

PARSHAS EMOR

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SHIUR PRESENTED IN 5771

לכבוד שמחת הנישואין של יוסף חיים בן דינה ומלכה בת רחל מרים
ובהתחלת ביון בית נעמן בישראל

AN EXCERSIE PROGRAM TO “BOOST” YOUR SHABBOS

SHABBOS ON AUTO-PILOT

ששת ימים תעשה מלאכה וביום השביעי שבת שבתון מקרא קדש כל מלאכה לא תעשו שבת הוא לה' בכל מושבתיכם

“On six days work shall be done, but on the seventh day there shall be a Sabbath of complete rest, a sacred occasion. You shall do no work; it shall be a Sabbath to Hashem throughout all your dwelling places.” (Vayikra 23:3)

The subject this evening is one of the most crucial and fundamental principles in a Jew's life and serves as the foundation for his continued growth.¹ The problem with this subject is that most of us who are familiar with the subject from the age of 3, go through life relating to it with the maturity of a 3-year-old or a 4-year-old. We never realize that the introduction that we had to the subject in our early youth was no more than a training session to give us some ideas and nothing to do at all with the subject matter.

The subject we are discussing is, of course, Shabbos. I see most of the people here are yeshivish people, so you all know that as children, as you grew up with Shabbos, the best part was oneg Shabbos. You got candies. You got lollipops. Maybe you heard a story in Pirchei. But Shabbos didn't have much to offer you. Then when you grew up and went to yeshivah, Shabbos became the mini bein hazmanim. When you got older and went to Eretz Yisrael or beis medrash or seminary you were mekayem “veheichinu” - you prepared for Shabbos early. Your bein hazmanim started Friday morning and some of the machmirim started Thursday night and mehadrin min hamehadrin started Thursday afternoon. And you were all me'acher in the yetzias haShabbos like the Rambam says. No one ended Motzei Shabbos. It extended through Sunday morning. For some, Sunday afternoon. If you started the week on

Monday morning that was great. And most people don't change. You'll hear different nuschaos: “It's the time I'm catching up on my life; I need to catch up on my sleep; Are you kidding? Shabbos is a day of work? I work hard all week!” The more Shabbos is disgraced, the more it becomes less. If you're a real yeshivish guy, maybe you buy the Yated. If you're more yeshivish, you buy the Yated and Hamodia. As you get older you buy Ami or you buy Mishpacha. Shabbos turns into a day of reading different materials, books or exciting frum novels to keep yourself busy; thus, your connection to Shabbos is really nothing more than that of a 3 to 5-year-old. It's just a question of whether you buy candy or peanuts, or papitas (sunflower seeds) - if you're a geshmake guy. And if you're a more classy guy you get chocolate-covered almonds, or you get white nuts. Whatever it is, that's the custom of Shabbos.

THINKING ABOUT EMUNAS HACHIDDUSH

So, the first thing you need to know is what's the purpose of Shabbos. What's the function of Shabbos? If you'll ask the average person what is the function of Shabbos, I'm not sure if he will know the exact answer. There is a Meiri in Tehillim (92), מזמור שיר, ליום השבת, where he says that after everything is said and done, והעיקר, the main purpose of Shabbos is to instill in us emunas hachiddush, the emunah that Hakadosh Baruch Hu constantly renews the world.² Most people think: “Why is yesh me'ayin such a big principle?” One of the fundamental principles of Creation is that Hakadosh Baruch Hu created the world yesh me'ayin. If you'll open up any sefer from the Rambam, to Rav Saadya Gaon, to any kadmon, it's going to tell you about yesh me'ayin. Now, who really cares? What difference does it make how Hashem created the world thousands of years ago?

The answer is Hakadosh Baruch Hu is מעשה בראשית בכל יום תמיד מחדש בטובו בכל יום תמיד מעשה בראשית. Not on a daily basis. Every single moment the world is being recreated from nothing. This means that I exist at this moment not because I existed a minute ago, so I have a 50/50

¹ The Rosh HaYeshiva, Shilt"a, delivered this shiur in Lakewood on Dec 10, 2011 (14 Kislev 5771)

² מזמור שיר ליום השבת. אמרו בדרש שזה המזמור אדם הראשון אמרו שנברא בערב שבת ונתקל ובשעת ייב של יום הששי כשנתגרש מנייע בא הבייה ליתן איפוסין ר"ל נור דין אלא שנכנס שבת () וניצל ובא לומי הימנון לשבת ר"ל הודאה אמי לו השבת לי אתה אומי הימנון אני ואתה נאמי הימנון להבייה ההייד טוב להודות להי' והעקר בדרש האחר שאמרנו למעלה שמשא רבי אמרו ורמז בו על ענין אם אמונת החדוש שאמונת ההשגחה וגמול ועונש נמשכת אחרייו וכבר ידעת שהגדולה שבסיבות נתינת השבת היא לקבוע אמונה זאת בלבבות [נאמי] טוב להודות כלומי עתה עת נאות וטוב להודות להי' ולהתבודד בנפלאותיו להיותו עת הפנאי עד שמתוך התבודדותו נשיג כבוד הבורא ונפלאותיו ונשח ונזמר לשמו להגיד בבקר חסדך כלום עד שנדע ונקבע בלבבנו זאת האמונה תמיד והוא ענין בבקר ובלילות כלום בכל זמן ורומזו בחסדך על בריאת העולם עולם חסד יבנה (מזמור פט ג) ואמונתך [רמז על אמונת גמול ועונש שהוא יושר ומשפט והוא ענין אמונה, אל אמונה ואין עול וכי [נדברים לב ד

chance to exist in another minute. The only reason I exist every single moment is because this very moment Hashem is choosing that I should exist. If you look around the world, you see that people get strokes, heart attacks, sprained necks, sprained backs, sprained ankles. One minute your stomach is fine, the next minute you ask yourself, "What did I eat wrong today? Who served me poison? What did I eat too much of?" You should know that it's all nonsense. You don't understand that Hakadosh Baruch Hu decided that your stomach was going to work until now - ad kan - and the next second Hashem said, "No." One minute ago Hashem wanted that you shouldn't have a headache,

and a second later Hashem can decide that you're going to have a headache. Your back is going to hurt you and your shoulders will hurt. Think about the pains we go through on a daily basis. One day you wake up and it's hard to walk, it's hard to get started. The reason is that Hashem decides every single thing. Sometimes you get up and you're ready to go. Sometimes you say, "Oh, I'm so tired. It must be because I didn't sleep enough. I didn't eat enough. I ate too much. I ate too little." You make up all kinds of stories. The reason for these aches and pains is one thing - Hakadosh Baruch Hu is **מחדש בטובו בכל יום תמיד מעשה בראשית**

This is one of the main lessons you need to learn and glean from Shabbos. If after a Shabbos you don't come out feeling that you know this fact and you've exercised this fact and you've worked on it, you missed the boat. That's the ikar of Shabbos, and it's shtait in alle rishonim, but the Meiri just explains it in a simple way.

