

THE KEDUSHA OF SHABBOS

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לימוד הדבר תורה לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שיי' בן רבקה לגאולה קרובה מן המיצר אל המרחב

A DAY OF KEDUSHA

After the histalkus of the Mitteler Rebbe, the great chossid Reb Eizik Homiler was at 'crossroads' in his search for a new Rebbe. Visiting the tzaddik Reb Yisroel of Ruzhin, 'the heilike Ruzhiner', he watched as he sat smoking his pipe, as was his custom, on Erev Shabbos. Suddenly, a moment before Shabbos commenced, the Ruzhiner threw down the pipe, and his appearance changed significantly, to the extent that Reb Eizik later said, "Had I not been there the entire time, I would have thought he was someone else. I saw that he ascended above while I remained below."

(לקו"ש ח"ה ע' 30 בשילוב שמו"ס ע' 259, וראה רשימו"ד החדש ע' 224)

Chazal say that a Yid's face shines on Shabbos more than the rest of the week. Furthermore, even a Yid who is completely devoid of torah is afraid to tell a lie on Shabbos.

The Mitteler Rebbe writes in a maamar: A great professor testified that there is a great change in the pulse of a Yid's hand on Shabbos. This is due to the great pleasure which the neshama has. It is like the positive change felt in the pulse upon the notification of good news (as Chazal relate about the emperor and Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai).

(ב"ר פי"א ב, ירושלמי דמאי, תו"ח שמות, תרלב א')

The Baal Shem Tov's tailor related that the Baal Shem Tov's Shabbos clothing were significantly longer than his weekday clothing. Yet, on Shabbos this was not recognizable, for they would fit him properly.

The tzaddik Reb Chaim of Chertovitch, known as the Be'er Mayim Chaim, was a head taller on Shabbos than he was during the week. His place in shul was on the Mizrach, near the Aron Kodesh. The Aron had wings built on it, and during the week he would stand under one of the wings, but on Shabbos, he could not fit under it and would have to stand nearby.

(רשימות דברים החדש ע' 221)

As a child, the tzaddik Reb Yisroel of Ruzhin learned with his melamed the Gemara concerning one who has forgotten which day is Shabbos. The child had difficulty understanding,

and the melamed explained that perhaps one traveled through a desert and forgot on which day he had left. The boy was not convinced and insisted that he did not understand how one could forget. Frustrated, the melamed asked him, "In such a situation, how does one not forget which day is Shabbos?" The boy replied, "On Shabbos the sky looks completely different. You just have to look up at the sky and you will see when it is Shabbos."

(רשימו"ד ח"א ע' רכ"ג)

ELEVATED SPEECH

Chazal established that on Shabbos it is forbidden to arrange or discuss mundane activities planned for the following week. One should also refrain from talking too much mundane talk, so that Shabbos be different than the weekdays.

The Frierdiker Rebbe explains this with a mashal: When one has an ordinary guest over, he may speak in front of him and befriend him. But when the guest is a great king or a wise scholar, the host is hesitant to speak up in his presence. So too, on Shabbos there is an exceptional revelation of elokus, and it is therefore appropriate to speak differently in its presence.

(שוע"ר סי' שז ס"א, קו"א הוכח תוכיח, סה"מ ת"ש ע' 78)

The Alter Rebbe writes that through the kedusha of Shabbos, the following week becomes holy. This is accomplished by guarding the Shabbos in one's thought, speech and action.

(אג"ק אדה"ז ח"א ע' קפה)

While taking a walk on Shabbos, one righteous Yid noticed that the fence protecting his property had been broken. At that moment, he resolved to make the necessary repairs to secure his field's boundary. Realizing that he had planned mundane activities on Shabbos, he decided that he would never fix that breach and he left his field open and unprotected. Due to his exceptional righteousness, Hashem caused a large fruit bearing tree to grow in that exact place, closing up the opening and providing him and his family with abundant parnasa.

(שבת קנ ע"ב)

One Shabbos, a fire broke out in the home of Yosef ben

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Sima'i, the treasurer for the Roman king. Word reached the government offices, and a legion of soldiers was dispatched to put out the flames, but Yosef did not let them. Because of his respect for Shabbos, he did not want it to be done, though they were doing it of their own accord. Immediately, rain began to pour, and the fire was extinguished. After Shabbos, he sent the soldiers recompense for their efforts.

