

Pulse OF Emunah

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life

LESSONS

TRUE PRIORITIES

The noted speaker and storyteller Rav Sholom Schwadron lost his father when he was just seven years old. For the rest of his life, Rav Sholom showed tremendous sensitivity to widows and orphans. Rabbi Paysach Krohn's family used to host Rav Sholom when he was in America, even after Rabbi Krohn's father passed away. One Pesach when Rav Sholom was staying with the Krohns, the first night of Yom Tov was Motzei Shabbos, and they couldn't start preparing for the Seder until very late.

Rabbi Krohn's married sister and brother-in-law were there with their children. The kids were very involved in the Seder, singing and saying all their *divrei Torah*. Rabbi Krohn knew that Rav Sholom was *makpid* to eat the *afikoman* before *chatzos*. It was getting late, and he tried to rush his brother-in-law.

Rav Sholom didn't speak English, but he understood what Rabbi Krohn was trying to do. He poked young Paysach in the ribs and said in Yiddish, "Don't rush!"

When they got up to the *seudah*, Rabbi Krohn tried again. He motioned to his mother to try to move quickly. Even without saying anything, Rav Sholom poked him again. "I told you, don't rush!" They ended up eating the *afikoman* after *chatzos*.

After the Seder, Rabbi Krohn apologized for causing Rav Sholom to miss *chatzos* for the first time. "Your mother is a widow," Rav Sholom said. "The whole year, she waits for her children and grandchildren to come from out of town, to hear them sing and give *divrei Torah*. Eating *afikoman* before *chatzos* is a *d'rabbanan*; causing pain to a widow is a *d'oraysah*. We have to know our priorities!"

Courtesy of Agudas Yisroel of America



gem

OF THE WEEK

NURTURE AND NATION

By Rabbi Moshe Pogrow

The *pesukim* at the beginning of Vayakhel teach us that even building the Mishkan does not override Shabbos. From this, we learn that the activities required for its construction are the *melachos* prohibited on Shabbos. These activities may be performed during the week, but not on Shabbos.

The construction of the Mishkan is a challenge to human craftsmanship, if not in an artistic sense, then certainly in the ideal it embodies: *v'asu li mikdash, v'shachanti b'socham*. Man's mastery over the physical world, expressed by the use of raw materials in production and manufacturing, reaches its highest purpose in building the Mishkan. He subordinates the world to himself so that he can subordinate himself to Hashem. The construction of the Mishkan is a sanctification of human labor. Here, it represents all the various productive activities of man. All 39 *melachos* of Shabbos are productive activities that cause change in an object. Intentional creation demonstrates man's mastery over the material world, so refraining from exercising this power is a way of paying homage to the Creator. By refraining from *melacha* on Shabbos, man shows allegiance to Hashem.

continued on reverse side

powerful
PRAYER

BIRKAS HAMAZON:
ELEVATING OUR NEEDS



In the *bracha* of Racheim, we daven for the restoration of the Beis Hamikdash and the rule of Malchus Beis David. A plea for the return of the kingdom of Hashem is postponed to the following *bracha*. It would be inappropriate to place a prayer for a human ruler right next to a prayer for the restoration of the rule of G-d. No matter what form this *bracha* has taken through the years, however, it has always contained a plea for Divine mercy on individuals. What better way to elevate our physical needs than to associate them with the highest and holiest matters of the Jewish nation?

Adapted from *World of Prayer* by Rabbi Elie Munk

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THE MEANING OF SHABBOS

By Rabbi Dovid Sapirman, Dean, Ani Maamin Foundation

The Gemara tells us that when Hashem was ready to give the mitzvah of Shabbos, He said the following: “Moshe, I have a wonderful gift in my treasury called Shabbos. Go and tell them about it.” If Hashem wanted to give *klal Yisrael* the Shabbos, why not just give it? Why did Moshe have to tell them first? For the Shabbos to be that promised treasure, we must prepare to receive it. Otherwise, we will hear only the restrictions and fail to see the beauty.

