

A Taste of Text: Source based learning for Shabbat

*This weekly sheet is brought to you by **Rabbi Dr. Moshe Freedman** of the **New West End United Synagogue** in conjunction with **Shapell's/Darché Noam***

PARSHAT TETZAVEH

DVAR TORAH: WISDOM TO THE WISE

Hashem tells Moshe to speak to all those who are “חכמי לב אשר מלאתינו רוח חכמה – wise of heart, those I filled with a spirit of wisdom” (Shemot 28:3) to make the clothes of Aharon. Commentators point out that this verse seems repetitive; why didn’t Hashem just write “wise of heart” or “those I filled with wisdom”? Another verse raises a similar difficulty: In Daniel’s prayer he says that Hashem “יהיב חכמתא לחכימיך – gives wisdom to the wise” (Daniel 2:21). The verse is worded in a way that implies that He gives wisdom to those who are already wise. Why didn’t Daniel just say, “He gives people wisdom”?

The author of the Chatam Sofer (Harav Moshe Sofer, זצ"ל, of Pressburg, 1762–1839, in the Chatam Sofer on Parshat Tetzaveh, p. 127) offers an answer based on the following (paraphrased) quote from the introduction to Chovot Halevavot (Harav Bachya ibn Pakuda, זצ"ל, Spain, 1040-1080):

“Wisdom is planted in men’s hearts. If someone will come and awaken them about it, they will be able to bring out that treasure. But if not, it will remain hidden and covered up. It is like a planted seed, that if cultivated will sprout but if not will rot.”

In one version of the Chovat Halevavot (translated from the original Arabic by Harav Yosef Kapach, זצ"ל, 2000 1917), the author quotes a wise man who expounds on the verse, “Counsel in man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out” (Mishlei 20:5). Wisdom is hidden deep within a man like a deep underground reserve of water. The wise man will strive to draw it out, much like digging a deep well. The end of the verse is unclear. Who is the “man of understanding” that draws out the wisdom within – is it the man himself or another person? The Chatam Sofer suggests, based on our verse, that it is another.

Moshe Rabbeinu was asked by Hashem to arouse the wisdom hidden within the people that would make the holy clothing for Aharon. They were already “חכמי לב”; they had understanding within their hearts. But Hashem wanted Moshe to reveal to them the treasured wisdom they didn’t even know they had. He was to inform them that “Hashem had filled them with a spirit of wisdom.” Moshe’s speech itself would arouse and activate their inner wisdom. This might also explain the verse in Daniel: “Hashem gives wisdom to the wise” means that He brings out and cultivates the latent wisdom He created within them.

This comment of the Chatam Sofer is quoted in conjunction with one of the works of Rabbeinu Yonah of Gerondi, זצ"ל (1180-1263), Shaarei Avodah (Harav Aharon David Goldberg, אשליט"א’s annotated edition, page 15, footnote 3). He opens that work with “The beginning [of עבודת ה' – service of Hashem] is that the עובד – the servant of Hashem – should know his own worth and recognize his level and the level of his forefathers, and how great, important, and beloved he is in the eyes of the Holy One, blessed be He.”

Perhaps the Chatam Sofer would add: Not only should a person recognize his own worth, but he should help others realize their worth, and let them know about the wisdom hidden within.

SOURCE GUIDE: SHABBAT VS. AMALEK

A cryptic Midrash contrasts the Divine command to remember Shabbat with the Divine command to remember Amalek. Amalek is like a cup of vinegar and Shabbat is like a cup of fine wine. This source guide builds on an approach to this Midrash that appears in Shem Mishmuel on Tetzaveh and Zachor.

A. Two "Zachor"s

In both commands, to remember Shabbat and to remember Amalek, the Torah uses the same word, זָכוֹר:

<p>1. Shemot 20:8 Remember the Shabbat day to sanctify it.</p> <p>Devarim 25:17 Remember what Amalek did to you on the way when you were going out of Egypt.</p>	<p>שמות כ:ח זָכוֹר אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת לְקַדְּשׁוֹ.</p> <p>דברים כה:יז זָכוֹר אֶת אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה לְךָ עַמְלֵק בְּדַרְךְךָ בְּצֵאתְכֶם מִמִּצְרָיִם.</p>
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Rashi explains the special connotation of the word זָכוֹר:

<p>2. Rashi's Commentary on Shemot 20:8 The word זָכוֹר is in the פָּעוּל form, as are the verbs in the expressions (that also indicate ongoing actions), "eating and drinking" (Yishayah 22:13) and "walking and crying" (II Shmuel 3:16). This is its explanation here: Pay attention to constantly remember the Shabbat day.</p>	<p>רש"י על שמות כ:ח זָכוֹר לְשׁוֹן פְּעוּל הוּא כְּמוֹ (ישעיה כב) אָכַל וּשְׁתָּה (ש"ב ג) הֵלֹךְ וּבָכָה וְכֵן פִּתְרוּנוֹ תָנוּ לֵב לְזָכוֹר תָּמִיד אֶת יוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת.</p>
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In the following Midrash, Israel was bothered by how they would be able to simultaneously constantly remember both Shabbat and Amalek. It records a conversation between Israel and Moshe Rabbeinu:

