

whY I Matter

בשבילי נברא העולם (סנהדרין לז)

Edited by Yedidye Hirtenfeld

י' - ט"ז אב ה'תשע"ח

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Voeschanon

ואתחנן

זמנים

Weekdays

Shachris	
Sunday	6:50, 8 & 8:30
Weekdays	5:50, 6:50, 7:30 & 8:30
Weekday Rosh Chodesh	5:40, 6:40, 7:30 & 8:30
Sunday Rosh Chodesh	6:30, 8:00 & 8:30
Mincha	8:05
Maariv	after mincha

תענית תשעה באב

נדחה ליום ראשון

Sunday Shachris	6:30, & 8:30
Mincha	2 & 7:50

שבת ואתחנן

Candle Lighting	7:58 PM
Mincha	7 & 8:08 PM
Shachris	7:30, 8:50 & 9:00 AM
Mincha	1:45, 6:30 & 7:50 PM
Maariv	9:00 PM
Shabbos ends	9:05 PM

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for all other zmanim

THESE ZMANIM ARE DETERMINED BY THE GABBOIM AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT THEIR DISCRETION

ואתם הדבקים בה' אלקיכם חיים כלכם היום
"You who cling to Hashem, your Elokim—you are all alive today."
 (4:4) R' Chaim of Volozhin z"l (1749-1821) explains: Even while you are still alive, you cling to Hashem. How so? When a person performs a Mitzvah, a spiritual aura ("Ohr Makif") surrounds him. This aura or "light" assists him in completing the Mitzvah and is what the Gemara (Yoma 38b) refers to when it says, "If one comes to purify himself, he is given assistance." This is a cyclical process, for this aura spurs a person to perform additional Mitzvot, which, in turn, strengthens the light and leads to the performance of additional Mitzvot. As the aura becomes stronger, it also serves as a

shield against the Yetzer Ha'ra. This is why our Sages say (Avot ch.4), "A Mitzvah brings about another Mitzvah." (Nefesh Ha'chaim I, ch.6)

Time's up

"ואתחנן אל ד' " - אמר ר' אבין: משל למה הדבר דומה? למלך שהיה לו אהוב, והוא ממנה דוכסין ואיסטרטילטין (ראשי הצבא). לאחר ימים ראו אותו אהוב שהיה עומד ומבקש מן השוער ליכנס לפלטין של מלך, ואינו מניח לו. היו הכל תמהים ואומרים: אתמול היה זה ממנה דוכסין ואיפרכין, ועכשו הוא מבקש מן השוער ליכנס לפלטין ואינו מניח לו? אמרו להם: שענתו עברה!...כך משה רבנו גוזר והקב"ה מקיים: "קומה ד' - שובה ד' - ואם בריאה יברא ד' ", ועכשו הוא מתחנן ומתחבט ליכנס לארץ ישראל ואינו מתקבל - עברה שענתו!..!

(דברים רבה ב', ב.)

רק השמר לך ושמר נפשך מאד פן תשכח את הדברים אשר- ראו עיניך ופן-יסורו מלבבך כל ימי חיך והודעתם לבניך ולבני בניך

We read in this week's Parashah (4:9-10), **"Only beware for yourself and greatly beware for your soul, lest you forget the things that your eyes beheld and lest you remove them from your heart all the days of your life; [rather,] make them known to your children and your children's children—the day that you stood before Hashem, your Elokim, at Chorev [Har Sinai]."** In many Siddurim, the above passage is listed among the "Sheish Zechirot" / "Six Remembrances"—events and ideas that some Halachic authorities require a person to remember every day. R' David Bleicher z"l Hy"d (Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat Bet Yosef-Novardok in Kiev, Ukraine and Miedzyrzec Podlaski, Poland; killed in the Holocaust in 1944) writes: The Zechirot are not incidental pieces of information to be remembered. They are the essence of what a Jew believes. He explains with a parable: Imagine a person about to take an urgent trip by airplane when an engine problem develops. No matter how big the rush, a wise person will stop to repair the engine. Only a fool would say, "I'm in a hurry now; fixing the engine can wait." Remembering the Giving of the Torah and the rest of these Remembrances is the engine that makes a Jew "run"; it is what causes a Jew to perform Mitzvot and study Torah, R' Bleicher writes. A defect in one's remembrance of these events is not an incidental problem, it is a critical issue. What is the sign that one is "remembering" properly? Our verse

