

PARSHAS DEVARIM



HARAV YISROEL BROG, SHLITA | ROSH HAYESHIVA, YESHIVAS TIFERES AVIGDOR

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PART 1: WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A SHIDDUCH PART 2: REVEALING THE PURPOSE OF CREATION



“I AM JUST NOT FEELING IT”

There is a *sefer* called *Yesodos Habayis*, based on writings of the Chofetz Chaim and his talmidim. It has a large section about many *yesodos* – how the *yesodos habayis* begin, from the sugya of *shidduchim*. Since many of us are married and we don't want to rock the boat, we're not going to go through all the things related to *shidduchim*. But we're going to tell you just a couple of things to know, very important.

The *gemara* says in Kiddushin (41a): רבא אמר רב יהודה אמר רב אסור לאדם שימדוש את האשה עד שיראנה, a person cannot marry a woman until he sees her. Why? Because שמיא יראה בה דבר מגונה, perhaps the first time he sees her after he marries her, he will see in her something that is מגונה, repulsive, and ותתגנה עליו, and she will be repugnant to him. ורמנא אמר, and the Torah says, וראתה לרעה כמוך - therefore, the Sages instituted a requirement that a man must see a woman whom he's *mekadesh*, in order to fulfill the Torah obligation to “love your neighbor.”

From here, there lies a great potential stumbling block. Why? Sometimes a *bachur* meets his date, and he wants to “feel the feeling,” which at this point in time is not a reality. It's simply not realistic. He wants to feel a certain *chein*, he wants to feel a certain feeling. He wants to feel chemistry. As if you're a chemist. And many times, these feelings don't come before marriage. They only come after marriage.

A *bachur* once came before the Chofetz Chaim with this problem. They had suggested a certain *shidduch* for him. All the facts seemed to fit, all the conditions were met from both sides, but the *bachur* didn't feel the feeling that he hoped for. He didn't necessarily feel anti the *shidduch*. He even liked many things about the *shidduch* in general, but the “chemistry” that he was hoping to feel toward the girl was missing. So he didn't know what to do. He decided to ask the Chofetz Chaim for advice.

CHOFETZ CHAIM: CHEIN ONLY COMES IN MARRIAGE

The *shaaleh* was presented to the Chofetz Chaim, and he said as follows. The *gemara* teaches us in Sotah (47a) אמר רבי יוחנן שלשה חינוות הן, there are three graces. Hakadosh Baruch Hu puts ‘chemicals’ in a person that enable him to have unique feelings toward certain things. There is a certain *chein*, a certain grace, a certain condition that a person has to certain things. Number one, it says הן מקום על יושביו, grace of a place upon its inhabitants, הן אשה על בעלה, the grace of a woman upon her husband, which means that a person's wife has a certain attractiveness in her husband's eyes. And הן מקחו על מקחו, the grace of a purchased item upon its buyer, meaning to say that when one has bought something, he views the purchase in a positive light. So the Chofetz Chaim said, this *gemara* says openly that you only have a *chein* על בעלה, meaning the *chein*, or warm feelings that we are talking about, are only with your wife, not with a girl you are dating. So before the marriage, there is no such *chein*, the Chofetz Chaim said to that *bachur*. There is no such feeling before you are *baalah* (her husband). Therefore, he told him not to wait for this *chein*, and if everything else in general fits, he should not reject the *shidduch*; the *chein* he's looking for will come on its own afterwards.

CHOFETZ CHAIM'S SON'S SHIDDUCH STORY

Now, in conclusion of this subject, we have a testimony from R' Aryeh Leib, the eldest son of the Chofetz Chaim, on how his own *shidduch* happened. He wrote down this testimony, and there is a lot to learn from it. Let's study it together. He writes the following:

“When I came of age to get married, my father began to think about my future. When he began to hear different suggestions for me, his first *shaaleh* was about the girl's house. He wanted to know what the house was like. Do they conduct themselves *kemin hag avoseihem* and *avos avoseihem*? Or did ‘strange winds’ come into the house? If the parents have brought strange *ruchos* into that family, that is a dangerous *shidduch*. He wanted to know if the girl had gone to secular schools. Did she have a secular education? To my father, it was *pigul*. He also didn't want to hear a *shidduch* of somebody from a big city because, he said, if you're from a big city, there is no guarantee that the girl will be *shomer* the *minhagim* of her mother. In the big city, the people already are more open minded. They tend to look forward instead of looking in the past. He also didn't want to do a *shidduch* with *ashirim* because he was afraid that the chances of going off the *derech* were much greater because outside influences somehow made it into the rich people's homes more than to others, as was known at the time.”

