

“Toward the face of the menorah shall the seven lamps cast light” By Means of the Kedushah of Shabbas One Can Sanctify the Three Ways in which Man Behaves like an Animal

In this week’s parsha, parshas Behaaloscha, we read (Bamidbar 8, 1): “וידבר ה' אל משה לאמר, דבר אל אהרן ואמרת אליו, בהעלותך את הנרות אל מול פני המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות, ויעש כן אהרן אל מול פני המנורה העלה נרותיה כאשר צוה ה' את משה—Hashem spoke to Moshe saying, “Speak to Aharon and say to him: When you kindle the lamps, toward the face of the menorah shall the seven lamps cast light. Aharon did so; toward the face of the menorah he kindled its lamps, as Hashem had commanded Moshe. Citing the Sifrei, Rashi comments: “להגיד שבחו של אהרן שלא שינה”—to tell the praise of Aharon—that he did not deviate.

At first glance, it appears as if the Sifrei is addressing the surprising phrase: “ויעש כן אהרן”—Aharon did so. It is inconceivable that Aharon would not have done so. Hence, it explains that this phrase comes “to tell the praise of Aharon—that he did not deviate.” Yet, the commentaries are not satisfied with this answer; for, the question still remains: is it even conceivable that Aharon, the Kohen Gadol, would deviate, chas v’shalom, from the command Hashem issued to Moshe?

We can resolve the matter, however, by referring to what the Shem MiShmuel writes (Behaaloscha 5675) in the name of his great father, the author of the Avnei Neizer. He addresses HKB”H’s directive to kindle the menorah in this precise manner: “toward the face of the menorah shall the seven lamps cast light.” Here is an excerpt from the Shem MiShmuel:

“והנה כ”ק אבי אדומו”ר זצללה”ה הגיד, ששבת היא דוגמת המנורה, תלת יומי דקמי שבתא ותלת יומי דבתר שבתא, שכולם פונים אל שבת שהוא השביעי, דוגמת שלשה קני המנורה שמכאן ושלשה שמכאן פונים אל האמצעי”.

My distinguished father of blessed memory said that Shabbas resembles the menorah. There are three days that precede Shabbas and three days that follow Shabbas; they are all related to Shabbas—the seventh day. This is reminiscent of the structure of the menorah, where three lamps on each side face the center.

We can understand this comment based on what we have learned in the Gemara (Pesachim 106a). It is permissible to perform “Havdalah” up to three days after the conclusion of the Shabbas. As he explains, the three days following Shabbas—Sunday, Monday and Tuesday—are referred to as “after Shabbas,” because they are related to the previous Shabbas; whereas Wednesday, Thursday and Friday are referred to as “before Shabbas,” because they are related to the Shabbas that follows them.

Three Days to the Right and Three Days to the Left with the Sabbath Bride in between Them

Our teacher, the Arizal, explains (Pri Etz Chaim) that Wednesday, Thursday and Friday are referred to as “before Shabbas,” because they draw their kedushah from the Shabbas kodesh immediately following them. On the other hand, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday are referred to as “after Shabbas,” because they derive their kedushah from the Shabbas that immediately precedes them. Based on this format, he writes:

“נמצא ג’ ימי השבוע הראשונים הן מן שבת העבר, וג’ ימי שבוע האחרונים הן מן שבת הבאה... והנה ביום ד’ יכוין להכין לקבל תוספת משבת הבאה תוספת נפש, וביום ה’ יכוין לקבל תוספות משבת הבאה תוספת הרוח, וביום ו’ יכוין לקבל תוספת הנשמה, ועל ידי כן יבואו ג’ תוספות אלו ביום השבת”.

On Wednesday, one should have in mind to receive an additional “nefesh” from the upcoming Shabbas; on Thursday, one should have in mind to receive an additional “ruach” from the upcoming Shabbas; on Friday, one should have in mind to receive an additional “neshamah.” By doing so, one will benefit from these three additions on the upcoming Shabbas.

In similar fashion, one must draw from the kedushah of the previous Shabbas during the three days that follow—Sunday, Monday

and Tuesday. On Sunday, one should have in mind to continue the illumination and enlightenment from the additional “neshamah” accruing from the previous Shabbas; on Monday, one should have in mind to continue the illumination from the additional “ruach” associated with the previous Shabbas; on Tuesday, one should have in mind to continue the illumination from the additional “nefesh” associated with the previous Shabbas.

