



תורת אביגדור
הגאון ר' אביגדור מיללער זצ"ל

Rav Avigdor Miller on the Parsha
Adapted from his Tapes, Seforim and Writings of Talmidim




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————— This week's booklet based on Tapes: —————

- #106 - Preface to Shabbos 1 | #227 - Preface to Shabbos 2 |
- #722 - Shabbos - Day of Knowledge | #791 - Ten Aspects of Shabbos |
- #E-190 - Shabbos - Day of Ideology



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בעזה"ש
פרשת ויקהל

With Rav Avigdor Miller ztz"l

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Part I. Hashem Created the World

THE MISHKAN OR THE SHABBOS?

“And Moshe assembled the entire congregation of the Bnei Yisroel and he said to them...” *Parshas Vayakhel* begins with Moshe Rabeinu gathering together the *Am Yisroel* in order to instruct them in all the details of the making of the Mishkan; everything we read in *Terumah* and *Tetzaveh* was said to Moshe on Har Sinai, and now Moshe is preparing to teach the nation what he received from Hashem. And yet we find something out of the ordinary here: Because we expect now to hear about the Mishkan, about the *bigdei kehunah*, and the *keilim*. After all, that’s what they were gathered for. And yet, what do we find? Moshe Rabeinu veers off course and introduces the Mishkan with a different subject altogether. אלה הדברים אשר צוה השם לעשות אותם. - “These are the matters that Hashem commanded you to do, ששת ימים תעשה מלאכה וביום השביעי יהיה לכם קודש שבת שבתון להשם - Six days work may be done, and on the seventh day shall be for you a holiness of *Shabbos Shabboson* to Hashem” (Shemos 35:2). Before we hear about the Mishkan, about building the home for the presence of Hashem among us, Moshe Rabeinu instructs us about keeping the Shabbos day holy.

Now, that's a question, because what is Shabbos doing here? We gathered around Moshe Rabeinu to begin our preparations for building the Mishkan, not to hear about Shabbos. So we'll say that this detour of Moshe Rabeinu was intended to demonstrate that despite the vast importance of building a Mishkan where Hashem's Presence would reside, the *Am Yisroel* was required to understand that *it is the Shabbos that is the first and most important "Sanctuary" to be built*. Unlike the Sanctuary of the Mishkan, which was to be limited to a single location in the encampment, the Sanctuary of Shabbos was going to be erected in every Jewish home, wherever they would reside. **בכל מושבותיכם**, said Moshe Rabeinu, "In all your habitations," (ibid. 35:3) you will celebrate Shabbos, forever. And it was the Sanctuary of Shabbos that would be our greatest opportunity for achievement, even more than the Mishkan itself.

Now, there's no doubt that our ceasing of all work on Shabbos comes to memorialize Hakodosh Boruch Hu's resting from creation on the Shabbos. However, equally important, is the *opportunity* for achievement that the *shvisah* of Shabbos provides. It's the cessation from involvement in this world on the Shabbos that opens before us a wide panorama, the one day a week when we can dedicate our minds to Hakodosh Boruch Hu. Because among the many benefits that we gain by stopping to work on Shabbos, the most important one is the opportunity to acquire a Torah mind; "Don't busy yourself with the work of material creation on the Shabbos," declares Hashem. "I have something that I want you to build that is more important even than the Mishkan; I want you to build a Torah mind."

HOW TO REALLY KEEP SHABBOS

Because "keeping Shabbos" doesn't mean merely to refrain from doing *melacha*. Shabbos is actual intended to be much more than that; it's a goldmine of understanding that can transform your mind. But sadly the Shabbos is not utilized as it should be. Even those who are meticulous in the performance of this *mitzvah*, people who are careful to avoid any semblance of work, are in most cases unaware of the wealth that this day can bestow upon them with even just a little bit of thinking and effort.

And therefore, when Shabbos is about to enter, and we turn around and say **בואי בלילה בואי בלילה**, "Come in O' Shabbos," welcoming

this great day of *machshava*, of *da'as Hashem*, we must do it with the understanding that Shabbos is going to change us - if only we would be willing to cooperate. Now comes the one time a week dedicated to putting into our thoughts the permanent attitudes which the Shabbos helps us gain. And by doing so, we are going to live all the days between the *Shabbosos* with a different form of mental attitude. And that's your preparation for happiness in the World to Come, because your portion in the next world will be in accordance with the degree of clarity of Torah attitudes that you achieve in this world.

SWEEPING UP THE DIAMOND DUST ON SHABBOS

And so our subject now will be how to make use of the Shabbos. And you should know, it's a very big subject, with many facets that have to be studied. But right now we're going to study one aspect of the creation of the Shabbos mind, and we should be sure to practice it. Even though you won't be able to practice everything all at once, but if you utilize a minute here and a minute there, then little by little you tap into the goldmine that the Shabbos can be. You know, in a diamond shop the rich diamond merchant gets down on his hands and knees at the end of the day. And with a whiskbroom he brushes together the dust from under the tables. So a visitor once said, "What's this? You, under the table sweeping up dust?!" So he said, "This dust is diamond dust. And therefore it's worth my while to sit on my knees and collect dust that comes from diamonds."