R' Aryeh Leib continued. "I remember, when I was 19 years old, I went to a place called Kalvarye (Lithuania), to go learn under the wing of the rebbe, the *gaon* R' Bentzion. He was a friend of my father's. When I was there, I received a letter from my father, and in it, he related that when he was in Minsk to sell his *sefarim*, he went to the nearby town called Robisoviz to see how his nephew who lived there was doing. He met one of the *chashuve* people in that *kehillah*, a man who was a *chovev* Torah, and an *ish amid*, he was a man with means. This *yid* said simply, *betmimus*, to my father, 'I heard you have a son, a *lamdan*. I have a daughter who has a lot of *ma'alos*. I would like to be *meshtadech* with you.' He said, 'I'm willing to give a *nadan* (dowry) of 1,500 rubles, which is half of what I'm worth.¹ Besides that, I'm going to support him for 6 years on my table. He can live by me for 6 years.' That was the *minhag* then.

"My father wrote to me that this man's words were *nichnesu belibo*, they entered his heart. But he answered that he won't look into this until the father-in-law sees me and determines that I'm what he is looking for." (He didn't want this potential father-in-law to rely on the Chofetz Chaim to testify on his son!) So my father told him, 'If you are interested, travel to the city of Kalvarye, and go take a look at the *bachur*, my son. Check him out. You can also ask the Av Beis Din there about him. And if you find my son pleasing to you, we'll continue to talk on the subject.' This is what my father wrote to me," R' Aryeh Leib said.

"After some time had passed," R' Aryeh Leib says, "I got a message from the Rav, the Av Beis Din, to tell me that a guest had arrived from Robisovitz and he would like to meet with me. I understood right away that the *yid* that my father wrote to me about was coming here to meet me. I met him at the Rav's house. He presented me with a number of difficult *kashas* in *halachah*. I attempted to answer them. We were *mefalpel*. And after the Rav mixed in and helped us out, the *kushyos* were answered in a pleasant way. I said goodbye to him, and he continued to talk to the Rav about me. I understood that he was pleased. But a number of months passed, and I didn't get any info about the *shidduch*. I didn't hear anything about it."

"The *zman* was coming to a close, and I was planning to travel home. I got another letter from my father and in the letter he said that he has not yet arrived home from his travels since the last time he wrote me, but he told me that, 'When I'll come home, you could assume that the *rosh hakahal* of the place where we live, is going

to suggest to me a *shidduch* with an *ashir echad*' and my father warned me in the letter that I should not enter into a conversation with him. 'Don't get involved in the conversation and don't listen to him whatsoever.' That's what he said to me. He said, "It's *mistaber* he's going to present to you a *shidduch*."

"As soon as I came home, the *rosh hakahal* called me, he wanted to speak to me, and he presented me with a daughter of a certain *gvir*. The guy owned huge wineries, a very rich guy, and he was ready to give 3000 rubles – that's double the last time – and also to promise years of *mezonos*. Understandably, I answered like my father told me to. I said that I can't say anything on the subject until my father comes back from his trip."

"But the *emes* is," R' Aryeh Leib writes, "even though I didn't go against my father's words, my father's position appeared to me at that point somewhat strange. I couldn't understand it. Why? I was familiar with that *ashir*. He was known as a *yarei shamayim*. He was an *emese frummer yid*, he was a *yashar*, he was very big *baal chessed* and *nediv lev*. He also sent his son to the *yeshivah* of my uncle. I didn't know why my father wasn't interested in the *shidduch*, and why he didn't jump on it. Why would he want to push away such a *chashuve nedunya*?"