MUCH CLOSER THAN TIBET

Now, how many people do that? How many people think and contemplate about this? Most people don't. That's the metzius. They like to eat on Shabbos. They like to sleep on Shabbos. Davening is not a big thing on Shabbos. You don't daven for parnasah on Shabbos so people don't find "exercising" their emunas ha'chiddush "muscles" that exciting on Shabbos. They don't relate much to the tefilos on Shabbos. It's not dealing with teshuvah or asking for things. It's not this. It's not that. What happens? You just go through the Shabbos and nothing meaningful draws your attention. That's number one.

Zugt the Meiri: what's the result of keeping this idea in mind? What's the immediate result if I know there's chiddush ha'olam? What is the nekudah of the principle of chiddush ha'olam? So, you have to know the following. The Rambam writes in the beginning of Yesodei haTorah (1:5) that the world is created by Hakadosh Baruch Hu every second.³ For what reason? For the benefit of man. That means as follows: right this very second, Hashem is recreating my world,

as far as it's noge'ah to me; your world, as far as it's noge'ah to you - in the most miraculous way - Hakadosh Baruch Hu is being meitiv with you. That's why I'm sitting here. I can talk. I can move my hands. I can think. I can process my thoughts. I can breathe at the same time. I can blink at the same time. I don't have to pause for that. That's a chessed Hashem. **גדלו וטובו מלא עולם**, that is the yesod. You must know that every second, chiddush ha'olam teaches me that **גדלו וטובו מלא עולם**.

I've asked people many times, "Do you recognize where the **גדלו וטובו מלא עולם** is?" They say, "Well, in the Himalayas, of course. The oceans are also very impressive." I say, "What does that mean? Is that where you find **גדלו וטובו מלא עולם**? What about the fact that your heart beats and it never pauses? What about the fact that your eyes work and never stop? Your mind works and it doesn't stop, correct?" The way he uses it - no, of course not. So just a couple of simple 'pauses' would remind the guy he has a mind or a heart. But Hakadosh Baruch Hu is **גדלו וטובו מלא עולם**.

A FREE PERSONAL TRAINER

Now, zugt the Meiri, what's the result of that thinking about the emunas ha'chiddush? Do you know what the result of that is? Hashgachah. A person comes to emunah in hashgachah. In other words, I realize that this very second I have a personal trainer, I have personal and individual hashgachah - a security and a medical detail who's watching every single facet of my life this very second. And the result of that is emunah in gemul ve'onesh. You understand that the world works on a system of reward and punishment. Every action that we do, every thought that we have causes a reaction letov ulemutav (good or bad). There's no such a thing as in the middle. I don't care what anybody is going to tell you. I don't care if they have long beards. I heard people with long beards say, "Oh, come on!" I don't care. That's one of the principles. The Ramban writes at the end of the Parshas Bo (Shemos 13:16) that any individual who doesn't believe in this fact, who doesn't believe that everything he does causes a reaction letov ulemutav **אין לו חלק בתורת משה**. There's not one thing that a person does that's not going to have an effect. And if he doesn't

³ המצוי הזה הוא אלקי העולם אדון כל הארץ. והוא המנהיג הגלגל בכח שאין לו קץ ותכלית. בכח שאין לו הפסק. שהגלגל סובב תמיד ואי אפשר שיסב בלא מסבב. והוא ברוך הוא המסבב אותו בלא יד ובלא גוף

believe that? **אין לו חלק בתורת משה**, he has no shaychus to Toras Hashem. That's how crucial and fundamental this thought is.⁴

Now, the Ramchal says in the beginning of Mesillas Yesharim that there are some truths that are widely known, but people either don't emphasize them or they take them for granted. You have to live with emunah. How is it shayach that you believe in Hashem when every action in your life cries out, "I don't need Hashem. I'm not afraid of Hashem. I do what I want. I do things how I want. I do things when I want."

WORKING ON EMUNAH IN THE DESERT

I ask people, "When was the last time you kept Shabbos like you're supposed to keep Shabbos?" Do you know an interesting halachah? The gemara in Shabbos says an amazing, fantastic thing. Let's say a guy is in a desert and he

doesn't have tefillin. What should he do? Should he take some desert grass and wrap it around his hand as a zecher for tefillin? Does it say he should make himself a tzitzis of reeds and wear these reeds, and when people ask what he's doing, he'll say that he's wearing tzitzis? No.

But there's one mitzvah you've got to do in the desert. Shabbos. You know what you do? You have no calendar. You should count seven days and keep Shabbos. It's mind boggling. What are you doing? You're not making kiddush. If it's a safek brachah, you shouldn't make kiddush! What are you doing on Shabbos then? You're singing Kel adon? Baruch Kel elyon? What are you doing on Shabbos? What are you doing that's Shabbosdik on that seventh day? You're doing one thing. You're rooting in your heart the emunah in chiddush ha'olam, in hashgachas haBorei and in gemul veonesh. No melachah may be done either.

YETZER HORA'S DIVERSION STRATEGY

If you know of a guy who goes to a gym and you ask him, "Did you work out?" and he tells you, "No, I met my friends there. We were shmoozing the whole time. I never got a chance to work out." That's a total waste of time, wouldn't you say? He may have had a great time with his friends. Maybe he got a smoothie there. Maybe a nice Coke. It was geshmak. They had a really great bull session; but hello, did you even remember you were in a gym?! You went to the gym to do gymnastics. To get your cardiovascular or strength workout. You wanted to get in shape, didn't you? But you did gornisht. Zero. Zilch. You missed the opportunity. You wasted your time.

Let me tell you something: you go through Shabbos the same way every week, every seven days, for years and years and years and years! If your visits to Shabbos resembled the trip to that gym, you acquired zero. That's called chillul Shabbos. That's called desecrating the Shabbos. We feed our faces. We want to have special foods. We tell our wives, "Make sure you make that special thing I like." If she doesn't make it, you say, "How come you didn't make it?" Or sometimes you may go out and buy it and take care of it yourself. Whatever you do. The whole Shabbos went right over your heads. "I spend time sleeping on Shabbos. I am so tired on Shabbos." What about learning on Shabbos? "I can't learn on Shabbos. Come on, I learn the whole week!" Or someone says, "I'm busy. I work all week. I can't learn on Shabbos." I say to them, "What about the Yerushalmi (Shabbos 15:3)?⁵ The Mishnah Berurah (290:7) brings it down:

