



Multifaceted

By HaRav Eli Mansour (Shiur E18)

The Spiritual Side of שבת is the Main Course.

Passive and Active

It is common to characterize שבת as a day of rest. Eat, sleep, socialize, repeat. And while there is certainly an aspect of שבת which involves physical rejuvenation, that description of שבת is passive (cessation of activity) and is certainly not the central theme of שבת. שבת is active.

The תורה teaches¹ that:

לא ניתנו שבתות וימים טובים לישראל אלא לעסוק בהן בדברי תורה.

Shabbat and Yom Tov were only given to the People so that they can (be free to) delve into the Torah.

The cessation of physical work is designed to free us to nurture our spirits. (לעשות את השבת – שבת is active)

Perhaps that is why שבת is introduced as שבתות (plural). There is a שבת if the גוף and the נשמה of the נשמה. The גוף rests by ceasing physical labor, relaxing, eating and enjoying. But the נשמה gets its renewal energy by immersion in Torah.

Cannot work for more days

The רמב"ל writes that the תורה is teaching us spiritual physics. And part of that physics is that a person cannot labor for more than six days. If a person were to be involved in business pursuits

for more than six days, the body/soul balance would tilt. Shifting the balance towards the body means that the soul begins to atrophy. The person would be called a חולה נפש – an ill soul. By analogy, the body suffers from malnutrition and the soul, if not properly fed a rich diet of spiritual nourishment will become ill. It is a spiritual scurvy or anemia.

After six days the נשמה needs intensive rejuvenation. (The urgency for this rejuvenation is greater for those who are not involved in full-time learning during the week.) As such, one who is involved in business pursuits during the week must be certain to have a learning סדר during שבת.

More to the learning on שבת

The Zohar² reveals that there is far more at stake when one learns on שבת than just keeping the נשמה in tune. The Zohar teaches that each נשמה which spent שבת on Earth returns to שמיים after שבת and is asked by Hashem if it had a new Torah thought, a חידוש תורה, over the course of its שבת learning. The Zohar describes what happens when the נשמה responds in the affirmative and announces the newly-clarified thought.

The Zohar describes the heavenly celebration. Praises are heaped on the נשמה and the heavenly

What does he do when שבת comes? What are his priorities?

¹

² זוהר שלח דף קעג



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court bursts into joy. The celebration then spills over into a visit to the souls of the *parents* of the one who learned that Torah on שבת. The righteous who have been summoned to the great celebration crowd around the souls of the parents and kiss them for the great merit that their child accrued. With their kisses they proclaim the good fortune of the parents of one who studied Torah on the Holy שבת.

Stopping and thinking is also spiritual

A אידוש תורה does not imply only that which was never heard before, but a clarification for the one learning. Something became clearer through one's learning on שבת.

The ספר יסוד ושורש העבודה says that even one who cannot learn or grasp what he has learned to say it over on מוצאי שבת can still benefit from this connection to Torah. Thinking about one's Middot and behaviors is also a part of Torah. Thus, one who considered his spiritual life understood with greater clarity some aspect of his obligations in life and thereby accepted upon himself some enhancement for the coming week is also included in the profit-sharing that the Zohar describes. Examples are endless, but the יסוד ושורש העבודה mentions several. A resolve to be a bit more careful with ברכות or with the recitation of קריאת שמע, davening with a Minyan, curbing one's anger, etc. Those are all parts of the spiritual side of the person and are linked with the purpose for which we were given the שבת.

Why the parents?

Per the above Zohar one who learns תורה on שבת gives boundless respect to one's parents, even if

they are no longer among the living. This may explain why the פסוק joins the two, seemingly unconnected מצות, as it says איש אמו ואביו תיראו ומצות שבתותי תשמרו.

You may wonder why the parents benefit from the Torah that their child learns?

The key shareholders in the company

We can understand the benefits accrued to the parents of the one who learns by thinking of equal partners in a company. When there is a profit all the partners are invited to share those profits.

Hashem has taken a mother and father as His partners in the formation of a person. The priorities of a person determine if his spiritual component was given at least equal weight to his physical needs. That means that the portion that Hashem has infused is being given priority as befits the partnership.

The test of the success of the endeavor is how the person's priorities are demonstrated when the person is relieved of physical demands. That is where we will see his priorities. What does he do when שבת comes? If he only indulges his physical side in eating and sleeping, then he demonstrates that he does not make matters of the spirit his priority. This is a badge of shame for the other partners, his parents.

But if the person demonstrates the priority of the spirit, then the partnership is deemed a success and all the partners join to share in the dividends. And we know that *actions express priorities*. Talk is cheap. Priorities are visible. And when the priorities are in the right place,



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then Hashem shares the profits with His partners.

The linkage of שבת and תורה – from day one

There is a discussion in the Gemara as to what day in Sivan the Torah was given on Har Sinai.

Takeaway: I will try to emphasize the spiritual side of שבת.

Was it the sixth of Sivan or the seventh? But all opinions agree that the Torah was given on שבת! The natural and unbreakable connection between Torah and שבת is unmistakable.

The שבת was only given...