



## Besamei HaTorah ... Beneath the Surface

By: R' Shmuel Winzelberg

(י"ל שם כי בא השמש (כח:יא))

*He spent the night there because the sun had set (28:11)*

Once the Torah already tells us that 'he spent the night there', obviously it was because it was already dark and nighttime. Why does the Torah add 'because the sun had set'? The meaning is that after he had Davened, he wanted to go back to Charan. HaKadosh Baruch Hu said, "This Tzadik came to my house, should I let him go without staying overnight?" Immediately, the sun set so that he should spend the night there. (see Rashi to Sanhedrin 95b)

## Parshah Thoughts - Ideas and Reflections - Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn

When Hashem spoke to Yitzchak, He mentioned that Avraham guards that which Hashem guards, meaning that Avraham has the same priorities as Hashem (26:5). Sforno explains that Hashem's personal concern is doing kindness and helping the wayward find their way. Avraham took this as a personal initiative as well, by offering an open house and teaching people about Hashem. These are two concepts which we can all try to incorporate, even in small ways, into our lives, and thereby join the elite guard of Hashem.

## Working on our Middos

It says in Sefer Shabbos Kodesh that Rav Shimshon Pincus, zt"l, would stress that there is a practical way to merit the Kedushah of Shabbos. All we need to do is welcome Shabbos when it arrives, and give it a proper greeting. Our problem is that when Shabbos arrives, we're usually not ready. As much as we try to be ready on time, it doesn't work. Why is it so hard to be ready to greet Shabbos when it comes? This is not just a matter of time mismanagement. There is a spiritual reason for it. A person can begin early in the morning and still barely make it in time for Shabbos until the last minute. Something strange is going on here. Rav Shimshon explains that it is written in Seferim HaKedoshim, that all the forces of evil that plague us during the week, they disappear on Shabbos. The Yetzer Hara knows it is about to be put out of commission. It will be banished for twenty-four hours. Therefore, it works hard and makes an extra effort beforehand. This effort generates many obstacles and delays on our path as we are trying to properly prepare for Shabbos. However, this is our chance to tap into the tremendous potential of Shabbos Kodesh. The way we begin Shabbos, is how Shabbos will continue, and it behooves us to put in extra effort to welcome Shabbos in the best way possible!

## A Summary of Hilchos Chanukah By: Rav Shmuel Goldstein

Where to Light the Menorah

3. Outside of Eretz Yisroel we don't light outside because of the goyim. Rather, we light by a window when possible.
4. One fulfills the Mitzvah if he lights anywhere in his house. The place chosen is based on safety, public view, and under ten Tefachim (in that order).

## Pearls of Wisdom... A Word for the Ages

The Manchester Rosh Yeshivah, Rav Yehuda Zev Segal, zt"l, was an individual who always practiced what he preached. His entire life was a lesson in honesty. He was once traveling by train, and the conductor would come by and collect the fares and issue tickets to the passengers. Rav Segal started his trip in the second-class economy section, but later during the trip, he moved to the first-class section which had many seats available. The passengers in his car in second-class were making a tremendous amount of noise, and made it impossible for him to concentrate on his learning. Hoping the conductor would come through the first-class section and collect the added fare, the Rosh Yeshivah turned to his Sefer and learned for the rest of the trip. When he reached his destination and realized that the conductor had not come by, he proceeded to the station master to pay the difference in price. Despite being told repeatedly that it was unnecessary to pay extra, Rav Segal insisted on paying the money. As the Rosh Yeshivah left the booth, the station master exclaimed, "That man is one in a million!"

## פרשת ויצא תשפ"ו

*Parashas Vayeitzei 5786*

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Staten Island E'manim

Erev Shabbos:

Plag HaMinchah: 3:32

Candle Lighting: 4:13

Sh'kiah: 4:31 *יכיל זמן ועל* Tzeis: 5:16

Shabbos Kodesh:

Sof Z'man Krias Shema:

Mogen Avraham: 8:46 Gra: 9:22

Sof Z'man Tefillah (Shacharis): 10:09

Chatzos: 11:44 Sh'kiah: 4:30

Havdalah: Tzeis HaKochavim: 5:16

Rabbeinu Tam (72 minutes): 5:43

(some say 5:58)