And because the lessons of Shabbos are so important, even the dust of these principles is worth everything. Because when a principle is so valuable every grain of it is precious. Every achievement of *da'as* is worth much more than diamonds, and even the tiniest particles of *da'as* are valuable too. And therefore it's worth our while, to study just one detail of how to utilize the Shabbos. And a lifetime of utilizing the Shabbos in that way will result in a benefit that will transform your life.

THE ANGELS COME TO VISIT

And so we'll begin with *Vayichulu*. When we stand up in *shemonah esrei* and in *kiddush* and say, ויכולו השמים והארץ וכל צבאם - "The heavens and the earth and all their hosts were finished at the end of six days," to our surprise it's such an important declaration that the *gemara* (Shabbos 119b) says: בשעה שאומר ויכולו - "At that time when a person says *Vayichulu*, שני מלאכי השרת המלווין לו לאדם מניחין

ידיהן על ראשו, so two angels come - , and they put their hands on this man's head. וסר עוונך וחטאתך תכופר, ואומרים לו, "Your iniquity will depart and your sins will be forgiven."

So this coming Friday night make sure to be aware of what's happening to you. You're going to say *Vayichulu*, and then you're going to be visited by two *malachim*. Now you'll be saying it more than once, and which of the times the angels will come, I don't know. But absolutely it will happen, so be ready for it.

KLAPPING AL CHEIT BEFORE KIDDUSH

The angels will put their hands on your head and they'll say: "Your sins will now depart, and your iniquity will be atoned." Now, isn't that a great opportunity?! You thought that you were going to have to wait another half a year for Yom Kippur to come, and meanwhile you can have a Yom Kippur every Friday night! That's how great that moment of *Vayichulu* is - it's like Yom Kippur. Of course it requires at least a thought of repentance. So you think of one incident over the past week, one wrong word you said, or one carelessness in *shmiras hamitzvos*, and use that opportunity; because it's at this moment when you say *Vayichulu* that the angels lay their hands on your head and tell you that all will be forgiven.

Now, to us that seems to be a very queer statement. Because we thought that we were just saying *Vayichulu*, and now we're being told that it's something like a Yom Kippur! So we'll have to study what it is that makes this occasion of saying *Vayichulu* so important. Because it doesn't say that as soon as the sun sets and the Shabbos comes in, that the *malachim* put their hands on your head. No! It's when you make that declaration of *Vayichulu*, or you listen to your husband making the declaration - *that's* when it happens. And that's a question: What great change has been affected in you by the words of *Vayichulu* that makes you deserving of a special *kaparah* with *malachim*?

THE MOST SPECTACULAR MIRACLE

So we'll say that when you say the words ויכולו השמים והארץ, וכל צבאם, you're saying that the whole universe was completed at this moment in time, as the Shabbos came in. The first thirty-one *pesukim* in the Torah describe the most spectacular miracle ever performed by Hashem, the process of *briyah yeish mei'ayin*, creation out of nothing, and *Vayichulu* was the culmination of that great miracle.

Now this is a startling idea that has no equal; here the Torah tells us a statement which is so revolutionary that it has no equal in all the statements and writings since the beginning of time. And never again will another statement be made that has the same impact. And that is that Hashem created *from nothing*.

SOMETHING FROM NOTHING

You know that you can make skyscrapers out of dust; it's possible. If you take dust and mix the right chemicals into it, you can amalgamate it until it becomes bricks and building blocks. But when you say *Vayichulu*, you're declaring that *there were no building blocks in the beginning*, that the world was created out of *nothing*. Before *Bereishis*, *nothing* existed. There was no Big Bang, and there was no Little Bang. There were no black holes and no explosions of stars. There was nothing to explode. There was zero. Nothing at all existed except for the *ruach Elokim*, the spirit of Hashem which pervaded all space - I don't want to say space because there was no space yet - but Hashem pervaded All. There was only Hashem and nothing else.

And then, from absolutely nothing, **וְהָאֵלֹהִים אָמַר וַיְהִי** - "Hashem said, and it came into being" (Tehillim 33:9). Hashem created everything, He willed space into existence; and then He willed that the space should be filled with heavenly bodies; and that there should be one planet that should have an atmosphere, that should have hydrosphere, that means water; that it should have a lithosphere, soil; and that it should have all living things. He willed that everything should come into existence including Man. And never again will there be a creation of something from nothing. It's a stunning idea, that something can come from nothing, and it's something that we are expected to labor all of our lives in order to gain a little bit of its impact in our minds. That's what Shabbos is, the **זָכוֹר לַמַּעֲשֵׂה בְרֵאשִׁית**. Now this is a stretch of the imagination beyond what we are actually capable of picturing. But we have to say it week after week until finally it begins to penetrate, that *the world was made out of nothing but the word of Hashem*.

