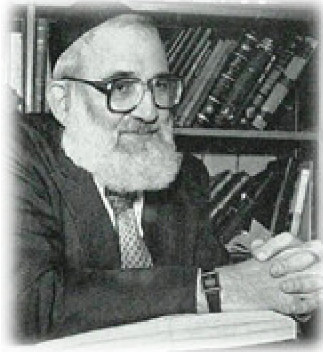


The Essence of Shabbos

BY: RAV YAAKOV WEINBERG ZT"L



About Rav Weinberg zt"l

HaRav Yaakov Weinberg, zt"l, (1923 – 1999) was the Rosh HaYeshiva of Yeshivas NerYisrael in Baltimore, Maryland from 1987 until his petira in 1999. For many decades he was a force for Torah in the Jewish world. He was the ultimate Rebbe, transforming the hearts and minds of thousands of talmidim with his unfaltering adherence to the truth of Torah and the words of Chazal. With his incisive analysis and penetrating insight, he developed generations of outstanding leaders. They follow his example in their understanding of Torah and in their responsibility for its transmission. His talmidim have been

instrumental in creating communal organizations including shuls, schools and kiruv centers. Rav Weinberg was a sought-after advisor, involved in hundreds of private and public issues within the Jewish community. He often conducted the question and answer sessions at Torah Umesorah conventions where many benefited from his counsel. Rav Weinberg was married to Rebbetzin Shaina Chana Ruderman, the daughter of Rav Yaakov Yitzchok Ruderman, zt"l, the founder of Ner Yisrael. He was the older brother and mentor of Rav Noach Weinberg, zt"l, the founder of Aish HaTorah.



Dedicated L'zchus Refuah Shleima
יזרם בן מלכה עמו"ש

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Transcription and footnotes by Moishe Wax
Editorial assistance by Dr. Michael Ring

The following is an adaptation of a shiur that was delivered in Aish HaTorah in Jerusalem. Appreciation is due to Aaron Dayan of Aishaudio.com for authorizing the transcription and publication of this shiur.

The Rosh HaYeshiva had a distinctive and expressive style of speaking. The text has been edited extensively for readability, including the addition of subtitles. Where necessary, the usual grammatical rules have been relaxed to retain the force and flavor of the Rosh HaYeshiva's delivery.

Two Aspects of Shabbos

Coming to *Shabbos*.¹ We'll deal with two aspects of *Shabbos* and leave for another time the third aspect of *Shabbos*, which is not quite that direct within the *Torah* itself.²

The two aspects of *Shabbos* we're going to deal with is the *Shabbos* that is **זכר למעשה בראשית**, the *Shabbos* which is the statement of our belief in the creation, in G-d's creation in six days and on the seventh day He rested.³ And the *Shabbos* which is **זכר ליציאת מצרים**, the *Shabbos* which memorializes the exodus from Egypt.⁴

These are the two aspects of *Shabbos* that we bring out in our **תפילות**, in our prayers, and that which we bring out in *kiddush*, in the sanctification that we make on *Shabbos*. Friday night we all make *kiddush*. We sanctify the *Shabbos* day. And in that sanctification we refer to both of these aspects of the *Shabbos*, that it memorializes both **מעשה בראשית**, the fact of G-d's creation, and **יציאת מצרים**, the exodus from Egypt.⁵

The second one I think we'll refer to first because it gives us the setting, and then we'll discuss the first. The second was it memorializes the redemption from slavery in Egypt.

Well, this is an absolute necessity if we are to understand that the *Shabbos* belongs to the Jew. Because the *Shabbos* as the attesting to and the affirmation of G-d the Creator of the universe belongs to all mankind. It is *universal*. As the Creator, He is the G-d of every creature, certainly of every human being who is made in His image.⁶ And therefore, if it were simply, only, the *Shabbos* which is in memory of the fact that G-d created the world in six days, it would be obligatory upon all human beings equally.⁷ The fact is, that it is obligatory upon Jews and Jews alone, and that not only is it obligatory upon Jews and Jews alone, but it is a specific covenant. It is a **ברית**, it is a covenant between the Jewish people and G-d.⁸ So that the *Shabbos* is uniquely relevant to the Jew alone, because not only is it a commandment given only to the Jews, but it is more, it is a specific relationship, more so than other *mitzvos*, that is created between us and Him, because it is a **ברית** between G-d and Jew, Jew and G-d.⁹ This aspect of the *Shabbos* can only

Editorial note: At the end of the shiur titled 'The Essence of Holiness,' which apparently was the very first 1 and introductory shiur of the whole series, the Rosh HaYeshiva indicated that the next shiur would be *Shabbos*. See footnote 74.

Editorial note: That *drasha* regarding the 'third aspect of *Shabbos*' was not located. Presumably, the Rosh 2 HaYeshiva is referring to *Shabbos* as a symbol of *olum haba*, The World to Come.

*שבת אחד מששים לעולם הבא [ברכות דף נא].

*עין מדרש אותיות דרבי עקיבא יד

*...ומה שתקנו בשבת ג' ענייני תפלות אתה קדשת ישמח משה אתה אחד ובי"ט לא תקנו אלא אחת אתה בחרתנו מפני שאלו ג' תפלות תקנום כנגד ג' שבתות אתה קדשת כנגד שבת בראשית כמו שמוכיח מתוכו ישמח משה כנגד שבת של מתן תורה דלכולי עלמא בשבת ניתנה תורה ואתה אחד כנגד שבת של עתיד... [טור אורח חיים ס' רצב].

3. זכור את יום השבת לקדשו ששת ימים תעבד 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 בס וינתן ביום השביעי על כן ברך ה' את יום השבת ויקדשוהו [יתרו כ ח-יא].

4. שמור את יום השבת לקדשו כאשר צוך ה' אלקיך ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כל מלאכתך ויום השביעי שבת לה' אלקיך לא תעשה כל מלאכה אתה ובנך ובתך עבדך ואמתך ושוורך וחמרך וכל בהמתך וגרך אשר בשעריך למען ינוח עבדך ואמתך כמוך וזכרת כי עבד היית במצרים ויצאך ה' אלקיך משם ביד חזקה וברוע נטויה על כן צוך ה' אלקיך לעשות את יום השבת [ואתחנן ה יב-טו].

5. יום הששי...ברוך אתה י"י אלקינו מלך העולם בורא פרי הגפן ברוך אתה י"י אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו ורצה בנו ושבת קדשו באהבה וברצון הנחילנו זכרון למעשה בראשית כי הוא יום תחלה למקראי קודש זכר ליציאת מצרים כי בנו בחרת ואותנו קדשת מכל העמים ושבת קדשך באהבה וברצון הנחלתנו ברוך אתה י"י מקדש השבת [קידוש ליל שבת].

6. ע' מלאכי ב' וע"ע אבות ג יד, ותפארת ישראל שם

7. ע' מהר"ל בתפארת ישראל פרק מד

8. ושמרו בני ישראל את השבת לעשות את השבת לדרתם ברית עולם: בניו ובני בני ישראל אתה הוא לעלם כי ששת ימים עשה ה' את השמים ואת הארץ וביום השביעי שבת וינפש [כי תשא לא טו-יז].

9. [א] ומי כעמך ישראל גוי אחד בארץ - אמרינן במדרש שלשה מעידין זה על זה ישראל ושבת והקב"ה ישראל והקב"ה הוא מעידים על השבת שהוא יום מנוחה ישראל ושבת על הקב"ה שהוא אחד הקב"ה ושבת על ישראל שהם יחידים באומות ועל זה סמכין לומר אתה אחד במנוחה בשבת אע"פ שאינו מדבר מעניינא דיומא דשבת כמו תפלת ערבית ושחרית [תוס' חגיגה דף ג].

be a consequence of the fact that we are the people He redeemed from Egypt to be His own. And therefore, *Shabbos* must necessarily represent that idea in order for us to understand why it relates to the Jew rather than to all of mankind.

It cannot be simply a commemoration of the creation because again, if it were only the commemoration of a creation it would belong to all human beings, not to the Jew alone. Therefore, it is necessarily not simply a commemoration of creation. It must be that creation in and of itself does not justify the *Shabbos*. It has to be that the resting of G-d on the seventh day is an expression of a relationship to His creation, which can express itself only through the covenant with the Jewish people, which is dependent on the exodus from *Mitzrayim*. That's why we say **זכר ליציאת מצרים**. It is through the redemption of the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt that we entered into that relationship with G-d that enables us to make use of what *Shabbos* stood for in creation itself.¹⁰

Now let's get back to the creation.

You understand, of course, from what we just said that there is no way to understand that the fact that G-d rested on the seventh day in and of itself means that we ought to keep the *Shabbos*. Because again, if that were the case, all people would have to keep it. It would be one of the *mitzvos* of the **בני נח** as well.¹¹ Therefore, the fact of G-d's resting on the seventh day is not in and of itself the justification of a *Shabbos*.

What did happen?

Shabbos as the Conclusion of Creation

Well, the first thing, of course, a moment's thought will enable us to realize, is that it isn't a holy day because G-d rested on it, but that G-d rested on it because He wanted it to be a holy day. Obviously, G-d does not tire, and is not exhausted and needs a vacation after a full week of heavy work. It wasn't exactly heavy work,¹² nor is it that G-d gets tired out.¹³

Therefore, of course, **שבת** doesn't mean *rested*. **שבת** means *ceased from*, no longer was involved in. So **שבת** means that He no longer created on the seventh day. It does not mean that He rested from His labor on the seventh day.¹⁴ Therefore, in choosing not to create on the seventh day, it couldn't be because He needed a rest. It had to be because He wanted the seventh day to be freed of creation. It's got to be. It couldn't be different. Right?

[ב]...תני רבי שמעון בן יוחאי אמרה שבת לפני הקדוש ברוך הוא רבונו של עולם לכלן יש בן זוג ולי אין בן זוג אמר לה הקדוש ברוך הוא כנסת ישראל היא בן זוגך... [בראשית רבה יא ח].

[ג] עיין רמב"ם בהלכות שבת ל טו

10. ע' מהר"ל בתפארת ישראל פרק מ, ופרק מד, וע' מהר"ל בגבורות ה' פרק מד

11. ע' רמב"ם בהלכות מלכים ט א

12. [א] בעשרה מאמרות נברא העולם. ומה תלמוד לומר, והלא במאמר אחד יכול להבראות, אלא להפרע מן הרשעים שמאבדין את העולם שנברא בעשרה מאמרות, ולתן שכר טוב לצדיקים שמקימין את העולם שנברא בעשרה מאמרות [אבות ה א].

