



Shabbos Chizzuk

Inspirational & Interactive Divrei Torah
for the Shabbos Table

Issue #5

Parashas Nitzavim

Shabbos

Rosh Hashanah

City	Candle-Lighting	Shabbos Ends
Jerusalem	5:55 PM	7:10 PM
Los Angeles	6:31 PM	7:24 PM
Seattle	6:47 PM	7:48 PM
New York City	6:33 PM	7:30 PM
Chicago	6:26 PM	7:25 PM
London	6:39 PM	7:44 PM

Rosh Hashanah Sept. 25	Rosh Hashanah Sept. 26	Holiday Ends
5:52 PM	7:07 PM	7:06 PM
6:28 PM	7:21 PM	7:20 PM
6:43 PM	7:44 PM	7:42 PM
6:30 PM	7:27 PM	7:25 PM
6:22 PM	7:22 PM	7:20 PM
6:34 PM	7:39 PM	7:37 PM



Parsha Summary

- **עֲרֻבוֹת** ; **בְּרִית ד'** Renewal of Hashem's covenant to study Torah and observe its commandments, the Jewish people's union and responsibility for one another.
- **תְּשׁוּבָה וּגְאוּלָּה** Repentance and the eventual redemption of the Jewish people.
- **לֹא בַשְּׁמַיִם הוּא** The Torah is accessible to everyone to observe in thought, speech, and action.
- **וּבַחֲרַת בְּחַיִּים** The ways of the Torah are good and pleasant. When one decides to go in Hashem's ways, loving Him, and keeping His commandments, it is equivalent to choosing life.

Sefer HaChinuch Mitzvah Count



0 However, we are taught by our Sages, that of all the mitzvos in the Torah, "Talmud Torah K'neged Kulam" – the study of Torah is equivalent to all the other mitzvos. The *Vilna Goan* (Shenos Eliyahu) explains that each and every word of Torah studied is considered its own separate mitzvah with Divine reward, unlike other mitzvos where we only receive one Divine reward for each act of mitzvah performed.



THOUGHT PROVOKING QUESTION: What feelings arise when you think about the mitzvah of teshuva?

Hashem's Infinite Kindness

וּשְׁבַת עַד ד' אֱ-לֹהֶיךָ וּשְׁמַעַת בְּקוֹל כָּל אֲשֶׁר-אֲנֹכִי מְצַוֶּךָ הַיּוֹם וּבְנִיךָ וּבְכָל לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ:

"...and you will return unto Hashem, your God, and listen to His voice, according to everything that I command you today, you and your children, with all your heart and all your soul" (Devarim 30:2);

The Gemara in Yoma (86B) teaches us a beautiful lesson:

Reish Lakish said, "Great is the power of teshuva (returning to G-d), for a person's intentional sins become like unintentional sins." But Reish Lakish also said, "Great is the power of teshuva, for a person's intentional sins become like merits." There is no contradiction. The first case speaks about returning to G-d out of fear of punishment and the second speaks about returning to G-d out of love.

Out of His endless love for Klal Yisrael, Hashem gave us a mitzvah of teshuva – the commandment to repent and return to Him. Not only does Hashem desire a close connection with His children, but mercifully understands that we make mistakes, gives us a clear and simple way to return to Him, atones for all sins, and bonusly, gives us reward for doing so! Rabbeinu Yona (*Sha'arei Teshuva Ch. 1*) considers this one of the greatest kindnesses Hashem, blessed is He, did for all of His creations for even if they sinned gravely and continuously and rebelled against Hashem, He never closes the doors of teshuva on them, as it is written, "Return, wayward children..." (Yirmiyahu 3:22).

The Rambam (*Hilchos Teshuva Chapters 1-2*) walks us through and lists the steps of the teshuva process: (1) *viduy* (verbal confession), (2) *charata* (regretting one's past actions), (3) *azivas hacheit* (abandoning the sin), and (4) *kabbalah al ha'asid* (resolving to not commit the sin in the future). In 2018, my Yeshiva took us on their annual trip to the Gedolim (the leading Rabbanim and spiritual leaders of our generation) for blessings. When we visited one of the Rosh Yeshivas of the famous *Ponevezh Yeshiva*, Rabbi Gershon Edelstein שליט"א, my Mashgiach, R' David Levy שליט"א, asked him how one does teshuva without getting down on oneself and feeling sad. The Rosh Yeshiva answered, "The main part of teshuva is *viduy*, *azivas hacheis* and *kabbalah al ha'asid*, skip *charata*." People shouldn't feel overwhelmed by teshuva nor feel like it's arduous, but rather, simple. The Chofetz Chaim would say, "Teshuva is not a *bor (pit)*" – it's not an immensely complicated or difficult task, just return to your Father in Heaven! As the Midrash on *Shir Hashirim (5:2)* states, "Open for me an opening like the eye of a needle and in turn, I will enlarge it to be an opening through which wagons can enter." All Hashem wants us to do is to take initiative, even if it's small, and allow Him to enter into our lives. When we do our part and do complete wholehearted teshuva to Hashem, we can become closer to Him than we ever were before.

May Hashem help us to always feel close to Hashem with great love and simcha! Wishing you and your family a *Ketivah v'Chatima Tovah* and a *Shana Tova u'Metuka!*

¹ All Hebrew translations are derived from Artscroll. The continuation of the verse states, "Hashem your G-d, will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring," which is one of the acronyms for the month of Elul and corresponds to the mitzvah of Teshuva.

² See *Tomer Devorah Chapter 1*, where the Ramak brings the Gemara (*Brachos 34B*): "In the place that penitents stand, [even] completely righteous ones cannot stand."