לא ניתנו שבתות ויו"ט לישראל אלא כדי לעסוק בהם בתורה⁶

So you go through your whole life the way most people do. The yetzer hara sees a guy get interested in Shabbos, so he gets the guy a little diverted. You know what he does? He gets him to buy Rav Simcha Bunim Cohen, my brother-in-law's sefer about The Kosher Home and The Kosher Kitchen. He opens it up for a day or two and he says, "Wow, that's interesting. I never knew that halachah. That's interesting. It is pretty interesting." He once tried learning a little Mishnah Berurah. Mishnah Berurah he remembers from his high school. He tried it also in beis medrash but he couldn't understand anything. He couldn't remember from one Mishnah Berurah to the next Mishnah Berurah and it was all one bilbul, so he stopped it altogether. But now he's got Rav Simcha Bunim Cohen's sefer, so now it's easy. Then, he realizes he can't do this. He can't

⁴ וּמִן הַנְּסִים הַגְּדוֹלִים הַמְּפֹרְסָמִים אִדָּם מוֹדֵה בְּנִסִּים הַנִּסְתָּרִים שֶׁהֵם יְסוּד הַתּוֹרָה כְּלָה, שְׁאִין לְאָדָם חֵלֶק בְּתוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה רַבִּינוּ עַד שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר בְּכָל דְּבָרֵינוּ וּמְקָרִינוּ שְׂכֵלֵם נִסִּים אִין בְּהֵם טִבַּע וּמְנַהֲגוּ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, בֵּין בְּרַבִּים בֵּין בַּיְחִיד, אֲלָ אִם יַעֲשֶׂה הַמַּצּוֹת יַצְלִיחֵנו שְׂכָרוֹ, וְאִם יַעֲבֹר עֲלֵיהֶם יִכְרִיתֵנו עֲנֹשׁ, הַכֵּל בְּגוֹרַת עֲלוּיִן כְּאִשֶׁר הִזְכִּירָנוּ כָּבֵר (בְּרֵאשִׁית י"ז א, וְלַעֲלִיל ו' ב) וַיִּתְפָּרְסְמוּ הַנְּסִים הַנִּסְתָּרִים בְּעֵינֵי הַרְבִּים כְּאִשֶׁר יָבֵא בִּיעוּדֵי הַתּוֹרָה בְּעֵינֵי הַבְּרִכּוֹת וְהַקְּלָלוֹת, כְּמוֹ שְׁאִמְרֵי הַכְּתוּב (דְּבָרִים כ"ט כ"ד) וְאִמְרוּ כָל הַגּוֹיִם עַל מַה עָשָׂה ה' כִּכָּה לְאַרְץ הַזֹּאת, וְאִמְרוּ עַל אִשֶׁר עָזְבוּ אֶת בְּרִית ה' אֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתָם, שִׁיתְפָּרְסֵם הַדָּבָר לְכָל הָאוֹמוֹת שֶׁהוּא מֵאֵת ה' בְּעוֹנֵשָׁם. וְאִמְרוּ בְּקִיּוּם וְרֵאוּ כָל עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ כִּי שֵׁם ה' (נִקְרָא עֲלֵיךְ וִירָאוּ מִמֶּךָ. וְעוֹד אִפְרָשׁ זֶה בְּעִזְרַת הַשֵּׁם (וַיִּקְרָא כ"ו י"א

⁵ רַבִּי חֲנִי בִּשְׁם רַבִּי שְׁמוּאֵל בַּר נַחֲמָן. לֹא נִיתְנוּ שְׁבִתוֹת וַיּוֹמִים טוֹבִים אֲלָ לְאִכִּילָהּ וּלְשִׁיתָהּ. עַל יְדֵי שֶׁהִפָּה זֶה (טְרִיחַ) מְרִיחַ הַתִּירוֹ לוֹ לְעֹסֵק בְּהֵן דְּבָרֵי תוֹרָה. רַבִּי בְּרַכִּי בִּשְׁם רַבִּי חִיָּא בַר רַבָּא לֹא נִיתְנוּ שְׁבִתוֹת וַיּוֹמִים טוֹבִים אֲלָ לְעֹסֵק בְּהֵן דְּבָרֵי תוֹרָה. מִתְנִיתָא מְסִיעֵיהָ בֵּין לְדִין בֵּין לְדִין. כִּיֶּצֶד הוּא עוֹשֶׂה. אוֹ יוֹשֵׁב וְאוֹכֵל אוֹ יוֹשֵׁב וְעוֹסֵק בְּדָבָרֵי תוֹרָה. כְּתוּב אֶחָד אוֹמֵר. שְׁבִת הוּא לֵי. וְכְתוּב אַחַר אוֹמֵר. עֲצַרְת לֵי אֱלֹהֶיךָ. הָא כִּיֶּצֶד. תֵּן חֵלֶק לְתַלְמוּד תּוֹרָה וְחֵלֶק לְאִכִּיל וּלְשִׁיתוֹ. אִמַר רַבִּי אֲבָהוּ שְׁבִת לֵי. שְׁבִת כִּי. מַה הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא שְׁבִת מִמָּאֵמֵר. אִף אֵת שְׁבִת מִמָּאֵמֵר

⁶ וְאִסוּר לְקַבֵּוּ וְכוּ' - בְּגִמְרָא אֵיתָא בְּתַלְתּ מִיָּלִי נַחְתֵּי בְּעִיב מְנַסְיֵיהוּ וְחַד מְנִייהוּ דְּקַבְעֵי סְעוּדָתָא בְּשַׁבְתָּא בְּעִידוֹן בִּי מְדַרְשָׁא וְהַעֲנִין כְּדֵאִיתָא בִּירוּשְׁלַיִם (הוֹבָא בְּבִי רִפִּיחַ) לֹא נִיתְנוּ שְׁבִתוֹת וַיּוֹמִים לְיִשְׂרָאֵל אֲלָ כְּדֵי לְעֹסֵק בְּהֵם בְּתוֹרָה מִפְּנֵי שְׂכֵל יְמוֹת הַחֹלֵל הֵם טְרוּדִים בְּמִלְאָכָתָם וְאִין לָהֶם פְּנָאֵי לְעֹסֵק בְּהֵן בְּקַבְעֵי וּבְשַׁבְתָּא הֵם פְּנִיִם מְמַלְאָה וַיְכֻלִּים לְעֹסֵק בְּהֵן כְּרָאוּ לְפִיכָן אִסוּר לוֹ לְפַנּוֹת עַצְמוֹ מִדִּיָּת וּלְקַבֵּוּ סְעוּדָתוֹ בְּשַׁעֲנָה שְׂדוּרְשֵׁין בְּבַהֲמִי' דְּבָרֵי תוֹרָה רַבִּים אֲלָ יִקְדִים אוֹתָהּ אוֹ יֵאָחַר אוֹתָהּ. וְזוֹהוּ תוֹכַחַת מְגוּלָה לְאוֹתוֹ הָאֲנָשִׁים שֶׁמְשַׁיְלִין בְּעַת הַהֵיאָ בְּשׁוֹקִים וּבְרַחוּבוֹת כִּי אִפְלוּ סְעוּדַת שְׁבִת שֶׁהִיא מְצוּהָ אִסוּר אִזּוּ מִפְּנֵי בְטוּל תּוֹרָה וְכִי לְטִילוּ וּלְהַרְבוֹת אִזּוּ בְּשִׂיחָה בְּטִלָה שְׂאִסוּר

do that. He thinks, "My wife probably learned this in seminary. It's not for me." Goodbye, zei gezunt. I did my Shabbos thing. But he never did Shabbos.