[ב]...מאי שנא דכתיב ביה ולא כתיב י-ה ("בטחו ביי עדי עד כי ביה יי צור עולמים" – ישעיה כו ד) כדדרש ר' יהודה בר ר' אילעאי אלו שני עולמות שברא הקב"ה אחד בה"י ואחד ביו"ד ואיני יודע אם העולם הבא ביו"ד והעולם הזה בה"י אם העולם הזה ביו"ד והעולם הבא בה"י כשהוא אומר (בראשית ב ד) אלה תולדות השמים והארץ בהבראם אל תקרי בהבראם אלא בה"י בראם [הוי אומר העולם הזה בה"י והעולם הבא ביו"ד]. [מנחות דף כט:].

13. הלוא ידעת אם לא שמעת אלקי עולם ה' בורא קצות הארץ לא ייעף ולא יגע אין חקר לתבונתו [ישעיה מ כח].

14. כי בו שבת - אינו לשון מנוחה שהרי גבי הקב"ה כתוב לא ייעף ולא יגע ושלא בטורח ברא הוא את עולמו אלא לשון הפסקה כמו וישבת המן וישבתו שלשת האנשים ויום ולילה לא ישבתו פי' כי בו פסק מלעשות מלאכה [חזקוני לבראשית ב ג].

Obviously, then, when we speak of *Shabbos* as **זכר למעשה בראשית**, as commemorating the creation, we don't mean from the fact that G-d rested from His labor, but that G-d understood the need of refraining, of ceasing, from His labors on the seventh day.

Again, **שבת** means to cease to do, to cut off. Therefore, you're **שובת** from **מלחמה**. If you're waging war and you cease, you are **שובת**, you stop, you cease and you no longer wage the war. He no longer created. He ceased from His creation, which means that it is a deliberate desire no longer to do. Now, if one has finished all of creation you don't have to cease. Obviously, cessation means an act of not creating. It is true that He did not cease until He saw to it that the creation was finished in the terms in which He wanted it, that on the sixth day it had reached that stage that He wanted it to be in. But it is a cessation. He decided to create no more.¹⁵

We have the *Chazal* that tells us that "what was missing in the world? *Menucha!* **באת שבת באת** *Menucha!* **באת שבת באת**, the day of *Shabbos* came and with it came *menucha*."¹⁶

Menucha means a great deal more than not working. It means peace of mind. It means a sense of serenity. In other words, *menucha* is a *positive* concept. It is not a *negative* concept. It doesn't mean that I don't have worries. Just as peace, **שלום**, is not a lack of war. Peace is a positive aspect.¹⁷ What was the world missing? *Menucha*. The world never misses something that is negative. It can only miss something that *it needs*.¹⁸ Therefore, *menucha* is a positive quality that you need. You need serenity.¹⁹ *Menucha*, then, is this sense of completeness and totality. That is a very positive need. So that the *Shabbos* then is not "don't do work," but it is positive, a thing of accomplishment, a thing to undertake. The *Chachamim*, the Rabbis, designate this undertaking as achieving *menucha*.

Now, the achievement of *menucha* means to be able to make use of, and deal with all that has come about. In other words, we've had six days of creation. We've had six days of accomplishment. Six days of growth. Six days of bringing things into existence. Six days in which we are doers. We now need to make use of all that we did, to integrate it, to give it a purpose, a completion, which has to be not in terms of its physical existence, but in terms of the

15. [א]...והעדר הפעל יבא באחד משלש סבות אם לכוונת מכון בהעדר ההוא ואם שלא עלה על לב הפעל ההוא ונשאר נעדר ואם שעלה על לב אלא שלא הספיק יכולת הפועל אל הפעל ההוא ונשאר נעדר על כן וזה אמנם בפעלים האנושיים אך בפעולות הש"י אינו כן ולכן ההעדר הנמצא בפעל האדם איננו נתלה בפעל האדם כלל כי איננו מורה על כוונת הפועל ממנו אחר שאפשר שלא בא הפעל מפני סבות אחרות אך ההעדר הנמצא במעשה השם מורה הוראה גמורה על כוונה ממנו כמו הדבר הנמצא במעשיו בפעל כי כמו שאי אפשר שיבא הפעל כי אם בכונה ממנו כן אי אפשר שיבא ההעדר כי אם בכונה ממנו וזהו מה שהשיבו הש"י מי שם פה לאדם וגו' איך תחשוב שהיותך נעדר צחות הדבור הוא דבר נפל במקרה מי שם פה וגו' כלומר כי כמו שהדבור לאדם הוא קנין מורה על כוונה ממנו כן העדר הדבור לאלמים מורה על כוונה ממנו ואין דבר בפעולותיו נופל במקרה לא הקנין ולא ההעדר שבהם אבל ראוי שיהיה נתלה בו הכל בכונה גמורה מאתו הודיעהו בזה כי היותו כבד פה לא נפל במקרה אבל בכונה גמורה מאתו ית' לסבה אשר זכרנו... [דרשות הר"ן ג'].

[ב] ויכל אלקים ביום השביעי מלאכתו אשר עשה וישבת ביום השביעי מכל מלאכתו אשר עשה [בראשית ב ב].
*ויכל אלקים ביום השביעי - ר' שמעון אומר בשר ודם שאינו יודע עתיו ורגעיו צריך להוסיף מחל על הקדש הקב"ה שיודע עתיו ורגעיו נכנס בו כחוט השערה ונראה כאלו כלל בו ביום... [רש"י שם].

**...ונראה שדבר גדול בא לומר שלא תאמר כי שביבת שבת הוא במקרה כלומר שלא היה עוד מלאכה לעשות שהרי באמצע היום שבת ממלאכה בערב שבת ואם כן לא היה זה מעלת שבת שאילו היה לו מלאכה היה עושה עוד מלאכה אף בשבת ולפיכך כתב "ויכל אלקים ביום השביעי" דהיינו לגמרי ביום השביעי שנראה כאילו כלל ביום השביעי וכל כך המשך הקב"ה המלאכה ולא שבת מן המלאכה אלא בשביל השבת שהוא יום מנוחה מזה אנו לומדין שהשבת בעצמו ראוי לשביבתה וכן אמרו רז"ל (ב"ר ז, ז) שבערב שבת בין השמשות ברא הקב"ה השדים וקדש עליו היום ולא גמר אותם... [גור אריה שם].

***ענין אדרת אליהו שם

16. ע' רש"י לבראשית ב ב

17. According to the Malbim, in Sefer HaKarmel, the word *shalom* incorporates, "all forms of success and the maintenance of all worlds," both physical and spiritual. Furthermore, *Shalom* is the name of Hashem because Hashem establishes all existence and connects all of the fundamental parts of creation to form one unified whole.

"גדול השלום ששמו של הקב"ה נקרא שלום שנאמר "ויקרא לו ה' שלום" (שופטים ו' כ"ד) [מדרש גדול וגדולה פרק עשרים בענין דרך ארץ].
18. ע' חגיגה דף ט: ורש"י שם (להמלאות מיבעי ליה). "אצל חסרונן נופל לשון מילוי שחסר מצוה אחת לא יתמלא עוד חסרונן זה משחסר"

19. ע' תפילת "אתה אחד..." במנוחה בשבת, וע' רש"י לז' תשא לא טו, וע' שפת אמת, פ' כי תשא, תרלה

direction that it takes. In terms of a fulfillment of what it's all about. A realization that money is to be used. That houses are to be used. That trees are to be used. And if they are to be used, for what? There is no meaning to creation unless we give it a direction and a purpose, which is got to come from the human being. That cannot come from the thing that was made. G-d created in six days a whole magnificent universe, intricate, an illustration of incredible wisdom, of incredible grandeur.²⁰ But what is it all about? What does it signify? Therefore, it needs now something to "wrap it up", so to speak, to integrate it and to make it all into one grand design. And until you see the design all that grandeur has no significance. This design has to be imposed from without. It has to be a design and a plan in to which all these things fit. *Shabbos* is *menucha*. It is the sense of completion. The sense of contemplating and seeing what it's all about.²¹

Therefore, the first thing that *Shabbos* says is, remember that whatever you have, and whatever you use, and whatever you make, you've got to have a **תכלית**, a goal, a purpose that it serves.²² You cannot go around making a living without knowing what you're living for! To make money just to make money is evident to everybody as being an aberration. It's a compulsion. It's a sickness. There's got to be "I'm making money because I need it in order to accomplish something." If it's for its own fulfillment somebody is mentally not well. There is an emotional problem involved. If somebody needs power because he wants to have power there is something wrong. He's sick. There's got to be "What is it for?"

This is the most basic aspect of being human, and it is the very, very meaning of being Jewish. That you don't live, and you don't work, and you don't accomplish and do for its own sake. You've got to set it towards something. It's got to be directed to a purpose. It's got to have that which justifies it all.²³

The *Shabbos* that we observe, and that we keep, gives us the perspective to integrate all that we accomplish and do during a week of undertaking, a week of building, a week of being creative, and spin it into this design. To see that it fits. And that we know where it's going to lead us. And that, in fact, it will lead us to where we want to go. That we don't walk off the way. That we haven't added things that are handicaps to where we want to go. That don't head us in different directions than the one that we want to go. You need that step back and perspective.

That's not a cessation of meaning. It is a cessation of creativity²⁴ in order to give it completion which takes place by the very contemplation, and by the very cessation, of creation. It gives us the opportunity to "wrap it up" and use it.

And that's why six always represents in Judaism the physical world, and the seventh is its completion.²⁵ The world is being given its final polish, the **מכה בפטיש**, the setting which enables it

20. ע' תהילים, קד כד

21. ידוע שתכלית כל דבר נקרא מנוחה ולכן נקרא שבת מנוחה שהוא תכלית ימי המעשה כמו שכתוב באלשיך [רבינו אברהם אחי הגר"א בספרו מעלות התורה].

22. אתה קדשת את יום השביעי לשמך תכלית מעשה שמאים וארץ וכו' [מעריב לליל שבת].

23. דרש בר קפרא איווהי פרשה קטנה שכל גופי תורה תלויין בה "בכל דרכיך דעהו והוא ישר ארחתיך" (משלי ג, ו) [ברכות דף סג.]. וע"ע קיצור שלחן ערוך, סימן לא ס"ק ז

24. מלאכת מחשבת שהיא מלאכת אומנות אסרה תורה שנסמכה פרשת שבת למלאכת המשכן בויקהל והתם מלאכת מחשבת כתיב [רש"י ד"ה לא מאי אית לך למימר, ביצה דף יג.].