THE BIG APPLE

I'll give you a *marshal*. Let's say you're going to imagine in your head right now a big apple, a big beautiful apple. And it will be the size of this room. There's a stem protruding from the top as thick as a cane. And the apple is striped red, with delicate tints of yellow. It

has beauty spots all over it like a real apple. And underneath will be dimples; and it will be begging you to sink your teeth into it. Now, as you imagine this apple that I'm describing, you're creating a picture in your mind. It's entering into your consciousness and your thoughts are creating a picture of a big beautiful apple in your head.

And while you think about this big beautiful apple, to some extent, the apple is really alive in your mind; your imagination is creating real images. Now, when you move onto some other thought and you'll stop thinking about the apple, so you'll say nothing remains of that apple. "It was only a dream in my head, my imagination, and it's gone now." But actually that's untrue - it'll remain forever. That daydream, that imagination that I caused in your head just now was a creation, the creation of a picture in your mind.

And that picture is not just imagination. We call it 'imagination' - making an image, but actually it's a fact. Suppose you young fellows, forty years from now, will be walking down the street and you'll pass a fruit stand on the sidewalk displaying big beautiful red apples. And you'll say, "I remember when I was a youth I attended a lecture and somebody was talking about an apple like these as big as a house." And suddenly there springs forth before your mind's eye the picture of the apple from this evening. Now where was it for forty years? It was lost and you recreated it? No, you're not recreating it! It was there all the time, but it was filed away somewhere in a back office of your mind, in your memory. Once it entered, once you created that picture, it remains *forever*. And that's why forty years from now, when something will press the button, this picture will leap out of the file, and come before your eyes and there it is - it's that apple that you created many years before.

IMAGINATION IS REAL!

What we're saying now is that our imagination is a reality. Only that it's a different kind of reality. You can't touch it. You can't make it alive, but it's a creation, you can see it with your mind's eye. Now, Hakodosh Boruch Hu also imagined things. But His imagination is much more powerful than ours. And He imagined a universe - and since He imagined a universe, here it is!

And that's what Shabbos comes to tell us. That the whole universe with all its diverse forms of matter and energy is basically

nothing but a form of the will of the Creator. It's a bomb! And only because **הוא אמר ויהי**, only because "He said," because "He commanded," something came into existence from nothing. And that's one of the most important functions of Shabbos, to impress upon ourselves this *yesod ha'yesodos*, the most fundamental principle of all, that Hashem's thoughts brought everything into existence. And so when you say *Vayichulu*, you're declaring to yourself and to your family that greatest miracle in the history of the world, *the creation of everything from nothing*.

Part II. Hashem is *Still* Creating the World

THE ANCIENT BENCH

But actually *Vayichulu* is much more than that. The lesson of *briyah yeish mei'ayin* is much more important than everything we've said up until now. Because really that first and most remarkable miracle *never ended*. When a carpenter makes a bench, and then he walks away, the bench is still there. The carpenter doesn't think about the bench anymore. He could die, he could be dead many years already, and the bench is still being used. But that's not the *Bereishis bara* of Hakodosh Boruch Hu, that's not the creation of Hashem. No! **הוא צוה ויעמוד**, *The universe continues to exist* by the word of Hakodosh Boruch Hu. Every second, He's creating it all over again.

Like it says **עושה שמים וארץ את הים ואת כל אשר בם** - "He made the heavens and the earth; He made the sea and all that is therein." And then right away it states **השומר אמת לעולם** - "He keeps His truth forever" (Tehillim 146:6). What's the connection between these two statements? He made heaven and earth, and He keeps His truth forever? It's a *non sequitur*. How does one follow the other?

And the answer is that they're both the same. He made heaven and earth; but not only did He will heaven and earth into existence with the energy of His imagination, but *right now He continues to will everything into existence*. Every second, He is keeping His word, He's maintaining His word. **השומר אמת** - "He keeps His steadfastness." He doesn't take it back. So not only did He create the world out of nothing, **הוא אמר ויהי**, but, **הוא צוה ויעמוד**, He keeps the world and everything in existence only by His will. And He

continues to imagine it right now. And because He's imagining it now, here it is!

PAINFUL IMAGININGS

Do you know what that means? That means that we are nothing but imagination. Even if you take a pin and you pierce your skin, and you shout, "Ouch!" it's all imagination. But it's Hashem's imagination. And that kind of imagination hurts. And if you'll sink your teeth into an apple, it's also imagination. But the pleasure of that bite, Hashem willed into existence by His superlative imagination.