Next Week: Vayishlach

Candle Lighting: 4:11

## The Siddur Speaks

Out of all the Korbonos, the one that is incorporated into our daily Tefilah in Pesukei D'Zimrah is the Korban Todah, the Offering of Thanks, which we make reference to in Mizmor L'Sodah. Rav Yaakov Emden, zt"l, says that we say Mizmor L'Sodah every day, since not a day goes by that we don't experience a miracle, even though we may not realize it. Therefore, we acknowledge this Chesed of Hashem to thank Him for this kindness. The Rokei'ach writes that there are 41 words in Mizmor L'Sodah which corresponds to the 40 loaves of bread that are brought together with the Korban Todah, including the Korban itself. In this Mizmor it says Hashem's Name four times, which corresponds to the four different kinds of bread that are brought with the Korban (ten each of Matzah, Challah, wafers, and scalded loaves) with one each going to the Kohein. It also signifies the four people who must bring a Korban Todah that are listed in the Gemara (Brachos 4b): one who traveled a desert, one who was released from jail, one who survived a serious illness, and one who returned from a journey at sea (Siddur Iyun Tefilah). The Medrash says (Vayikra Rabbah 9:7) that when Moshiach arrives and the world becomes a state of perfection, there will be no further need for sin offerings, because people will no longer do Aveiros (Yefei Toar). However, the Medrash teaches that there will always continue to be the Korban Todah, because of the importance of one to always express his gratitude to Hashem!

*Chazal* have taught us (*Yerushalmi, Nedarim* 9:1), "Is what the *Torah* forbids to you not enough that you have to take things that are permitted to you and make them forbidden?" (*Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 29:7)

### **Boundaries**

The *Kitzur* directs us to not make additionally prohibitions other than what the *Torah* has already forbidden to us. It is taught in the name of Rav Simcha Bunim of Peshischa, ז"ל, who learns this lesson from *Pesukim* in *Parshas Va'eschanan* (4:2,4), where we are instructed not add anything to what *Hashem* commands us, and also, those who attach themselves to *Hashem* are alive today. Rav Simcha Bunim connects these ideas. If one is genuinely attached and connected to *Hashem*, he won't need to add anything to what *Hashem* has commanded. Oppositely, if one has a weak connection to *Hashem*, he will try to strengthen it by adding *Chumros*, stringencies, and *Gedarim*, fences. In other words, when one adds to the *Torah*, it is an indicator of his weaker connection to *Hashem*. A strong connection with *Hashem* needs no additional enhancement.

However, this may be referring to one who is on a high level with no chance of slipping in his *Avodah*. Many people may not be on this level, and they will require enhancements and safeguards. Perhaps it is because of this that the first *Mishnah* in *Pirkei Avos* directs us to make a fence around the *Torah*. *Rashi* explains that this teaches us to put up safeguards to our safeguards so that one will not come to violate any prohibition of the *Torah*.

Rav Shmuel Brazil comments that erecting a guard on the prohibitions of the *Torah* stems from the *Middah* of *Yiras Hashem*. He comments that the word '*Geder*', in *Gematria* equals 207, which is the same *Gematria* as the word '*Zar*', which means 'a stranger'. We can learn from this that the more *Gedarim* one makes, the more of a stranger he becomes with the prohibitions of the *Torah*. As the saying goes, "Out of sight is out of mind." [Perhaps we can add to this thought, as the word '*Zeir*' means 'a crown' (as seen in *Shemos* 25:11,24;30:3), and this also has the same *Gematria* of 207. When one makes a *Geder* he is placing a crown on his service of *Hashem*, as this encourages him to keep far from doing *Aveiros*.]

Rav Brazil quotes Rav Yitzchak Hutner, ז"ל, who writes in his last *Ma'amar* on Pesach, that by making *Gedarim*, fences, one is also acting from the *Middah* of *Ahavah*, by bestowing love and honor to the *Torah*. The greater amount of fences one places on the observance of the *Mitzvos*, the greater amount of honor he demonstrates for the *Torah*. *Chazal* teach that *Hashem* also makes *Gedarim*. It says in *Avos D'Rebbe Nosson* (*Perek* 1) that one should make a fence around his words, the way *Hashem* made a fence around His words, and Adam made a fence around his words. The *Torah* made a fence around its words. Moshe made a fence around his words. Even *Iyov*, and even the *Nevi'im* and the *Chachamim* all made a fence around their words. Please see there for examples of this. However, one thing we see from this, says Rav Brazil, is that if *Hashem* makes *Gedarim*, we can get become closer to Him by making our own *Gedarim*, as this would be emulating *Hashem*. When we emulate *Hashem* and are trying to become more like Him, we are in fact getting closer to Him.

When one breaks the fences and guards that were instituted to protect the *Halachos*, one fence quickly falls after another. It sets into motion a domino effect, and one can fall very quickly to the bottom of the pit of decadence and beyond.

Rav Brazil notes that before we start saying *Shemoneh Esrei* in *Shacharis*, our *Chachamim* established that we recite *Pesukim* from *Krias Yam Suf* and mention the miraculous episode. The connection between the splitting of the sea and *Tefilah* is that a *Yid* must build walls surrounding himself to distance his lifestyle and ambitions from outside influences. When the *Yiden* crossed the sea, the water formed two walls on both sides, on their right and left. They were protected from outside influences, and we must do the same, especially when we *Daven*.