25. ...וזה כי העולם הזה הוא גשמי, וכבר ידוע כי הגשם יש לו חלופי צדדים ששה ועל ידם הגשם שלם והם המעלה והמטה וארבעה צדדין שהם ארבע רוחות הידועים כי אין גשם שלם רק כאשר יש לו ששה צדדין, והצדדים האלו שייכים לגשם כי הגשם הוא בעל רוחק שזהו גדר הגשם שהוא בעל רוחק ויש עוד גבול נבדל לעצמו והוא האמצעי אשר הוא נבדל לעצמו ואינו נוטה לא לימין ולא לשמאל לא לפניו ולא לאחור רק עומד באמצע ואין האמצעי הזה מתיחס לגשם כמו ששה צדדים כי הצדדים הששה יש להם רוחק והרוחק הוא גדר הגשם ולכך על ששה הצדדין יאמר שהם צדדין גשמיים אבל האמצעי מפני שאין לו רוחק לא יאמר עליו שהוא גשמי בעצמו ומתיחס אל בלתי גשמי וכאשר ברא השם יתברך את העולם הגשמי הנה כמו שיש לגשם שש צדדין שהם צדדין גשמיים וכך הוא לבריאת עולם ששה ימים שבו נברא העולם

to function. They've manufactured the engine. They've manufactured the chassis. They've manufactured the wheels. You've got everything you need over here. It's all there. The seats, the bucket seats, the cockpit, the instruments. Everything is there. You've got to fit it together and integrate it in order to be able to use it. Until you do, it's useless. It has no meaning. It's only a potential. You polish it off in the final putting it together, in the assembly line. The assembly line is what justifies and gives meaning to all the manufacturing that took place before. The assembly line is *Shabbos*!

Shabbos as the Source of Sanctity

Now, the *Torah* tells us that *Shabbos* is the source of sanctity. How does the *Torah* tell us this?

We have a general rule in the *Torah*, in learning, which says as follows, that the first time the *Chumash*, the first time the Five Books of Moses mentions something, that place where it's mentioned is the source of this thing in the universe.²⁶ The first time that *kedusha* is mentioned is *Shabbos*. ויברך אלקים את יום השביעי ויקדש אותו. He sanctified it.²⁷ Therefore, this is the source of all sanctification. The concept and practice of *kedusha* – of sanctification – derives from, springs forth from the *Shabbos*.

Well, immediately we see two things. One, that this ultimate perspective, this framework into which we're going to fit the days of doing, the days of accomplishment, of creation, has got to be one of *kedusha*, one of sanctification. That means that the goal, the justification, the purpose is going to be in terms of sanctification.²⁸

But more, it is from this completion, from this usage that sanctification comes. It is because of G-d's using this day to bring *kedusha* into the universe, it is this sanctification itself, with which He completes the meaning of creation.

Menucha is the fact of completion. The fact that we are at peace because we are whole, sense our wholeness, which means sense the integration of all that we've done, sense its purpose, and use it for that purpose. It can be *derived from* sanctification and be *used for* sanctification. Both.

Remember what we spoke, that time itself is sanctified.²⁹ This day is given this special quality of holiness from which we can derive the understanding, from which we can derive the awareness, by which we can sanctify in turn all that we have done and accomplished through the *ימי המעשה*, the days of doing. So that it is from the *kedusha* brought forth into this day that we derive the ability to sanctify in turn all that we have done. It is the source of *kedusha*, but what it does is open up to us the power of sanctifying in our terms, of bringing about *kedusha*, not only on the day in which *kedusha* exists, but to spread it to all the days.³⁰

הגשמי ויום השביעי בו שבתה ולא היה בו הויה וזה כנגד האמצעי שאינו מתיחס לגשם ודבר זה מבואר והו ענין ששת ימי הויה והשבת שבו היה שבתה בלתי הויה ולכן יום השביעי הוא קדוש כי כבר אמרנו כי הוא כנגד האמצעי שאינו מתיחס לגשמי רק הוא בלתי גשמי והבן הדברים האלו מאד... [מהר"ל בתפארת ישראל פרק מ].

26. ...ובכל מקום במה שזכר פעם ראשונה בתורה שם הוא שורש הדבר כמו שנאמר (בבא קמא דף נה.) באות ט' שמורה על טובה... [פרי צדיק ראש חודש תמוז א].

27. ויברך אלקים את יום השביעי ויקדש אותו כי בו שבת מכל מלאכתו אשר ברא אלקים לעשות [בראשית ב ג].

28. ע' מכתב מאליהו, חלק ב דף יד.
See 'The Essence of Holiness.'

29. ע' מכתב מאליהו חלק ב עמ' כא

30. דהא כל שיתא יומין מתברכאן מיומא שביעאה [זוהר פ' בשלח דף סג:]. ובראשית חכמה שער הקדושה פרק ב כתוב: ואחר שהשבת הוא שורש לכל קדושות נאמר שמה שצותה תורה "קדושים תהיו כי קדוש אני" הוא שנתקדש ונמשך עלינו בכל יום ויום מאור קדושות שבת אם נקדש עצמינו מעשיית מלאכה וטהרת המחשבות ושאר פרטים שיתבארו בקדושת שבת...

And it is fascinating in this term that the *Shabbos* is the only day that is *kadosh* in and of itself. All the other days in which there is sanctity requires an act on the part of the Jew to bring that sanctity down. In other words, we use the *Shabbos* to give us the power of sanctification, but we have to take it from the sanctity which G-d brings into His universe. That He did in the *Shabbos*. We use that to bring forth the sanctity to the rest of the universe. Therefore, the other holy days require our using the sanctity and that power which we derive from the *Shabbos* to impose on other days as well. And that's why all other holidays the *Yisrael* is *mekadesh*; the body, the people of Israel make holy. The *Shabbos*, G-d has made holy.³¹

You can well ask then, we now understand why on all other days we make the *kiddush*, the sanctification. We have to sanctify the day. But on the *Shabbos* why do you make *kiddush*? The *Shabbos* is holy without our making *kiddush*. Why do we have to sanctify the day when the day is sanctified by its existence? This is what G-d brought forth.

Clearly then, from the fact that there is an obligation to make *kiddush* on the *Shabbos* as well, there is an aspect in which *we* sanctify. That means that a sanctification that we do not make use of, a sanctification that we do not make ourselves aware of and ready to deal with, is a sanctification that cannot function. Therefore, even though the sanctification is there, it is *klal Yisrael*, it is the Jew's statement of it, that makes it an active, positive force that can be used to change all of existence. And that's why even though *Shabbos* is *kadosh* in and of itself, we still make a *kiddush* to make use of and to give that power of *kedusha*, that power of holiness, a viability that can spread and become a force within the universe as a whole. So, we derive from the *Shabbos* the power and ability, but it is for us to use and for us to make a reality, for us to make an actuality.³²

Shabbos and the Nation vs. the Individual

This, in turn, explains to us why the fact of *Shabbos* does not make it a day to commemorate, that is to say, why the non-Jew is not obligated to keep it. If the fact of its existence in and of itself was sufficient, then the *kedusha* would be for the non-Jew as well. It is the fact that we have to make *kiddush*, that we have to make real in the universe the *kedusha*, the sanctification that G-d placed into the day, and it is for us to bring it into actuality, because it's there only in a sort of potential until we do, that makes it that until you are a people who deal with *kedusha*, until you are a people who have accepted the reality of sanctity and holiness, in other words, until you are a people who relate to G-d in a special way, and you are a **גוי קדוש** – a people of sanctity yourself³³ – you cannot have a *Shabbos*.³⁴ That becomes clear. That's why we have to make *kiddush*. But the moment that you need to make *kiddush* it is clear why the fact of creation cannot in and of itself make it a **דין** of *Shabbos*. That's why it has to be only a people who have a covenant with G-d, meaning who have become a **גוי קדוש**, who have achieved a sense and an understanding of sanctity, who can now sanctify the *Shabbos*, meaning bring forth into reality the holiness that G-d placed there and make use of it by which to direct all of creation, including

31. ע' ביצה דף יז. וע' גירסת הר"ף בברכות דף מט. ורבינו יונה שם ד"ה אמר...

32. ושמו בני ישראל את השבת לעשות את השבת לדרתם ברית עולם [שמות לא ט].

ושמו בני ישראל וגו'... עוד צריך לדעת כוונת אומרו לעשות את השבת... עוד ירצה על דרך אומרו ו'ל (ב"ר פי"א) אמרה שבת לפני הקב"ה לכלם נתת בן זוג ולי לא נתת בן זוג אמר לה הרי ישראל וכו' ע"כ הנה כי השבת חסר פרט א' מפרטי השלימות ותיקונו הוא על ידי שישמרוהו ישראל והוא אומרו ושמו בני ישראל את השבת מה טעם לעשות את השבת לשון תיקון שבזה יתקון מעשהו של שבת ונמצא לו בן זוג [אור החיים שם].

33. ואתם תהיו לי ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש אלה הדברים אשר תדבר אל בני ישראל [שמות, יט ו].

34. ולא נתתו ה' אלקינו לגויי הארצות, ולא הנחלתו מלכנו לעובדי פסילים, וגם במנוחתו לא ישכנו ערלים כי לישראל עמך נתתו באהבה לזרע יעקב אשר במ בחרת עם מקדשי שביעי... [תפילה בשבת]

*וע' מהר"ל בדרך חיים, א א

all of mankind. It's a **ברית כרותה**, an **אות**. It is the sign of the specialness, of the holiness of the Jewish people that became a **גוי קדוש** and thereby became aware and understood the meaning of sanctity and are able to bring forth the sanctification which lies within the *Shabbos*.

The question is what happened from the time of creation to the time of the giving of the *Torah* at **הר סיני**? Actually, *Shabbos* was given in **מרה**,³⁵ but still, its fullness certainly expresses itself in the **עשרת הדברות**, the Ten Commandments, at **הר סיני**.³⁶ What happened during this whole period, over a millennium? What happened for the *Shabbos*?

The answer is that *Shabbos* was not lacking. We know that there never was a *Shabbos* that wasn't observed. There were those who had specific, private relationships with G-d. Beginning with an **אדם**, and a **מתושלח**, and a **נח**, and a **שם**, and an **אברהם**, and a **יצחק**, and a **יעקב**, and an **עמרם**, and a **משה**. There were always in existence those who privately as individuals related to G-d and were able therefore to bring forth the potentials of the *Shabbos*.³⁷

However, *Shabbos* needs for its totality a people. It is not enough to have individuals. And therefore, eventually, you needed a **גוי קדוש**, that **אות היא בניו ובין ישראל**.³⁸ It's an **אות היא לעולם**. And this **אות** is interestingly enough **כי ששת ימים**. The **אות** is on the six days itself. And we're going to speak now about what that means.

