabbos, our service of Hashem stems from love. On the other hand, Shabbos is also **"עת לשנוא"**—**a time to hate**; it is a time to hate and loathe the evil in the world. It states in Tehillim (97,10): **"אוהבי ה' שנאו רע"**—**Lovers of Hashem, despise evil!** The greater the love one has for Hashem, the more he loathes evil.

HKB"H Created the World to Exist for Only Six Days

Come and see how this amazing concept of the Ramak—that HKB"H created Shabbos from the four hours that each of the six weekdays contributed—agrees perfectly with an important principle found in the magnificent commentary of the Ohr HaChaim hakadosh (Bereishis 2,3). He teaches that HKB"H only created the world to exist for six days; however, on every Shabbos, the Holy One extends creation for another six days; this process is continually repeated for the duration of this world's existence.

He finds proof for this hypothesis from the text of the Ten Commandments, which we read in this week's parsha (Shemos 20,11): **"כי ששת ימים עשה ה' את השמים ואת הארץ"**. A careful reading of this possuk reveals that it doesn't say that he created the heavens and the earth in six days; to convey that message, it should have said: **"בששת ימים עשה ה' "**. Rather, the possuk states that Hashem created the heavens and the earth for six days.

Nevertheless, the Ohr HaChaim's premise is enigmatic. Since HKB"H only created the world to exist for six days—as implied by the words **"כי ששת ימים עשה ה' את השמים ואת הארץ"**—how does the world continue to exist on Shabbos itself? Furthermore, how is it then able to sustain the following six weekdays?

Employing the Ramak's theory, it all makes sense. Originally, HKB"H created the world to exist for six days—each day consisting of twenty-eight hours. However, those days longed for a king, and each contributed four hours with which HKB"H created the twenty-four hours of Shabbos. Seen in this light, we also understand why the creation of the six weekdays preceded the creation of the Shabbos day.

Shabbos Imparts Abundance and Berocheh to the Weekdays

Based on this understanding, we can comprehend the Ohr HaChaim's premise. As a result of Shabbos observance, HKB"H renews and extends creation for an additional six weekdays. Due to the fact that Shabbos was created from the donations of the six weekdays, Shabbos recognizes its debt of gratitude and returns the favor to the weekdays by imparting to them an abundance of good and a new lease on life for another six days.

Now, these additional six days should really consist of twenty-eight hours each--as was the case at the onset of creation. Nevertheless, since they wish to make Shabbos their king, all over again, the cycle repeats itself. They each contribute four hours of themselves in order to create the upcoming Shabbos; then, Shabbos returns the favor by blessing them with abundance and extended life for another six days—and so on and so forth. As a result, all of the blessings realized during the week

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derive from Shabbos, as stated succinctly by the Zohar: **“כל ברכאן דלעילא ותתא ביומא שביעאה תליין”**—all blessings, above and below, depend on Shabbos.

How nicely this allows us to interpret the following statement in the Gemorah (Beitzah 15:): **“אמר HKB”H said to Yisroel: “My children, borrow on my account, and sanctify the holiness of the day; trust in Me and I will repay you.”** In similar fashion, each of the weekdays contributes four hours to Shabbos as a form of loan; in return, HKB”H repays them each week by imparting the power of blessing and renewal to the Shabbos. We learn that it is necessary to borrow in order to delight in Shabbos—knowing full well that HKB”H will reimburse the loan in full.

It is also clear, now, why our blessed sages instituted the recitation of six mizmorim (psalms) on Shabbos evening prior to Lecha Dodi-- **“לכו נרננה”**, **“שירו לה’ שיר חדש”**, **“ה’ מלך תגל הארץ”**, **“מזמור שירו לה’ שיר חדש”**, **“ה’ מלך ירגזו עמים”**, **“מזמור לדוד הבו לה’ בני אליים”**. In the sefer Tikunei Shabbos and in the siddur Kol Yaakov, they explain that these six mizmorim correspond to the six days of the week that precede the Shabbos; whereas, Lecha Dodi is a piyut in honor of the Shabbos. Since the six weekdays gave of themselves in order to create the Shabbos, it is only fitting to recognize their contributions and honor them with these six mizmorim at the onset of Shabbos kodesh.