Shabbos is described as *mei'ein Olam Haba*. Just as we enjoy the fruits of our accomplishments in the Next World, but cannot achieve anything more, so too on Shabbos we eat only what we have prepared and do not do any further *melachos*. Just as our enjoyment in the Next World comes from our closeness to the Shechina, so too does Shabbos engender a closeness to Hashem.

The Friday night *zemer* Kol Mekadeish opens with an intriguing line: “All who sanctify the Shabbos as befits it, all who guard the Shabbos from desecration, their reward will be very great in accordance with their actions—each man at his camp, each man by his flag.”

The Chofetz Chaim explains that there are two types of *shomer Shabbos*. One person sanctifies the Shabbos, makes the Shabbos holy. He reflects on the idea that Hashem is the Creator, who made everything in six days and stopped on the seventh. He realizes how much we owe Hashem and rededicates himself more and more to His service.

But there is a second type of *shomer Shabbos*. He may guard the Shabbos from desecration—he would not turn on a light or engage in any other forbidden activities—but does not grow from the experience. He does not feel inspired. He is no closer to his Creator than he was on Friday afternoon. Both people will receive their reward—but “in accordance with his actions.”

There is a famous question asked regarding Tehillim, *perek* 91. It begins “*Mizmor shir l'yom hashabbos*,” yet does not mention Shabbos again. The *perek* simply discusses how wonderful the world is, our thanks to Hashem for his kindness, and the eventual justice He will mete out. Yet this is what we should think about on Shabbos—Hashem’s Creations, and how much we owe Him.

The forbidden *melachos* of Shabbos are all of a creative nature. Sewing, writing, and building all change something or make something new. These activities make us feel that we are in control of our lives. When Shabbos comes and we refrain from them, we are reminded that the only true Creator is Hashem. It is His world. The creativity, ingenuity, and energy that we use to change our world come from Him alone.

But the *melacha* of *hotza'ah*—carrying from a *reshus hayachid* to a *reshus harabbim* and vice versa, and carrying *daled amos* in a *reshus harabbim*—can hardly be categorized as productive. Nevertheless, this *melacha* is of such importance that the *navi* Yirmiyahu, in the last days of the Jewish state, proclaims that it will be saved if the Jews observe *hotza'ah*: *hishamru lenafshoseichem, v'al tisu masa b'yom haShabbos, v'haveisem b'shaarei Yerushalayim*. From the words of Yirmiyahu, the *issur hotza'ah* appears not as an integral part of the general *issur melacha*, but as a parallel concept.

The theme of the other *melachos* is man’s mastery over the physical world. *Hotza'ah*, however, is a social act. Accordingly, if the *issur* of the other *melachos* subordinates man to G-d with regards to the physical world, the *issur* of *hotza'ah* expresses man’s subordination to G-d with regards to the social world. The 39 *melachos* place man’s work in nature under Hashem’s rule, and *hotza'ah* does the same for his work in the state. Just as our world comprises both nature and state, Hashem’s rule over the world includes His command of nature and history. His kingdom will be complete only if man subordinates himself to Hashem’s will in both his natural and his national lives.

The Torah gives two reasons for Shabbos: the creation of the world, and the exodus from Egypt. *Briais haolam* testifies to Hashem’s rule over nature, expressed on Shabbos by the 39 *melachos*, while *yetzias Mitzrayim* proves his sovereignty over nations, expressed on Shabbos by the *issur* of *hotza'ah*.

Based on the commentary of Rav Shamshon Raphael Hirsch zt”l on Chumash, with permission from the publisher.



wonder WORLD

ORANGE YOU GLAD



What vegetable is naturally purple?

Every kid has heard their parent say “Eat your vegetables!” But what is so great about vegetables? They are extremely important to our health, full of vitamins, minerals, fiber, and other nutrients. People have been growing vegetables since the beginning of time. They may have changed in many ways since then, but they are still healthy! For example, today, we take it for granted that carrots are orange, but the truth is that up until the 1700s, most carrots were actually purple! Dutch farmers selectively bred carrots to produce the popular orange carrot that we know today, possibly to honor their orange flag and their king, William of Orange. Hashem created vegetables to help us stay healthy, but also to brighten our lives with their flavors, colors, and textures.

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