לכבוד האי גברא ובי' הרוצים בעילום שמם על הסיוע שמושיטים לי בעין יפה להמשיך את הגליון עוד הפעם בשנה זו שיהיה לזכותם ולזכות כל משפחתם הקב"ה יברך אותם בכל מילי דמיטב מיט יידישע נחת בעושר ואושר ואריכות ימים בבריאות בזה ובבא עבגצב"ב

answers: It is that he "make[s] them [i.e., these events] known to [his] children and [his] children's children." (Divrei Binah U'mussar)

אז יבדיל משה שלש ערים בעבר הירדן מזרחה שמש: לנס שמה רוצח אשר ירצח את-רעהו בבלי-דעת והוא לא-שנא לו מתמל שלשם ונס אל-אחת מן-הערים האל וחי

"Then Moshe designated three cities" (Devarim, 4:41) The Talmud teaches that the three cities of refuge on the east bank of the Jordan River only became functional after the three on the west bank were established. Although Moshe knew that the latter three would only be established fourteen years after his passing, he insisted on establishing the three on the east bank. The Talmud uses this as an example of Moshe's alacrity in the performance of mitzvot. (Makkos, 10a) Generally, alacrity in the performance of a mitzva leads to the mitzva being accomplished sooner. However, in Moshe's case, since the cities offered no refuge until after they all were completed, what was there to be gained by his promptness? The cities of refuge served a dual purpose. One function was as a safe haven for the perpetrator of an accidental murder, while the second was to create a higher degree of awareness amongst Bnei Yisroel concerning the sanctity of human life. The mere presence of the city sent a message to everyone to be more cautious with their actions. Although the first function did not take effect until after the conquest of Eretz Yisroel, Moshe was able to immediately set the second function into motion. (Rabbi Zweig on the Parsha)

לא יהיה לך אלהים אחרים על פני

"You shall not recognize elohim acheirim / the gods of others (literally, 'other gods') in My Presence." (5:7) R' Chaim Mordechai Yaakov Gottlieb z"l (rabbi in Oyber Visheve, Hungary; died 1936) writes: The midrash says that those who recognize "elohim acheirim" cause goodness to be withheld from mankind. R' Hillel z"l

[perhaps referring to **R' Hillel Lichtenstein z"l**; 1814-1891] explained that "elohim" means "leader" (see, for example, Shmot 7:1). The Gemara (Tamid 28a) states that a leader who puts the people's needs first and acts for the sake of Heaven, is a true leader and brings goodness to the world. It follows that a leader who is thinking of his own interests, i.e., one who recognizes "other elohim," causes goodness to be withheld from the world. (Yagel Yaakov)

שמור את יום השבת לקדשו כאשר צוך ה' אלקיך

Safeguard the Sabbath day to sanctify it, as Hashem, your G-d, has commanded you (5:12)

Similarly, the Torah states, "Honor your father and your mother, as Hashem, your G-d, has commanded you." (5:16) Do we not know that these commandments came from Hashem? **R' Shraga Feivish Schneebalg** (mid-20th century rabbi in London) explains: These verses are teaching us how to observe mitzvot. Do them "as Hashem has commanded you." Just as He had no ulterior motive for giving us the mitzvot - after all, He gets nothing out of it - so we should perform the mitzvot with no ulterior motives. (Pitcha Zuta: Kuntreis Shraga Ha'meir La'Torah)

יום השביעי שבת לה' אלקיך לא תעשה כל מלאכה אתה ובנך ובתך ועבדך ואמתך ושורך וחמרך וכל בהמתך וגרך אשר בשעריך למען ינוח עבדך ואמתך כמוך

But the seventh day is Sabbath to Hashem (5:14) The Gemara makes a remarkable statement: Whoever recites "Vayechulu" (i.e. Kiddush) on Friday night is considered as if he was a partner with Hashem in the creation of the world. The **Ohr HaChaim** asks: How can someone become a partner in a job which is already finished?! He explains as follows: We read in the "Aseret HaDibrot" (not in the version found in this Parasha, but in Parashat Yitro) that G-d created the world in six days. Interestingly, however, the literal translation of the verse in question says, "For six days G-d created the world..." This teaches us, writes the Ohr HaChaim, that when Hashem originally created the world it had the capacity to endure for only six days. What has made it last longer? The merit of Shabbos.

