

Behar 2016

1.

### Why is Shabbos repeated?

“Guard my Shabbas and fear my Mikdash.” (26, 2)

"את־שַׁבָּתִי תִשְׁמְרוּ וּמִקְדָּשִׁי תִירָאוּ אֲנִי ה'."

Why is the commandment of Shabbos mentioned here, after the fact that Shabbos was already mentioned?

The safer Otzer Chaim (Rabbi Chaim Zukerman) page 184 quotes the Nachalas Yaakov Yehoshua who says this parsha elaborately discusses shemita and yovel. The Gemara in Horeyos and Rashi (parshas Mishpatim on the pasuk “Ubayom Hashvi Tishbos”) says this pasuk is really referring to the seventh year. We are still not allowed to uproot Shabbas during this time. A person should not say since the entire year is called Shabbos I don’t need to keep the actual halachas (laws) of Shabbas.

The Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh (26, 2) offers an additional answer. The Torah wanted to juxtapose the Mitzvah of Shabbas to the previous mitzvah of not making idols. Just as if a person who sins with avoda zara (idolatry) it’s as if (Chulin 5a) he violated the entire Torah, so too someone who keeps Shabbas it’s as if he kept the entire Torah. Therefore Shabbos is repeated again to allude to the concept that Shabbos isn’t merely a holiday. Rather Shabbos is much greater; it’s equal to the entire Torah.

We can learn two important lessons from the aforementioned information. We clearly see the importance of Shabbos from the fact that if one keeps Shabbos it is as if he kept the entire Torah. Additionally, we see how bad avoda zara is. Nowadays the Gemara in Yuma (69b) relates that we don’t have a yeitzer hara (evil inclination) that desires avoda zara. Nevertheless, we still have the concept of avoda zara. There are other things which are similar to avoda zara and we need to uproot anything that is against proper beliefs of the Torah.

2.

### Shemita and emunah

“The land will rest.” (25, 2)

"ושבתה הארץ שבת לה'."

The mefarshim (commentators) discuss the reason for the mitzvah of shemita. The Kli Yakar says many say the land should rest for practical agricultural reasons. The land resting will enable it to produce more. (This is comparable to someone who rests when he is in the middle of exercising. He rests in order to regain energy to exercise more and harder.) Many ask on this, if this is so then why is the punishment for not keeping shemita exile? A more appropriate punishment would be for the land not to produce anymore. (Mida keneged mida (measure for

measure)) Additionally, how does this fit in with the pasuk that says shemita is a rest for Hashem? This isn't a rest for Hashem; it's a rest for the ground!

The Kli Yakar quotes the Akedah who offers a different answer. He says the purpose of this mitzvah is to remember the newness of the world and to remember our lives in general. The Kli Yakar asks on this, this seems farfetched as well because we have Shabbos every week which reminds us of the newness of the world every week!

The Kli Yakar in conclusion says **the real reason for the mitzvah is to ingrain, plant, and root within all the Jews the character trait (mida) of emunah and bitachon (faith/belief) in Hashem.** Hashem worried that when the Jews enter into Eretz Yisroel (Israel) maybe they would completely forget about Hashem, Chas V'shalom. They might unfortunately say this flourished land and success was all because of me and my business techniques and tactics. The reality is that Hashem is running the show. We are therefore required to leave the land fallow during shemita. We rest the land to remind ourselves that everything is from Hashem. Regardless of the effort we put in to the land, ultimately the results are from Hashem. It makes sense according to this for a person having to go into exile if he didn't keep shemita because he didn't believe in Hashem. Hashem is essentially informing this individual that he isn't the owner of his land. According to this the main reason and principle behind shemita is emunah in Hashem.

**Nowadays, how can those that don't have land and can't keep shemita, attain proper emunah? The answer is through a proper thought process we can attain high levels of emunah.** Rav Eliyahu Lopian (Lev Eliyahu pages 71-72) says the more a person believes in Hashem, the more Hashem will help that person. **Nature itself is a miracle. This is part of the foundation of proper emunah.** Ein Od Milvado (there is nothing besides for Hashem). The Ramban (end of Bo) says Hashem sometimes performs major miracles for us, in order that we will remember that the small things are miracles as well. **Seeing, breathing and moving are miracles.** We thank Hashem for the miracles He does for us every day in Shemoneh Esrei. (מודים) 'We thank You Hashem etc. for the good you do for us every day' refers to the revealed miracles Hashem does for us. 'All the wonders Hashem does for us.' This refers to the hidden miracles. **All the occurrences that happen that are seemingly ruled by nature, are really orchestrated by Hashem.** Everything depends upon a person's faith in Hashem. To the extent that if we believe in Hashem, He will watch over us (mida keneged mida). We say in the Haggadah 'every generation, our enemies try to kill us but Hashem saves us./ בכל דור ודור עומדים עלינו לכלותינו והקב"ה מצילנו מידם.' We are like a sheep surrounded by 70 wolves, yet we still endure (Yuma 69)! Nature dictates that these wolves will fiercely pounce on this sheep. However Hashem protects us. Every day a heavenly voice cried out that the entire world gets sustained because of Chanina who sustained himself and lived on carobs from one Shabbos to the next. (Berachos 17b) We can conclude based on the aforementioned information that **bitachon nowadays can also be attained by thinking about the wonderful miracles Hashem does for. Whether they are within the realm of nature or not, obvious or not, we must strive to see the hand of Hashem that is truly and completely involved.**

