

Kindert Torah

בס"ד

Parashas Shemos

Boruch Kel Elyon

"Good Shabbos, kinderlach! How did everyone sleep last night?"

"Wonderful, Abba. Our sleep was real Oneg Shabbos."

"And how were your tefillos this morning?"

"Filled with *kavannah* (concentration), Abba."

"Excellent! Let us make Kiddush, hamotzi, and then sing our first *zemer* of the day."

"Will you explain it to us, Abba?"

"My pleasure, kinderlach."

And so, the family makes kiddush and begins their sumptuous Shabbos meal.

"We begin the *zemiros* with *Boruch Kel Elyon*, kinderlach. It praises those who keep Shabbos and tells of the great rewards that await them. 'May the Most High G-d be blessed, Who gave a time of rest, a relief for our souls from tragedy and groaning...' The gemora (Shabbos 118a) relates that all who eat the three Shabbos meals will be saved from the birth pangs of *moshiach*, the judgment of *gehennom*, and the war of *Gog and Magog*. '...And may He seek the welfare of Zion, the city laid waste. Until when must the groaning soul suffer?'"

"Keeping Shabbos has spared us much suffering, Abba. May it lead to the redemption!"

"Amen, kinderlach. At Har Sinai the King of the Universe made it heard in such a pleasant way that we should honor Shabbos with tasty food and delicacies, elegant garments, and a family feast."

"Fantastic, Abba. Shabbos is pure pleasure."

"Fortunate is everyone who awaits a double reward from the One Who sees all but dwells in dense darkness...' What is that double reward? The Zohar (2:255:1) explains that Shabbos expenses are considered as a loan from Hashem, and He pays back double! '...He will merit an inheritance in the mountains and the valleys; an inheritance and resting place that shines for him like the sun."

"One who observes Shabbos correctly, his lot is to be worthy of beloved holiness! If he fulfills the obligations of the day, praises are due him. This would be a gift to Hashem, The Master Who created him."

"We want to give Hashem a gift, Abba!"

"Keeping Shabbos is a wonderful gift for Him, kinderlach. The *zemer* continues, 'Hashem, You called it the most desirable of days.' We say this in the Amidah prayers of Shabbos. The wholesome ones (descendants of Yaakov) are fortunate if it is safeguarded. He will fashion a beaten crown on their heads and rest His spirit upon them."

"The one who remembers the Shabbos day to make it holy; his stature will be raised; he will have a crown on his head. Therefore, let each man give himself pleasure and joy – symbols of greatness."

"How inspiring to know that the pleasures that we enjoy on Shabbos are so exalted, Abba!"

"Finally, kinderlach, we come to the culmination – the last verse. Shabbos is described as a Queen, who is holy. The sefer 'Merkavas Hamishna' elaborates on the *kedusha* of the Shabbos Queen. She adds holiness to our entire body, more so than any other mitzvah. She brings blessings into our homes every week. How do we welcome her? By refraining from doing work. Our sons, daughters, and even our servants do no work on this holy day."

"Abba, the Queen is here! May we all receive her blessings!"
"Amen!"

Kinderlach . . .

How good Hashem is to us! At Har Sinai He gave us this wonderful day of Shabbos, to be a haven of tranquility and rest for our weary souls. We honor this precious gift with the finest food, clothing, celebration, and rest. In return for our enjoyment, we receive fantastic rewards – boundless inheritance, good fortune, endless praise, and crowns upon our heads. The Holy Shabbos Queen brings blessings into our homes, as we all enjoy her blissful rest.

Make The Effort

"Hashem is close to all who call upon Him" (Tehillim 145:18). How close is Hashem? Rav Shach zt"l relates an insight in his sefer, "A Beacon of Light" which shows just how close He really is. Moshe Rabbeinu was tending the sheep of his father-in-law, Yisro. He saw a bush burning, but the fire did not consume the bush. "I will turn aside now and look at this great sight" (Shemos 3:3). How much did he turn aside? Rebbe Yochanan says that he walked three steps. Reish Lakish says that he did not walk but he inclined his neck. "Hashem saw that he turned aside to see; and He called out to him from the bush and said, 'Moshe, Moshe.'" (Shemos 3:4).

Our sages are teaching us that "turning to see" was an act of drawing closer to Hashem, which immediately made Moshe worthy of receiving prophecy. How much or little he approached was irrelevant. The mere act of turning was enough, because Hashem's Presence fills the entire universe. He is waiting to draw close to those who turn to Him.

Kinderlach . . .

Getting close to Hashem is our whole purpose in life. If we turn toward Him, He will draw close to us. Did you eat a delicious apple today? Stop for a moment. Turn aside. Think. Where did that apple come from? Who created it? Who made it

so delicious, so beautiful, and so good for you? Who else but Hashem could possibly create such a wondrous thing? Look in the mirror and smile. What a beautiful face! Who could possibly create such beautiful features with all of the skin and muscles working together to create that lovely smile. Only One. Take the time to stop. Think. Turn aside toward Him. He will come close to you.

Derech Eretz

"He saw and behold the bush was burning with fire, but it was not consumed" (Bereshis 3:2). Why did Hashem choose to reveal Himself to Moshe in this manner? He could have just called to Moshe directly. Rav Shach zt"l relates that Hashem is teaching us a lesson in *derech erez* (proper behavior). Moshe Rabbeinu was in the midst of working for Yisro, tending his sheep. Hashem did not wish to interrupt Moshe while he was working. First, He showed him something that might draw his attention. Only after Moshe stopped what he was doing, did Hashem call him.

Think about this a second. Hashem is the Supreme Being, Creator, and Master of the universe. He wished to appoint Moshe Rabbeinu to the position of leader of Klal Yisrael, to take them out of Mitzraim. This was an important job, perhaps the most significant leadership position in history. Did Hashem need to wait for anyone? Of course not! Yet, He did not want to distract Moshe from what he was doing. What a lesson in how to treat others!

Kinderlach . . .

"There's the teacher now. Didn't you want to ask her something?" "I did but she is speaking with someone." "So what? You have to be bold. Go over to her and ask your question. She does not have to answer you, but at least you can ask. Look at how much time you will save." Miri thinks about this, but decides that interrupting the teacher would show chutzpah (impudence). She walks over and waits patiently until the teacher is finished speaking. "Miri, you have such derech erez! It is a pleasure to talk with you."

Parasha Questions:

- What were Moshe's responses to Hashem's request to take Klal Yisrael out of Mitzrayim? (3:11, 13, 4:1, 10, 13)
- What was Hashem's response to Moshe's final response? (4:14-17)
- What was Paroh's response to Moshe and Aharon's order from Hashem to send out Klal Yisrael? (5:2)

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