This scheme is reflected in the words of the Arizal’s piyut that is recited on Shabbas evening: **“ימינא ושמאלא וביניהו כלה”**—**there are three days preceding the Shabbas (to her right) and three days following the Shabbas (to her left), with the bride in the middle.** In other words, Shabbas kodesh resembles a bride standing in the center of the seven days of the week. The other six weekdays, on the other hand, surround her on both sides. The three days—Wednesday, Thursday and Friday—stand to the right of Shabbas, while the three days—Sunday, Monday and Tuesday—stand to her left.

Now, let us return to the comment of the Avnei Neizer that the structure of the menorah reflects this format. For, the central lamp, which constitutes the body of the menorah alludes to Shabbas kodesh—which is the central focus of the week. The three lamps which emanate from the body of the menorah to its right represent the three days preceding the Shabbas; while the three lamps emanating from the left side of the menorah represent the three days that follow the Shabbas.

This scheme is implied by HKB”H’s command: **“בהעלותך את הנרות--אל מול פני המנורה יאירו שבעת הנרות, toward the face of the menorah shall the seven lamps cast light.** In other words, the three lamps to the right of center and the three lamps to the left of center should all lean toward the central lamp. In this manner, all the days of the week will be connected and the six weekdays will derive their sustenance from the Sabbath day: **“ימינא”** **“three days to the right and three days to the left, with the bride in between them.**

שב”ת **Multiplied by Six Equals** מלא”ך הוי”ה

Based on the Avnei Neizer’s hallowed concept, it appears that we can suggest a practical explanation for the menorah’s shape and form and the practice of lighting its lamps: **“toward the face of the menorah shall the seven lamps cast light”**—with each lamp facing the center lamp. The Bnei Yissaschar (Shabbasos 1, 13) provides us with a numerical allusion related to the name “Shabbas”: **מלא”ך** **“multiplied by six equals** הוי”ה **שב”ת**. Here is what he writes:

“יתבאר הדבר על פי מה שאמרו רז”ל בתיקוני זהר (תיקון ט כד): בראשי”ת יר”א שב”ת, מן שמירת השבת כראוי יגיע היראה לשומריה בכל ששת ימי החול, ותראה בסגולת השבת ליראה, מן [ממה] שאמרו רז”ל (ירושלמי דמאי פ”ד ה”א) אפילו עם הארץ אימת שבת עליו.

והנה ביראים כתיב (תהלים לד ח) חונה מלאך הוי”ה סביב ליראיו, וכיון שמון שמירת השבת תבוא לאדם היראה בכל ששת ימי החול, ומלאך הוי”ה חונה סביבם בכל יום כיון שהם יראים, על כן שב”ת בגימטריא ו’ פעמים מלא”ך הוי”ה.”

It states in the Tikunei Zohar that the word **בראשי”ת** is an anagram for **יר”א שב”ת**—conveying the message that as a result of proper observance of the Shabbas, a person will achieve the midah of “yirah”—fear and reverence—throughout the six days of the work week.

Concerning those who fear Hashem, the passuk states (Tehillim 34, 8): **“חונה מלאך הוי”ה סביב ליראיו—the malach of Hashem surrounds those that fear Him.** Since Shabbas observance instills “yirah” in its observers throughout the six days of the work week, we can infer that they are surrounded by the malach of Hashem during these six days. Hence, **שב”ת (702) equals six times מלא”ך (117=91+26) הוי”ה.**

As we know, there are many facets to the Torah and it can be interpreted in many different ways. Thus, let us explain this allusion--**שב”ת multiplied by six equals** מלא”ך הוי”ה--based on what we have learned in the Gemara (Chagigah 16a):

“ששה דברים נאמרו בבני אדם, שלשה כמלאכי השרת שלשה כבהמה, שלשה כמלאכי השרת, יש להם דעת כמלאכי השרת, ומהלכין בקומה זקופה כמלאכי השרת, ומספרים בלשון הקדש כמלאכי השרת, שלשה כבהמה, אוכלין ושותין Six characteristics were described regarding human beings; in three, they resemble ministering angels; in three, they resemble animals. The three characteristics in which they resemble the ministering angels are: (1) they possess understanding like the angels, (2) they walk erect like the angels and (3) they speak “lashon hakodesh” like the angels. The three characteristics in which they resemble animals are: (1) they eat and drink like animals, (2) they procreate like animals and (3) they eliminate waste like animals.

Thus, we find that man has two distinct sets of characteristics. He resembles the malachim with regards to his understanding, his method of walking and his speech. He resembles animals with regards to the way he eats and drinks, the way he procreates and the way he eliminates bodily waste. It is quite clear that if man does not take care to behave properly and safeguard the ways

in which he resembles a malach, he can very easily become far worse than an animal. For example, he can use them to perform transgressions; he can use his intellect to contemplate matters that are prohibited to contemplate; he can use his power of speech to speak lashon hara.