<p>2. Pirkei D'Rabbi Eliezer 43 Israel said to him: "Moshe Rabbeinu, one verse says, 'Remember what Amalek did to you' and another says, 'Remember the Shabbat day to sanctify it.' How can both of them coexist? This is 'remember' and that is 'remember'?" Moshe replied to them: "There is no similarity between a cup of spiced wine and a cup of vinegar. This is a cup and that is a cup. This is to remember to keep and sanctify the Shabbat day, as it says, 'Remember the Shabbat day to sanctify it.'" And this is to remember to destroy and cut off all of the descendants of Amalek, as it says, 'Remember what Amalek did to you.'"</p>	<p>פירקי דרבי אליעזר מג אמרו לו ישראל: "משה רבנו, כתוב אחד אומר 'זכור את אשר עשה לך עמלק', וכתוב אחר אומר 'זכור את יום השבת לקדשו', היאך יתקומו שניהם? זה 'זכור' וזה 'זכור'?! אמר להם משה: "לא דומה כוס של קונדיטון לכוס של חומץ, זה כוס וזה כוס. זה זכור לשמר ולקדש את יום השבת, שנאמר 'זכור את יום השבת לקדשו', וזה זכור להשמיד ולהכרית את כל זרעו של עמלק, שנאמר 'זכור את אשר עשה לך עמלק.'"</p>
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1. How does Moshe answer their question?
2. What does this Midrash teach us? Isn't the difference Moshe points out to Israel obvious? Isn't it obvious that remembering Shabbat means remembering to keep and sanctify it, whereas remembering Amalek means remembering to destroy it?
3. What does Moshe's image of the two cups add to his explanation?

B. Shabbat and Amalek: Polar Opposites

Harav Avraham of Sochotchov, זצ"ל (1838-1910, Poland, known as the "Avnei Nezer" after the title of his book of responsa), quoted in an essay in his son's Shem Mishmuel on the Chumash and Holidays, answers Question 2 above. What does this Midrash teach us?

<p>3. Shem Mishmuel on Parshat Tetzaveh and Zachor, 568o My father, master, and teacher, of blessed memory, explained that it comes to teach that Amalek is the opposite of Shabbat.</p>	<p>שם משמואל פרשת תצוה - וזכור שנת תר"פ וכ"ק אבי אדמו"ר זצלה"ה פירש שבא לומר שעמלק הוא היפוך שבת.</p>
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In what way are Shabbat and Amalek opposites?

<p>4. Shem Mishmuel on Parshat Tetzaveh and Zachor, 5680 Meaning, that Shabbat is something internal (penimiut), the day devoted to the Soul, the Neshamah, which is internal. Amalek is not like other nations, for they are associated with that which is external, whereas Amalek is also (like Shabbat, l'havdil) internal. But Amalek's is the internal side of evil.</p>	<p>שם משמואל פרשת תצוה - וזכור שנת תר"פ היינו ששבת היא פנימיות, יומא דנשמתא שהיא בפנימיות, ועמלק איננו כשאר האומות שהם חיצוניים אלא שהוא נמי פנימי אבל פנימיות רעה.</p>
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This explains the image Moshe used, the contrast between the cup of spiced wine and the cup of vinegar:

<p>5. Shem Mishmuel on Parshat Tetzaveh and Zachor, 5680 This is why he likened them (Shabbat and Amalek) to a cup of wine, for the essence of wine is the internal side of the grapes. But whereas one of them is quality wine, the other is vinegar. For vinegar also comes from the inside of the grapes – it is just spoiled.</p>	<p>שם משמואל פרשת תצוה - וזכור שנת תר"פ וזהו שמשל את שניהם לכוס של יין, שמהות היין שהוא פנימיות הענבים, אלא שזה קונדיטין וזה חומץ, שהוא נמי בא מפנימיות הענבים אלא שנתקלקל.</p>
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Perhaps this also explains the conversation between Israel and Moshe Rabbeinu. Israel asks: "How can we constantly remember both Amalek and Shabbat?" Moshe answers that remembering Shabbat and remembering Amalek are two sides of the same coin. Constantly remembering Shabbat means living with a consciousness of having a pure soul at the core of our internal world. Remembering Amalek means making sure our core is free of evil – for Amalek represents the core of internal evil.