"I took the matter out of my mind, and a short while later, I got a letter from Robisovitz, and in that letter, I was being invited to meet with the girl from Robisovitz and to decide if I wanted to marry her. That's what we did. I went, and it concluded the matter. That *yid*, the Robisovitzer, was my father-in-law, and he was a *muflag betorah veyirah*, and a tremendous *baal chessed beseiser*. His name was R' Avraham ben R' Eliyahu, zt"l. My father said about him one time, 'It's hard to find a person like him among tens of thousands of people.' In what? 'In his *chavivus*, in his dearness, in his *hasmadah* in Torah, in his *nekus kapav migezel* and in his *nedivus*, his willingness to give.' My father-in-law gave me half of what he owned as my *nadan*, and the other half he gave to his other son-in-law, *hagaon* R' Tebel, who became the *rav* of Malech (Belarus)."

"In the year 1880 (תר"מ), he says, "I came to my father-in-law's house and for the next three years I learned *bepirush* (that means by myself), away from my family, in a certain city. And when I was there, I got a letter from my father. In that letter, he mentioned the other *shidduch*. It's interesting. (This is very telling and revealing. R' Aryeh Leib was married already.) My father mentioned the *shidduch* that the *rosh hakahal* suggested to me a number of years back. He related that the fourteen year old sister of the girl that they had in mind for me was sent by her father to a *goyishe* school in Grodno, which was a *davar pasul*. And in that town, she went to the movies, to the theaters. That's what she did over there. And from there, it went from bad to worse. She met a *goyishe* officer over there and *lekalos daatah*, she fell for him, and she was prepared to change her religion in order to get married to him. Her father, the *ashir*, left all his *asakim*, came to Grodno in order to try to win her over, and to get her away from the hands of that *goy*, and he spent thousands – my father wrote – he spent *kamah alfei rublim be'inyan*. But he still wasn't successful." This is the Chofetz Chaim who is writing this!

¹ Ed. note: the average salary of a Russian worker in Moscow in 1879 was 189 rubles per year, so 1500 rubles represented about 8 years worth of an average worker's salary in those days (<https://www.opocuu.com/rab1913.htm>)

“Then my father concluded his letter, after giving all the *pratim*, as follows: ‘*Mah gadlu rachamei shamayim alai*, how great was Hashem’s mercy upon me for saving me from falling into this trap! Could you imagine the *cherpah* we would have had if we had been *mischaten* with *aza bayis*. and the *chillul kavod haTorah* and the *chillul lomdei haTorah* that would have been caused by this, when people would say that the reason why we married into that family was just that we were willing to sell ourselves for money.’ This is what my father wrote to me in the letter,” R’ Aryeh Leib says.

LESSONS GLEANED AND LEARNED FROM THE STORY

This is the story. From this story, we see a number of very big *yesodos*. When it comes to *shidduchim*, you want to first check out the *bayis*. Is it a *bayis* of Torah and *yirah*? That’s all. Now, if it’s a *freier* home - I want to tell you a rule today. You’d say, “A not *frum* home? That’s worse. Isn’t that terrible?” The answer is: no, it’s not. I want to tell you something. A girl who comes from a *freier* home and became *frum* is somebody who broke the mold of her family. So she’s *taka* really *frum*. If you have a *frum* father who has *deios kosovos* and he’s a *pasule mentch*, *nisht kein nediv lev*, *nisht kein gutte mentch*, and he has his *pasul* philosophies on education or schools - that’s much, much worse! Because that girl grew up in a *frum* home, and it’s a *pasule* place; you have to be very careful in such a place. That’s what the Chofetz Chaim *b’etzem* was saying to his son. You have to know that.

Second of all, you have to know that the *taaneh* on the father was that the father sent his daughter to this place! Obviously, the daughter wanted to get an education, so the father sent her away. And when it comes to *hashkafos*, there is no place to give in. You have to know that.

And the *chiddush* was also over here that even though the girl who was *redd* to R’ Aryeh Leib was a good girl herself, since her father practiced a different *shitah* that was extreme, for another sister, you have to know it’s a place where it is ripe for potential for someone to move away from the Torah.