Now, of course, there is a difficulty in a statement that this is a sign between Me and the people of Israel, a sign forever that G-d created the world in six days and on the seventh day He rested. (How would you explain **וינפש**? Caught His breath? Was refreshed? I'm talking with *Rashi's* translation. You know, the others speak in terms of **נפש**,³⁹ but we'll take it in the way *Rashi* does, which is the norm, that G-d was, **כביכול**, as it were, refreshed.⁴⁰) The difficulty is how can you have a sign between G-d and the Jews that G-d created the world in six days?

Shabbos As a Sign of the Creator

We're told over here of another dimension of what *Shabbos* means, and perhaps of that which is the most important and significant of all the aspects of *Shabbos*. We are told here that the Jewish people have a duty and responsibility to declare to mankind the fact that G-d is the Creator. Remember, the six days is not the heart of the issue. G-d the Creator of a universe is the heart of

35. ע' בשלח טו כב-כה, ורש"י לפסוק כה שם

36. ע' יתרו כ ח-יא

37. [א] ולך לדעת כי מיום ברא אלקים אדם לא חסר העולם דבר המעמיד צדיק יסוד עולם שהוא שומר שבת, כי אדם שומר שבת היה ע"ה (מדרש תהלים צב) ואחריו קם שת בנו כי הוא היה צדיק גמור, ואחריו כמה צדיקים וכשזה נופל כבר בא השמש שומר שבת מתושלח וכו' נח שם אברהם וכו' (ב"ר עט) ומשם לא פסקה שמירת שבת מישראל ואפילו במצרים היו שומרי שבתות כמאמרם ז"ל (שמ"ר כב ה) ונכון] [אור החיים, בראשית, ב ג].

[ב] ואחר כך מתפללין תפלת מנוחה אבות וגבורות וקדושת השם. ובמקום האמצעיות יאמר אתה אחד והוא כנגד שבת שלעתידי לבא. כתב ה"ר נתן ז"ל אנו ושבת מעידין בשם יתברך שהוא אחד שנאמר כי אות היא בניו ובניכם לדורות לדעת כי אני ה' מקדישכם והקב"ה ושבת מעידין לישראל שהוא גוי אחד בארץ. וה' יתברך ואנחנו מעידין בשבת שבו בחר שנאמר ימים יוצרו ולא אחד בהם זה הוא השבת כי לא יקרא בו"ו וגם בכתיבתו יקרא בתמיה. וזהו מנוחה שלמה שאתה רוצה בה. תפארת גדולה ועטרת ישועה בזכות שבת נושע שנאמר בשובה ונחת תושעון. אברהם יגל כתב החכם בעל המלמד כי תקנו ז"ל להזכיר האבות בתפלה זו שהם הודיעו היחוד תחלה בעולם וזאת הברכה היתה כלה וענינה מעין היחוד כאמרם אתה אחד וכו'. וה"ר נתן ז"ל כתב לפי שהאבות שמרו שבת נקבעו בה. באברהם כתיב וישמור משמרתו פירוש ששמר אפילו ערובי תבשילי וכתוב אשר יצוה את בניו זה יצחק. וביעקב כתיב ויחן את פני העיר נכנס עם זמזומי חמה וקבע תחומיו מבעוד יום. הדה אמרה ששמר יעקב את השבת ב"ר. ובאברהם שהיה אביו של יצחק שייך ביה גילה שנאמר גיל יגיל אבי צדיק. יצחק ירנן מצניו באגדה רננו צדיקים בה' בזמן שהצדיקים רואין הב"ה מיד אומרים שירה שכן מצניו ביצחק שנעקד וראה השמים פתוחים מיד אמר שירה. יעקב ובניו ינוחו בו שנאמר ויחן את פני העיר [כל בו פרק מ].

[ג] עיין ספר כוזרי, מאמר ראשון אות צה

38. כי תשא לא טו-יז

39. ע' ספורנו לפרשת כי תשא לא יז, וע"ע ביצה דף טז.

40. ע' רש"י לפרשת כי תשא לא יז

the issue.⁴¹ To have G-d the Creator means that the fact of our keeping *Shabbos* is the vehicle through which all of mankind becomes aware of G-d a Creator.⁴²

G-d as all powerful, G-d as a smiter, G-d as a giver of food or a sender of lightening, they knew, they accepted. G-d as a Creator is the tremendous difference that Jewry has made to all of mankind.

G-d a Creator is one G-d. You don't have many "creating gods". You can have many, many gods. One controls lightening and one thunder and one this and one that and they can fight and they can beat. But G-d a Creator is one. Because you only have one creation. If you had dozens of creators you would have dozens of different worlds clashing and banging and doing. There is only one G-d the Creator. I'm putting it in the most simplified form but it's obvious. If G-d is the Creator who formed, shaped and maintains the universe, and G-d the Creator means that, then, there is only one G-d.

G-d the Creator means a moral G-d. You can't have the "drunken god," the "fornicating god," which the idol worshipers have. G-d the Creator is a moral G-d. G-d the Creator is a moral G-d because G-d the Creator is dependent on nothing and has no needs. And therefore the meaning of creation can only be in terms of the created beings. It can't be in terms of the Creator anymore, because a god who is in need is not a god who creates. It's a god who is dependent. You can't have needs unless there are things which you're dependent on. Therefore, it is a G-d who created for the sake of His creatures, not for His sake. He has nothing to gain. It can't have any meaning to Him. If it's for the sake of the creatures He can only be a just and moral G-d.⁴³

G-d the Creator therefore means a G-d who relates. G-d a Creator means a G-d who is personal. Because the Creator is giving continued existence to each separate individual existent.⁴⁴ Therefore, He knows me and is aware of me and He has a purpose for me.⁴⁵

G-d the Creator, in other words, is that which was specific and particular to that which the Jewish people brought to the awareness of all mankind.

41. ...עיקר שביתת שבת הוא זכרון למעשה בראשית, ולכאורה ההבנה בזה קשה מאד, שאם יסוד השבת הוא זכרון יצירת שמים וארץ - לזכור כח הקב"ה בבריאה, הרי לכאורה מהי הוראת ענין השביתה, ובמה היא מראה על מעשה בראשית, משול למי שבנה בנין מפואר, ואחרי גומרו הלך לנוח על כסאו, וכי המנוחה מראה על הבניה שקדמה לה, הרי יש הרבה שנחים גם בלי שיקימו לזה מלאכת יצירה, וא"כ איך המנוחה מראה על היצירה, ואדרבא, היה ראוי שנעשה מלאכה שיהא בזה זכר למלאכת שמים וארץ... והנה היסוד בסוגיין הוא שהשבת אינה באה לאות על יצירת העולם במעשה בראשית, אלא לאות על חידוש העולם מהאין והאפס הגמור, וכבר הסכימו בזה כל הקדמונים ששבת קודש באה להורות על חידוש העולם, עיין רמב"ן פ' יתרו ופ' ואתחנן בדבור של שבת, והחינוך מצוה ל"ב... ומעתה כל מציאות השבת מראה על החידוש, שאם היתה היצירה מחוייבת המציאות ממנו יתב', ולא באה ברצון ובחירה, כבר כל סדר היצירה לא יכול להשתנות וגם לא יכול לשבות, אלא לעולם יהא סדר היצירה פושט צורה ולובש צורה, וכמו שהיה מתחילה כך יהא לעולם, ולזה בא ענין השביתה, שזה שמעשה בראשית נגמר ופסק, מראה שעיקר היצירה מתחילה לא היתה בטבע והכרח אלא חידוש גמור ממנו יתב', ברצון יוצר ובורא וברצון פוסק. והוא ענין השבת, פסיקה ושביתה ממעשה בראשית ומיצירת העולם, ומה ההכרח שהעולם הוא מחדש ברצון יתב' [ע' רבי שמשון פינקוס בספרו 'שבת מלכתא' חלק ב פרק א].

42. שמות, לא טו-ז. וכתוב בהעמק דבר בפסוק ז' שם: בני ובין בני ישראל אות היא לעולם. במה שאוה"ע רואין שישראל נוהרין בשבת ממלאכה בזה אות היא לכל העולם כי ששת ימים וגו' שישכילו דרך משום זה הזהיר הקב"ה לישראל ומה יגיע כבוד ה' לכל הארץ וזהו התכלית מכלל הבריאה ע"כ החמיר הקב"ה בקדושת שבת כב. וע"ע רמב"ן בפרשת תולדות, פרק כו פסוק ה. וע"ע רמב"ם, הלכות שבת, פרק ל הלכה טו ומגיד משנה שם. וע"ע אגרות משה, אה"ע סי' כ ענף ד

43. כי אמרתי עולם חסד יבנה שמים תכן אמונתך בהם [תהלים, פט ג]. כי אמרתי. והנה בעת בריאת העולם נתגלו שתי המדות כאחת, כי ראשית הבריאה היתה מצד החסד הגמור, כי אז לא היה שום נמצא במציאות שיבטיח לו הקיום והמציאות, וחקי הטבע נתיסדו אז בלא הבטחה וחייב קודם, רק בחסד גמור, וזהו שאמר כי אמרתי עולם חסד יבנה, שתחילת בנין העולם היה מצד החסד לבד... [מלבי"ם שם]. וע"ע רמח"ל בדרך ה' חלק א

44. ...ובטובו מחדש בכל יום תמיד מעשה בראשית... [תפילת יוצר אור].

45. *וע' בית הלוי על התורה, בראשית פרק ב. וע"ע אדרת אליהו לבראשית ב ג

45. ע' הקדמת הרמב"ן לספר איוב

We think of it only as that there is a G-d. It's a great deal more than that. The G-d who made the world in six days means all the implications of truth and justice and morality and purpose. All of these things are the immediate consequence and implications of G-d the Creator.

Therefore, the statement that this is a sign between Me and Israel forever is the statement that we, in keeping the *Shabbos*, maintain this awareness to all mankind. We attest to all mankind our conviction of, and therefore the reality of, G-d the Creator. That is what we are saying there. Which means that the *Shabbos* for the Jew is not only all that we described before, but it has this added dimension that through keeping the *Shabbos* we are the instrument and have the privilege of being the attestors to the reality of a G-d, of morality, of justice, of truth, of purpose to all of mankind. Which means that the Jewish *Shabbos* is the heart and soul of the existence of civilization and humanity. That all the concepts of good, the realization of an abhorrence of evil derive from the Jewish observance of the *Shabbos*. **אות היא לעולם**. What is a sign that G-d created the heavens and the earth in six days? What does that mean? This is what it means. As long as the Jew observes the *Shabbos*, all of mankind becomes aware that there is a creation. They've got to deal with it. They've got to relate to it. It's a testimony and a statement that you can never avoid and ignore.