(Throughout history, from Adam onwards, there has always been at least one person who observed Shabbos.) Similarly, every person who keeps Shabbos adds to the world's capacity to exist for another week, and thus, the work of creation is never done. Rather, it must be renewed each week, and those entrusted with this task are the Shabbos-observers. This thought allows us to explain another teaching of Chazal. The Gemara (Shabos 118a) states: If one rejoices with the Shabbos, all the desires of his heart will be fulfilled. Why so? Because the person who keeps Shabbos is like one of the builders of the world, it seems only right that each of the partners in this endeavor should have something added onto the world for his own benefit. There is another reason why a person who keeps Shabbos should have all of his requests fulfilled. The Gemara (Shabbos 88a) teaches that when Bnei Yisrael accepted the Torah the angels descended from the Heavens and crowned them with jewels. Later, however, after the sin of the Golden Calf, the angels returned and confiscated these jewels. What was the nature of the gift that Bnei Yisrael had held? **R' Simcha Bunim of Przysucha** explained (in the name of the **Arizal**) that Bnei Yisrael had been given the gift that their prayers would be answered even before they were articulated. However, because of the sin of the Golden Calf, this gift was taken away from Bnei Yisrael. But not completely! The Arizal taught that on Shabbos one's prayers are indeed answered before they are said. (This is reflected in the Halacha that we do not make personal requests in the Shabbos prayers. They are not necessary.) This then is the meaning of the statement that if someone keeps Shabbos, all of his desires will be fulfilled; no special request required. (Ramatayim Tzofim) **Regarding the fact** that on Shabbos we pray a shorter "Shemoneh Esrei" which does not incorporate all of the requests that we make on weekdays, we find two explanations in the works of Chazal. The Midrash Tanchuma (Vayera) states that it is not right for a person to detract from the Shabbos spirit by agonizing over the sick, over his livelihood, or over any other personal need. However, the Gemara (Berochos 21a) states that Chazal

ordained a shorter prayer on Shabbos (seven, instead of 19 blessings) so that we will have more time to enjoy the Shabbos. **R' Dovid Cohen** explains that both reasons are required. If we had only the reason of the Midrash Tanchuma, we should replace the 19 weekday blessings with 19 (not seven) Shabbos blessings. On the other hand, if we had only the reason given in the Gemara Berochos, we might think that we should make the same requests that we do on weekdays, but in an abbreviated form. However, between the two sources we learn that a shorter, and completely different, "Shemoneh Esrei" should be composed for Shabbos. (Mas'at Kapi)

Gift

"ואתחנן אל ד' - שני פרנסים טובים עמדו להם לישראל: משה רבנו ודוד המלך, והיו יכולים לתלות שכרם במעשיהם הטובים - ולא בקשו מאת הקב"ה שיתן להם אלא חנם. והלא דברים קל וחומר: ומה אלה שיכולים לתלות את שכרם במעשיהם הטובים לא בקשו מלפני המקום שיתן להם אלא חנם - מי שאינו אחד מאלף אלפי אלפים ורבוה רבבות מתלמידיהם, על אחת כמה וכמה שלא יבקש מלפני הקב"ה שיתן לו אלא במתנת חנם... (ילקוט שמעוני).

כבד את אביך ואת אמך כאשר צוך ה' אלקיך למען יאריך ימך ולמען ייטב לך על האדמה אשר ה' אלקיך נתן לך

Honor your father and your mother (5:16) We find that the commandment to respect one's parents is performed by the nations of the world, as well, and sometimes even more stringently than Jews fulfill it, as Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel states (Bereishis Rabboh 65:16): "All my lifetime I served my father, yet I did not do for him a hundredth part of the, service which Eisov did for his father. I used to serve my father in soiled garments and go out in the street in clean ones; but when Eisov served his father, he served him in royal robes." Similarly, (Kiddushin 31a): "R. Eliezer was asked: How far does the honor of parents extend? He said, Go forth and see what a certain heathen, Domo son of Nesinoh by name, did in Askelon. The Sages sought jewels for the eiphod, at a profit of six-hundred-thousand gold denarim — but as the key was lying under his father's pillow, he did not trouble him. The following year the Holy One, blessed be He, gave him his reward. A red

heifer was born to him in his herd. When the Sages of Israel went to him to buy it, he said to them, 'I know you, that even if I asked you for all the money in the world you would pay me. But I ask of you only the money which I lost through my father's honor.' The explanation is: Someone whose main life is life in this world, feels a moral obligation to show gratitude to those responsible for bringing him to this world. Consequently, his distance from the Third Partner (Hashem), causes him to demonstrate greater gratefulness to the two partners (his parents). (Oznaim LaTorah)