I don’t say every person has to sit and learn, but if the father sends one sister to college and one sister to Beis Yaakov, that shows that in that home, there is something weak there.

Another thing we see is that the Chofetz Chaim didn’t mind having a nice *nadan* for his kids. For his own son, he didn’t say, “Oh, I don’t need money, and even though it’s *min hashamayim*, this and that.” No, if you could get it and Hakadosh Baruch Hu is giving it to you, why not?!

And R’ Aryeh Leib said, “Even though it was a double dowry, my father held that’s something you don’t have to reject.” (that in essence, he would have taken it if not for the *pasul hashkafah* issue).

Making a *shidduch* with someone who grew up in a home with inconsistent, non-Torahdik *hashkafos* - from that, you have to be careful. Now, if someone is the type who moved away from a Torah lifestyle, then of course, they will marry someone else who similarly moved away from a Torah lifestyle; they’re exactly the same. Let’s say a guy comes to me, he’s thinking of going to college someday. Going to college is generally not the Torah way. But since that’s what you are doing, you could marry a girl who wants college, and her father wants college. That’s where you belong. No question about it. It’s *matzo min es mino*. We’re not talking about that.

What we’re talking about is, let’s say you have a *bachur* who wants to be a ben Torah. He wants to *shtell avek a shtub* of Torah. So then, making his *shidduch* is a different story. The girl’s *hashkafos* and the parents’ *hashkafos* have to match his. This is a very important lesson in determining the proper *shidduch*.

Let’s say a person wants to marry into a family and he wants to sit and learn, and you know that the father-in-law doesn’t agree with the idea of sitting and learning, or the mother-in-law doesn’t hold of it. So you’ve got to be out of your mind to marry into a family like that! I don’t care if your *kallah* wants you to sit and learn. You know what you’re going to have to face?! Because your wife is going to be under the influence of her family. I see these things play out all the time! So a person should make the right decisions.

Participant: Does the rule about *chein* apply the other way too, the girl for boys?

Answer: I think that’s less of a *chiddush*. That’s more natural because it says a lady is a part of a man. A lady only has her *metzius* through her *baalah*. So there it’s more of a *davar pashut*. A lady can’t have more than one husband, but a husband could theoretically have more than one wife, so it’s important that there be *chein*, the grace of a woman upon her husband.

Participant: Why is it not different than a *ba’ales teshuva* who broke away from her family’s non-*frum derech*? Didn’t she reject her parents’ position? Why shouldn’t we treat her the same way?

Answer: Because you generally don’t reject one *prat*. I had a girl who came a little while ago with her parents, a very *frum* family. Her father learned in Telshe for many years. The girl is looking for a *shidduch*. I said to this girl, “What kind of *shidduch* do you want?” She said, “A *geshmake* guy, a *mentch*.” I said, “Tell me, what kind of guy do you want?” I asked the mother, “Could you leave the room for a moment, please?” The mother was there, the father was there. I told them, “I want to talk to your daughter alone.” When her parents left the room, the daughter told me straight. “I’d like somebody

who is with it.” I said, “What does that mean?” She said, “I want somebody who appreciates sports.” I said, “What do you mean?” She said, “I want that at the Shabbos table, sports should be a discussion.” I said, “Really?! That’s what you want?! If I knew somebody like that, I wouldn’t have great respect for him.” I asked her, “Where did you get this *hashkafah*?” She said, “My family is like that.” I knew her father. Her father was sitting in *kollel*, he was a *kollel* guy! *Nebach*. This family had *tzaros* over their head! It’s no *kasha* to me why. If that’s what she wants *lechatchilah*, that means they gave their kids this type of *chinuch*. You know what that is? That’s a *churban*. Now I understood why not one of her older brothers was *shayach* to the *parshah* of being a ben Torah.

No, I don’t say it never happens, that a brother from a family with these values cannot become an *emese* ben Torah, you understand. But you are going to be going up against the grain . If someone is very sincere in his change, that’s different, but it’s hard to expect that. I know couples where the husbands sit and learn, but you know what the guy tells me? He said he told his wife, “It’s only temporary. Don’t get scared. We’re not a *kollel* couple.”

