

Kinder Torah®

Parashas Behar

כ"ב

Longing for Shabbos

“Abba, I am so excited! Shabbos is finally here!”

“Were you waiting for it all week, Avi?”

“I surely was, Abba. I was more than waiting for Shabbos -- I was longing for it!”

“Ahhh, Avi. Your emotions are expressed by the Chassidic master Rabbi Aharon of Karlin, in his beautiful *zemer*, ‘Kah Echsof Noam Shabbos’.”

“Can you please share it with me, Abba?”

“Certainly, Avi. The second stanza of the *zemer* compares the longing of the Jewish *neshama* (soul) for Shabbos to a deer’s thirst for water. When a deer eats a snake, its body becomes warm from the venom, and it becomes very thirsty. Therefore, it searches for ‘*afikei mayim*’ – strong springs of water to quench its thirst.”

“I can relate to that, Abba. I feel the spiritual ‘thirst’ in my *neshama* that only Shabbos can quench.”

“May you always imbibe deeply from its holiness, Avi. The *zemer* begins with a mystical description of how Shabbos and Hashem’s treasured nation, become ‘twins’ and unite on the holy day. The Torah and Hashem’s Holy Name (mentioned in the next stanza) become the third and fourth partners in the sacred union of Shabbos. We entreat the Holy One to favor us with the sweetness of fear of Him.”

“How can fear be sweet, Abba?”

“When you fear Hashem by being in awe of His Might, realizing that He uses it only for your good, it gives you a pleasant feeling of security. You know that you are in the hands of the Almighty Who loves you. Lastly, we request that our desire to come close to the Holy One open the gates of His desire for us. The second stanza asks the Eternal One for His protection and purification of our hearts to serve Him in truth. Our love for Shabbos is so great, that we delay in parting from it, requesting that its sanctity be absorbed into the six days of the week.”

“I would love to elevate my *madrayga* (spiritual level) of *kedusha* (holiness) during the week, Abba.”

“You can do it, Avi. You need to ask Hashem to have mercy and help you. That is the subject of the third stanza. His kindness is metaphorically compared to a river flowing from Eden, which will crown with splendor the nation who glorifies Hashem through Shabbos. Then

all six days will be endowed with the boundless inheritance of Yaakov, as the verse states, ‘You will spread out westward, eastward, northward, and southward.’”²

“Shabbos is so wonderful, Abba! I am just ecstatic over it!”

“That is precisely how the *zemer* ends, Avi. Shabbos is the sweetness of the soul, delight of the spirit, bliss of our essence; the ecstasy of Hashem’s love and awe. Holy Shabbos! My soul pines for your love! The souls of Israel find refuge in the protection of your wings; they are sated from the abundance of Hashem’s house.”

“May we all feel such true inner love for Shabbos.”

“Amen.”

Kinderlach . . .

Rabbi Aharon of Karlin masterfully describes the ecstasy of the yearning of the Jewish *neshama* for the beauty and holiness of Shabbos. These emotions are nurtured by a true understanding and appreciation of the holy day. It begins with learning about Shabbos, its *halachos* along with its concepts. We then begin preparing for Shabbos, taking care to direct our *kavannah* (intention) in every action for the sake of the Holy Shabbos. Finally, we finish the preparations and the Holy Day arrives. We sanctify the day, refrain from *melacha*, pray the prayers, delight in the eating and drinking, sing *zemiros*, and learn Torah. We become totally absorbed in the holiness of the day – a spiritual wellspring! It is no wonder that the Jewish soul yearns for Shabbos. Its pleasure is like nothing in this world – “*me’ein Olam Habo*” – a semblance of the world to come! Kinderlach, may you all merit to enjoy Shabbos to its fullest.

Leiv Tahor

“Excuse me; can you please direct me to Rechov Leiv Tahor?”

The man opens his eyes. He had been enjoying a nice afternoon nap in the beautiful public park when this stranger came along.

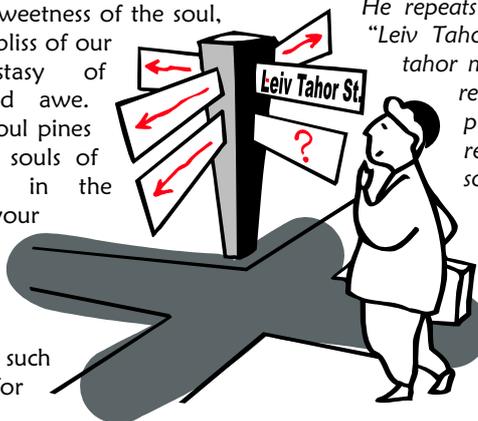
“What? Which street do you want?”

“Leiv Tahor.”

“He has some nerve,” the man thinks. “He

woke me up to ask me directions. Didn’t he see that I was sleeping? I will fix him good. I will give him directions to a street so far away that he will be lost for hours.” He stands up to point the man in the wrong direction.

“Let’s see - Leiv Tahor.”



He repeats the words to himself. “Leiv Tahor”. “Leiv Tahor”. Leiv tahor means pure heart. Am I really doing this with a pure heart? I am taking revenge. I am giving someone bad advice.

That is *onaas devarim* (wronging him with words). Perhaps he did not realize that I was sleeping. Even if he did, perhaps there was no one else around to ask. He may be under pressure to make an appointment. Why should I take revenge? He did not do anything wrong. I am going to give him the answer with a pure heart.

“Rechov Leiv Tahor. I am going that way myself. Follow me.”



The Torah prohibits wronging a person with words as the verse states, “You shall not wrong your fellow (Jew) with words, and you shall fear your G-d” (Vayikra 25:17). Rashi asks the following question: If someone gives bad advice, who will know if he really intended to wrong the person? Perhaps he just made an honest mistake. Therefore, the verse states, “You shall fear your G-d.” He knows your thoughts. He knows the intentions of your heart. He cannot be fooled.

Kinderlach . . .

Onaas devarim is a sin of the mouth and the heart. The mouth should never utter words that hurt one of our fellow Jews. However, even if these words are spoken there is another partner in the crime - the heart. Did the speaker really intend to hurt the person? Only two individuals know the answer to that - Hashem and the speaker. The Almighty cannot be fooled. He knows everything. Do not try to fool yourselves either, *kinderlach*. Do not try to convince yourselves that you are right, when you know in your heart that you are wrong. Keep your hearts pure. Serve Hashem with a *leiv tahor*.

¹ Radak on Tehillim 42:2

² Bereshis 28:14