From it, of course, came the concept of a Sabbath for all the nations. They all have taken a Sabbath. It is true that, of course, they cannot have our *Shabbos*. You've got to understand it's an **אות ביני ובין בני ישראל**. There's no way that the gentile can have our *Shabbos*. And therefore, Christianity, which of course began with our *Shabbos*, transferred it to the "lord's day." Whatever rationalization they gave it, but the fact, of course, is that once it said in the *Torah* **אות** **היא לעולם ביני ובין בני ישראל**, there was no way that the Christians could have a Jewish *Shabbos*, the seventh day. No way. Because it's the specific **אות** between G-d and us.⁴⁶

The Muslims began with *Shabbos* on the seventh day. They couldn't maintain it. It shifted to Friday, to the sixth day, whatever the rationalization, and they all will rationalize it.⁴⁷

Of course, even the rationalization is really that they don't want to be like the Jews. The first choice always is to get the Jews to give up their *Shabbos* so they can retain it. But if you can't and you don't want to be like the Jews, you make a different day and you explain it. But that's beside the point. The point really is that once G-d made it an **אות**, a sign between G-d and the people of Israel, it is only the people of Israel who can maintain the *Shabbos* on the seventh day. And therefore, all the others who come to recognize and realize a *Shabbos* have to make it a different day.

But look what happens when they make it a different day. Please, you call it a lord's day, call it whatever you want, but the one thing you've done is that you're no longer attesting to G-d the Creator. That you're not doing anymore. As long as it's the seventh day you're attesting to creation. That is **כי ששת ימים עשה ה' את השמים ואת הארץ וביום השביעי שבת וינפש**.

46. ביני ובין בני ישראל אות היא לעולם - הבטיח להם שהאות הזה ישאר לעולם וישראל ימכרו נפשם עליה ועי"כ יתקיים אות זה בידם לעולם וגם הבטיח שעובדי אלילים לא יקבלו יום זה לשביתה וישבתו ביום אחר כמ"ש בתפלת שבת ולא נתתו ה' אלקינו לגויי הארצות [מלבד] שם.

47. ...וראשון נאמר שבעו"ה פורצים העם בשמירת שבת אשר בכל שבת אומרים ישמח משה וכו' והוא שמחתו והיא מתנה גנוזה לעם ישראל אשר נאמר ולא נתתיה לגויי ארצות כי כל עמים קובעים איד בכל ימי שבוע ויודעים כי שבת קודש היא מה' ובו שבת צור עולמים ומ"מ מתחכמים לעשות איד כמו ישמעאלים ביום ו' אפס כי לא יהיה ביום שבת ונגד השכל הוא למאוד כיון שאתם קובעים יום מה נפקא מינה לכם אם תקבעו יום אשר קידשו ה' וברכו מכל הימים ואתם מודים בו ואין זה כי מסך ה' בקרבם דבר זה כדי שלא יהיה להם חלק בשבת קדש וזו היא מתנה טובה שנתן ה' לנו... [יערות דבש א יז].

That's why it has to be that the **אות** is not just G-d the Creator, but the Creator through a six days of creation and a resting on the seventh. It is this specific sign that makes it that resting on the seventh day is our attestation to creation. And therefore, the moment you change the day of rest, you're changing this aspect. And if this aspect is no longer there you are no longer attesting to G-d a Creator. Whatever it is you're saying, but G-d a Creator you have left out of the equation. And it remains that of all the peoples of the world, the only ones that retain the **אות בני ישראל** is the Jewish people.

We will have to amend this a little bit, you have the Seventh Day Adventists and all the rest, but they really are adjuncts and therefore can never become major movements in the world.

The question was how do they, the Christians and the Muslims, give significance to their "seventh day"? The truth is, I did once read what the Muslim meaning of the seventh day was. I don't really recall it. To the Christian, of course, it's the lord's day. It's the day that Yushka rose from the dead, was resurrected. The rationalization is that this is the more important manifestation than the other. But obviously, it also includes within it the fact that you're no longer attesting to creation. Whatever you call it, lord's day or anything else, and whatever rational explanation you give it, you have lost this testimony that there is G-d the Creator. That testimony remains specifically the Jewish one.

Now, I'm not saying they change it because of this. You have to hear what I'm saying. I'm saying that once G-d said that this is the sign between Me and the people of Israel forever, the apparent necessity that results from it is that the other peoples are not going to keep it, that they're always going to need the Jews. It is not because they weren't allowed to keep it, but that G-d knew that they were not prepared to testify to the actuality of G-d making the world in six days and that this should be a part of their formal ongoing life. And therefore, they have to switch it since this is not what they're prepared to do. They have to switch it to some other day because they have to have some other purpose in their doing.

This much almost all mankind has derived from the Jewish keeping of the *Shabbos*, a realization that human beings must have a day off in order to be able to survive as human, that you can't just keep working and not become robots, animals, something of the sort. All people have accepted the need of a day off with which to come to yourself, with which to be able to deal with yourself, to deal with things that matter as well as just being involved in the daily grind of making a living. All have done that.

It's of course, a pity that they fritter it away in things which aren't that helpful. But even so, it's somewhat helpful. I am sure that there are a great many cultural events that would not have taken place if they didn't have a day off. It does give them some perspective.⁴⁸ You go golfing, it's also a kind of rest, it makes a difference. The point here is this. That rest in and of itself has a helpfulness in this aspect. It's a relaxation. It is a removal. Automatically it will have some beneficial results in terms of perspective. So this itself, resting from work, is a desirable quality and that they've taken from the Jew. This one day a week is clearly from the Jew that they've taken this concept. Of course, as we got richer they took two days off but that's another facet.

At any rate, this is the **אות היא לעולם**. So that it means that the Jew in keeping the *Shabbos* is not only meeting his personal needs that we've described. He is able to see in perspective, he is able to recognize and reorient himself to accept again purpose and meaning and goals and directions

48... ולכן יש חובב בשבת לחדש חידושי תורה (זוהר ג קעג): כי מחמת המנוחה מסוגל האדם לחדש... שפתי חיים מועדים ג עמ' תלא].

which the *Shabbos* gives him. Remember, as we've stressed, it is a positive aspect, it isn't just a day of refraining from work. It is a day to use, it is a day which has sanctity that we can make a part of our entire existence and we can sanctify the other six days by what we derive from the *Shabbos* day. It is a very positive approach, but it's individual. We are now speaking of the *Shabbos* that is national. That is part of the peoplehood. That is the **אות**. You can't do that individually. Individually you can commit yourself to your belief, but you can't testify to the peoples of the world. The testimony to the peoples of the world can only come from the observance of the people, from a whole nation being identified or associated with the observance of a *Shabbos* day, on the seventh day, on Saturday. And the realization that that is why they're doing it, because that was the day that G-d rested from, or ceased from, His creation. That is the testimony. You realize clearly that this is a testimony that would be meaningless for individuals to give. A testimony to mankind can only come from a people that live this way.

And even though so large a proportion unfortunately, G-d forgive us and help us, do not observe the *Shabbos* as it should be observed, but mankind still associates the concept with the Jewish people. But that's only because there are so many **ברוך ה'** who do maintain a full observance of the *Shabbos*. Obviously, it would be so much more if we all did and it's to be hoped that more and more will. And will become part of this and the force of it will increase. But it is again, something that now we have to do as a people, not simply as individuals. Therefore, *Shabbos* has a sense that *tefillin*, for instance, does not have. *Tefillin* is an **אות** between G-d and the man, the Jew. *Shabbos* is an **אות** between G-d and the **בני ישראל**.

[Apparently in response to an inaudible question...] The question was a perceptive one. On *Shabbos* we all know that you do not make plans for tomorrow's business,⁴⁹ though, if you said your *zemiro*,⁵⁰ you said **מחשבה מותר** is **מחשבה**.⁵¹ It is permissible to think. You're not allowed to talk, but of course, you shouldn't even think.⁵² The prohibition is against speaking these things. We sing the song that says that the **מחשבה**, the thinking about it itself, is permissible, but speaking is prohibited. **דיבור** on *Shabbos* cannot be of **חול**. But thinking is wrong to do. And certainly you're not allowed to *do* anything to prepare.⁵³ It's a distraction to think of "Oh, I'll order twenty gross of this" or "I'll call him and see what the latest quotes are" on *Shabbos*. It is really a very unworthy, not a prohibited, but a very unworthy thing. On the other hand, I seem to be indicating, as you say, that on *Shabbos* we do plan our future, integrate it.

I don't know whether I quite meant it that way, but it's true. I meant it more that we seek the justification of what we did and to see how we're going to use it properly. But that itself means somewhat to project to the future. But we project a relationship to G-d. When we say that we

49. אם תשיב משבת רגלך עשוק חפצך ביום קדשי וקראת לשבת ענג לקדוש ה' מכבד וכבדתו מעשות דרכיך ממצוא חפצך ודבר דבר [ישעיה נח יג]. ... ודבר דבר' שלא יהא דבורך של שבת כדבורך של חול דבור אסור הרהר מותר... [שבת דף קיג. וקניג].

50. בשבת קודש מנהג ישראל לתת חשיבות מיוחדת לשירה ולזמרה. בכל הסעודות נוהגים ישראל בזמירות שבת, וכן בתפילה בפסוקי דזמרה יש תוספת זמירות. והדבר מודגש ביותר בקבלת שבת, שכל עסק קבלת השבת הוא זמירות, יש מתחילים בשיר השירים, ואח"כ בפרקי תהילים העוסקים במיוחד בשירה או בזמרה, לכו נרננה, שירו לה', מזמור שירו לה', ואח"כ פזמון לכה דודי, ומזמור שיר ליום השבת, באופן שמנהג ישראל הוא ששבת קודש נכנסת מתוך שירה וזמרה... [ע' ר' שמשון פינקוס בספרו 'שבת מלכתא' חלק ג פרק ט בענין 'שירה וזמרה'].

51. ... חפצך בו אסורים וגם לחשוב חשבונות הרהורים מותרים ולשדך הבנות ותינוק ללמדו ספר... [זמר "מה ידידות" לליל שבת]

52. [א] ... ואמר דבר דבור אסור הרהור מותר ואעפ"כ החסידים נוהרים אפ' מהרהור חפצים אלא בחפצי שמים כמעשה החסיד ההוא שמספר במס' שבת [...] תנו רבנן מעשה בחסיד אחד שנפרצה לו פרץ בתוך שדהו ונמלך עליה לגודרה וזכר ששבת הוא ונמנע אותו חסיד ולא גדרה ונעשה לו נס ועלתה בו צלף וממנה היתה פרנסתו ופרנסת אנשי ביתו... [שבת דף קנ:]] [רד"ק לישעיה נט יג].