Man's Purpose Is to Transform His Animalistic Characteristics

It seems obvious that it is man's purpose in this world to utilize the three characteristics in which he resembles the malachim, in order to elevate and transform his three animalistic characteristics. He can do so by sanctifying himself in all matters that are permissible and by performing all worldly matters and human functions solely for the sake of Hashem. In other words, a person should eat and drink and fulfill the mitzvah of procreation with kedushah and purity for the sake of Heaven—as dictated by the halachah in Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 231).

If one's eating and drinking is for the sake of Heaven then his elimination of human waste will be as well. By separating the waste products from the food one consumes, one separates the good from the bad. This process is described by the great Rabbi Tzaddok hakohen, zy"l, in Pri Tzaddik (Vaetchanan 19), as follows:

“דידוע ששורש קלקול הנחש היה להכניס תאוה באכילה, ועל ידי זה נעשה פסולת ומותרות מהמאכלים, דבמן כתיב לחם אבירים ואמרו (יומא עה:): שנבלע ברמ"ח אבירים, וקודם הקלקול לא היה פסולת מהאכילה כשהיה אדם הראשון בגן עדן כמו הגמון, רק על ידי הנחש שהכניס כח התאוה והגאת עצמו נעשו המותרות ופסולת.”

It is known that the root of the serpent's corruption was to introduce cravings into the realm of human consumption. This created waste and excesses from the food consumed. Concerning the “mahn,” we learn that it was absorbed entirely by the 248 limbs of the body. While Adam HaRishon was still in Gan Eden, prior to being corrupted by the sin, there was no waste generated by his consumption of food—just like the situation with the “mahn.” The situation changed as a result of the serpent; the elements of craving and self-gratification he introduced created excesses and waste.

If, however, man sanctifies himself in the service of Hashem, he elevates himself to resemble a malach. This notion is expressed by the Targum Yonatan on the passuk discussing tzitzis (Bamidbar 15, 40): “מן” בגלל דתדכרון ותעבדון ית כל בקודי, ותהוון קדישין הי כמלאכיא דמשמשין קדם “ה' אלקכון”—by remembering and performing all of My mitzvos, you will be holy like the malachim that serve Hashem, your G-d.

Thus, we can conclude that the purpose of man's creation is to utilize all six characteristics—the three in which he resembles a malach and the three in which he resembles an animal—to sanctify himself completely. After sanctifying the three areas in which a person resembles a malach—his understanding, his manner of walking and his speech—he should use them to sanctify the three animalistic characteristics, as well. A person should have in mind that all his activities in this world are devoted solely to the service of Hashem. As a result, his entire being will resemble that of a malach.

In the Merit of Shabbas a Person Sanctifies All Six Characteristics

We have already learned from the teachings of the Arizal that Shabbas kodesh influences the rest of the week with its kedushah. It influences the six days that surround it on its right and its left: “ימינא ושמאלא וביניהו כלה”—**three days to the right and three days to the left, with the bride in between them.** Thus, we can suggest that the kedushah of Shabbas possesses the power to extend kedushah to the remaining six days of the week. This enables a person to sanctify all six human characteristics—not only those in which he resembles a malach but also those in which he resembles an animal—and attain the status of a malach.

This is the rationale underlying the mitzvah of delighting on Shabbas in worldly matters. The passuk states (Yeshayah 58, 13): “וקראת לשבת עונג”—**if you proclaim the Shabbas a “delight.”** Regarding this matter, the Gemara teaches us (Shabbas 118a): “כל” —**anyone who delights in the Shabbas is rewarded with a portion without boundaries.** Seemingly, since Shabbas is a day of kedushah and represents a covenant between HKB”H and Bnei Yisrael, it would have been more appropriate to divorce ourselves entirely from earthly matters and engage solely in Torah study. Nevertheless, it is HKB”H's will that we occupy ourselves on Shabbas with worldly matters, as well. For, due to the kedushah of Shabbas, we are able to sanctify all that is mundane and related to our earthly existence. In this manner, we can extend the kedushah of Shabbas also to the six weekdays that surround the Shabbas.