TIME TO BECOME SHOMER SHABBOS

The first avodah you have to do, is you have to realize if you have no emunah your Yiddishkeit is built on hot air, or maybe cold air. In other

words, it's gornisht. Your Yiddishkeit is really very shvach. The way to build your Yiddishkeit is through Shabbos, because Shabbos builds Yiddishkeit. That's the way. So you've got to start becoming a shomer Shabbos.

See, I actually know a lot about this because I used to keep Shabbos in this way. That's how I know so much about it. But many years ago I decided to wake up. I remember thinking, "Am I going to go the rest of my life with this yeshivishe shtick?" So I decided to become frum. I decided, "I'm going to become a shomer Shabbos."

Now, I'll tell you one of my greatest motivations. If you would have asked me years ago, I would have told you that the hardest time to fight the yetzer hara, on any front, is Shabbos. Sunday it's not bad. Monday I'm in shape. Tuesday I'm in shape. Wednesday. But on Friday it starts to get shvach already. Shabbos was a downer. I mean, forget about it. On all counts the yetzer hara had me before we even started to rest.

Then I saw in many sefarim that the easiest time to beat the yetzer hara was Shabbos. I said, "What?" The easiest time to learn is on Shabbos. The time you need the least sleep is on Shabbos. The time a person could daven best is Shabbos. I remember seeing this in one sefer and another sefer and another sefer. What planet do these guys come from? What is Shabbos there? Where is this? Are they chassidim? I don't know what they were. They weren't chassidim. I said to myself, I'm Litvish. I'm not chassidish. What do you want from my life?

Then I thought, "Maybe I missed the boat. Maybe I never observed Shabbos. Just maybe." I learned hilchos Shabbos. I can tell you the different shitos. I learned perek kirah and I learned perek haboneh. I learned a lot of things about Shabbos, but Shabbos had a shvache meaning to me.

NIGHT AND DAY

Then I decided I'm going to make an attempt, and I discovered that the easiest time to daven is on Shabbos. That's a simple thing. Shabbos is the only day of the year that the tefilos of the day are not repetitive. It's the only day of the year that minchah, shacharis and ma'ariv are different. Every day of the year lerabos Yom Hakippurim, lerabos yamim tovim, the same story ma'ariv, shacharis, minchah. In case you slept through ma'ariv, you get a chance at shacharis. If you slept through shacharis you get another chance at minchah. If you missed it this time, come back next year. In chutz la'arets you get two days. You can make up the second day. If not then, come back next year. We'll see you again. It's the same story. Shabbos is the only time it's different. What's going on over here?

And then I discovered an even bigger discovery. I started looking in the Sifri and the Safra and the Mechilta. I saw in the Mechilta a davar niflah. You know there are two pesukim in the Torah that say if you're mechallel Shabbos you're chayev misah, and the Mechilta says one is for the night and one for the day. When I saw that for the first time fifteen years ago, it blew me out of this world. I said, "What's shtait duh? There's two Shabbosos and there's a hava minah that you're only chayav chillul Shabbos for one and not the other. What's the pshat?" Then I realized it. There's a night of Shabbos with one chelek - one avodah - and there's the day of Shabbos, which is a totally different avodah. And then I started to think about these things over and over. I said, "You know we don't mention Shabbos being a kallah after Friday night. Shabbos is a kallah only on Friday night. On Shabbos morning we don't mention the concept of kallah." What's the pshat? And then I realized that the whole avodah of leil Shabbos was about acknowledging that Hakadosh Baruch Hu created shamayim va'arets and He rested on Shabbos. The avodah of Friday night is to connect with that fact every single week, over and over again.

GET BUSY THANKING HASHEM

Now, I'm thankful I grew up in a house with Rav Avigdor Miller, zt"l, my zeida. At least I had some ideas. I remember him doing certain things. I didn't chap what he was doing. I thought maybe he was a little frum, he was a little this, a little extreme. He wasn't yeshivish. I was wondering, "What is he doing?" I remember, every Friday night - from the time I was a little kid - he

would ask, “What’s the most important thing to do on Shabbos?” He used to say, “What’s good to do on Shabbos?” That’s how he used to ask the question. What’s the good thing to do on Shabbos? We would say oneg Shabbos, we’d say chulent. The answer is: טוב להודות לה (Tehillim 92). The avodah of Shabbos is ליום השבת שיר ליום השבת. He used to say to us, “When you’re going to grow up you’re going to wonder why it doesn’t make any mention about Shabbos in ליום השבת שיר ליום השבת. But that’s a mistake. It does. That’s Shabbos – טוב להודות לה.

Now, I didn’t chap this. The Meiri that we mentioned above - I only found it recently, within the last year - you know what he says on the pasuk טוב להודות לה? Do you know what the purpose of being modeh to Hashem is? The Meiri writes the purpose is to be mechazek and exercise our emunah that Hashem is המחדש בטובו בכל יום תמיד מעשה בראשית. Everyday גדלו וטובו, Hashem imbues me with miraculous mofsim, nisim venifla’os and He gives me tov constantly, non-stop. I don’t take it for granted. Just because I had it five minutes ago, doesn’t mean I’m going to have it in another five minutes. And I recognize, “Hashem, You’re being mashgiach (supervising) over me. I’m never lost.”

LOSING MONEY BUT GAINING EMUNAH

I’ve gone through some massive, and major challenges in my life. I’ll tell you one. For twenty years I lived with my mother-in-law, A”H, and I didn’t pay rent. I lived in the basement and I didn’t pay rent. And every month I put away about \$1000, as if I was paying top dollar rent, to marry off my kids. איזהו חכם הרואה את הנולד. And Hashem blessed me with ten daughters and a couple of sons. People said to me, “What are you going to do with ten daughters?” I said, “I don’t know. But I guess I’m going to be a rich man.” So I figured I’ll help the system along, so I put away money for many years. Years. And years. Then at some point, I invested it. The money grew. At the end, before I married my first child, I had amassed a sum total of \$420,000. I thought I was sitting pretty. I felt very comfortable. I was still living in the basement, but I had 420 grand. I figured I’ll take care of a few daughters. I can help them out. I can pay for the chasunos. I’ll have what to support them with. I made cheshbonos. Ten years each one. I’m going to do it. I figured somehow it will work.