Today, it looks very different than in the olden days. In the olden days, there was a large segment of *frum* people who were going away from Yiddishkeit, so parents had to investigate and look into everything. Today, you know, people would never get married if we followed every one of these old rules, because they would have to sit and be *borer* everything. My grandfather, Rav Avigdor Miller, zt”l, used to tell people all kinds of rules about marriage. He used to ask about *middos*, what kind of *baalos chessed* a girl is, etc. Now he just says, “Find somebody who wants the same things you do, and marry her. Because otherwise, you’re going to be sitting and waiting until Mashiach comes.”

SHABBOS - REVEALING THE PURPOSE OF CREATION

A SOURCE FOR THE PURPOSE OF CREATION

In the *nusach hatefillah* of *leil Shabbos* we say as follows: אתה קדשת את יום השביעי לשמך - “You sanctified the seventh day for Your Name.” And that *kiddush* of יום השביעי, which is לשמך, is the תכלית of וארץ שמים, is it the purpose of Heaven and Earth.

Now, in that one sentence, it says a wonderful *chiddush*. If somebody asked you, “What was the תכלית of the creation of שמים וארץ, what was the purpose for which Hashem created everything in שמים and everything in the ארץ?” You will hear all kinds of answers except the straightforward answer. Because it’s such a *chiddush* that nobody accepts this! Do you know what the answer is? The answer is: the תכלית of the creation of שמים וארץ is for Shabbos.

I remember the first time I asked somebody this question. When I *chapped* this, I went over to a *chashuve* person and I said, “What is the absolute תכלית of everything in שמים and ארץ?” So he told me, “It’s *Torah* and *chessed*.” I said, “I’ve got something else for you - Shabbos.” He said, “Shabbos?” I said, “Yes.” He said, “Where does it say that?” I said, “*Azoy shteit* in the *siddur*! שמים וארץ - אתה קדשת את יום השביעי לשמך תכלית שמים וארץ - that is the ultimate purpose of שמים וארץ.” Now you have to understand that’s a whopper of a bomb. After hearing this, you should never enter Shabbos again in the same way that you did till today, because now you’re handling the תכלית of שמים וארץ.

Now, let’s understand this a bit better. We know that the world underwent a change, a metamorphosis, from before Adam Harishon’s *chet* to after his *chet*. We see from *Chazal* that Shabbos plays a big role in that event. Most people don’t know exactly how. You have to know, *Chazal* tell us that if Adam Harishon would not have sinned on *erev Shabbos*, then he and the entire *briyah* would have entered ליום שכולו שבת ומנוחה לחיי העולמים. That means, in the first Shabbos, we would have reached the purpose of creation.

THREE PARALLEL PURPOSES

Now, there are three *inyanim* that are included in תכלית מעשה שמים וארץ. Number one - Hakodosh Boruch Hu wants to be מיטיב to all His נבראים, like the Ramchal tells us in the beginning of *Mesillas Yesharim* - ולהנות על ה’ ולהנות. So that means when we talk about the תכלית of שמים וארץ, one תכלית is definitely for Hashem to be מיטיב. Number two, בראשית בשביל התורה שנקרא ראשית, - Torah. And number three, Hakodosh Boruch Hu wants us to recognize the *yichud*, His Oneness, His superiority - אני ראשון ואני אחרון. Hakodosh Boruch Hu who is *kulo hatov v’hameitiv*, ה’ אחד. That’s the third aspect of תכלית שמים וארץ.

So what we begin to see, is that Hashem was *mekadesh Shabbos* לשמך - for the sake of His Name, because Shabbos is what brings about the תכלית of שמים וארץ. What is included in that תכלית? Like we just mentioned. *Meitiv* - Hashem is being *meitiv*. Torah - Hashem gave us Torah. Now, it’s important to realize that Shabbos and Torah are not simply two unrelated mitzvos; Shabbos itself is intrinsically linked with Torah (see below). Shabbos is inherently related to Torah. The fact that Torah was given on Shabbos means that Shabbos and Torah share a unique relationship. Shabbos is the essence of Hashem and Torah is the essence of Hashem.