C. Shabbat and Amalek: Beyond Intellect

In another passage he quotes another contrast between Shabbat and Amalek:

<p>6. Shem Mishmuel on Parshat Tetzaveh and Zachor, 5671 My holy and honored father, master, and teacher, of blessed memory, said that the negative power of Amalek is above intellect. For the rest of the nations (after the Splitting of the Sea) heard and trembled (based on Shemot 15:14), but Amalek went out against Israel. On Shabbat, the light that is revealed is also above intellect. Therefore all of Israel are desired then (on Shabbat) just as they are. This is what we say in prayer, "He desires us." And there is no reason for the will. Therefore it is the opposite of Amalek.</p>	<p>שם משמואל פרשת תצוה וזכור שנת תרע"א כ"ק אאמו"ר וצוקללה"ה אמר דקליפת עמלק היא למעלה מהשכל. דהעמים שמעו וירגזו ויהו יצא נגדם. ובשבת נתגלה ג"כ אור שהוא למעלה מהשכל. ולכך כל ישראל רצויים אז איך שהם וז"ש ורצה בנו, ואין טעם לרצון, א"כ הוא ההיפוך מעמלק.</p>
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Amalek has an irrational antipathy towards Israel. He stands out among the nations. All reacted to the great miracles of Israel's salvation through the splitting of the Sea in a sensible way; they were terrified. Only Amalek, inexplicably, attacked Israel in the desert. Shabbat – in sharp contrast – brings out the connection between Hashem and Israel that is beyond logic. Hashem simply desires us. On Shabbat a light that is beyond intellect is revealed to Israel.

PURIM BUZZ BY RABBI AVRAHAM FISCHER

With the click of a button, these words are sent from Eretz Yisrael to the other side of the globe. E-mail, the Internet, digital photography, cable and satellite communication - all enable us to disseminate information worldwide. Today you can literally see news as it happens. And within seconds you can broadcast your reaction. We are inundated with data and opinions. So, it becomes increasingly more difficult for us to be discriminating about the information we receive.

The name of the game nowadays is image management, spin, buzz, hype, exposure: get people talking about you, your product, or your candidate. It almost doesn't matter what they say about you – or what you stand for – as long as your name is "out there." It is often publicity for publicity's sake.

Purim is also about publicity, but look at how different *pirsumei nisa* (פרסומי ניסא – publicizing the miracle) is from modern hype.

Chazal decreed that we read Megillat Esther twice on Purim, night and day, so as to proclaim how Hashem saved the Jewish people from annihilation, to publicize the Purim miracle.

Pirsumei nisa on Purim is so important that the Beit Hamikdash services, and even Talmud Torah, are suspended for Megillah reading. In fact, the only mitzvah that has priority over Megillah reading is burying a body when no one else is available to do so (Megillah 3b; Rambam Mishneh Torah, Laws of Megillah 1:1), because of *כבוד הבריות* – human dignity.

The general obligation of *pirsumei nisa* overrides many other halachic constants. Despite the rule that a more frequent mitzvah takes precedence over a less frequent one (Zevachim 89a), if one can only afford to buy either wine for Shabbat Kiddush or Chanukah lights, he must buy the lights because they publicize the miracle (Shabbat 23b; Rambam's Mishneh Torah, Laws of Chanukah 4:13). Even though one must not squander more than 20% of his money for a mitzvah (Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim 656), nevertheless, if it involves *pirsumei nisa*, a person must spend whatever necessary, and beg, borrow, or even sell one's only garment to fulfill it. This is true of the four cups of wine at the Pesach Seder (Pesachim 99b), and Chanukah lights (Rambam's Mishneh Torah, Laws of Chanukah 4:12).

What is the source of the primacy of *pirsumei nisa*?

Harav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, זצ"ל (1903-1993) explains that publicizing a miracle Hashem performed to save His people from danger is a fulfillment of Kiddush Hashem, the mitzvah to sanctify His Name (Harerei Kedem 160, based on R. Yerocham Perlow's commentary on R. Saadia Gaon's Sefer HaMitzvot, Positive Mitzvot 59-60, quoting R. Daniel HaBavli). From the verse, "And you shall not desecrate My holy Name, and I shall be sanctified in the midst of the children of Israel" (Vayikra 22:32), the Sifra derives the positive obligation to praise Hashem through Hallel and to publicize His miracles. *Pirsumei nisa* is thus an expression of the cardinal Torah principle of Kiddush Hashem.

Reading the Megillah on Purim, says Rav Soloveitchik, sanctifies Hashem's Name by stating publicly that He saved our lives in the time of Mordechai and Esther. This teaches all of us the importance of trusting in Hashem's salvation – "And also all who hope in You shall not be shamed" (Tehillim 25:3). Self-promotion is egocentric. But publicizing the miracle of Purim sanctifies the world.

שבת שלום ומבורך

*This publication is compiled by the staff and Rabbonim at **Shapells/Yeshivat Darché Noam** for men and **Midreshet Rachel v'Chaya Seminary** for women in Jerusalem. Find out more about the **married couples' programme** and the **Pathways Israel** and **Pathways Plus** programmes offered at www.darchenoam.org +972-2-651-1178, 5 Beit Hakerem Street, Jerusalem.*

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