[ב] ובמאירי למסכת שבת דף קנ: כתוב: ולעולם יהא אדם זהיר בכך שאף מחשבתו לא יטרידה בשבת בעניינים אלו אלא שיעשה כל היום קדוש לה' וינהג עצמו בקדושה וטהרה כי יום השבת קדוש לה' ואל יוצא קדשים לחולין... [ג] וע"ע בטור או"ח סי' שו סעיף ה, וברבינו יונה באגרת התשובה

53. ... ומציעין את המטות מלילי שבת לשבת אבל לא משבת למוצאי שבת... [משנה במסכת שבת, דף קיג].
וע"ע רמב"ם הלכות שבת, פרק כד הלכה יב

don't think of planning, it means we don't plan our *mundane* undertakings on the *Shabbos*. We're lifted out of the mundane. You don't say "What time do I open tomorrow? Which salesmen will be there? What instruction will I give?" But to plan the learning for tomorrow, it's a *mitzvah*. And לשדך את הבנות. Remember again the *zemirah*. One of things you do a lot of talking about is making arrangements for weddings. That's a very wonderful thing to do on the *Shabbos*. That's planning for a future that is not mundane. That's planning for purpose and meaning.⁵⁴ That's what it is really. You see, it isn't that we don't plan on *Shabbos*, it's we don't plan our material needs because the day is sanctified, to be lifted out and above the daily material needs. That's the real thought involved.⁵⁵ Therefore, we do plan very definitely how we're going to teach the curriculum. Getting the children married. How we're going to go about seeing that our children are going to find the right schools. All of these things are the things that we do on *Shabbos* with a great deal of avidity. We look forward to finding these things to do on *Shabbos*. That's the meaning of using sanctity. So you use it by directing what you do properly, including "how will I bring this concept of sanctity into my business?"⁵⁶ That, to talk about on *Shabbos* is very worthwhile, that which are concepts of elevating are very relevant to the *Shabbos*.

Shabbos As a Sign of a Relationship

But coming back, the difference between the **אות** that is *tefillin* and the **אות** that is *Shabbos*, is that *tefillin* is **אות על ידך**, *tefillin* is a personal sign. It's a sign between me and G-d.⁵⁷ But *Shabbos* is a sign between G-d and **בני ישראל**. It's a sign between G-d and the people of Israel.⁵⁸ It's not a sign between G-d and me.

When I keep the *Shabbos* I am attesting to this great concept which is unique to Judaism. Namely, that it is not a religion, but a relationship to G-d. This is what this **אות** means, that the religion of Israel is universal. The religion of Israel is for all human beings regardless. *Olam habah*, paradise, heaven, World to Come, immortality, salvation, these are all expressions of ultimate goals that mankind uses and recognizes as a need. In order to achieve this one has to keep the seven *mitzvos* of the *b'nai Noach*, of all the sons of *Noach*, of all mankind. This is obligatory upon everyone regardless. Those who keep it are fulfilled. Those who keep it are saved, to use that language, and reach heaven. You don't have to be a Jew.⁵⁹ To be saved for a Christian you have to become a Christian. To be saved for a Muslim you have to become a Muslim.⁶⁰ But to be saved for a Jew you don't have to be a Jew. You have to be a *human*. Keep the seven *mitzvos*.

The Jew is not because of *mitzvos*. The Jew is because of a specific particular covenant. A *bris* that he made with G-d. To represent Him. To be His people. To live a life of sanctification by which we will make known to all Mankind His truth, His justice, His goodness and all the rest that goes with it. This is a specific relationship.⁶¹

54. ...דריש ר"ע איש ואשה זכו שכינה ביניהן... פ' רש"י: זכו - ללכת בדרך ישרה שלא יהא הוא נואף ולא היא נואפת: שכינה ביניהם - שהרי חלק את שמו ושיכנו ביניהן יו"ד באיש וה"י באשה [סוטה דף יו].

וע"ע חינוך מצוה א

55. אמר קרא "ממצוא חפצך ודבר דבר" חפצך אסורים חפצי שמים מותרין [ע' מסכת שבת דף קנ].

56. ע' רמב"ם הלכות יסודי התורה פרק ה הלכה יא

57. קשרתם לאות על ידך (אלו תפלין שבוזרע - רש"י) והיו לטטפת בין עיניך (אלו תפלין שבראש - רש"י) [דברים ו ח].

58. ושמרו בני ישראל את השבת לעשות את השבת לדרתם ברית עולם ביני ובין בני ישראל אות היא לעולם כי ששת ימים עשה ה' את השמים ואת הארץ וביום השביעי שבת וינפש [שמות, לא: טז-יז].

59. כל המקבל שבע מצות ונוהר לעשותן הרי זה מחסידי אמות העולם ויש לו חלק לעולם הבא והוא שיקבל אותן ויעשה אותן מפני שצוה בהן הקדוש ברוך הוא בתורה והודיענו על ידי משה רבנו שבני נח מקדם נצטוו בהן... [רמב"ם הלכות מלכים פרק ח הלכה יא].

60. ע' כוזרי, מאמר ראשון אות ד-ה

61. ואתם תהיו לי ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש אלה הדברים אשר תדבר אל בני ישראל [שמות, יט, ו].

Now, this relationship is open to any human being who wants to enter the covenant and take upon himself this privilege and prerogative of becoming a part of a people who are G-d's people, G-d's nation, representing G-d's appearance, G-d's manifestation within the universe.⁶² That is not a religious duty. It is a national duty, because we have become a nation of G-d. But we have entered into it with a covenant that made it a mandatory obligation upon ourselves.

And this is the reason, as we've had occasion to explain, that the seven *mitzvos* of *b'nai Noach*, nobody offered it to anybody. It was given by G-d as a commandment. That's the end of it. I created you, I maintain you, this is what I demand of you. You've got to. There's no choice.

But when it comes to the covenant with the Jewish nation as a nation, that which is beyond the seven *mitzvos*, it's offered, will you enter a covenant? A covenant and a relationship can't be imposed. It can't be mandated. It can be offered.⁶³

Once you signed on the dotted line, you're obligated. We, as a people, signed on the dotted line. We entered into a covenant. Now that we're within the covenant, that is forever, לעולם. Any non-Jew who enters into the covenant and accepts upon himself the burden of becoming a part of the Jewish people and living this way and attesting through his life as part of the Jewish people to all what the *גוי קדוש*, the sanctified people, represents, it's forever. He can't do it for himself. Once he does it it's for him and his children and his children's children until the end of time. There is no withdrawal. Once you enter a covenant you're in it. And it's binding, literally, for all eternity. There is no pulling out. A Jew is a Jew forever. Man, women, child, forever. There is no pulling out. You can enter, you can't pull out once you're in. Nobody is forcing you. A covenant is something that you want to make. But once you make it you're stuck with it. You signed the treaty, you've got to keep the treaty.

So, we are the people of the covenant. We are not the people who are religious. We are not the people who know the truth. We are the people of the covenant.

And the truth shall be known and must be known, and should be known by all peoples. **בית** **תפילה יקרא לכל העמים**. All the nations of the earth have the *Bais Hamikdash* to pray in. It's not for the Jews, it's for all the nations.⁶⁴

But the Jew has this relationship. That's the chosen people. They are not chosen to have a religion, they're not chosen to go to heaven, they're chosen because of a covenant. They are chosen to represent the concept of G-dliness, the concept of holiness, the concept of truth and justice, the concept of G-d the Creator to all mankind.

That's **אות היא לעולם בניו ובני ישראל**. *Shabbos*, then, transcends the individual Jew and becomes a matter of national obligation and concern.

*ובזה תהיה סגולה מכולם כי תהיו ממלכת כהנים להבין ולהורות לכל המין האנושי לקרוא כלם בשם ה'... [ספורנו שם]

**וע"ע אבות וי, ותפארת ישראל שם, אות קנז

62. ע' רמב"ם הלכות איסורי ביאה פרק יג הלכה א-ד, וברמב"ם הלכות מלכים פרק ח הלכה י

63. אתה מושל בגאותה הים בשוא גליו אתה תשבחם [תהלים פרק פט פסוק י].

* (י) אתה מושל בגאותה הים. ההבדל בין מלוכה וממשלה הוא, מלוכה הוא בעצת השרים למשמאותו, וממשלה הוא בע"כ שלא מדעתם, כמ"ש אחי יוסף המלוך תמלוך עלינו, ברצונו ומדעתנו, ואם מושל תמשול בנו, בע"כ שלא מדעתנו כאדם השליט על בהמתו לכן נאמר בנו לעשות עמנו כרצונך. וכן כי לה' המלוכה, כי אנחנו קבלנו אותו בלבב שלם ואמרנו כל אשר דבר ה' נעשה ונשמע, ומושל בגוים שלא רצו לקבל התורה מושל עליהם בע"כ כי פלגי מים לב מלכים וכי אל כל אשר יחפוץ יטנו, וכן בברואים שאין להם בחירה כלל רק מתגאים בסיבות הרוחות כמו מי הים ויכלו להחריב העולם ומלואו, אבל הקב"ה מושל בהם, ואינו משנה הטבע רק 'בשוא גליו' למעלה 'אתה תשבחם' לאחר ואינם יוצאים ליבשה, כמו כל רוחו יוצא כסיל וחכם באחור ישבתנה [פירוש באר אברהם על תהלים (הגאון רבי אברהם בן הגר"א מוילנא)].

64. ע' ישעיהו נו ז

It is perhaps the reason that you find the drive of Orthodox Jewry in Israel to be so much in terms of the *Shabbos*. The offenses of the *Shabbos* are what's so disturbing. Whether the manifestations of this disturbance are right or wrong is beside the point. We're talking about the fact that it is something that is offensive and hurts every believing Jew when they see a public manifestation of a desecration of the *Shabbos*.⁶⁵ Because the *Shabbos*, not like *tefillin*, and not like *sukkah*, is not individual, it is national in its obligations. It's an **אות היא**, it is a sign, **בני ובין בני ישראל**, between Me and the children of Israel, which is the people, **לעולם**, forever, that G-d is the Creator. We fulfill it only as a people. We can't fulfill this aspect of the *Shabbos* as individuals. This aspect of the *Shabbos* we can only achieve as a people. That's why it's **בני ובין בני ישראל**.