I invested the money with a good chaver of mine. A fine yeshivishe heimishe guy. Two weeks before the wedding I was in New York buying some last-minute things for the wedding when I got a phone call from this fellow. “Hello, Yisroel? How are you doing? Are you sitting down?” “No, I’m standing up,” I told him. He said, “Why don’t you sit down?” I said, “I don’t mind standing up. If you’ve got good news for me, give it to me standing.” He said, “No, it’s not good news.” I said, “Give it to me standing anyhow.” He continued, “You know all the money you had? I can’t live with myself anymore. I ripped you off. I stole it from you. You know all the business deals you showed to lawyers? The aluminum, the steel, the chrome? You know those bank checks I showed you from companies in North Carolina and Texas? They were all forgeries.” The guy gave me shiurim gedolim on steel, chrome, and alloys. He showed me orders for six hundred airplane propellers! The guy was a ba’al kishron. I showed it all to lawyers. The lawyers all said it was rock solid. A known company. He had bank checks from companies. He printed a bank check.

I said, “Tell me, how much is left?” He said, “You’re not hearing what I’m saying. Efes.” I said, “Efes? What do you mean ‘efes’? There’s got to be something, I mean you had 420 grand. You burned 420 grand?” He said, “I’ve been living very big during the last few years. It wasn’t only your money. I took other people’s money, too. A few million bucks in total. I said, “So you’re telling me that I’ve got zero dollars left, two weeks before I’m making my first kid’s wedding.” I said, “Have a good life.” I hung up the phone on the guy. I turned to my wife and said, “We just got the test of our life. We are wiped out.”

I was thinking to myself, “Why couldn’t Hashem wait for two weeks after the wedding to do this? Wouldn’t that be easier?” You know what Hashem wanted to show me? “You think you’re saved. You’ve got money. You shoteh what you are. You tipesh. Do you think you save and that gives you money? Don’t you understand - I determine every single second if you’re going to live or you’re going to die and how much money you are going to have? Do you think if you have money stashed under your blanket, under your bed, that means it’s going to be there when you get home?” There was a story with a lady in Eretz Yisrael with over a million bucks. The lady had a million dollars in her mattress. And her daughter came in, and in the chessed of her heart, she threw the mattress out, the old shmatta mattress out. She wanted to clean her mom’s apartment. A million dollars gone. The lady paid 30 grand to try to recover that mattress. She hired security guards. At every garbage dump, every guy and his cousin were looking for that mattress. A million bucks in a mattress! It doesn’t mean anything. Gornisht!

EATING GEFILTE FISH LIKE NEVER BEFORE

Rabbosai, I just married off my ninth child and I support all my eidems. If you’re learning well, you get 10 years. I can’t tell you how, but Hashem gave me every time. That’s the one thing I learned. That’s what Shabbos can teach you. You’re never going to worry about a payment. If you keep Shabbos as it should be kept, you’re never going to worry. Because then

you're going to know that every single second, you have a security detail with you. You've got a financial person with you at all times. It's nothing for Hakadosh Baruch Hu to help you.

Do you know what the problem is? The problem is that you're far from Hashem. You believe Hashem created the world thousands of years ago, like the goyim believe, and now, He's far away. So when you keep Shabbos, remind yourself Friday night and repeat the following, with every piece of fish you put in your mouth (and everything else you eat): "Hakadosh Baruch Hu made this fish for me. He created this fish in some sea or maybe in some pool in Chile, or maybe in the Atlantic Ocean, and some gefilte fish company crushed it somewhere. And this fish had my name on it. Hashem had it packaged for me. It came with a code that said, 'Yisroel Brog is getting this and his wife is getting this and his kids are getting this and his guests are getting this, and every single one has his name on it.'" And the soup and the water - how much water you're going to have and how much chicken you're going to have, and if you're going to end up with a geshmake bowl of soup with a geshmake kneidel or not a geshmake kneidel, if you're going to get the vegetables you want or not the vegetables you want, if you're going to get the piece of chicken that you wanted or not.

Just last night at my own simchah, I walked away from the table for a few minutes. I had eaten the side dish but left my chicken there. Everybody said afterwards that the chicken was the best part of the seudah. I walked away to talk to somebody. When I came back the chicken was gone. My wife said, "Look, the chicken is gone." I said, "It wasn't mine. It wasn't mine." She said, "What do you mean? I saw it there." I said, "So what's the problem? It wasn't mine. You thought it was mine. That chicken did not have my name on it." She said, "What are you going to do?" I said, "Hashem just told me - 'No chicken tonight. I'm not going to go to sleep hungry.'" Oh, but the goyim took it away. I said, "So what? They're shluchim." Hashem decides every single thing, Rabbosai.

You've got to become frum, Rabosai. You've got to get with the Shabbos program.

SHABBOS MORNING PROGRAM

Shabbos morning. What's Shabbos morning about? Shabbos morning is Torah. **הכל מודים בשבת נתנה תורה** - everyone agrees that Torah was given on Shabbos (Pesachim 68b).⁷ The gemara has a shaylah: what day in Sivan was the Torah given on. But one thing there's no machlokes about **הכל מודים בשבת נתנה תורה**. You know why? Because Shabbos and Torah are one. They are one because on Shabbos we were able to receive the Torah. The biggest connection we have to Hashem is through Torah. The only connection we have to Hashem in this world is Shabbos. So of course the Torah was given on Shabbos! It couldn't be given on Sunday. The only reason you could have a shaychus to Hashem on Sunday is because you have a shaychus to Hashem on Shabbos.

So Shabbos morning is the dream time to learn Torah. I remember when I made that discovery. I said, "I can't get out of bed. It's just not happening."

I can stay up late Friday. I don't have a problem staying up late Friday but to get up on Shabbos morning, that's not happening. But I told myself that I've got to try it. I tried it. No alarm clocks. I said, "Hakadosh Baruch Hu - let me see if it works." And it works like magic. I hope someday to get up earlier. I started getting up at 7 o'clock, 6 o'clock, and then eventually at 5 o'clock. Hashem wakes you up. You're not tired. And you can learn better than you learn any time during the week.

Now I'm going to tell you one more chiddush. This is a bombe chiddush. Everything that happens to you during the week is determined on Shabbos. That means any brachah you have during the week comes from Shabbos. Shabbos is the mekor habrachah. When you come out of a bank, you only have as much money in your hand that you took out of the bank. If you took out \$10 and you expect to have \$25 when you come home, it ain't going to be there. So you only have as much brachah during the week as you collected on Shabbos. It's shtait in the Ramchal.⁸

So then I chapped something. You know what I realized? That there's a Shabbos night that corresponds to all the nights and there's a Shabbos morning which corresponds to all the mornings, there's a Shabbos afternoon which corresponds to all the afternoons.