And the third aspect is Hashem’s *yichud*. Shabbos also brings out the revelation of the Oneness of Hashem, His *yichud*. These are the three aspects of Shabbos.

RA AS A TOOL TO SERVE HASHEM

Now, Ramchal explains in *Daas Tevunos* that Hakodosh Boruch Hu created the *metziyus* of *ra* in the world to serve Hashem. How does *ra* serve Hashem? If you walk down the street and there's a *perutzah* walking down the street, how does that serve to be *megaleh kevod Shamayim*, to serve Hashem? You know how? Because if a person says, "Hakodosh Boruch Hu does not want me to look and think about that *perutzah*." So now, that *shtick shmutz* that was walking down the street was *megaleh kevod Shomayim*. And you know who revealed it? You. You were *megaleh kevod Shomayim* through that *perutzah*. It's amazing.

Adam Harishon was told this when he was first created. Hashem said: "I put an *eitz hadaas* here, be *megaleh kevod Shamayim*. How? Don't eat from it. By looking at this tree and not eating from it, you're being *megaleh kevod Shamayim*." That's all. And he should have *chapped*, I'm sure he did *chap*, that any attraction to eat it contradicts the fact that everything is Hashem and Hashem is in control. It was there only to give him a test and to give him a *zechus*. The Ramchal says that if Adam Harishon would have withstood the test of his loyalty and wouldn't have been seduced by his *yetzer hara*, he would have been *mechazek* in his heart this *emunah* and would have reached the pinnacle of internalizing the *matzev* of Hashem's absolute Oneness.

When Adam Harishon was created, he was holding at a very, very high level. The Ramchal says that if Adam Harishon would have just strengthened himself in this last little *shtickel* of *emunah*, and refrained from transgressing Hashem's word and would have held out until *leil Shabbos Kodesh*, then Hakodosh Boruch Hu would have done in a single day what He now has to do in six thousand years. In other words, had Adam Harishon trusted and believed in the absolute presence and Oneness of Hashem, and that it's not *shayech* to go against Hashem, he would have been *mevatel*, in one second, all the *ra* in the world. Adam Harishon would have been *mekayem* *ובערת הרע מקרבך*. That means there was a small pocket of *ra* in the world when Adam Harishon was created, that presented a challenge to go against the *ratzon* of Hashem. And if he would have not succumbed to that challenge, the *kevod Shomayim* that would have been *nisgaleh* would have taken over the world. And Adam Harishon would have entered the *יום שכולו שבת ומנוחה לחי העולמים*. But because he didn't, the world fell.

OUR TIKKUN OF THE ORIGINAL CHET

You have to know that everything that we're challenged with is part of the restoration of that original *chet*.

Here's a person who is sitting in front of a *gemara*, and he is feeling very antsy. What is that antsiness? A person who doesn't have a lot of *seichel* says to himself, "You know what that antsiness is from? I don't have a good head, I have ants in my pants," and he makes all kinds of stories up instead of saying, "What I have is a challenge from my *yetzer hara*." So instead of reminding himself of this, the guy picks himself up and walks out. You know what the person is saying? "Hakodosh Boruch Hu, I'm very sorry to tell You, but right now I'm not interested in being *megaleh Your kavod* in this world."

Now, only *you* could be *megaleh* that *kavod* in that unique way; I can't. I may not have the same challenges you have, so I can't bring out that aspect of *kevod Shamayim*. Each one of us has our own, unique way of bringing out the *kevod Shamayim*. And when you walk away - like that fellow walked away from his learning - you know what you're saying? "Hashem, I'm sorry; right now, You don't exist." A person has to always consider this challenge. It takes tremendous insight to realize how everything we do leads back to that one truth.

Does it mean a person can never take a walk? No, it doesn't mean that. Does it mean you can't take a rest? No. Does it mean you can't talk to your wife and your children? No, it doesn't mean that. But it means you have to always ask yourself: "Am I being pulled away by my *yetzer hara*? You're always being challenged by your *yetzer*. With every single thing you do, you are being challenged by your *yetzer hara*."

