

Shabbos: Ta'am HaChaim

Chaye Sara 5780

Sara Observed the Shabbos During the Week

Introduction

In this week's parashah it is said (Bereishis 24:67) *vayivieha Yitzchak haohela Sara imo vayikach es Rivka vatehi lo liisha vayehaveha vayinacheim Yitzchak acharei imo*, and Yitzchak brought her into the tent of Sara his mother; he married Rivka, she became his wife, and he loved her, and thus was Yitzchak consoled after his mother. Rashi quotes the Medrash (Bereishis Rabbah 60:16) that states that the juxtaposition of the words *vayivieha Yitzchak* to the words *haohela Sara imo* teaches us that when Yitzchak married Rivka, he observed that she was similar to his mother in every manner. When Sara was alive the candle would remain lit from one Friday afternoon to the next, blessing was found in the dough, and the cloud was above the tent. When Sara died, these phenomena ceased, and when Yitzchak married Rivka, the miracles returned. The simple understanding of the idea that the candle remained lit from one Friday afternoon to the next is that a miracle occurred and the candle was never extinguished. Upon deeper reflection, however, there is a profound lesson to be gained from this phenomenon. Sara was of such stature that she did not allow the candle to

become extinguished during the week. It is very easy for one to observe Shabbos, as when the sun sets on Friday, one is forbidden to engage in the thirty-nine primary acts of labor, and one is required to sanctify the day and delight in it. Yet, this is one level of observing and honoring the Shabbos. A higher level is when one conducts himself or herself throughout the week on the level of Shabbos. This means watching one's speech, being meticulous regarding the honor of others, avoiding impure areas and thoughts, and constantly seeking ways to be prepared for Shabbos. The Zohar states that a Torah scholar is in the category of Shabbos. The explanation for this statement is that the Rambam (Hilchos Deios) writes that a Torah scholar is judged on a different plane than the average person. For one to truly be in the category of Shabbos, he must conduct himself the entire week on a higher plane. Rivka truly reflected these ideas, as she was raised in the house of wicked people, and she still persevered and remained righteous.

The Shabbos Connection

When one can traverse the darkness of the weekday and still enter into the Shabbos bathed in the light of Torah and mitzvos, one has certainly experienced Shabbos in the week. When the entire Jewish People will observe Shabbos, i.e. when we will recognize that we must conduct ourselves at all times on a higher plane than the rest of the world,

we will instantly merit the Final Redemption with the arrival of Moshiach, speedily, in our days.

Shabbos in the Zemiros

Kel Mistater

This mystical Zemer was composed by Avraham Maimin, whose name with the addition of chazak, is formed by the acrostic. Avraham was a student of Rabbi Moshe Kordevero, a member of the Kabbalistic school of the Arizal, and he lived from 5282-5330 (1522-1570 C.E.)

רחובות הנָהָר נחֲלֵי אֲמוּנָה. מִים עֲמוּקִים יְדֻלֵּם אִישׁ תְּבוּנָה, like a broad flowing river, like faithful streams, deep waters drawn by the most understanding man. The Torah is likened to water, as water travels from on high downward. Thus, anyone can study Torah, even one without financial resources and lacking lineage. Nonetheless, one must humble himself to study Torah, like the water that descends to the lowest parts of the earth.

Shabbos Stories

Waiting to Say Kaddish

Rabbi Dovid Goldwasser relates: I had received a plea to travel to Croatia and Bosnia and spend Shabbos with a group of people who had an urgent thirst for spirituality. They not only had not had a rabbi since the 1940s, but they had just gone through a horrifying war. Realizing the urgency of the request and what it would mean to people living through

such troubled times, I could not refuse. And so, I was booked on a connecting flight Thursday evening leaving New York's JFK Airport for Vienna and continuing to Bosnia with my final destination – Sarajevo. The flight Thursday evening was delayed for one hour in the airport and one hour on the runway. My connecting flight in Vienna was scheduled to leave within 45 minutes of my arrival. I asked the flight personnel what they thought my chances were of my making the connecting flight. They assured me that there would be no problem. However, even with their assurance, I cannot say that I was not concerned. Sure enough, moments after the flight landed in Vienna Friday morning, as I rushed to the connecting flight, I was informed that the flight had just left. I raced to the transfer desk and was told that it would be impossible to make a connection that would arrive in time for Shabbos. In fact, there would be no flights connecting to Sarajevo until possibly Sunday evening. I could not believe it! I had traveled to Europe, blocked out my entire schedule in order to spend Shabbos with these people, and now I was faced with the possibility that the trip might have been in vain! I explained to the airline supervisor how important it was that I get to Sarajevo in time for Shabbos. I was almost in tears and I begged for understanding. When the supervisor realized the urgency of this mission she told me to wait a moment and went into a back office. Moments later she emerged, smiling. "We have arranged for a jet to fly you to