So that this aspect of the *Shabbos* of the testimony to G-d the Creator we don't carry out as individuals, but as individuals we contribute to the national testimony that is being made. Of course, individually we're saying that. But testimony is not saying, testimony is living. Living, you need a nation to live it. The Jewish people living the *Shabbos* is this testimony.

They are, in other words, the bringers of the whole concept of sanctity, of holiness, to all mankind. This is the source. This is from where they know and understand and share a concept of sanctity, of holiness, of transcendence, of that which is above the material, of that which makes obligatory on humans to have a morality and justice. There is no other way. There is nothing else that can oblige nations to have morality and justice.

A nation can oblige its individual membership by coercion, but nations are not coerced. Nations have to be convinced that there is such a thing. And a nation that is not so convinced does what Germany did. That's what happened when you're not so convinced. Nothing will hold you in line. And this is the nation that affects all nations, the nation of Israel, the **בני ישראל**, through the observance of the *Shabbos*.

Therefore, you will find a great deal of truth in that aphorism: "*More than the Jews have carried the Shabbos, has the Shabbos carried the Jews.*"⁶⁶ That's true. Because the whole purpose and meaning of Jewish existence is to be this testimony to the nations. If you're not that, what are you? What is the purpose of a Jewish existence? What is the justification for Jewish survival? The purpose and meaning of Jewish survival is this testimony that we have to mankind that there is an absolute truth and an absolute justice and a morality. We carry out that obligation, that testimony to mankind, through observing the *Shabbos*. Therefore, it is the observance of the *Shabbos* that gives us the justification to our national existence, and it becomes extraordinarily true to say that it's the *Shabbos* that carries the Jew. It gives him his justification for being and for maintaining his existence.

So this **אות** is the national meaning of the Jewish people, as a people of the *Shabbos*. Where before we spoke of those aspects of the *Shabbos* that are specific to us individually, within each home, within each family, over here, it's an addition. The observance of the *Shabbos* by the body, by the people as a whole, becomes of fundamental importance.

But more, since this is given as the source, it tells us that the ultimate and fullest use of the *Shabbos* is through the nation, not through the individuals, which may come as a surprise to many but you see it clearly.

See the article titled 'Marriage, Shabbos and Rav Yaakov Weinberg zt"l' on page 19. ⁶⁵ "More than Jews have kept Shabbat, Shabbat has kept the Jews." - Ahad Ha'am (Asher Ginsberg, poet philosopher, (1856-1927)) ⁶⁶

This is what we testify twice on *Shabbos*. Before we come to the *Shemoneh Esrei* of *Shabbos* we proclaim this and, of course, in the *kiddush* in the morning we proclaim it again. So we proclaim it in the opening of the *Shabbos*, we proclaim it in the daytime of *Shabbos*. This is what we're doing with the *Shabbos*.

Shabbos and Hashgacha Pratis

The point was brought yesterday that should rightfully be addressed. The **וביום השביעי שבת** is **אות** - and on the seventh day He rested, **וינפש**, refreshed Himself, we said. Remember, we're going with *Rashi's* interpretation, which is true, because even those who use **וינפש** from the expression of **נפש**, dealing with soul,⁶⁷ they can't deny that **וינפש** means catching your breath, which is a sense of resting, relaxing from a strain. Whatever other explanation you give, this is there. And *Rashi's* interpretation is the basis of all other interpretations as well. You can carry it, of course, to its implications and further in greater depth. But this meaning is there in the **וינפש**.⁶⁸ But, what do we mean when we speak concerning G-d, **וינפש**?

What we mean, of course, again, is the sense of catching your breath, as used normally by people, not in any forced usage. It's the ordinary, common, casual use. To catch your breath means to be able to take another look. To pull back from the drive. Catch your breath, see it again, to look again.

This is the statement that G-d Himself gives through the *Shabbos*, a reassessment of His creation, a putting of His creation into a framework. This is the **וינפש**. That in ceasing from doing work there isn't just a cessation, "I'm not going to do anymore," but there is a **וינפש**, a positive aspect. The positive aspect only follows a cessation. If you're not **שבת**, if you don't cease doing, you cannot have the **וינפש**. But the **וינפש** means a renewal. That's really what it should be. **וינפש** doesn't really mean refreshment. It is an interpretation in the English when you translate it that way. But the interpretation is of what catching your breath is about. If you look at it as to refresh your physical self you interpret it that way. What it really means is to renew. To start over, so to speak. Therefore, the **שבת** is in order to renew, to see again, to give a purpose, to give a freshness to that creation which has taken place. It's not just a dead issue. It has to be constantly given meaning, direction, purpose. Therefore, the **וינפש** is that G-d ceased from involvement in the bringing of addition and went into making the proper usage and direction of that which is there.⁶⁹

So the sign is not only of G-d the Creator, but G-d the Creator *who continues to care, who continues to be involved!* That is the **שבת וינפש**. G-d the Creator who maintains His involvement and interest in His creation, which is the highest expression of a personal G-d. It's not just a personal G-d who makes me, maintains me, and knows me, but above all, who cares about me.

Now, this concept of caring is the most important one of all. Because remember this, there is no way that we can worship a G-d who doesn't care. Because if He doesn't care, what difference does it make? You can love somebody with all your heart and soul and you want to send him presents to express it, but if he's indifferent to the presents and they go into the garbage, you can't send presents. He doesn't know you and doesn't care and isn't aware of you, what can you do?

67. ע' ספורנו לכי תשא לא יז, וע"ע ביצה דף טז.

68. ע' רש"י לפרשת כי תשא לא יז

69. ע' אור החיים בפרשת בראשית ב ב-ג

When you send a letter to the president of the United States you're under the illusion that he's going to read it and respond and say "Oh, how nice!" But if you know that he's never going to see it, and that he's never going to know you wrote it, you're never going to write it. All those who write letters to the White House do so either because they know that it will be tabulated and they want it to be tabulated (like when I write that I protest very strongly because I want him to get that there were seven hundred and sixty five letters today that protested something), either that, or he's under an illusion. Because if you know he's not going to see it what are you writing it for? So if I'm writing because they're going to count it, good, the purpose is there whether he ever reads it or he doesn't read it, whether anybody reads it, who cares, but they're going to put down that there was another protest or another mark of support. Fine. That makes a difference. So I can write for that. Or, I can write because I think, I delude myself, into thinking he cares. But otherwise, what are you doing?

Therefore, if I don't know that G-d cares, that G-d is interested, if I can put it **כביכול**, as it were, that G-d is concerned and that it makes a difference to Him, then what are you doing?

If somebody thinks that I will worship G-d out of prudence⁷⁰ that somebody is deluding himself. Nobody allows prudence to direct his activity. Prudence hasn't reduced the death rate on the highway. Prudence hasn't reduced the death rate from overdosing. Prudence is the last thing which manipulates or motivates a person. We don't worship G-d out of prudence. We worship G-d because He cares. Because it makes a difference to Him what we do. And you will not do this unless you know that G-d cares, that it makes a difference to Him, that He responds. In other words, that there is **שכר ועונש**, that there is reward and punishment. Because if He cares, He's got to express that care. Any expression will either be a reward or a punishment.

The only way that a parent refrains from punishing a child is if the parent is indifferent to the child. A parent who is not indifferent always punishes and rewards. You punish with a frown, you reward with a smile. You know punishment doesn't have to be with a potch. It doesn't have to be with taking something away. A tear from a mother can be a very strong punishment to a child. So therefore, necessarily, a parent who cares is rewarding or punishing, simply by their response. A response is a reward or a punishment. And the only way that you avoid reward or punishment is that you don't care. And that's the most horrible of all the things that a parent can do to a child. There is no child who would not rather be beaten than totally ignored. Because that takes away all meaning from existence.

Therefore, before we can be **עובדי ה'**, before there can be a morality, before there can be a sense of justice, there must be an awareness that not only is G-d *aware*,⁷¹ but He *cares*. He responds.

Which means that there is reward and punishment.⁷² It makes a difference what we do. If what we do matters, it's got to be reward and punishment. We either do things that make things better or do things that make things worse. If it matters, that's reward and punishment.⁷³

⁷⁰ "Definition of prudence: 1: the ability to govern and discipline oneself by the use of reason 2: sagacity or shrewdness in the management of affairs 3: skill and good judgment in the use of resources 4: caution or circumspection as to danger or risk" [Miriam Webster Dictionary].

⁷¹ היסוד העשירי כי הוא הש"י יודע מעשיהם של בני אדם ואינו מעלים עינו מהם לא כדעת מי שאמר עוב ה' את הארץ אלא כמו שנאמר (ירמיה לב) גדול העצה ורב העלילה אשר עניך פקוחות על כל דרכי בני אדם וגו' וירא ה' כי רבה רעת האדם בארץ וגו' (בראשית ו) ונאמר זעקת סדום ועמורה כי רבה (שם יח) זהו מורה על היסוד העשירי הזה [יג עיקרם] פ' המשניות להרמב"ם במסכת סנהדרין.

⁷² היסוד אחד עשר כי הוא הש"י נותן שכר למי שעושה מצות התורה ויעניש למי שעובר על אזהרותיה וכי השכר הגדול העולם הבא והעונש החזק הכרת וכבר אמרנו בזה הענין מה שיספיק והמקרא המורה על היסוד הזה מה שנא' (שמות לב) ועתה אם תשא חטאתם ואם אין מחני נא והשיב לו הש"י מי אשר חטא לי אמחנו מספרי ראיה שיועד העובר והחוטא לתת שכר לזה ועונש לזה [יג עיקרם] פ' המשניות להרמב"ם במסכת סנהדרין.

⁷³ ע' בפירוש דרך חיים על מסכת אבות ג' טו

Therefore, we attest in the **וינפש** that G-d cares. If G-d cares, all the other things come about. And therefore there is a real relationship.⁷⁴ There is that which we say to Him, that which He says back. He responds to us, it makes a difference what we do. What we do makes a difference to the world, to ourselves, to existence as a whole.

And now you can talk about a real purpose to existence. If what we did didn't make a difference, you can't talk about purpose, you can't talk about meaning. That's obvious. There's no way that we want to say that we finished *Shabbos*, but we do have to go on, and so **אי"ה** we'll continue.⁷⁵ I think the next one should be **פסח**.⁷⁶

74. [א] ויכל אלקים ביום השביעי מלאכתו אשר עשה וישבת ביום השביעי מכל מלאכתו אשר ברא אלקים לעשות" [בראשית ב ב].
*ויכל אלקים ביום השביעי. חמדת ימים אותו קראת (תפילת שבת) היכן נקראת שבת חמדה, שנאמר ויכל אלקים ביום השביעי, בתרגום ירושלמי וחמדת ה' ביוםא שביעאה (האורה ח"ב סי' סג) או משום דאין ויכל אלא לשון חימוד, וכן הוא אומר (תהלים פד ג) נכספה וגם כלתה נפשי (הפרדס עמ' שח) [מוסף רש"י שם].