Come and see how this is precisely the reason that HKB”H provides man with a “neshamah yeteirah”—an extra neshamah—on Shabbas. It allows man to sanctify matters of this world, too. We find the following comment in Rashi (Beitzah 16a): “נשמה יתירה, רוחב לב למנוחה ולשמחה ולהיות פתוח לרווחה, ויאכל וישתה ואין נפשו קצה רוחב לב למנוחה ולשמחה ולהיות פתוח לרווחה, ויאכל וישתה ואין נפשו קצה—**עליו**—the additional neshamah brings serenity, allowing a person to be more relaxed and joyous, and enabling him to tolerate extra

food and drink. This seems odd. Is the purpose of the “neshamah yeteirah” to enable man to eat and drink more on Shabbas?

Yet, we find an explanation in the sefer Siach Sarfei Kodesh where he cites the great Rabbi Henich of Alexander, zy”a. Throughout the week, the body and the neshamah are at odds with one another. The physical, material body craves food, while the spiritual neshamah shuns food. On Shabbas kodesh, however, due to the mitzvah of “oneg Shabbas”—delighting in the Shabbas—even the spiritual soul delights in the food and drink.

Based on our discussion above, let us add a small tidbit, explaining why the “neshamah yeteirah” does not shun food and drink on Shabbas. By sanctifying himself through food and drink on Shabbas, a person extends kedushah even to mundane, earthly matters throughout the rest of the week, as well. Thus, he becomes like a malach even regarding the three animalistic characteristics—which include eating and drinking. As a result, a person is able to better serve Hashem, which is a tremendous benefit to the neshamah.

The Shabbas Was Not Given for Your Detriment but for Your Benefit

This understanding, provides us with a very nice interpretation of an enigmatic Midrash (D.R. 3, 1): **“ואת סבור שמא לרעתך נתתי לך את השבת, לא נתתי לך אלא לטובתך, כיצד, אמר רבי חייא ברבי אבא, את מקדש את השבת במאכל ובמשתה ובכסות נקיה ומהנה את נפשך, ואני נותן לך שכר, מנין (ישעיה נח יג) וקראת לשבת עונג וגו', מה כתיב אחריו, (שם) אז תתענג על ה'.”** According to this Midrash, a person might have thought that Hashem gave us the Shabbas to our detriment. We are taught that this is not so. By sanctifying the Shabbas with food and drink and clean clothing, we are rewarded.

The commentaries are perplexed by this Midrash. How could a person possibly think, chas v’shalom, that the Shabbas was given to us for our detriment—to the point that HKB”H has to reassure us that it was given for our benefit? Based on what we have learned, however, we can provide an explanation. As we know, a Jew who wishes to serve Hashem properly and fulfill the mitzvos of the Torah must sanctify himself even regarding all that is permissible and separate himself from all worldly concerns. Concerning this point, the Gemara states (Yevamos 20a): **“קדש עצמך במותר לך”—sanctify yourself by refraining from that which is permitted to you.** Rashi explains (Sanhedrin 53b): **“להתרחק אף מזו המותר כדי שלא תיכשל באיסורא”—**it is often necessary to distance oneself even from things that are technically permissible in order to prevent a prohibited act.

Now, one might ask: Why does HKB”H encourage us to delight in food and drink on Shabbas, might it not enhance the temptations of the yetzer hara during the rest of the week? For it is said (Berachot 32a): **“אין ארי נוהם מתוך קופה של תבן אלא מתוך קופה של בשר”—a lion does not roar amid a basket of straw, but rather amid a basket of meat.** Therefore, to avoid such faulty logic, the Midrash states: **“you might have thought perhaps that I gave you the Shabbas to your detriment; in truth, I gave it to you for your benefit.** In reality, it has the exact opposite effect. By sanctifying oneself on Shabbas with food and drink in honor of the Shabbas, a person draws upon himself kedushah that enables him to remain sanctified even during the regular six weekdays—resembling a malach in all six characteristics that describe a human being.

This then is the meaning of the Midrash: **את מקדש את השבת—במאכל ובמשתה ובכסות נקיה ומהנה את נפשך, ואני נותן לך שכר—sanctify the Shabbas with food and drink and clean garments and please your soul, and I will reward you.** The reward takes the form of sanctity regarding mundane, worldly matters even during the normal work week—in other words: **“נחלה בלי מצרים”—a portion without boundaries.** The Midrash goes on to prove its point: **מנין וקראת לשבת עונג וגו', מה כתיב אחריו, אז תתענג על ה' ויתן לך משאלות לבך—**after telling us to delight in the Shabbas, the passuk informs us that Hashem will grant us all of our hearts’ desires. Even during the six work days, we will merit the pleasure of total devotion to Hashem.

We can also posit that this is the message of the statement: **“כל המענג את השבת נותנין לו נחלה בלי מצרים”—whoever delights in the Shabbas is given a portion without boundaries.** In other words, he is not limited to sanctifying himself within the realm of the three characteristics regarding which man resembles a malach. Rather, his areas of sanctification are without boundaries and extend even to the three characteristics regarding which man resembles an animal.