⁷ אמר רבי אלעזר: הכל מודים בעצרת דבעיני נמי לכם. מאי טעמא? יום שניתנה בו תורה הוא. אמר רבה: הכל מודים בשבת דבעיני נמי לכם. מאי טעמא? "וקראת לשבת עונגי". אמר רב יוסף: הכל מודים בפורים דבעיני נמי לכם. מאי טעמא? "ימי משתה ושמחה" כתיב ביה (רש"י): דבעיני נמי לכם - שישמחו בו במאכל ומשתה להראות שנוח ומקובל יום זה לישראל שנתנה תורה ב

⁸ הוא הקדש והוא מה שמצטרך לעה"י כמו שזכרנו. אמנם מצד אחר בהיות החלק הזה סוף הסיבוב וחיתומו מו' והנה כיונה סוף הסיבוב יהיה תמיד בקדש ונמצא זה עילוי גדול לכל הימים שאעפ"י שרובם חול ורק חלק א' נמצא הסיבוב לו נתקן ומתעלה עי"ז עד שנמצאים כל ימות האדם מתקדשים. והנה זו מתנה גדולה שנתן הקב"ה לישראל להיות שרצה שיהיו לו עם קדוש ולא נתנה לשאר האומות כלל שאין המעלה הזאת ראויה ולא מיועדת להם (דרך ה', חלק רביעי, בעבודה הזמנית)

“WHY IS YOUR SECOND SEDER SO SCHVACH?”

I always had this question: What's the weakest time in yeshivos during the day? There are two times that are usually shvach. The biggest shvachkeit is the beginning of second seder. It's universal. I was thinking to myself, “Why is it like that?” The guy just took a nap. The guy is not 65. He doesn't work that hard. Nobody learns like Rav Chaim Soloveitchik. So how come when it comes to second seder you're bombed out? Some guys say, “5 o'clock, I need that second coffee. I need that third cup.” Then I chapped. What's the time that he sleeps on Shabbos? Boom! Bingo! That's the time! You know what I'm going to do? I'm going to change it. I said, “What's the second time people are shvach? In the morning. Everybody takes time to get started.” I'm not a morning person. I'm not this person, I am not that person.

And sometimes Friday nights are the best time for bull sessions. That was the best bulling time in the yeshivishe velt. There's nothing better. Now I hear that they've “advanced.” There are a couple of brewskis. Bachurim chip in. They buy a six pack, a twelve pack, a twenty-four pack, whatever is lefi madreigasam and they get into a matzav. So of course, your night seder you can't learn! Davar pashut.

I said, “I'm going to conduct an experiment.” I took a group of bachurim and I said to them, “I want you to stop sleeping in the afternoon. When the Shabbos day seder starts at 2:30, I want you to be up already at 2pm on Shabbos and I want you to learn shtark during that time. I took another group of bachurim. I said, “I want you to learn Shabbos morning. Let's start a program.” Shabbos morning we have a seder in yeshivah before davening. I took a third group of bachurim. I said, “Friday night everybody has got to be here, married, not married. You come. You learn. I don't care if you learn for an hour. I don't care if you learn for a half hour. You'll come back to the yeshivah and you'll learn seriously.” Like this, I had a group of bachurim who learnt 23 hours over Shabbos!

People say it's not shayach. I say, “Come and see. I'll show you.” Regular guys. They said, “Rebbi, yeshivishe guys don't do that.” I said, “I'm trying to do teshuvah, so I'm mekarev you along with myself. I'm going to show you what you can do.”

You know what it's going to do? It's going to change your whole week. It's going to change your entire week because your morning is going to be shtarker. You're going to have mekor habrachah for the morning. You're going to have mekor habrachah for the nights. If you're one of those guys that can't learn at night, learn Friday night, be mechazek yourself. You'll have brachah for every night. Be mechazek your afternoons. You'll see that you can learn in the afternoons. But if the mekor habrachah is shvach, the whole week is going to be shvach.

THE BEST KIRUV PROGRAM

If you're ever going to try to be mekarev somebody, let me tell you, there's no better way than Shabbos. But it doesn't mean that you talk to the guy about sports. I always used to wonder. People have these big Shabbosos and invite guys over. They shmooze. They talk about sports. They talk about stocks. They said “we're the cool guys”. Who do you follow? Which team do you follow? A guy once told me that in kiruv you've got to get into this. You've got to get a baseball cap. You're a cool guy and you learn what's going on in the velt. That's the biggest bunch of gumbo I've ever heard in my life. Those guys, the only kiruv they do is they're mekarev themselves to the other side. That's the only kiruv that happens with those kinds of guys. They get mekurav. They wear jeans after a while and they wear baseball caps, and polo shirts. All in the name of kiruv of course. In the end, the kiruv becomes richuk.

You can take a person who is frei, who knows zero, and be mekarev him to Yiddeshkeit over the course of a Shabbos. I used to tell them beforehand: “Give me one twenty-five hour period in your life. That's what it's going to take. (I don't need them to stay up 23 hours, of course). You can sleep. We'll talk, but we're not talking about any mundane stuff. I don't want to hear about your boating. I don't want to hear about your experience in the Himalayas (I've met people with the most interesting experiences, flying experiences, boating experiences, traveling, business). I want to talk about one thing. The reality of your life. Let's discuss your life and understand what's going on. Who is pushing the buttons? Let's understand. Now, the food is also great. But let's think about where the food came from? Enjoy the food. **כי יסיתך אחיך בן אמן** - if your brother, your mother's son incites you in secret (Devarim 13:7). So the gemara in Chullin (4b) says: **אין הסתה אלא באכילה ובשתיה** - the incitement happens only with eating and with drinking. But most people think, “Just give them achilah and shesiah.” That's it. No, no, no. You've got to teach them Yiddishkeit.

“MY BOSS WON'T LET ME MARRY YOU OFF”

I'll tell you a story I had. I met a guy once in a health club. He came over to me. I didn't know he was Jewish at all. He came over to me and said, “Do you conduct marriage ceremonies? I hear you're a rabbi.” I said, “Yes, I'm a rabbi and I'm

licensed to do marriages.” He said, “Could you officiate my wedding?” I said, “For that, you’ve got to be Jewish.” He said, “Oh, I’m Jewish.” I said, “You’re Jewish? So why are you such a gornisht?” (I used to see this guy sitting in front of a mirror). He said to me, “I’m a dancer.” I said, “What does that mean? I don’t understand.” I said, “Oh gosh, what can I do for you?” He said, “I want to get married.” I asked him, “Is the girl Jewish?” He said, “No. She’s an Italian.”

I said, “I can’t marry you off.” He asked me, “Why not?” “My Boss won’t let me,” I said. So he said, “I’m not a guy looking for fanfare. It’s going to be a private affair. I’ll pay you cash. It will be off the books.” I said, “No, you don’t understand. Wherever I go, my Boss goes.” He says, “Oh, yeah? I don’t see your Boss here right now.” I said, “Oh, my Boss is here right now. My Boss is all over us right now.” He said, “What are you talking about?” He looked a bit scared. I said, “My Boss is eavesdropping right here on everything I say and everything you think.” He said, “What are you talking about?” I said, “Did you ever hear of the big guy in the sky? Did you ever hear of Big Guy? The Big G? The big G dash D? That’s my Boss, my friend, and it’s your Boss, too.” He says, “I’m freaking out. I got enough problems dealing with reality. How do you want me to deal with your Boss? I’m out of here.” And the guy left.