Rav Brazil cites the *Mechilta* on *Parshas Beshalach*, which comments on these two walls: What caused *Klal Yisroel* to be saved from the *Mitzrim* and caused the water of the *Yam Suf* to be split and make a wall for them on their right and on their left? The wall of water on their right was in the *Zechus* of the *Torah* that they would accept in the future, as the *Pasuk* in *Devarim* (33:2) says, the fire of *Torah* shines forth from the right side of *Hashem*. The wall of water that was on their left was in the *Zechus* of their *Tefilah*. Another explanation given by the *Mechilta* is that the wall of water on the right was in the *Zechus* of the *Mitzvah* of *Mezuzah* that *Klal Yisroel* will do in the future, and the left wall of water was in the *Zechus* of the *Mitzvah* of *Tefilin*. As Rav Brazil points out, the *Mezuzah* is placed on the right side of the door, and the *Tefilin* are placed on the left arm.

Rav Brazil says that we relive *Krias Yam Suf* when we approach *Shemoneh Esrei*. And when we leave the house, we must recognize the *Mezuzah*, which should be like a *Geder* to remind us not to be influenced from the outside influences. Likewise, we put *Tefilin* on our bodies which is the house for our *Neshamos*, and this reminds us to make a *Geder* to not crave pleasures. *Tefilah* is where we focus on the fact that *Hashem* is in control of everything that happens.

Rav Brazil concludes with quoting Dovid *Ha'melech* who writes in *Tehilim* (147:13), that when one strengthens the bolts of his gates, the children will be blessed. Dovid *Ha'melech* does not mention the bolts of one's house, but rather, he says the bolts of the gates, which stands before the doorstep. It is the gateway that is the *Geder* that needs strengthening with tighter protection, because it is the *Geder* that keeps the bad influences away from one's house. It is through this that there will be blessing in the children. Our *Gedarim* will protect us and keep us far away from spiritual catastrophe! *Continued* →

Rav Yisroel Brog recalled some stories from his grandfather, Rav Avigdor Miller, ז"ל: I remember we had a small family *Simchah* that took place in a *Shul* basement. My grandfather saw a young girl there who was about six years old. She was walking around, and she was not one hundred percent dressed modestly as a *Tzenuah*. Rav Miller got very upset. He insisted that they put up a *Mechitzah*, right then and there in the middle of the *Simchah*. However, no one listened to him. So he got up and he said, "This demands *Tznius*. We need a *Mechitzah*." Some people snickered, saying "It's okay. There aren't any strangers here. It's just family." But my *Zeida* got up. He brought over two coat racks and he placed them between the men and the ladies. Then he got some extra tablecloths and draped them over the coat racks. He did this all by himself, and he made a *Mechitzah*. Rav Brog said that later, Rav Miller said to him, "I saw the snickering, and it doesn't bother me at all!" Rav Miller had tremendous strength to make *Gedarim* for the sake of *Kedushah*. One time, when my *Zeida* was in his upper 80's, I drove by his *Shul* in the summertime, and I noticed that the few windows that he had in the front of the *Shul* were open, and the door was wide open. Now, it wasn't at a time when the *Shul* was in use, and I knew my *Zeida* was very careful about keeping the windows and the doors closed. There was no such thing for him to not check to make sure that the doors and windows were closed. I pulled my car over and I said, "I have to check this out and see what's going on." I walked into the *Ezras Nashim*. The front door of the *Shul* opened up to the *Ezras Nashim*, and the entrance to the *Bais Medrash* was on the side. When I walked in, I saw a lady sitting in the middle of the *Ezras Nashim*. She was a *Tzniusdik'e* lady. I wondered what she was doing there? I said, "Excuse me, can I help you? Could I give you some assistance? Are you looking for something?" She turned around and said, "I'm talking to the Rav." I thought to myself, "Oh, this is another one of those characters, one of those Miller nuts." I said to myself, "Who knows what this is here?" I said to her, "I'm the Rabbi's grandson. What are you doing here?" All of a sudden, I hear my grandfather, Rav Miller, say, "Who is there?" I walked through the *Ezras Nashim*, around the *Mechitzah* and into the *Bais Medrash*. My *Zeida* was sitting on a folding chair facing the *Ezras Nashim*, and he had a *Sefer Mesilas Yescharim* on in his lap that was open to the first *Perek*. I said to him, "Oh, *Zeida*, you're learning with her?" He said, "No, I'm talking with her." I went back outside and I went home. The next time I met my *Zeida*, I said, "What was going on in the *Shul* at that time? All the doors were open, all the windows were open, and a *Mesilas Yescharim* was on your lap. What was all that for? He told me, "You could never be too careful! You could never be too careful!" He was sitting on the men's side and the *Mechitzah* was completely closed so he couldn't see the woman he was talking with. This was *Kedushah*, and Rav Miller made *Gedarim* so that he wouldn't stumble with *Kedushah*!

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