



## Permission to Heal

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E20)

*There are hospitals and doctors and medicine...and there is שבת*

### *From damage compensation to healing*

The Torah teaches us the required compensation for personal injury. Compensation always includes the cost of the medical treatment and loss of work for that treatment but then depends on the victim's ability to function. Where the victim can get up and walk the פסוק says: רק שבתו יתן ורפא ירפא<sup>1</sup> – literally: [the damager] only – compensates for the victim's loss of work and 'heal he shall heal' – he must also pay for the cost of medical treatment.

The Gemara<sup>2</sup> understands this double wording – ורפא ירפא – as giving permission for a physician to heal. Intervening in the Divine plan is called השתדלות which always requires permission. This permission is limited. One's primary response to pain and injury, even if inflicted by another person, is to turn to the רופא כל בשר in prayer for healing.

### *A remedy of שבת*

The תפארת ישראל sees an additional hint in the פסוק. The Torah uses the word שבתו when speaking of the victim's loss of work. This word, שָׁבַח, can also spell שָׁבַת – Shabbat.<sup>3</sup> The שבת is a source of healing. A sick or injured person needs a serious dose of שבת. He needs to

connect heaven and earth and draw into his physical life the great sanctity of the שבת. The food that one eats for the sake of כבוד שבת can be more effective than the best medicine as it is a spiritual healing that elevates the person.

### *The Tzadikim go further*

One of the tools that the Tzadikim, who have access to the world of קבלה, use is based on the Hebrew letters. They have taught us that Hebrew letters are unlike the letters of other languages. All languages use letters to form words which describe reality. But the relationship between those letters/words and the reality that they describe is simply a matter of convention. The word 'table' describes that upon which one places one's food because society uses that word consistently.

There is nothing about 'table' that must describe that surface upon which we eat. Another word could do the same job. For example, we say *tisch* in German. It is simply a convention with which we communicate. The reality exists in the world; we just need a word to describe it.

### *לשון הקודש is Constructive*

The Holy Tongue, לשון הקודש, operates in the reverse. An object exists because ה' used that

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<sup>1</sup> שמות כא: יט

<sup>2</sup> בבא קמא פה.

<sup>3</sup> תפארת ישראל שמות כא: יט



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word and the reality flows from that word. A table is the product of the creative energy which flows from the letters ש-ל-ה-ן. If one knows how to unleash the creative capacity of each letter one could then create. Indeed, חז"ל tell us that בצלאל, the architect and builder of the Mishkan, knew the combinations which Hashem used to create Heaven and Earth. Release of the energy of the words is alluded to in the פסוק דבר ה' – שמים נעשו – the Heavens were created via the 'word' of Hashem.<sup>4</sup>

### Over and over

The word-creating with which Hashem created the world happens again and again all the time. This is one of the many hidden realities of the world. – המחדש בטובו בכל יום תמיד מעשה בראשית. Hashem, in His Goodness, renews the act of creation continuously. Everything that we experience is happening in the present moment. The past does not insist that the present will be a certain way. There could have been light a moment ago and now there is darkness. There is no contradiction for it to be daylight for one person and pitch darkness for another. That was revealed in the plague of חשך in מצרים. The same holds for illness. The existence of illness now does not dictate its existence tomorrow.

### Inside the word שבת

A careful look at each of the letters will reveal that the Holy Name (הוי"ה) appears as the nucleus of every letter. (For example, the letter אלה is comprised of a ה with two letters א attached.) The שם הוי"ה is numerically 26. There are 27

letters in לשון הקודש, the 22 basic letters and 5 מן ק"ך (מנצפ"ך) or final letters, referred to as סופיות at the end of a word).

With that in mind, the letters can be said to be 27 (letters) times 26 (the שם) or 702. The word שבת also adds up to 702. Shabbat is not just a special day; it is *the* day, the sum of the building blocks of creation. When thinking about שבת we should fully disconnect from any prior assumptions about creation. What existed on ערב שבת is not what can exist on מוצאי שבת. The one who has an illness does not need more medicine; he needs more שבת. This is hidden in a mystical play on the words יתן ורפא ירפא – רק שבתו יתן ורפא שבתו – just give him שבת and he will surely be healed.

### Yet a step deeper

The Gemara mentioned above derived from the פסוק the permission for a doctor to practice medicine – מכאן שניתן רשות לרופא לרפאות – As with most words of חז"ל there is more to the word רשות than meets the eye.

There is a 42-letter name of Hashem which we refer to as אנה בכה. It is called that because we have a word for each of the 42 letters. In most Siddurim you will see those letters lined up in 7 rows of six words. Often the six letters are printed to the side of the six words so that one can focus on the part of the Name associated with that line. The 7 lines correspond to the days of the week. The 7<sup>th</sup> line, which is the Holy Name associated with שבת, is שקוצי"ה which expands to שועתנו קבל ושמע צעקתנו יודע תעלמות. 'May He receive our entreaties and hear our

<sup>4</sup> תהלים לג:ו



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cries, He Who knows that which is hidden.’ These words reflect the confidence that שבת is curative. Hashem, Who knows our illnesses far better than we do, hears our cries to such an extent that no cries are needed.

The Gematria of the Holy Name שקוצי"ת (921) is the same as the Gematria of רשוי"ת. The Kabbalists understand from here that hidden in the ‘permission’ to seek the aid of a physician is the ‘permission’ to rely on the שבת קודש as a healer. While the physician is permitted to heal, the שבת is designed to heal. The Holy Name of שקוצי"ת is attached to it.<sup>5</sup>

***Takeaway: I will try to keep שבת on the forefront of my mind when I think about my health.***

We each can use an upgrade in health protection. It is a part of the השגחה of the times that we are living in. We must bear in mind that part of our upgrade in health protection must include an upgrade in our relationship with שבת קודש. Taking a closer look at any aspect of Shabbat observance and committing to that observance is a significant upgrade in our relationship with שבת קודש. We could not ask for better protection.

This is part of what Ibn Ezra intended when he wrote כי אשמרה שבת א-ל-ל-ישמרני – when I observe and heed the שבת קודש, the שבת turns back around and heeds and protects us.

<sup>5</sup> ספר סור מרע ועשה טוב מהאדמו"ר מזידיטשוב עם הוספות מהרצ"א אות קנ"ו