We can apply this concept very nicely to the statement found in the Zohar hakadosh (Yitro 88a): **“כל ברכאן דלעילא ותתא ביומא”—all the berachot, both those from above and those from below, depend on the seventh day.** Let us suggest that all the berachot **“from above”** refers to the three ways in which man resembles a malach from above; while all the berachot **“from below”** refers to the three ways in which man resembles an animal from below. In order to transform them all into berachot which man can use to serve Hashem exclusively with the utmost kedushah, it is necessary to rely on Shabbas kodesh.

This also explains very nicely the following: **‘לדעת כי אני ה’** מקדשכם, אמר לו הקדוש ברוך הוא למשה, מתנה טובה יש לי בבית גנזי ושבתי “לדעת כי אני ה’—שמה, ואני מבקש ליתנה לישראל לך והודיעם” he has a special gift in His treasure room which He wishes to bestow upon Yisrael; it is called “Shabbas.” For, in the merit of Shabbas kodesh, a person merits sanctifying himself even during the six days of the work week regarding man’s three animalistic characteristics. Hence, there is no greater gift for a Jew; for Shabbas enables him to serve Hashem like a malach at all times!

The Six Branches of the Menorah Correspond to the Six Human Characteristics

Now, let us illustrate how this wonderful idea is reflected by the structure of the Menorah. We have learned from the Avnei Neizer that the central lamp, which constitutes the body and central frame of the menorah, represents Shabbas kodesh. Kedushah is drawn from it to extend to the other six days of the week which surround it. Based on what we have discussed, let us propose that the three branches emanating from the right side of the menorah represent man’s three angel-like characteristics; whereas the three branches emanating from the left side of the menorah represent man’s three animalistic characteristics.

We can now begin to appreciate the benefit we accrue from HKB”H’s command to kindle the menorah precisely in the following manner: **“When you kindle the lamps, toward the face of the menorah shall the seven lamps cast light.”** By following this procedure, we are able to extend kedushah from the central lamp representing Shabbas kodesh to the three lamps on the right side of the menorah and the three lamps on the left side of the menorah. As a result, man is able to sanctify himself regarding all six human characteristics—transforming himself into a “malach Hashem.”

Obviously, Aharon, the Kohen Gadol, did not require the kedushah of Shabbas in order to sanctify all six human

characteristics—corresponding to the six branches of the menorah. For, due to his tremendous kedushah, he was already detached and separated from matters of this world. As the Chinuch explains (Mitzvah 270), the Torah prohibited the Kohen Gadol from becoming “tamei” even for the sake of his parents for the following reason:

“והכהן גדול הנבדל להיותו קודש קדשים עם היותו בעל גוף, נפשו תשכון תמיד בתוך המשרתים העליונים, על כן לא תחוש התורה עליו להתיר לו טומאה לעולם ואפילו בקרובים... כי מרוב דבקות נפשו למעלה יתפשט לגמרי מטבע בני איש, וישכיח מלבו כל עסק העולם הזה הנפסד, ועל חברת הקרוב לא תבהל נפשו, כי כבר הוא נפרד ממנה בעודנו בחיים.”

Although a physical being, the Kohen Gadol resembled the Holy of Holies. He was supposed to be totally devoted to spiritual service and, thus, needed to divorce himself from matters of this world. Therefore, the Torah did not permit him to become tamei, even on account of relatives.

Yet, the passuk attests to Aharon’s praiseworthiness: **“ויעש כן אהרן אל מול פני המנורה העלה נרותיה כאשר צוה ה’ את משה—Aharon did so; toward the face of the menorah he kindled its lamps, as Hashem had commanded Moshe.** Due to his extreme humility, he felt that it was still necessary for him to sanctify himself by means of the menorah. This is the point conveyed by Rashi in the name of the Sifrei: **“להגיד שבחו של אהרן שלא שינה”--to tell the praise of Aharon--that he did not deviate;** even though, he himself did not need to do so; he did not require this form of sanctification.

We can now appreciate the incredible allusion regarding the name “Shabbas” presented by the Bnei Yissaschar: **מלאך הוי”ה multiplied by six equals שב”ת.** We have learned that due to the kedushah of Shabbas, a person merits elevating his three animalistic characteristics to become angel-like. Consequently, he resembles a “malach-Hashem” in all six characteristics. This fact is conveyed beautifully by the allusion: the name “Shabbas” possesses a numerical value equivalent to six times “malach-Hashem.”



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