

Kinder Torah

בס"ד

Parashas Vayeshev

Mah Yedidus

“Abba, we enjoyed your *peirushim* on the *zemiros* ‘Kol Mekadesh’ and ‘Menucha Vi Simcha’ so much. Can you please explain ‘Mah Yedidus’ to us?”

“With great pleasure, kinderlach. ‘Mah Yedidus’ is a *zemer* that contains both praise of the Shabbos, in addition to a wide variety of *halachos* of Shabbos. We begin by declaring how beloved the *menucha* (resting) of Shabbos is to us.”

“We love Shabbos, Abba!”

“Indeed, kinderlach. Our beloved day is referred to in three ways in the first stanza: Shabbos (resting), malka (queen),

and kallah (bride). The Maharal (Chidushei Aggados on Bava Kamma 32a) relates that Shabbos refers to the mitzvah of refraining from *melacha*.

Kallah refers to the mitzvah of wearing special Shabbos clothes. Just as a kallah wears her finest clothes for her most special day, so too we wear our finest clothes to honor the holy seventh day. Malka, the Shabbos Queen, refers to the sumptuous food and drink that we enjoy. We delight in the delicacies of kings and queens to honor the day.

“We will run to greet the Shabbos.” The *kadmonim* were so excited about the arrival of Shabbos that they would go out of the city to the field to receive it. ‘The Jewish women finish all of their preparations, dress in their finest garments, and light the candles with a blessing (to greet the arrival of Shabbos).’”

“How delightful!”

“That is exactly what the refrain of the *zemer* says, kinderlach. ‘To indulge in delights – poultry (that is fit for a king), very fatty fowl, and fish.’ ‘All of these tasty things are made ready the day before Shabbos. We have many varieties of delicacies, including ones that give joy to a person’s heart and scented wines for all three meals.’ Foods that are easy to prepare are made ready on Erev Shabbos. More complicated dishes, such as fatted fowl (which requires salting) are begun the day before. Kinderlach, the work of preparing for Shabbos is a very big mitzvah. Our holy Tannaim and Ammoraim would personally buy the Shabbos food in the market, chop the wood, light the

fire, salt the meat, cook, prepare the wicks of the lights, and do many other preparations for Shabbos. The work was so important that they would not leave it to anyone else, rather do it with their own hands!”

“We want to help prepare for Shabbos, Abba!”

“Wonderful, kinderlach! Imma and I welcome your assistance. Menachem, the author of ‘Mah Yedidus’, then speaks about the reward for those who keep the Shabbos. They will receive an inheritance like Yaakov Avinu’s – without boundaries, as the verse states, ‘You will spread out westward, eastward, northward, and southward’ (Bereshis 28:14). ‘Both

the rich and the poor shall honor it (each according to his abilities) and thereby merit redemption.’ The Rambam adds that a wealthy person who eats delicacies all week should have different

food on Shabbos, or at least eat at a different time of the day. ‘If you will guard the Shabbos day, you will be My treasure. Six days you shall labor, and on the seventh day rejoice!’”

“What a fantastic day, Abba!”

“Indeed, kinderlach. Now let us learn a few *halachos* together. ‘Business matters are forbidden, as well as calculations.’ This refers to doing or speaking about them. The Zohar

states that these mundane words go up to heaven and cause a separation between Hashem and His holy nation. However, ‘thinking is permitted, and to arrange *shidduchim* for girls.’”

“Why, Abba?”

“Because it is a mitzvah. The *zemer* then goes on to list other mitzvos involving money that are permitted to plan on Shabbos. Arranging a paid teacher (of *Tanach*) for a child, or one who will teach its musical notes, or one who will teach him how to speak beautifully in every corner and community are all permitted on Shabbos.’ Now we will speak about relaxation on this day of rest. ‘May your walking be calm (relaxed, small steps). Declare the Shabbos a delight (with special food and drink). Its sleep is excellent; it refreshes the soul (to learn

Torah better). My soul yearns to fulfill all of the mitzvos of Shabbos; to be content with love. It requires only a fence of roses, (which is not restrictive at all) in order for the Bnei Yisrael to rest in it.’ We do not consider Shabbos restricting, nor do we need any special warnings to guard it. Rather it is a day of pure pleasure and love.”

“That is absolutely beautiful, Abba.”

“Yes, kinderlach. As beautiful as . . . Olam Habba! Shabbos is called, ‘May’eyin (a semblance of) *Olam Habba*.’ Its delights give us a small taste of the pleasures of Olam Habba. The Gemora (Brachos 57b) states that Shabbos is 1/60 of Olam Habba. ‘All those who delight in it will merit much happiness.’ The Gemora (Shabbos 118b) relates that one who delights in Shabbos will have all of his heart’s requests filled.”

“I have a lot of requests, Abba!”

“May the all be fulfilled, Chaim. Kinderlach, Menachem ends his beautiful *zemer* with a fervent request. ‘They (Shabbos observers) will be rescued from the birth pangs of Moshiach. Make our redemption sprout forth, so that grief and pain may flee!’ All suffering will end with the arrival of the final *geula*. The simcha will be so strong, overwhelming, and everlasting, that there will be no room for sadness and grief. It will just disappear.”

“We can’t wait, Abba!”

“Neither can I, kinderlach. However, in the meantime, let us enjoy this wonderful day of Shabbos, and experience a small taste of that pleasure that is in store for us.”

Kinderlach . . .

Our love of Shabbos knows no bounds. We joyfully prepare for it, don our best clothes, and go out to meet it. We enjoy the best delicacies in honor of the day. We refrain from mundane activities. Our reward for delighting in Hashem’s special gift is inheritance without boundaries, spiritual and physical rest, happiness, and a taste of the world to come. What a day! What a gift! We love Shabbos!

Parasha Question:

- What is the meaning of, ‘His master (Potiphar) saw that Hashem was with him’? (Rashi 39:3)
- What merchandise was the caravan of Yishmaelim carrying? Why does the verse tell us this? (37:25 and Rashi)
- Who pulled Yosef out of the pit? To whom was he sold? (37:28 and Rashi)

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