Tonight, on Shabbos, we're going to sit down for a *seudah*. Every one of us likes to eat, and our *yetzer hara* is going to be all over us. He is going to be our closest *chaver* in that *seudah*. And a person has a choice - the choice is his to be *megaleh kevod Shamayim*. He could say, "Hakodosh Boruch Hu, my *yetzer hara* doesn't want me to think this is a *seudas Shabbos*. My *yetzer hara* doesn't want me to contemplate what the purpose of *seudas Shabbos* is. My *yetzer hara* doesn't want me to bring any *kevod Shamayim* from a piece of *challah*, my *yetzer hara* wants me to enjoy the *challah* - this type of *challah*, that type of *challah*. This type of drink, that type of drink. My *yetzer hara* wants me to enjoy my *guf*, and just have *gufniusdike fliesh*."

You have to realize that the *gilui kevod Shamayim* comes from overcoming this challenge. Let's say a person is going to be challenged the whole entire *seudah* about thinking that Hashem is present in the world on Shabbos, more so than before Shabbos, and fulfilling the directive, the *ratzon* of Hashem of *זכור את יום השבת*, you have to be *shomer* the Shabbos, not to be *mesiach daas* from Shabbos. It's not easy to have these thoughts throughout your *seudah*. You are in a constant challenge. But every second that a person does that, he is being *megaleh* the *kevod Shamayim* in the world!

And you know what that does? That brings tremendous *hatovah*, Hakodosh Boruch Hu is now able to fulfill one of the main *tachlis* of the *שמים וארץ* to be *meitiv* with people.

But why is Shabbos the *tachlis* of *hatovah* in this world? The answer is that Shabbos is the revelation of everything. On Shabbos, Hashem reveals His presence to the world, which is the greatest *hatovah*. Shabbos is *mein olam haba*, and the *olam haba* is the ultimate *tovah*, so if Hashem gives you something that's *mein olam haba* in this world, that is the ultimate *tovah*!

TORAH AND SHABBOS GO HAND IN HAND

If a person learns Torah on Shabbos - ooh - it is a good thing to do and it is *me'iid* that Hakodosh Boruch Hu created the world! One of the reasons He created the world was Shabbos. And that's why Shabbos and Torah go together. In other words, if a person learns Torah on Shabbos with an awareness that Shabbos has an intrinsic connection to Torah, then just like Shabbos is *me'iid* on HaKadosh Baruch Hu, so too His Torah is *me'iid* on HaKadosh Baruch Hu! And if a person learns Torah on Shabbos because he recognizes that there's a connection between Torah and Shabbos, then by extension the Torah is being *me'iid* that HaKadosh Baruch Hu created the world!

Let's say a person learns Torah on Shabbos, but he struggles, and his *yetzer hara* tells him, "I know it says שבת יעשו כולו תורה, but I'm a *talmid chacham*; it says that for *baalei battim*, not for me. And if yes, I'm not holding there, I can't, my mind doesn't work, I don't have the clarity, I don't have this, I don't have that." So you end up giving in to the *yetzer hara*, you waste life, and destroy tremendous, tremendous opportunities for growth. You have to think about what you're doing, that's what you have to do.

THE FIRST SHABBOS WAS PERFECT

Now, Hakodosh Boruch Hu did us a *norahdikke chessed*. What was that *chedsed*?

When did Adam Harishon sin? On *erev* Shabbos. When Adam Harishon sinned, the whole world, the whole *briyah* became *niskaleil*, it became cursed. 'Cursed' means it became downgraded; nothing had the same *sheleimus* as before. However, *Chazal* tell us that Hakodosh Boruch Hu didn't let the *klalah* be *chal* until *motzoei Shabbos kodesh*. That means during the first Shabbos, the *briyah* and Adam remained in the same *matzav* that they were before the *chet*. That was a *gevaldige chessed*.

Azoy shteit in the Medrash Rabbah in Bereishis (11:2). It says as follows: שאף על פי שנתקללו המאורות בערב שבת לא לקו עד מוצאי שבת, even though the luminaries were cursed on *erev Shabbos*, they were not smitten until *motzoei Shabbos*. And the *medrash* says regarding Adam (according to *Rabanan*), ומוצאי שבת ניטל ממנו זיוו וטרדו מגן עדן, it was only on *motzoei Shabbos*, that the splendor of Adam Harishon was taken away, and he was kicked out of Gan Eden. That's when he changed his whole stature. Hakodosh Boruch Hu let him retain his *maamad* through that first Shabbos.