(שבת קכא ע"א)

Chassidus explains that on Shabbos the life of the world is loftier, being that it comes from Hashem's thought, instead of His speech. The Rebbe explains that on Shabbos it is easier to feel that the world is created by Hashem.

(לקו"ת ש"ת סו,ג, סה"ש תנש"א ח"ב ע' 551)

DAVENING AND LEARNING

Hashem told Moshe Rabbeinu, "Gather the Yidden on Shabbos and teach them its halachos, so that future generations learn from you to gather in the shuls and learn on Shabbos, and my name will be praised."

When the Yidden were about to enter Eretz Yisroel, the Torah complained before Hashem, "What will become of me? The Yidden will be preoccupied with working the land and will not dedicate enough time for me." Hashem replied, "I have a match for you called Shabbos. On that day the Yidden will abstain from working, and will enter the Beis Medrash and learn Torah.

Chazal say that Shabbos and Yom Tov were given to the Yidden so that they be able to learn Torah. Particularly those who work during the week must spend considerable time on Shabbos learning Torah.

(ילקוט שמעוני ויקהל רמז תח, שוע"ר סי' ר"צ ס"ג וס"ה)

The Frierdiker Rebbe spoke of the kedusha of Shabbos: In the past, the chassidische 'balabus' would be entirely different on Shabbos, at ease and unrushed. Before davening, he would listen to a maamar being taught, followed by davening at a longer pace, each person on his own level. They did run home to the kugel. Though they honored Shabbos with fine foods, they knew that this is not the most important. Each person would work on themselves, accepting direction from the local leader. Today, there are many who keep Shabbos; but what is with the kedusha of Shabbos?!

(סה"ש תש"א ע' 53)

The Rebbe explains that Shabbos is called a day of rest, not because one sits idle and does nothing, for surely on Shabbos one must toil in his service of Hashem. Rather, it means that on Shabbos one takes pleasure in this service; just as one derives pleasure from a sack of precious stones he is carrying. This is similar to the time of Moshiach called 'a day of Shabbos and rest,' when with much enjoyment,

we will rise to great heights, in our service of Hashem.

(התוועדויות תשמ"ג ח"ד ע' 1983)

The chossid Reb Shmerel Sasonkin described Shabbos in Lubavitch: On Erev Shabbos after mincha, as the tables were arranged, everyone pushed to grab a spot, and the nigunim would begin. These nigunim of longing and joy would uplift the neshama from the weekday to Shabbos. The kedusha of Shabbos could be seen on everyone's faces, singing the heartfelt nigunim with sweetness.

Suddenly all would silence, as the Rebbe would make his appearance. The Rebbe Rashab would stand with his shtreimel on his head, a silk kapota and a white scarf on his neck, and his face shining bright. The Rebbe would enter the zal slowly, and sit in his place, wrapping his hand with a red handkerchief. He would sit silently for a short while, gazing at his son the Frierdiker Rebbe, and then, in a low voice, he would begin the maamar. His voice would rise, his face aflame, and everyone would listen in complete silence for the hour and a half that the maamar was said.

After the maamar, we would daven maariv and leave for our seudas Shabbos. Yet some bochurim and guests would remain to chazer the maamar late into the night.

Early Shabbos morning, the head chozer, Reb Shilem Kuratin, and his assistants would gather in the Rebbe's home for chazara. Reb Shilem would repeat the maamar, and the Rebbe would correct him where necessary. Afterwards, we would review the maamar further throughout the day, it becoming the focus of Shabbos.

Towards the end of Shabbos, 'raiva d'raivin' (the highest point in Shabbos), the Bochurim would gather again for nigunim and chassidus. We would sing stirring nigunim until late into the night, feeling the loftiness of the time. When Reb Shilem would repeat the maamar again, we would feel the kedusha of Shabbos hovering upon us, a taste of Olam Haba.

(זכרונותי ע' 45 ואילך)

The Frierdiker Rebbe writes: There will come a time when everyone will recognize the complete truth, that the happiness of a Yiddische home is dependent on the keeping of the holy Shabbos.

(אגרות קודש מוהרי"צ ח"ה ע' רפב)

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