THE SHABBOS THAT CHANGES HIS LIFE

A number of months later he came back. I bumped into the guy, of course by ‘coincidence.’ I hadn’t seen him for three months. He said, “I think you put a jinx on me.” I said, “What do you mean?” He said, “The owner of the club told me that you’re the guru. If you put a hex on something, it’s finished. The guy is gone.” He said, “You didn’t give me a blessing for my wedding, so I’m sure you’re the guy who put the hex on it.” Eventually I heard the whole story.

I said to the guy, “Why don’t you come for Shabbos.” He said, “I can’t.” I said, “Come for Shabbos.” He said, “What’s Shabbos?” I said, “Let me tell you what Shabbos is.” I started giving him the menu. I said, “Do you like good food?” Yeah. I said, “Have you ever heard of challah?” What’s challah? I said, “I’ll tell you what challah is.” I told him about whole wheat challah, poppy challah, sesame challah, sweet challah, egg challah. What do you like? I’ll have it for you. You’ll see bread you never saw in your life. (That Shabbos when he came to my house, I got every bread in the bakery plus!) I told him, “Then, we have kiddush. Then we have soul food, we have shalom aleichem. I made the menu look like out of this world. The guy finally says, “I’m in. When is it?” I said, “This Shabbos.” He replies, “No, I can’t do then. Let’s do it Thursday night. I can only do it Thursday night. Let’s do this ‘Shabbat thing’ on Thursday night, because on Friday night I work.” I said, “You can’t do Shabbos. Shabbos means Shabbos. It means Friday night, Saturday. It’s a Saturday affair.”

Bekitzur the guy came. This guy was so clueless, he said that he had never heard that Jews don’t eat pork! That’s how this guy had his head buried in the sand. Today the guy is a rav. He has semichah. He put out two sefarim. He’s working on a third. It all started from one Shabbos. The guy spent that Shabbos learning. It was only one of many.

You can be as veit (as far) as you can be, but if you become aware of the fact that Hashem is truly running your life and He’s right here this second and He’s being mashgiach bechol yecholto and that everything is gemul veonesh - then you will transform your Shabbos and your life. I know people don’t like to hear that. “Oh, come on, please, Rabbi. There’s no such thing as gemul veonesh. That’s an old-fashioned thing.” Now everybody does chessed. We don’t know about these things. I didn’t say I know, but everything is gemul veonesh everywhere. I can tell you one thing. For any kid that misbehaves there are going to be repercussions. I can’t tell you what. Will he get kicked out of school? Or something else? Whatever it is, there will be repercussions. They’re not giving you prizes to misbehave. If you don’t do Yiddishkeit, you don’t daven and you don’t learn and you don’t keep Shabbos and you’re not an erliche Yid, there’s a price you’re going have to pay for it, even though you’re a nice guy, you have a nice smile, but that’s not what Hashem gives credit for.

Everybody has to understand, that’s the yesod in Yahadus. It starts with emunah, chiddush ha’olam, hashgachah and that’s all infused into Shabbos. I welcome you all to start preparing for your next Shabbos with your new frumkeit, religiosity, that hopefully you’ll bring into your life.

KEEPING A RUNNING LIST OF YOUR BLESSINGS

At my seudah we start off with my grandfather’s minhag. Our minhag for the last 30 years has been that, as the fish course is over, the first thing you do is tov lehodos laHashem. I give a week’s worth of hoda’ah for ‘banai’ which is my family, my entire family, my parents, my brothers, my sisters, children, and talmidim. ‘Chayei’ is my life, my physical life: my health, my teeth, things that I encounter during the week, and my spiritual life: my own and of my talmidim, of my children, are they frum, are they shteiging. And then I give hoda’ah for ‘mezoni,’ parnasah. That’s just the core issues besides the

many other things.

Then we point out that there is so much to thank Hashem for. As a person goes through his week he encounters different people. You hear about a person, for example, who needs a job, or who lost his job. So I thank Hashem that we have parnasah. I think about somebody that's sick and had to go to the doctor, or somebody took his kids to the doctor. Baruch Hashem I didn't have to take my kids to the doctor. Baruch Hashem I didn't have to go to the hospital. My wife works in bikur cholim so we know every sick person in Cleveland. I think every week, I say, that this person has a kidney problem, but my kidneys are baruch Hashem great. I don't need a lung transplant, a heart transplant or a heart operation. You have to keep a cheshbon during the week of the things you become aware of. We're all blessed.

There's a moradige Rashi in Sotah that says hoda'ah means deveikus to Hashem. That's what hoda'ah means.

You're going to say this hoda'ah the first week and then you're going to say it the second week and after two years you're going to feel like a faker. I remember doing this for two years and thinking I don't believe this. What kind of nonsense is this? I asked my zeida. I said, "Zeida, I don't feel at all hoda'ah to Hashem. I'm just saying the words." You know what he said? "Look at it as an exercise. Do you ever go to the gym? At first, you lift 5 pounds. With time, the five pounds becomes easier, so you lift more, and then you move up to 10 pounds. With time, that becomes nothing. And so on." But you don't say right away, "Give me 200 pounds." No, you can't lift that right away. Eventually you'll get there. Today it's a different day.

Some people have broader lives, some have smaller lives, but you become aware of things to thank Hashem and how tov (good) Hashem is with you and if you realize that, you'll be walking on air because you'll realize what kind of recipient of chessed you are. You'll ask yourself, "What am I doing to reciprocate?" Are you living up to this? Are you deserving this? Are you pushing yourself? Have you grown in learning? Have you grown in retzifus? Are you getting burned out? Are you getting toasted? Everybody says, "I'm toast. I'm getting burned out." It doesn't make a difference.

DESIGNING AN EXERCISE PROGRAM

A yungarman called me last year Elul and said, "I'm feeling I'm getting toasted. I want to come and learn by you." I said, "Why? I'm not looking for toasted guys." Somebody told me, "Maybe you could help me?" I said, "Are you ready to become a bachur again? When's the last time you listened to a shiur?" "A shiur?" he said, "I've been married already for six, seven years. I don't listen to shiurim." I said, "Listen to shiurim." He said, "They're not for me." I said, "I'm only taking a yungerman who is ready to become a bachur. Do you know what time davening starts by me? 7:10 on Mondays and Thursdays, 7:15 the other days." Why so early? A lot of bochurim ask me this, "Why so early?" I say to them, "I'm trying to get rid of the chaff. It's not for everybody. I don't have enough time in the day. I wish I had more time in the day but it's a packed day. So it's at 7:15. I would have liked 6 o'clock but I don't think it's going to work. I'm not ready to get up that early. I do get up that early myself, but I use that time to prepare a shiur. So it's rough. I said to him, "Listen, if you don't want to do it, it's not for you."