Now the *shaaleh* is why? If he messed up before Shabbos, how come the *klalah* didn't take effect until after Shabbos? And the answer is because the first six days of the world each correspond to the six thousand years of history, while Shabbos corresponds to what the *Chazal* refer to as the *אלף השביעי*, the seventh millenia. The Ramban in Bereishis (2:3) says this clearly. And the *אלף השביעי* is when Hashem is going to be Hashem Echad. ביום ההוא יהיה ה' אחד ושמו אחד. That's when the world will reach its ultimate *tachlis* - יום שכולו שבת ומנוחה לחי העולמים. So if Hakodosh Boruch Hu would have allowed the curse to be *chal* on *יום השביעי*, the first Shabbos, the result would have been that *יום השביעי* would have been imperfect. And *יום השביעי* has to be perfect.²

THE HUGE POTENTIAL OF SHABBOS

So it comes out that we're saying as follows: אתה קדשת את יום השביעי - Hakodosh Boruch Hu, You sanctified *יום השביעי*. You kept it so *kadosh*, You didn't allow *chet* to mess it up. You know why? לשמך למען שמו. For Your name. What does "for Your name" mean? Because והיה ביום ההוא יהיה ה' אחד ושמו אחד.

לשם ה' - לשם אחד means לשמך. And that's the Shabbos that we have. And the residue, we have a lot of residue from that. Because Shabbos wasn't cursed, we don't have to work for the food we consume on Shabbos. The money that a person spends on Shabbos is not *nichlal* in the *cheshbon* that Hakodosh Boruch Hu designated for him on Rosh Hashanah.

Shabbos is a very special day. And we have to utilize this great opportunity because it is an opportunity that is not just for Shabbos. It's an opportunity for everything we could accomplish potentially in the *ששת ימי המעשה* that follow each Shabbos.

Therefore, let us be aware of these challenges and the corresponding opportunities during this Shabbos and acknowledge the following, "Until now, I struggled to be *megaleh kevod Shamayim*. But, Baruch Hashem, this Shabbos, I was *zocheh* to be *megaleh kevod Shamayim*." Giving *hodaah l'Hashem Yisbarach* on Shabbos is also an opportunity to be *megaleh k'vod Shamayim*. That's what it really is. Rabbosai, these are all tremendous opportunities that Hakodosh Boruch Hu presents us with. So let us try to reach that level, to the degree that we can, and hopefully we'll be *matzliach*.

² ונראה משוני הזימים משרץ המים והעוף לסיבת הארץ, כי בתחלת האלף הששי תתחדש מלכות אמה שלטת ואימתני ותקיפא יתירא, ומתקרבת אל האמת יותר מן הראשונות. היום השביעי שבת, רמז לעולם הבא שכלו שבת ומנוחה לחיי העולמים. והאל ישמרנו בכל הימים, וישים חלקנו עם עבדיו התמימים.

IN CONCLUSION

Amazingly, the *nusach tefillah* for *leil Shabbos* reveals clearly the reason the world was created - Shabbos! The words of the *nusach* are אתה קדשת את יום השביעי לשמך תכלית מעשה שמים וארץ. Three shared purposes of both the creation of the world and Shabbos are: *Yichud Hashem*, recognizing Hashem as the *meitiv*, and learning and keeping the Torah. Hashem gives us the opportunity to connect with Him through overcoming *ra*. This began from the original *cheit* of Adam Harishon and we are still restoring the deficit in *kevod Shamayim* caused by that *cheit*. Shabbos is a day when we can more effectively bring the world closer to its purpose, when the world will know *Hashem echad u'shmo echad*. This week (*bli neder*), I will try to recognize that my Shabbos meal is a *seudah* with great potential and say, "This is a Shabbos *seudah* and the purpose of it is to increase *kevod Shamayim*."