your destination.” Airline personnel soon arrived to escort me to the plane. To my surprise, I was the only passenger in a small plane. The far-reaching hand of Divine Providence moved swiftly that Friday afternoon and, miraculously, I arrived in time for Shabbos. I was told that usually fifteen to twenty people show up for the Friday night services. However, some additional preparations were made due to the fact that word had spread about the special guest the community would be hosting that Shabbos. The beautiful shul that once stood so proudly in the center of town had been destroyed – it had actually been systematically bombed in sections. Today, the only indication that a shul once stood there is a plaque on a brick wall of a parking lot. The group was to meet in the synagogue which is currently housed in the community center... An elderly woman approached me and asked if I would say the Kaddish for her husband. She explained that her husband had died during the war and throughout these difficult years she had never found someone to say Kaddish for his soul. She said that tonight would be his yahrtzeit (the anniversary date of a person’s passing). I told her at once that it would be my privilege to say Kaddish for her husband. Following the prayers, we all assembled in a large room where I recited the Kiddush for everyone. I personally poured a little bit of wine from the cup for each person. The spirit in the room that evening was contagious. We sang, we learned, we ate, and we discussed various topics of Torah,

continuing late into the night. One of the middle-aged men came to me with his cup of wine and asked me whether he had to drink it, or if he could save it for a future happy occasion (since kosher wine was difficult to obtain). I told him he could drink some of it and save the rest. I returned to my room early in the morning exhausted, yet exhilarated from one of the most special Friday nights that I had ever experienced. The next day we studied and davened together throughout the day. The same elderly woman approached me, and fully repeated her request that I say Kaddish for her husband. She then came to me once again before the afternoon service – I assured her that I would recite the Kaddish. We said farewell to the Shabbos with a Torah class that lasted from 4:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. After the class, I continued to answer personal questions from various individuals. Then I noticed the elderly woman waiting to speak to me. She said to me, “Because you redeemed my husband’s soul after all these years, I would like to redeem the Kaddish that you said.” She told me her name was Leah and she presented me with what looked like a round object wrapped in silver foil. She explained that the coin was over 100 years old and was the last possession that she had of her husband’s. She wanted me to have it. I politely refused by saying that it is important for her to have a memento. She then said, “Up until now the coin was my memento, but from this day onwards, I no longer need the coin – for I have the Kaddish.” The next morning

at 8:00 a.m. I was preparing to leave for the airport to fly into Sarajevo. Before I left, I wanted to say goodbye to the elderly woman who had asked me to say Kaddish. I got her telephone number from the community center and when I dialed her number a young person answered. When I asked to speak with Leah, the young person said, “I am so sorry. Leah passed on early this morning.” I then learned that her husband had not died in the recent civil strife, but during World War II. For one reason or another, she had been unable to find anyone to say Kaddish for him. She willed herself to stay alive for another 50 years until she could perform this final duty.

Shabbos in Halacha

Wringing and Laundering

3. כיבוס – Laundering

The Prohibition

Laundering (with water) is done in three steps; performing any one of the steps violates the *melacha*:

1. שרוייה: Soaking
2. שפשוף: Scrubbing
3. סחיטה: Wringing

1. Soaking [or Wetting]

It is forbidden *mideoraisa* (by Torah Prohibition) to soak or to saturate a stained fabric in water (or other cleaning

agents). Pouring water on a stain is also forbidden.

This prohibition applies only to absorbent materials (i.e. wool, cotton, linen), for which such materials the rule is שרייתו זהו כיבוס: *Soaking is [by itself, a form of] laundering*. Leather, plastic and other non-absorbent materials are exempt from this particular prohibition, for materials that are not truly absorbent cannot be substantially cleaned by merely soaking in water.

Accordingly, one is prohibited from pouring water on a soiled linen tablecloth, however, one is permitted to do so on a plastic tablecloth. If the plastic tablecloth has a trimming made of absorbent fiber one must avoid wetting the trim.



**Shabbos Ta'am HaChaim:
Chaye Sara 5780**

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