I always tell you that even a big truck driving down the street is only the imagination of Hashem. Only that Hashem's imagination is much more real than ours, and because He established a law that two things cannot occupy one space at the same time, you'd better be sure not to get in the way of Hashem's imagination when He's imagining a truck!

THE SCIENTIFIC LAWS OF CONSERVATION

And the truth is that today it was made so much easier to acquire such an attitude because if you study the sciences you see that's it's almost the same. I'll explain that. Many years ago everybody thought that all matter was something that was indestructible; there was a law of the Conservation of Matter. And even if you could chop up material until it became so fine that it became atoms, but it still was something substantial, it was still matter, just smaller pieces. And if you could chop up atoms into even smaller pieces, it would be a still finer powder. But you couldn't destroy matter. It was accepted science that matter was around forever. If it's matter now, then it had to be matter always. That's how they always learned "*pshat*."

Only fairly recently did the world learn that matter can be destroyed and revert to energy; even today people are not yet aware of the enormity of this discovery. It is the consensus today that matter can be transformed *one hundred percent* into energy. Matter can explode so that *nothing* is left. No powder, no dust, no atoms. Matter can turn into energy one hundred percent if you have the proper apparatus. And even more startling is the idea that energy can be transformed into matter. So now they say that there is a Law of Conservation of Energy-Matter. It's one or the other; if you destroy

matter it will become energy, and energy can be transformed into matter.

$$E = mc^2$$

If you want a demonstration of matter being transformed into energy, when you'll eat breakfast tomorrow, and then you'll go out to work; so you're going to work from nine to one, or maybe you're going to loaf from nine till one. You know it takes a lot of energy to loaf. Because your heart is beating all the time, your metabolism is working; your body is consuming energy even though you're sitting at a desk twirling a pencil. Where did that energy come from? It came from the food you ate at breakfast. Food is material, it's matter, and breakfast turns into four or five hours of work. So it's matter turning into energy!

And I'll give you an example of the reverse, of energy being transformed into matter. Tomorrow morning walk out on the street and look at any tree. Take a look at the sunlight shining down on the leaves. What is sunlight? Try to capture some sunlight in a bottle, and then try to weigh it. The bottle will weigh the same now as it weighed before the sunlight entered. You can't weigh sunlight - it's not matter, it has no mass. Sunlight is energy.

But when the sunlight hits the leaf - the green leaf that has chlorophyll - so the sunlight begins to manufacture starch. Don't think that the sunlight changes the materials in the leaf into starch. No, it's the sunlight itself, the energy of the sunlight, that combines with the materials and it creates starch; it makes food. The sunlight becomes matter. So here we have an open example of energy being transformed into matter.

WHERE DO APPLES COME FROM?!

It's a miracle. You know I explained this to you recently. They once planted an apple tree in a tub full of earth, a very large tub. And they weighed the tree and they weighed the earth. And every year the tree produced apples. Year after year the tree was producing apples and they weighed the apples every year and added it up. At the end of ten years they again weighed the tree and the earth, and they discovered that the earth had diminished by only a couple of ounces! The earth was only a couple of ounces in weight lighter than it had been ten years ago. So the question is where did the apples come from? For ten years many pounds of apples had come off this

tree, and the tree had drawn its nourishment from the ground. And the answer is that the apples take very little from the earth. This little bit is important but by weight it's only a tiny fraction of the fruit. The fruit is almost entirely water, air and sunlight. *When you're eating an apple, you're eating sunlight!* But how does sunlight, which is nothing but energy, become apples? It's a marvel!

Energy is a *yeish*, not an *ayin*. It is something that was created, but for us it's a good *mashal*. Because it's just as difficult to picture *energy* becoming matter, as it is to picture *nothing* becoming energy. Imagine sunlight streaming through the atmosphere, and you see in the sunlight potatoes and apples! You see human beings! Is that what sunlight becomes? And the answer is yes. So if sunlight can become something material, then you begin to fathom the great truth that the *dvar Hashem* became energy and also something material.

EVERYTHING IS NOTHING!!!

And the real secret of the *briyah yeish mei'ayin* is that not only are matter and energy interchangeable but that *they are one and the same thing*. Because actually even what we consider matter is mostly energy. Today the scientists know that the atom, the building block of all matter, is mostly empty space. With the electron microscope you can see the atom, and it has been discovered that the nucleus, where the mass of the atom is concentrated, occupies less than one trillionth of the volume of an atom. And what that means is that the building blocks of everything around us actually contain nothing but empty space and energy.

The common factor of all matter and energy is *their basic nothingness*. The hidden force of all things is the command *Yehi*, "Let there be!" And it is only Hashem's word that is the existence of all the phenomena of this world. And so when you pick up your *becher* filled with wine to say *Vayichulu*, you are actually holding the *dvar Hashem* in your hand - it's a bundle of energy being sustained only by the word of Hashem, *הוא צוה ויעמוד*, only because He is giving the command, does that energy take the form of a silver cup full of wine.