But the guy came. The guy came to learn! One year later, the guy is still here and his twin brother is sitting here as well. This yungerman is in the beis medrash every morning at 6:15. Every single day! And he stays there straight through first seder. He doesn't go home for lunch. He stays there second seder. He would stay until third seder but he has to see his wife. That's what happened.

His shver called me recently. He said, "I'm starting to support my son-in-law. Do you know why? Because today he's a ben Torah." He said to me, "I learned in kollel for fifteen years. I know what kollel is. My son-in-law was wasting his life in Lakewood. He was toasted. He tried this chaburah, that chaburah. Nothing was working. I'm proud to support this son-in-law in learning. Now he's mamish learning." I said, "You are right." During bein hazmanim the guy sat and learned the whole day. I told him "Maybe take it easy?" He said, "I'm having fun! I'm really enjoying myself. I wouldn't do this if I didn't enjoy myself. I'm really enjoying myself!"

Last winter, I put him on an 'exercise program.' He asked me, "What should I do bein hasedarim?" We were learning chezkas habatim. I said, "Learn chezkas habatim ba'al peh." He said, "The whole chezkas habatim?" I said, "No, try ten blatt. Ten blatt ba'al peh word for word. Not shaklah vetaryah. And only bein hasedarim." He went on that program. He went to that 'gym' and he started to 'work out' and he learned twenty blatt. By the end of the winter the guy knew twenty blatt in chezkas habatim. This is a guy who thought he was not done toast, but burned toast already!

And he accomplished this just from learning. You know what he did? One thing. He went to a program. He put himself

in a program.

With most people who go to a gym, the doctor tells them to lose weight, so they go to the gym and they lift up two pounds, “Okay I’m finished. I could go home.” But no pain, no gain. You need a program. You need a guy to show you how to do it. If you’re not going to take an instructor or take somebody to guide you, if you’re not going to have a rebbi and you try it on your own, it’s not going to work. I said, “You failed all your life on your own. All of a sudden you’re going to have some kind of epiphany and you’re going to start becoming your own rebbi? You can’t do that. It’s not shayach.”⁹

❧ THE BOTTOM LINE ❧

The ikar avodah of Shabbos is acknowledging that Hakadosh Baruch Hu created shamayim va’aretz and He rested on Shabbos, and, using Shabbos as the dream time to learn Torah. Doing these avodos will instill in me emunas hachiddush, as well as hashgachas ha’Borei and gemul ve’onesh. Shabbos is the most powerful reminder that every single moment, Hashem not only recreates the world from nothing, but He also gives life to every cell and organ of my body - simply to be metiv with me. If for example I can move my hands and feet and I can breathe, while sitting at my Shabbos table this week, I must understand that all of this is nothing but a tremendous chesed from Hashem that He imbues me with every single moment! And for that I have to thank Him, fulfilling the famous dictum of טוב להודות לה’ on Shabbos. So this Friday night, after I start my meal, I will, bli neder, spend few extra minutes thanking Hakadosh Boruch Hu for ‘chayei, banai and mezonai,’ focusing on and detailing some specific details of each of these chassadim that Hashem bestowed upon me and my family during the previous week. And with the long summer days upon us already, I will also attempt to, bli neder, maximize my Torah-learning opportunities on Shabbos. In the zechus of following this ‘exercise program’, I will enhance my Shabbos experiences specifically, and will elevate my relationship with Hashem altogether, to a whole new level.

⁹ The following is the Q&A following the talk. **Question:** The *Mishnah Berurah lema’aseh* says that there’s also an *inyan* of *menuchah*, rest. **Answer:** That’s rest. Rest means ‘don’t work.’ That’s what rest means. מנוחה שלימה means ‘don’t work.’ **Question:** He says those whose *omnus* is learning should rest. **Answer:** I didn’t say you shouldn’t rest. A person doesn’t need more than a half hour nap. No one needs three hours of sleep [see Mishna Berura 290:3 and Shelach (Shnei Luchos HaBris, Shabbos, Ner Mitzva, 36-37)]. In the summer, you could finish your meal at 12 o’clock or 12:30. I ask people, ‘Why do you start your meal at 12 o’clock?’ You know why? ‘Because the day is so long, Rabbi. I don’t know what to do with it.’ I can’t sleep for six hours. I wish I could. I’m not saying a person should not sleep. If you could get to that point, [where you have a half hour nap and feel rested, it would be great]. I just feel much more rested on Shabbos [after taking only a half hour nap]. I got to that point. My zeida told me he was in Slabodka for seven years and he didn’t eat *chulent*. You know why? Because he wanted to learn the entire day. So what did he do? He put two eggs in the *chulent* and he would eat two eggs because that didn’t make him tired. Most people take a pill, called the *chulent* pill. **Question:** He [your zeida] didn’t rest for half an hour somewhere? **Answer:** He slept at night. That was enough for him. He wasn’t a *shvache mentsch*. He didn’t need it. If a person needs it, I’m not against a person resting, but that’s not the Shabbos. *Nisht dus iz der Shabbos*. שינה בשבת תענוג, I can tell you all the *chochmos*. I know all those *chochmos* also. [People say] I slept more because I wanted more *ta’anug*. **Question:** When you lost your peice of chicken, maybe it was your *hishtadlus* to go back and get your chicken? How do you know you were not supposed to do that? Maybe, Hakadosh Baruch Hu wanted you to have that chicken. **Answer:** There’s no *hilchos hishtadlus* in getting back your chicken. It says בועת אפך תאכל להם. It doesn’t say תאכל chicken. Also, it’s not like I was starving. **Question:** It’s only because you had what to eat? **Answer:** Yes. If I wouldn’t have had what to eat, maybe I would go looking for the chicken. There was a time in my life when I definitely would have gone after the chicken. Then I realized it was Hashem. That’s what I figured. It wasn’t the Mexican waiter. It wasn’t that guy next to me. The *chosson* didn’t *chap*. **Question:** You said how you started at 7 and then you went to 6 and then to 5? You wanted to start with easier things? **Answer:** Correct. I didn’t want to go to an extreme. I didn’t know if it was *shayach*. I would wake up at 8:30am. **Question:** They [the yeshiva bochorim] learn twenty three hours straight [over the course of Shabbos]? Each individual? **Answer:** They sleep two hours at night. They eat and they *daven*. **Question:** What’s a very practical level for somebody starting out? **Answer:** The first place you start out is preparing for Shabbos. That’s the first thing. You’ve got to know what you’re going to do for Shabbos. You have to set up. I used to write up [a plan], a program for myself, on how to conduct my *seudah*. What I’m doing before the fish. What I’m doing after the fish. What I’m doing after the soup. Because if you’re not in control of the *matzav* it becomes *hefkervelt*, especially if you have kids, parents, a wife. If you’re not in control of the *matzav*, you’re going to be run over. You have to make it interesting. For the younger children you have to have one program and for the older children there’s a different program and for guests another program. You have to get your wife to get into it.