לא תרצה ולא תנאף ולא תגנב ולא תענה ברעך
עד שוא: ולא תחמד אשת רעך

“...Do not commit adultery...Do not desire your neighbor's wife...” (5:17,18) The seventh commandment of the Decalogue, “lo sinaf” prohibits adultery. Included in the tenth commandment, “lo sachmod” is the prohibition against coveting a friend's wife. It would appear that these two prohibitions duplicate one another. Why are they both included in the Ten Commandments? Although “lo sinaf” addresses the prohibition against adultery, the Torah does not explicitly state that it is referring to a married woman. Why, when discussing “lo sachmod” does the Torah emphasize the woman's marital status? The Mishna in Pirkei Avos records that Avraham Avinu successfully endured ten trials.(Avos 5:3) The Torah reports that Sarah, Avraham's wife was abducted on two occasions, the first time by Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and the second time by Avimelech the Philistine monarch.(Bereishis 12:14-17, 20:1-7) Rabbeinu Yonah registers both abductions separately in his enumeration of the ten trials. (Avos ibid) The Ramban explains that the purpose of a trial is to afford a righteous individual the opportunity to actualize his potential.(Bereishis 22:1) Once the individual successfully overcomes his trial, actualizing his potential, repetition of the trial is pointless. Why, then, is Sarah's second abduction included in Avraham's ten trials? The only possible solution is that the two different abductions served to develop different sensitivities. What is the difference between the two abductions? As Avraham and Sarah

approached the Egyptian border, Avraham told Sarah “Now I know that you are a beautiful woman. When the Egyptians see you, they will kill me in order to take you. Therefore, please tell them that you are my sister.”(Ibid 12:14,15) Rashi explains that the local populace was not graced with women of beauty, and Avraham was aware that the Egyptians' lust for her would lead to his demise.(Ibid) The Torah attests to the fact that Avraham's fears were not unfounded, as the verse records that upon their arrival in Egypt, the Egyptian officials saw Sarah's beauty and lauded her for Pharaoh, after which she was abducted.(Ibid) In the verses which record Avimelech's abduction of Sarah, we find no mention of her beauty being a factor which motivated the act. The Ran explains that this abduction, which occurred twenty-four years after the first one, was motivated by Avimelech's desire to incorporate a member of Avraham's family into his household.(Drashos HaRan) The verses make it clear that the Egyptian abduction was motivated by lust; Egyptians were notorious for their immorality. Avimelech's abduction of Sarah was motivated by the need for domination and power. Avimelech was exercising his power as king to assert himself over Avraham by taking a member of his household for a wife. The intended victim of the first abduction was Sarah. Avraham's test was the manner in which he would react to losing the woman he loved. The intended victim of the second abduction was Avraham, over whom Avimelech was attempting to exert his power and control. This test presented Avraham with a completely different challenge than did the first abduction. The dynastic names of the monarchs reflect their motivations; the name “Pharaoh” is derived from “perah” or “paru'ah”, which means “naked” or “immoral”, while the name “Avimelech” means “father of power”. The act of adultery can be motivated by two very different feelings; its motivation can be either lust, or the desire to exercise control over the married woman's husband. The tenth commandment, “Do not covet” is emphasizing the prohibition against taking control of another person. Therefore, in this prohibition, the Torah lists those items to which a person senses the greatest

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connection: his wife, house, field and slave. The Torah emphasizes the coveted woman's marital status, for that serves as the motivating factor, the assertion of control over his friend. The seventh commandment addresses the act of adultery motivated by lust. Therefore, although it refers to consorting with a married woman, the relationship between husband and wife is downplayed. (Rabbi Zweig on the Parsha)

שמע ישראל ה' אלקינו ה' אחד

“Hear, Israel, Hashem is our
Elokim, Hashem is One!” (6:4)
R' Yehoshua Rokeach z"l
(1825-1894; Belzer Rebbe) asks:
When we recite Shema, we are

accepting G-d as our King. Why then is it customary to sit when reciting Shema? One would expect that we would stand out of reverence! He explains: Accepting G-d as King is a mitzvah that one is obligated to perform constantly. But, of course, no one can stand all of the time. By reciting Shema seated, we are emphasizing that one must accept G-d as King no matter where he finds himself. (Orchot Rabboteinu) [Hamaayan]

“Comfort, comfort My people,’ says your Elokim. ‘Speak to the heart of Yerushalayim and proclaim to her that her time [of exile] has been fulfilled, that her iniquity has been conciliated, for she has received from the hand of Hashem double for all her sins.’”