And the only difference between the wine, the challah, and your children is the form that Hashem commands the energy particles to take. All the varied forms of matter and energy in this world are but different manifestations of the Creator's will. Everything is the imagination of Hashem. The tangible universe is

real only to us, but to Hashem it is all His imagination - it was created by means of His imagination and it continues to exist only because of His imagination. And thus all phenomena is nothing other than the concretized will of Hashem. Matter and energy in all of their forms are merely forms of His will. Now once a person understands that everything he sees is a manifestation of **הוא צוה ויעמוד**, so his whole life becomes completely transformed.

Part III. Let's Make *Kiddush*

OPTOMETRY 101

And it's with this understanding of what *Vayichulu* means that we can understand the *ma'amar chazal* (Berachos 43b) that **פסיעה** - "A hasty step takes away one five hundredth of a man's eyesight." And when does it return? **להדריה בקדושא דבי שמי** - "It returns when you make *kiddush* as the sun goes down." Now, the *gemara* says one five hundredth, but it's not measured with a caliper; it means that it takes away a little bit of a man's eyesight. If you walk *with anxiety*, if you hurry, you take big steps *because you're worried*, you're afraid you'll be late, so you must know that it's going to affect your eyesight.

You didn't know that? Eye specialists will tell you that - many times excitement will affect your eyes. It's a fact; anxiety, hurrying, haste, tension, it affects the eyes. Like Dovid Hamelech said: **עששה מכעס עיני** - "My eye became worn out from the excitement of anger." So be careful against anger; it can ruin your eyes. I once visited a man who was blind, and it was a result of *ka'as*. Yes; emotions like fright and anxiety can affect the function of the eye nerves.

Now eyesight is very important; nobody wants to lose the ability to see; and yet people are always taking hasty steps; everyone is busily hurrying through life taking **פסיעות גסות**. So the hasty steps that you take all week - all week we're full of anxiety, we're worried about this and that and everything. So the *gemara* asks: **מאי תקנתיה** - "How do you remedy that?" What can you do about your eyesight that is slowly going lost? And the *gemara* says: **להדריה בקדושא דבי שמי** - "It returns when you make *kiddush* as the sun goes down." You can restore your eyesight at *kiddush* Friday night. That's a very interesting

statement, that when you stand for *kiddush* at the Shabbos table, that's the time to regain your eyesight.

THE WEEKDAYS WEAR US DOWN

Now let's understand this as simply as we can. The *gemara* is revealing to us that life during the week has an effect on us. It has a physical effect; there's wear and tear on the body. Little by little there is a wearing down of the body tissue and even the best metabolism does not completely restore all of that depletion.

In addition, the weekday hurry, the weekday occupation, dims our *mental* eyesight, our ability to see things clearly. There's no question about it, that when you're busy all week with this world - you have to make a living after all - all week long you're losing sight of the great principles of truth. That's what involvement with *gashmiyus*, even if it's glatt kosher *gashmiyus*, does to you. It's a *mehitzah* between you and the truth, between you and Hakodosh Boruch Hu.

And therefore a person begins to have his *spiritual* eyesight diminished, it's dimmed somewhat. You become more materialistic, you think everything depends on you. Making a *parnasa*, accomplishing this and that - you think that *you're* the one doing in this world, *you're* the one creating. And so you run and you do - you take a big step running here, and a hasty step running there. You're anxious, under pressure and you worry. And all that is bad for your eyes - your physical eyes, as well as your eyes of *da'as* - your ability to "see" Who is *really* in control, Who *really* is the *macher* in your life.

THE RX FOR ALL WORRIES

And so when you don't see as clearly as you did before, מאי תקנתיה, what's the remedy? להדריה בקדושה דבי שמישי - "He can restore his eyesight at *kiddush* Friday night." We have to listen to that. It means that when you make *kiddush*, or *kiddush* is being made, it's an opportunity to restore the health of your body and the sharpness of your mental vision. And so now it's Friday night; you finally made it - you didn't think you were going to make it. You were so tired and so worried and now you're dressed in your *bigdei Shabbos*, you're standing with the wine in your hand, and it's all behind you. You're standing and declaring that it was all a waste of worries, a waste of anxiety. ויכולו השמים והארץ. "Everything was done by Hashem until

now and He's still in charge. He's still in charge conducting our affairs."

