

Remove the Yoke



כי לי בני ישראל " 25:55

עבדים עבדי' הם אשר הוצאתי אותם מארץ מצרים. אני ד' אלוקים

"For B'nei Yisroel are servants to Me, they

are My servants, whom I have taken out of the land of Mitzrayim – I am Hashem your G-d." Rashi says that Hakodosh Baruch Hu says, "שטרי קודם" – My contract comes first. Meaning that even if one sells himself to another person, his first responsibility is to Hakodosh Baruch Hu. The Torah then continues to tell us that we should not make and serve Avodah Zarah, and, "את שבתתי תשמרו" – that we should keep Shabbos. We understand that we need to be a direct Eved to Hashem, and cannot serve Avodah Zarah. But what is the connection of being an Eved to Hashem to keeping Shabbos Kodesh? If one veers from the path of Hashem, what is the path to return?

One only listens to the commands of a king, because he fears the king. However, if he were to have a way out without any repercussions, he would certainly take that opportunity to not follow the directives of the king. However, the advice of a doctor to a sick person is taken very seriously by the sick person. The difference is that the king is making the rules for his benefit, while the doctor is making the rules for the benefit of the sick person. Thus, the sick person will listen to all of the commands of the doctor, for it is in his own best interest to do so. Had Hakodosh Baruch Hu given us the Torah for His own benefit, for his Own honor, then it wouldn't be so difficult to understand how people do not follow all of the directives of the Torah. However, this is not the case with Hakodosh Baruch Hu, for He gave us the Torah for our benefit, for our honor, as it says in **Devarim 30:20** "כי הוא חייך ואורך ימך" – **"For He is your life, and the length of your days."** **If so, who would be a fool not to heed the Torah, as that is the person's life source; it is completely for his own benefit. The proof that the Torah was given to Klal Yisroel only for their benefit, and because Hashem loves them is from Shabbos Kodesh. Shabbos was given to Klal Yisroel to be a day of rest for them, for if it wasn't for them, why did Hakodosh Baruch Hu have the Mon for Shabbos come down on Erev Shabbos?**

One may have thought that Hakodosh Baruch Hu did not have the Mon come down on Shabbos, for the Mon would be going from one Reshus to another on

Shabbos Kodesh, which is prohibited. This is completely incorrect, as we see from the Midrash Tanchumah Parshas Ki Sisa 22 that a wicked person asked Rebbe Akiva how could Hakodosh Baruch Hu make it rain on Shabbos Kodesh, when the rain is going from Reshus to Reshus?

Rebbe Akiva answered that the entire world is Hakodosh Baruch Hu's, and to Him, it is all one Reshus, thus perfectly permissible to bring down the rain on Shabbos. If one will say, but Klal Yisroel needed to bring the Mon into their homes from outside, (for some it was on their doorsteps, and for others they had to go to retrieve their Mon), which is a prohibition for Klal Yisroel to bring the Mon from one Reshus to another. The Mon was clearly that which was completely miraculous, and thus, in order to deal with the issue of the prohibition for a Yid to take it from Reshus to Reshus, Hakodosh Baruch Hu could have made it arrive in everyone's home. Thus, Hakodosh Baruch Hu could have brought the Mon on Shabbos, but didn't do so in order that Klal Yisroel should be able to rest, and not have to gather their Mon from anywhere. We see from the Mon that Hakodosh Baruch Hu acted for the benefit of Klal Yisroel, and thus from Shabbos Kodesh, which represents the entire Torah Hakdoshah, that indeed the entire Torah was given for the benefit of Klal Yisroel. (חכמת התורה)

Rashi says that Hakodosh Baruch Hu says, "שטרי קודם" – My contract comes first. Meaning that even if one sells himself to another person, his first responsibility is to Hakodosh Baruch Hu. If one veers from the path of Hashem, what is the path to return? It is through Shabbos Kodesh, as Chazal tell us that Shabbos Kodesh is an auspicious time to do Teshuvah. **The Mishnah in Avos says that one who is Mekabel upon himself the Ol, the yoke, of Torah, other yokes from other matters are removed from the person.**

The Mishna says, "עול מלכות ועול דרך ארץ" – and "עול דרך ארץ" refers to the yoke of one following after his Ta'avos, his physical desires and cravings. Shabbos Kodesh is an auspicious time for Teshuvah, for one who removes the Ol Malchus Shomayim from upon himself, it is very difficult for him to get it back. He becomes subservient to the yoke of matters of this world, of following after his whims and desires. With this understanding, we explain that which Chazal tell us that Shabbos is an auspicious time for Teshuvah. One who already removed the yoke of Shomayim, and is fully entrenched

in following his Ta'avos, how could he possibly dig himself out of that rut and remove the yoke of Ta'avos, to return to having the Ol Malchus Shomayim upon himself? The answer is Shabbos Kodesh, for Chazal tell us that on Shabbos Kodesh, even the Am Ha'aretz (the ignorant person) has Yiras Shomayim, so that he would not lie. This also applies to every Yid who has a part of him which is an Am Ha'aretz, which he may have the yoke of Ta'avos upon him – but due to the Kedusha of Shabbos Kodesh, that yoke is not so strong. Thus, this is the day to remove that yoke, and return to the Ol Malchus Shomayim. (שם משמאל)

The secret to the path of being an Eved to Hakodosh Baruch Hu is Shabbos Kodesh. Shabbos Kodesh is such a holy day. We cannot fathom the greatness of the day. There are so many rules in the Torah Hakdoshah. There are Halachos on everything that we are to do. Our every action is to be dictated based on Halacha – based on Chazal who tell us and teach us what the Torah wants from us. One could potentially look at this task as completely overwhelming. How could one follow all of the Halachos of the Torah when there are so many? The answer is Shabbos Kodesh. Shabbos Kodesh teaches us that Hakodosh Baruch Hu does everything for our benefit. A king of flesh and blood makes rules and laws that benefit himself. All of the rules of the Torah Hakdoshah are for us – for our benefit. Hakodosh Baruch Hu does not need us, rather He is doing everything for us.

Why did Hakodosh Baruch Hu give Klal Yisroel two portions of Mon on Erev Shabbos Kodesh in the Midbar, when He could have given them a portion on Shabbos? There would have been no prohibitions transgressed by Hakodosh Baruch Hu bringing down the Mon on Shabbos Kodesh. He could have made the miraculous Mon come straight into everyone's home. However, He wanted Klal Yisroel to be able to rest – a day of rest. A day to recognize Hakodosh Baruch Hu, a day of Teshuvah. **Shabbos Kodesh is a day when we are closer to Hakodosh Baruch Hu. Every Yid is Zoche to receive a Neshama Yeseriah, which comes directly from below the Kisai Hakovod. It is a day that it is much easier to come closer to Hakodosh Baruch Hu.** May we be Zoche to utilize this day of such great Kedusha, to do Teshuva and come close to Hakodosh Baruch Hu.