[ב] ובאור החיים שם כתוב: ולמה שפירשתי בפסוק ויכלו שהוא לשון תשוקה וחשק יכול להתפרש גם כן אומרו ויכל אלקים וגו' על דרך אומרו (איוב יד טו) למעשה ידיך תכסוף וכתוב (דברים י טו) רק באבותיך חשק, כי האדון חשק וחפץ בעולמו וזה היה באמצעות יום השביעי שנתקיים העולם כדרך שפירשנו חשק ה' ונתרצה בבריותיו...

75. Editorial note: In the 1980's and 1990's, *HaRav Noach Weinberg zt"l*, *Rosh HaYeshiva of Aish HaTorah*, in Jerusalem, would invite his older brother and mentor, *HaRav Yaakov Weinberg zt"l*, to fly to Eretz Yisrael and lecture to the students at *Aish HaTorah*. This trip occurred annually from *Shiva asar b'Tamuz* through *Tisha b'Av*, during which time *Rav Weinberg zt"l* would lecture throughout the day on a wide variety of topics. This *shiur* was part of a series of lectures that *Rav Weinberg zt"l* gave pertaining to the Jewish holidays.

See 'The Essence of Pesach.' 76

Marriage, Shabbos, and Rav Yaakov Weinberg ZT”L

(Excerpted From Rabbi Baruch Leff's Sefer on Shabbos)



The following is a transcription of an inspiring speech given by Rav Yaakov Weinberg, ZTL, Rosh HaYeshiva of Ner Yisrael in Baltimore, which beautifully explains the concept of Shabbos acting as our ben zug, marriage partner. The speech was given on 15 Kislev, 5758/ December 14, 1997, at a gathering which was organized in response to a new policy of the local Baltimore Jewish Community Center to remain open on Shabbos. The gathering was known as a 'Rally for Shabbos' and was very well attended by the observant Jews of Baltimore. Soon after the rally, with G-d's help, the JCC reversed its decision.

Marriage is a wonderful institution. The combination and synthesis of two different and unique individuals into one loving entity creates a harmony and true peace that is beyond description.

As Chazal (Beraishis Rabbah 11:8) describe, Klal Yisrael is married to, (is the 'ben zug'-mate of) Shabbos. This means that the two individual and unique forces of Klal Yisrael and Shabbos fuse and become one entity. Originally, it may have been possible for other nations to marry Shabbos as well, but ultimately Klal Yisrael became the lone mate of Shabbos.

The following is a transcription⁷⁷ of an inspiring speech given by Rav Yaakov Weinberg, ZTL, Rosh HaYeshiva of Ner Yisrael in Baltimore, which beautifully explains the concept of Shabbos acting as our ben zug, marriage partner. The speech was given on 15 Kislev, 5758/ December 14, 1997, at a gathering which was organized in response to a new policy of the local Baltimore Jewish Community Center to remain open on Shabbos. The gathering was known as a 'Rally for Shabbos' and was very well attended by the observant Jews of Baltimore. Soon after the rally, with G-d's help, the JCC reversed its decision.

My Brothers and Sisters B'Yisrael, I beg you to forgive me if I bring up something that might sound like a bit of criticism. (The crowd had clapped proudly at the previous speaker's mention of the 5000 people at the rally-ed.) It is nothing of the sort. It is an expression of that which I feel so deeply and think that every one of us must share the profundity of this feeling.

We are not rallying to succeed. We are rallying to be! The success is in the coming together and giving each to the other the support, and giving each to the other the commitment, and giving each to the other the dedication to that which is the lifeblood of our community, to that which alone makes possible that we continue to be a community of Jews--the Shabbos. It is not a mitzvah that we have come to support. It is our own existence, our own ability to live as Jews that makes us come together, to enable each other in the face of a wound, in the face of a hurt, to recover and hold on with all our hearts and all our souls to the centrality of the Shabbos for our very being. So therefore forgive me.

There is no room for applause. There is only room for a depth of sighing and accepting and reacting. We are not being taught, we are not being educated, we are not being given messages to respond with applause. We are crying out from a heart that has been wounded. We are expressing concern for all that the Jewish people stands for. We are expressing the pain that we have undergone in the thought that a Jewish community could repudiate, as a community, as a 'rabim', as a 'kehilla', could repudiate that upon which our very existence depends. We are crying out a 'Tza'akah G'dola U'mara,' a terrible and bitter scream, not to accomplish, but to express the hurt that is within the depths of each and every one of us who has come. And in the very coming we have made that statement and in the very coming together we have given strength to our own ongoing commitment to Shemiras Shabbos.

For the Shabbos is truly unique. It is not only chamor- there are many mitzvos of the Torah which carry severe punishments. There are other mitzvos that share the concept of being an 'os', special sign, with the Shabbos, a sign of our special relationship with the Master of the World. There are other mitzvos that provide a bris, a covenant, a treaty between our Creator and us.

My gratitude goes to Rabbi Mordechai Dixler for transcribing the initial version. ⁷⁷

The concept of bris enables us to be the Am Hashem, a covenantal people. It is not the Shabbos alone which creates the bris, and perhaps circumcision, which has 13 references to the word bris in the Torah (see mishnah in Nedarim 31a), is an even deeper and more profound covenant. But that which Shabbos is to us as Jews is unique because as the Midrash tells us we are the ben zug of the Shabbos.

We are the spouse of the Shabbos. We and the Shabbos are connected as man and wife. We are connected in our very life experience, our very life existence. To betray the Shabbos is to tear apart the whole existence of Am Yisrael. We cannot repudiate, we cannot divorce the Shabbos which is the essential 'ben zug', the essential partner of our existence. Klal Yisrael and Shabbos are inseparable. Klal Yisrael and Shabbos cannot possibly exist each without the other, and we have blessed all mankind with the insight of Shabbos. How?

We have elevated the feelings of all human beings with the thoughts and concepts of Shabbos, with the awareness and the acknowledgement that man is not an animal who can be involved in his mundane life all week long, but must set aside that which alone enables him to contemplate and to recognize sanctity, kedusha, uniqueness, ruchniyus - spirituality. That alone should be the hallmark of a human being. The nations of the world learned this from the Jewish experience of living with the Shabbos and being inseparable from the Shabbos.

The Shabbos is that which is the unique expression of the Jew. The Shabbos is that for which he was moser nefesh, sacrificed, and the Shabbos is that which gave him a nefesh to be moser, a purpose in living. The Shabbos is our 'ben zug'. We cannot go on, we cannot be, we cannot exist except with the Shabbos. And all mankind cannot have a connection to spirituality without our giving it reality in our observance of all the laws of the Shabbos. And that is why all Jewish communities, whatever the individual concern, whatever the individual practice, recognize that we stand for the Shabbos, and the Shabbos stands for us. And to lose that is to lose the basic bolt work that alone enables us to continue our being in the midst of all that which is 'misnaged', which is the counter influence to our very way of living and thinking.

The hurt is so deep, and the hurt is so profound because the ben zug of Shabbos is not to any one Jew or any one group of Jews. A ben zug, a spouse, is the whole Jewish Nation, the whole Jewish people. It is those who keep the Torah and those who, Rachmana nitzlan, (G-d should save us) don't keep. Those who understand and are devoted and those who, for whatever reason of upbringing, have lost this deep connection with the source of their being. All of us are the ben zug. And when we see a hurt in that relationship between Jew and Shabbos, when we see a repudiation, the pain is unbearable! For we know that we will all pay in our very being, in our souls, in our understanding of Torah, in our shemiras hamitzvos from this pain, this wound, that has been brought about.

So we come together to strengthen each other. We come together to make sure that the wound will not, G-d forbid, fester and make us lose ourselves. That in the face of all that will be done to hurt and weaken, we're going to strengthen ourselves and our community. We're going to say to all, "You are us, we are you, and together we live in the Shabbos, and together the Shabbos lives in us."

Together we exist through the Shabbos. You must honor it, you must have deep feelings for it

whether you keep it or not. But you must recognize it as the basic source of who and what we are, as a Jewish people through all the ages that have been and through all the ages that are to come. Without it we cease to exist and with it we remain the Am Hashem, kadosh and meyuchad, holy and unique. And this is the purpose and the meaning of our being here today. To make that expression, to make that statement. All of us, all Jews, are a part of the Am Yisrael who is the ben zug of the Shabbos and to whom the Shabbos provides us a ben zug as well. And all of us are involved in the need for Shabbos and in the life that the Shabbos gives. And all of us no matter how we treat it must come to the Shabbos, must look to the Shabbos for our very being.

And we hope and we pray that, B'Ezer Hashem Yisborach, with G-d's help, eyes will be opened and hearts will be touched to recognize and to see and to feel how deeply we want not only our own Shabbos, but their Shabbos as well. How deeply we feel the need not for our Shabbos alone but for the entire community, the observant, and even the non-observant, to attest to their honoring, and to attest to their recognizing the centrality of the sanctity and the holiness the Shabbos alone provides, the Makor Hakedusha, source of sanctity, that which enables spirituality to exist. And therefore honoring it even in a formal manner transforms the life not only of us and not only of the community, but even of those non-shomrei shabbos who even contemplated perhaps to wound it. May the Master of the World give them the insight and the wisdom and the understanding to see how deeply they, as well as we, are affected, that they may rally, as we do, for Kavod HaShabbos, the honor of Shabbos, that this wound shall be expunged and never take place. Amen, Kain Yehi Ratzon.

May Rav Weinberg's inspirational words help us experience a meaningful Shabbos.

יום הששי

ויכלו השמים והארץ וכל צבאם ויכל אלקים
ביום השביעי מלאכתו אשר עשה וישבת ביום השביעי מכל מלאכתו אשר
עשה ויברך אלקים את יום השביעי ויקדש אותו כי בו שבת מכל מלאכתו
אשר ברא אלקים לעשות סברי מרנן ורבנן ורבותי ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך
העולם בורא פרי הגפן ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו
במצותיו ורצה בנו וישבת קדשו באהבה וברצון הנחילנו זכרון למעשה
בראשית כי הוא יום תחלה למקראי קדש זכר ליציאת מצרים כי בנו בחרת
ואתנו קדשת מכל העמים וישבת קדשך באהבה וברצון
הנחלתנו ברוך אתה ה' מקדש השבת
[קידוש ליל שבת].



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גוט שבת!