The Six Weekdays Wanted Shabbos to Be Dedicated to Torah Study

Continuing along this path, we can achieve a greater appreciation for the positive commandment of **“זכור את יום השבת לקדשו”**—which according to the Ramban, citing the Mechilta, is a command to mention and recall Shabbos on each and every day of the week. Let us begin by explaining the weekdays’ motivation for making Shabbos their king. The Tur writes in the name of the Midrash (O.C. 290): **“אמרה תורה לפני הקב”ה, רבוננו של עולם, כשיכנסו ישראל לארץ, זה רץ לכרמו וזה רץ לשדהו, ואני מה תהא עלי, אמר לה, יש לי זוג שאני מזווג לך ושבת שמו, שהם בטלים ממלאכתם ויכולין לעסוק בך”**—the Torah said to HKB”H: “Master of the Universe, when Yisroel enter the land, each one will run to take care of his personal needs—his vineyard, his field, etc.—and what will become of me?” HKB”H answered her: “I have a mate for you, and its name is Shabbos; on Shabbos, they will desist from their work and will be free to occupy themselves with you.”

Now, the six weekdays are designated for working in pursuit of one’s livelihood—as it is written (Shemos 20,9): **“ששת ימים תעבוד ועשית כל מלאכתך”**—**You shall work for six days and accomplish all of your work.** Yet, we learn in the Mishnah (Avos 3,17): **“אם אין תורה אין קמח”**—**if there is no Torah, there is no sustenance.** It turns out, then, that without a day designated for Torah study, such as Shabbos, it would be impossible to make a living and sustain ourselves during the six days of the week. Therefore, the six weekdays devised their plan to each give four hours of themselves to establish a day dedicated solely to the study of Torah and devoted service of Hashem—Shabbos.

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As a consequence, HKB”H created the day of Shabbos on which work is prohibited—thus, allowing Yisroel the freedom to engage in Torah-study and prayer. In this manner, each of the six work days has a part in the Torah that is learned on Shabbos. In the merit of this Torah-study on Shabbos, they are rewarded with sustenance. This is why: **“כל ברכאן דלעילא ותתא ביומא שביעאה תליון”**—**all blessings, above and below, depend on the seventh day.**

Based on this understanding, we can interpret the flow of the pesukim in the Aseres HaDibros as follows: **“זכור את יום השבת לקדשו”**—sanctify the Shabbos day by engaging in Torah-study and worshipping Hashem; the reason being: **“ששת ימים תעבוד ועשית כל מלאכתך”**—in that merit you will receive sustenance; after all, there is no sustenance without Torah. How, in fact, are the six days of the week sustained by the Torah-study which is performed on Shabbos? In answer to this question, the possuk states: **“כי ששת ימים עשה ה' את השמים ואת הארץ את הים ואת כל אשר במ”**—as elucidated by the Ohr HaChaim hakadosh, HKB”H created the world to exist for only six days; **“וינח ביום השביעי”**—in the merit of their contributions to form the twenty-four hours of Shabbos, each day shares in the merit of the Torah-study performed on Shabbos; **“על כן ברך ה' את יום השבת ויקדשהו”**—therefore, Hashem blessed and sanctified the Shabbos day, so that that it could transmit blessing and sanctification to its benefactors, the six weekdays.

Thus, we stand enlightened in our understanding of the mitzvas aseh of: **“זכור את יום השבת לקדשו”**—**Remember the Shabbos day to sanctify it.** According to the Ramban’s opinion, based on the Mechilta, this is a command to mention and remember Shabbos each and every day of the week, in order to evoke merit for each respective day. By each contributing four hours of themselves to create a day dedicated entirely to the study of Torah—the day of Shabbos—each day realizes berocheh and kedushah, in that merit. As seen above, the Arizal expresses this idea as follows: **“להורות כי כל ימי החול תלויים ונקשרים ונמשכים מיום השבת, ומשם נמשכים להם הארתם”**—mentioning Shabbos every day indicates that the weekdays depend on Shabbos, and are connected to Shabbos, and derive their extended existence and illumination from Shabbos.

In conclusion, it behooves us to clarify one point. In truth, all of the six weekdays contributed to the formation of Shabbos—a day dedicated to Torah-study and the service of Hashem—and in this merit, Shabbos transmits berocheh and kedushah to them. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that it is essential to dedicate times for pursuit of Torah-study during the weekdays, as well. Otherwise, chas v’shalom, a schism and disconnect would be caused between Shabbos and the other days of the week.

Hence, it is crucial that we establish times during the work week devoted to the pursuit of Torah-study—thereby, solidifying the association and relationship of the weekdays with Shabbos. For this reason, our blessed sages advise us (Avodah Zarah 3.): **“מי שטרח בערב שבת יאכל בשבת, מי שלא טרח בערב שבת מהיכן יאכל בשבת”**—in order to enjoy the delights of Shabbos, one must prepare appropriately before Shabbos. In the merit of preparing appropriately for Shabbos, we will realize the abundant berocheh and kedushah we are able to derive from Shabbos, and will ultimately merit the time that consists entirely of Shabbos—speedily, in our days. Amen.