Let's elaborate on the concept of our existence as a nation being a miracle. It is a huge miracle we exist around the 70 wolves. Rabbi Yaakov Emden ben Tzvi (introduction to the siddur Yabetz page 12) says nowadays we are in exile. There is so much that happened to us. There is no nation in the world that gets persecuted as much as the Jews. Despite all their efforts they

have been unsuccessful and most of these nations don't even exist anymore! He says **when he thinks about this wonder of our survival; 'I conclude this is the greatest miracle that ever happened to the Jewish people throughout our entire existence as a people.'** (How do we know God exists? Based on this, an answer to this question could be, look at the Jewish people. Statistically and probabilistically we should be wiped out and nonexistent.) **It is even a greater miracle than the splitting of the sea or the ten makkos! The longer the exile is; the greater, true and real this miracle becomes.** This is unbelievable. This is a complete proof that Hashem saves us. Our existence is really a miracle within nature. We need to acquire the trait of emunah regarding this and other matters as well.

The sefer Mashal Lemah Hadavar Domeh (page 17) relates a story of a villager who went to a big city. He was very impressed and expressed his awe. He went to a tailor who was sewing an article of clothing for the king. He was spreading cloth on the table and then he took scissors and was ready to cut the fabric. The villager said stop! You are about to destroy all the material. The tailor responded and said I'm not destroying but rather I am fixing and making a nice garment. The Dubno Maggid explains that sometimes we see bad happening to tzaddikim (righteous people). We need to know we are like this villager and we can't possibly see the entire picture. Our minds are incapable of properly comprehending the kindness that Hashem really bestows upon us. This pain is not destroying us but really fixing us. The Gemara in Berachos (60) states that everything Hashem does is for the good! This is true emunah.

**Another fundamental aspect of emunah is; parnassah (our income). We must have faith that Hashem will ultimately provide for us.** The Nachalas Tzvi (page 224) quotes the pasuk in Shemos (27, 20) that says that the oil needs to be crushed for illumination. He says the Menorah alludes to those who learn Torah. He says even if a talmid chacham (Torah scholar) is in a pressing financial situation, nevertheless he should still focus on learning and mitzvos. This is the explanation of the pasuk; even if a person is crushed, he should still learn, grow and ascend. He should realize and internalize that this is also for the good and whatever Hashem does is for the best. Let's discuss another aspect of emunah and parnassah. The Gemara in Berachos (6b) quotes Rabbi Yitzchak who says anyone who regularly comes to shul and doesn't attend one day, Hashem asks why didn't he come to shul today as the pasuk (Isaiah 50, 10) says "Though he may have walked in darkness with no light for himself, let him trust in the Name of Hashem, and rely upon his God." If he didn't come to Shul because he was involved with a mitzvah, then he will have light. The Eitz Yosef explains that he will have success. However, if he didn't attend Shul because he was involved with something optional, then he will not have light as the pasuk concludes "let him trust in the Name of Hashem, and rely upon his God." He should have trusted in Hashem and he didn't. The Maharsha elaborates and says sometimes people think working is considered a mitzvah that is a prerequisite that enables people to afford many other mitzvos. It is true, working is a mitzvah, but this person incorrectly concludes that he should work without davening. Wrong! He should believe in Hashem that He will sustain him. (Also see Berachos 32b this is the approach of the chasidim hareshonim towards learning, davening, and working). We see from this a person needs to have faith especially regarding financial matters.

It is noteworthy to discuss one last thought regarding parnassah. The Mishna Berurah writes (siman 156 sif katan beis) a person should work only for what he needs according to the amount he needs. The Chofetz Chaim elaborates and says a person needs to be careful from the yetzer

hara (evil inclination) convincing him to do something incorrect. He will tell you to work way overtime for many extra amenities. The ikur (main) point is to contemplate is what an absolute necessity is. **Work only for necessities, not luxuries. Think about what is impossible for you to live without and only work that much to support yourself. He elaborates and explains how to properly assess ourselves. If we needed to support our friend how much would we give him to support him? He says you should take this amount and apply it to yourself.** This is all learned from shemita.

Thank you Yair Moshe Ausabel for typing this up.