Shabbos is the great consolation for the one who thinks when he says *Vayichulu*. Your nerves relax on Shabbos under the calming influence of that great principle that everything is the *dvar Hashem*. It's a whole new attitude that is now washing over your mind - Hashem is everything! He's in charge! And so you can sit back at the Shabbos table and relax now. It was all a waste of worries, a waste of emotions and anxiety. Shabbos is the great consolation of life! Because when we say *Vayichulu*, Hashem says, "Don't worry; I'll take care of everything. You keep on doing what you're supposed to be doing, and leave the worrying to Me. Everything in the world is only My imagination, so you can leave it up to Me; I can do the worrying for you." That's what Shabbos tells us, and that's the way to achieve the calmness of true *bitachon* that restores your dimmed mental eyesight, and makes you aware of the great principles of truth.

And if you make use of the Shabbos to think about these concepts, so your entire life becomes a life of confidence in Hakodosh Boruch Hu and you do away with all anxiety. There is no need for anxiety; everything is under control. Hakodosh Boruch Hu is the cause of everything - every atom in the universe is being sustained by His word right now and therefore He is in full control.

WHO NEEDS A PLUMBER?

And so when sometimes things seem to be going awry, everything seems to be going wrong - here it is *erev Shabbos* and the toilet is running over and the lady of the house is trying to mop up the floor. The children are running around sliding on the slippery floor and she still has to put the kugel into the oven. She should be on the verge of losing her mind. And now the the husband walks in from work tired and excited, he's full of worries. "What's this?" he might say. "Why didn't you call the plumber?!" It's an opportunity for a flare up.

But no, he doesn't say that. And his wife is calm too. Why? Because they both learned the lessons of *Vayichulu* from *kiddush* last Friday night. They've built the Mishkan of Shabbos in their minds that lasts from Shabbos to Shabbos. They keep quiet, they keep calm, because they know that everything is under control. In the end

everything will be alright. Eventually the floor will be dry; Shabbos will be nice and happy eventually.

Because Shabbos means that Hashem says: “Children, I’ll take care of everything! The toilet is overflowing? I’ll take care of that too. You do whatever you can, and it will be all good in the end.” And even if you didn’t learn that lesson, you opened your big mouth, and now she hit you in the face with that soiled mop, so what should be your reaction? At least *now* be a *Vayichulu* Jew. Think, “Shabbos is coming; Hashem is in charge.” Don’t get excited! You can swallow down your indignation if you know that Hashem is in control. You can be a *Shabbosdikeh* person always, even on Friday afternoon when the toilet is overflowing.

READING TORAS AVIGDOR MAKES YOU A MILLIONAIRE

Vayichulu tells us that there is nothing in the universe except for the *dvar Hashem*. Wherever you look, wherever you see anything, you are being reminded of Hashem, it’s **מלא כל הארץ כבודו** - “The universe is full of His glory.” There’s nothing in this world except for Hakodosh Boruch Hu, the Creator, He is everywhere and there is nothing but His will, His imagination. If Hakodosh Boruch Hu would take His mind off us, off this universe, everything would disappear into nothing. Not into dust or into atoms. Into *nothing* at all! And that has to sink into our heads because that is the foundation of everything - not only of Shabbos.

What you’re hearing now is the greatest wealth you could ever acquire, because Torah attitudes are the most valuable wealth in the world; it’s diamonds and gems, all types of precious stones. And now you’ll be going home a millionaire. You’re leaving here with the knowledge that *you are only the word of Hashem*. And even those of you who already knew this have to study it again and again because each additional time is another diamond. And once a person begins to think these ideas, he becomes a changed person. His whole way of looking at the world is transformed completely.

And because this attitude is a gem, a diamond, for a person’s mind, so even if we have been saying it for years, it’s never enough. And so when you say *Vayichulu* one more time, you gain a tiny grain of more awareness. By repeating it, it becomes a little more clear to you. And so, even though you might have said it thousands of times,

if you say it one more time it becomes more and more firmly embedded in his mind.

IGNITING A HYDROGEN BOMB ON SHABBOS

And the truth is that when a man makes this declaration of *ויכולו השמים והארץ* *with thought*, if he thinks about the things we said here, then he has put into his mind not just a bit of important information, not just a particle of diamond dust, but he has actually put a hydrogen bomb into his head. It's an explosion of *da'as* in his head because the results of this idea are incalculable. When a man declares that Hashem created this world from nothing, and that He continues to sustain everything by His word, so in effect he is saying that there is nothing in the world except for Hakodosh Boruch Hu, and he begins to live with Awareness of Hashem wherever he goes, whatever he does, whatever he sees.

And now we come back to the "Yom Kippur" that falls out every Shabbos. We asked in the beginning of our talk, what is so important about saying *Vayichulu* that it makes you worthy of a mini Yom Kippur, that your sins are being forgiven? And it's a good question: After all, when a man stands up on Friday night and he makes this declaration, or when you stand around the Shabbos table and you listen to your husband or your father make the declaration, what really are you learning that you didn't know before? There's nothing new here! This is a Jew who has been saying *Vayichulu* every Friday night for years; what new information has he gained tonight by standing up and saying it once more? What great change has been affected in him that he deserves a special *kaparah* tonight with *malachim*?