(Yeshayah 40:2—the opening verses of this week’s Haftarah) Midrash Eichah Rabati (end of ch.1) states: The Jewish People sinned doubly, as is written (Eichah 1:8), “Yerushalayim sinned a sin.” They were punished doubly, as is written (in our verse), “She has received from the hand of Hashem double for all her sins.” And, they will be consoled doubly, as is written (also in our verse), “Comfort, comfort My people.” [Until here from the Midrash] Many commentaries wonder about the meaning—indeed, the fairness— of this Midrash. **R’ Chaim Yaakov Goldvicht z”l** (1924-1995; founder and Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat Kerem B’ Yavneh, the first Yeshivat Hesder) explains: The Gemara (Ketubot 66b) relates that, at the time of the destruction of the Second Bet Hamikdash, the sage Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai (RYB”Z) saw a woman who was so desperate for food that she was collecting kernels of grain from animal dung. “Are you not the daughter of Nakdimon ben Gurion?” RYB”Z asked, referring to one of the three richest men in Yerushalayim. “Yes,” she replied. “Do you remember that you signed my Ketubah, which was for 1,000,000 gold Dinars [120,000 times the value of a typical Ketubah of 200 silver Zuz]?” All her father’s wealth had been lost, however. Whereupon RYB”Z cried and exclaimed: “Ashreichem Yisrael / How fortunate you are, Jewish People! When you do Hashem’s will, no nation can touch you. When you do not do

Hashem’s will, you fall lower than all the nations—indeed, lower than the animals of the other nations!” [Until here from the Gemara] How could RYB”Z call the Jewish People fortunate under these circumstances? R’ Goldvicht explains: The fact that the Jewish People are punished so harshly is a sign of our greatness. Just as a white garment shows dirt more readily than a dark garment does, so even minor sins leave stains on the Jewish People that would not even be noticeable on others. For this greatness, we are indeed fortunate! This, writes R’ Goldvicht, sheds light on the above Midrash as well. Of course, Hashem’s judgment is fair. But, because He judges the Jewish People so strictly, it appears as if they are punished doubly. In reality, “one” punishment is for the sins that every person can perceive, while the “second” punishment is for the sins that are visible only against the white background of a pure soul. Thus, there are “two” sins, “two” punishments, and, someday, “two” consolations. (Asufot Ma’arachot: Eichah)

Who is building the third Bet Hamikdash? R’ Moshe ben Maimon z”l (Rambam; Spain and Egypt; 1135-1204) writes: “The king, Mashiach, is destined to restore the reign of house of David as in the days of old, to build the Bet Hamikdash, and to gather-in the dispersed of Yisrael.” (Hilchot Melachim 11:1) Rambam writes further: “Tractate Middot contains nothing more than a history. It describes the dimensions of the Bet Hamikdash and its form, its structure and all its details. The use of this information is that, when the Bet Hamikdash is rebuilt soon in our days, it will be necessary to adhere to these details and make the building the same way, since they were set forth with Ruach Ha’kodesh / Divine inspiration.” (Introduction to Mishnah [R’ Kapach edition p.59]) The anonymous sage known only as **“a Levi from Barcelona”** (Spain; 13th century) writes: “This Mitzvah [building a Bet Hamikdash] applies when the majority of the Jewish People are on their Land. No individual is commanded to fulfill this Mitzvah, only the congregation as a whole. When the Bet Hamikdash is

built soon in our days, it will be a fulfillment of this Mitzvah.” (Sefer Ha’chinuch: Mitzvah 95) **Rashi z”l** (France; 1040-1105) writes, explaining the Gemara’s suggestion that the third Bet Hamikdash might be built on the first day of Pesach: “The Halachah ruling that the Bet Hamikdash cannot be built on Yom Tov refers only to a structure that is man-made. However, the future Mikdash that we are anticipating will be revealed fully built and will come from Heaven, as it is written (Shmot 15:17), ‘The Sanctuary, my Master, that Your hands established’.” (Commentary to Sukkah 41a) “For You, Hashem, with fire consumed her and with fire You will in the future rebuild her.” (“Nacheim” prayer recited in Minchah on Tisha B’Av) [Hamaayan]

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יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלקי ואלקי אבותי שתשלח מהרה רפואה שלמה מן השמים רפואת הנפש ורפואת הגוף לחולים

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בתי בת שרה
בריינדל בת פעשא לאה
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