THE REAL TESHUVA

And the answer is that it is the biggest kind of *teshuva* there is! There is no bigger repentance than saying *Vayichulu*! If you would fast for twenty-five hours, and stand all day in the synagogue in prayer; even if you would take upon yourself not to do any more sins – and you meant it sincerely – it's still nowhere near the purification that you get from saying *Vayichulu*.

And that's because the lesson of *Vayichulu* is a return to the *yesod ha'yesodos*, the foundation upon which all foundations are built, that everything is Hakodosh Boruch Hu. And just saying *Vayichulu* is so important, because it affects a change in your mind. That

declaration, and the impression that it makes on your mind is so great, that you have already changed your entire nature; the entire way you view the world has changed. There's no such thing as nature anymore; there is nothing but the *dvar Hashem*. Everything is but the various manifestations of Hashem's will. And that's such a fundamental impression on the mind, that everything about him is now different, and it becomes for him a Yom Kippur. Yom Kippur!

DON'T BE A FRUM COW

Recognizing Hashem in this world is the real return to Hashem, and all other things that a Jew can do are only subdivisions of that. *Yeish mei'ayin* is so important to understand, that if you don't understand it, then it is a waste of time doing *teshuva*. Look, I say waste of time - of course, it's better do *teshuva*. It's better to do *teshuva* from your sins and be a frum ignoramus, absolutely. It's better to be a frum cow than to be a wicked cow! But to remain a cow by living without real *teshuva*, without returning to the true attitudes of the mind that you must achieve in this world is a tragedy. A person who doesn't utilize his mind, if he doesn't think, so he becomes similar to a *beheima*. And if you don't want to spend your life being a frum cow, so you'd better get busy utilizing the Shabbos to impress into your mind that Hashem created the world out of nothing and He continues to keep it in existence only with His will. It's His imagination and He continues to imagine it and that's why it continues to be.

And that's such an important attitude, that just the thought of it, just the fact that you say the words one more time, so you deserve that messengers should come and make a declaration by putting hands on your head and saying: וסר עוונך והטאתך יכופר. Why are your sins forgiven? Because you have brought the most important of all *karbonos* - the *korban* of the mind. You thought about that great principle that the world is *yeish mei'ayin*, and by doing that you brought your mind as an offering to Hashem.

THE #1 REQUIREMENT OF SHABBOS

Now, when you hear that you think it's just an exaggeration, but it's not so. When a man thinks about this principle even for a little moment, it's a change of attitude, and that's the Yom Kippur of a Jew; to recognize what Hakodosh Boruch Hu really is in this world, to understand that His will is causing everything to exist *yeish mei'ayin*

at this very moment, that is the greatest form of *teshuva*. Only that people don't understand what is the meaning of *teshuva*. *Teshuva* for all the sins in the world, as important as it is, is nowhere as important as the fundamental *teshuva* of recognizing Hashem's place in this world, the fundamental principle that the world was created out of nothing.

Now isn't it a pity that so many people who are *shomer Shabbos* don't ever think about that? It's the number one requirement of Shabbos, but they go through Shabbos after Shabbos, week after week, and nothing! They keep everything, but they are missing out on the great opportunity that Shabbos provides.

And therefore, let's keep in mind, from now on, every Shabbos, as much as possible, that whatever you see in the world is nothing but the imagination of Hakodosh Boruch Hu concretized into physical form. And every moment, it continues in existence only because He continues to will it to exist. And therefore everything that you see wherever you go, while you walk to shul, while you walk back from shul, everything you see on your Shabbos table, the *becher* holding the wine, your children sitting around the table, it's all only the vapories, so to speak, from His mind. When you're walking down the street, you're walking on the energy of Hashem's imagination. And when you look around, what you're seeing is Hashem's imagination. He created it all with His word and that's why we see things - but actually it's nothing but Hakodosh Boruch Hu in all the forms of matter that the universe contains.

THE PATH TO TRUE AWARENESS

And that's why no principle in the Torah is given as much attention as the principle of Creation from Nothing. "In the beginning Hashem created the heavens and the earth," are the most important words that were ever spoken and that ever will be spoken, and they are therefore placed in the position of greatest importance, at the very beginning of the Torah. And although we celebrate our Exodus from Mitzrayim with great fanfare on Pesach, and the Giving of the Torah is commemorated on Shavuot with remarkable excitement, *the Creation of the World yeish mei'ayin, because of its importance, is celebrated not once a year, but every week.*

And so, when Moshe Rabeinu gathered the nation to instruct them in the building of the Mishkan, he made sure to first declare the

importance of Shabbos. Because although the residence of Hashem among His people in a physical tabernacle would certainly ignite the tangible Awareness of Hashem among the nation, that Awareness *can be even more readily achieved in the Shabbos home of every Jew*. And therefore the nation was told that the building of the *Mishkan* was suspended on the day of Shabbos, and the *Am Yisroel* thereby learned the eternal lesson that even the enthusiasm for building the house of Hashem must yield for the building of the Shabbos home.

And on what foundation is the Shabbos home to be constructed? It is the tremendous declaration of *Vayichulu*; the internalizing of the Creation from nothing, that is the bedrock of the Jew, the foundation for all your thoughts. And it is of such vast importance that its repetition on Friday night causes the occasion to resemble Yom Kippur. Although no new knowledge is gained, the added awareness of Creation by a Creator brings blessings and atonement, because it is the *yesod hayesodos*. And when that declaration is absorbed by those who hear it, it becomes the paramount foundation in the creation of the Torah mind that prepares you for the World to Come.

HAVE A WONDERFUL SHABBOS

תורת אביגדור

"שאל אביך ויגדך זקניך ויאמרו לך"



שו"ת מיט רב אביגדור מיללער זצ"ל

פראגע: ווען איך זאג פאר מיין קליינעם קינד צו דאנקען השי"ת פאר'ן זיין געזונט און האבן צוויי פיס, קוקט ער אויף מיר ווי גלייך איך בין נארוואס אראפגעפאלן פון די לבנה און ער לאכט. וויאזוי זאל איך האנדלען מיט דעם?

ענטפער: ס'איז נישט בלויז דיין קינד. ווען דו זאגסט עס פאר דיין זעכציג יעריגער ברודער, וועט ער אויך לאכן. איך האב מורא צו זאגן אז אפילו געוויסע מענטשן מיט לאנגע רעקלעך און לאנגע בערד וועלן אויך לאכן. ער קען זיין גענוג איידל נישט צו לאכן, אבער אין זיין הארץ לאכט ער. אין זיין הארץ, טראכט ער נישט וועגן דאנקען השי"ת. קיינער טראכט נישט וועגן דאנקען השי"ת! איר ווייסט פארוואס? איך וועל אייך זאגן א סוד. זיי גלייבן נישט אין השי"ת. אפילו ביי פרומע אידן איז דער אויבערשטער בלויז א ווארט אינעם סידור. ער איז נישט קיין רעאליטעט ביי זיי. אויב ער וואלט געהאט אזויפיל אמונה אין השי"ת ווי ער האט אין זיין ברודער אין קווינס אדער בארא פארק, גלייב מיר, ער וואלט געווען דער גרעסטער צדיק אין דער וועלט.

אונזער ערשטע עבודה איז - און ס'איז א גרויסע עבודה - פאקטיש צו גלייבן אין השי"ת, צו קונה זיין א באוואוסטזיניגקייט אז ער שטייט גלייך דא. און דאן קענען מיר טראכטן וועגן אים דאנקען פאר אונזער געזונט.

דעריבער זיי נישט איבערראשט פון דיין קליין קינד. אבער, גיב נישט אויף האפענונג. דו האלט אן צו רעדן צו דיין קליינעם קינד און מיין נישט אז ער הערט נישט אויס. דאס קינד קען לאכן פון דיר, אבער די ווערטער גייען אריין אין זיין הארץ. און אט די קערעלעך פון אמונה וועלן דארט בלייבן. און איין טאג, קען עס ארויסגעבן הערליכע פרוכט!

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תורת אביגדור
"שאל אביך ויגדך זקניך ויאמרו לך"



Q&A With Rav Avigdor Miller Ztz"l

Q:

I read in a *sefer* that we are not supposed to serve Hashem with the intention of getting reward. So what should a person do if he feels that he does *mitzvos* only for reward?

A:

He should continue to do more *mitzvos*. And more and more. It's a good investment, no question about it. A very good investment. Only that you have to know, that along with that investment, you are working on yourself and you're changing your character.

That's what Hakodosh Boruch Hu wants from you. מצוה קדושים תהיו is a *mitzvah*, it's a general *mitzvah* that applies to everything you do. The more *mitzvos* you do, the more *kadosh* you become. Your character is changing for the better and you are perfecting yourself. Every *mitzvah* that you do, you are walking in the ways of Hashem. והלכת בדרכיו. You should emulate Hashem by walking in His ways. The more you walk in His ways, the better you become.

Nobody said you should stop doing *mitzvos* for the purpose of reward. – אל תהיו כעבדים המשמשים את הרב על מנת לקבל פרס – "You should not be like a servant who serves his master to gain reward" (Avos 1:3). It's a big mistake to listen to that. What that means is, "Don't serve Hashem *only* for the purpose of reward." That shouldn't be your only intention when you are doing *mitzvos*, when you are serving Hashem. You have to add in the thought, "I'm serving You Hashem because I owe it to You for all that You've done for me."

But in any case, always do *mitzvos* even though you want reward. And it's true, you'll get a great reward. It's a very wise investment indeed.

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