Challenge: Think about an area you would like to improve in and make a small commitment towards the right direction!



Hilchos Shabbos

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Redacted by Dr. Emile Amzallag

How should one prepare for Shabbat?

The *Shulchan Aruch* (O.H. 262:1-3), based on the Gemara (*Shabbat 119a*), writes that one should set one's dining table, make the beds, and prepare the home such that all will be ready when one returns from the synagogue on Friday night. Rabbi Pinhas Horovitz (*Sefer Hamikna Kiddushin 41a*), discusses the Gemara's opinion (ibid) that preparing for Shabbat is actually a biblical Mitzvah, based on the verse, "Vehechinu Et Asher Heviu" (*Shemot 16:5*).

Interestingly, the *Arizal* (*Sha'ar Hakavanot*, pg. 72a) was particular about setting a table that had four legs since this was the type of table used in the Beit Hamikdash. Although one should not replicate the artifacts of the Beit Hamikdash, having a four-legged table is a symbolic reminder of the Shulchan that was used there, and not a replica.

The rush and stress to prepare for Shabbat can lend itself to conflict and therefore, the *Chida* (*Avodat Hakodesh*), *Ben Ish Hai* (*Parashat Vayera, Shana I, § 1*), and *Rabbi Haim Palagi* (*Sefer Kaf Hachaim 27:35*) write that one should do all that is possible to prevent any conflict as Shabbat approaches.

Rabbi Shalom Messas (*Shemesh Umagen*, vol. IV, *Orah Haim*, § 15:1) writes that the Moroccan custom is that *Mizmor L'David* (*Tehillim 29*) is recited sitting down since this is not when one accepts Shabbat. Furthermore, *Lecha Dodi* is also recited while sitting and only during the last stanza of "Bo'i Beshalom" does one stand up. In other Sephardic communities, *Mizmor LeDavid* is when one accepts Shabbat and thus it is recited standing up. The *Ben Ish Hai* (ibid:§ 2), based on the *Arizal*, writes that in the last stanza of *Lecha Dodi*, one should turn to the west and then turn to one's right and then to one's left when saying the words, "Bo'i Kallah." *Rabbi Ovadia Yosef* (*Halichot Olam*, vol. III), citing Rabbi Ya'akov Emden, says that one should bow when turning to one's right and left. Nevertheless, the source of bowing by *Boi Kallah* is unclear and many simply turn to all directions.

Summary: One should prepare one's home and oneself for Shabbat. One should be careful to avoid strife on Erev Shabbat. The general Sephardic custom is to stand for *Mizmor L'David* and *Lecha Dodi* (the Moroccan custom is to sit for *Mizmor L'David* and for *Lecha Dodi*, and to stand for the stanza of *Bo'i Kallah*). The Ashkenazic custom for the stanza of *Bo'i v'Shalom* is to face the entrance of the synagogue or more commonly, to face away from the Aron Kodesh.



Maase Shehaya - Hashgacha Pratis Stories | From Pirchei Shoshanim

This week's story is in honor of one of my best friends, Elan Benor, who served 3 years in the IDF Paratroopers/Tzanchanim Unit. May Hashem bless him with health, blessing, and success! May he continue to make his amazing contribution to Klal Yisrael!

When you keep the Shabbos, Shabbos protects you!

David was in paratrooper training for the US Armed Forces. His training required that he needed 5 jumps from an aircraft in order to graduate. On Monday and Tuesday, he completed 3 jumps in total and Wednesday would be the final jumps but they were postponed because of a heavy storm. The officers planned for the final jumps to be on Friday and Saturday. Because David was Shomer Shabbos, they gave him the option to rush both jumps on Friday so he could be home for Shabbos. After his 4th jump, there wasn't enough time for his last jump and there was no way for him to jump again and still be home before *shkiah* (sunset)!

David explained to them that he needed to leave in order to properly welcome the Shabbat. As he turned and walked out, he could feel hundreds of eyes upon him and saw many open-jawed faces in shock to see someone prepared to walk away after weeks of training. He was also disappointed to postpone his graduation and hoped that he would not have to repeat the whole training. At the same time, he was proud to be demonstrating a commitment to his Jewish faith and a Kiddush Hashem.

On Motzei Shabbos, David called his friends to hear how graduation went and then heard something that absolutely shocked him! They didn't jump on Saturday because apparently, the cloud ceiling was too low to allow for a safe jump. The entire course was Shomer Shabbos that day! The final jump and graduation was scheduled for Sunday morning and Baruch Hashem, David was able to join and eventually graduate with his class. As the passuk says, *"Fire and hail, snow and vapor, storm-wind, all fulfilling Hashem's word"* (Tehillim 148).



Stories of Tzadikim | Parable from the Ba'al Shem Tov adapted from Living Lessons Yahadus Curriculum and Chabad.org

A Parable to Explain Shofar

A king sent his precious and only son to a distant country to learn new things about different cultures. Far away from home, he used up all of his money until he remained with nothing. He decided it was time to return home but he had forgotten his native language, so when he finally made his way back to the capital city of his kingdom, he could not explain who he was, that he was indeed the son of the king, and tell them where he needed to go. When he made it near the palace, the guards refused to let him in. In despair, he cried out in a loud voice. The King recognized his son's voice and his son's cry for help touched his heart. They were reunited with love and forgiveness.

The message of this analogy and connection to the day of Rosh Hashana and the mitzvah of shofar is that the Jewish people are G-d's children who were sent into this earthly world, a foreign environment where the soul may feel estranged. However, the soul always remembers who it is and earnestly cries out to God from the depths, which is the wordless sound of the shofar, an expression of the innermost voice and longing of the soul to return to G-d and feel close to Him. When Hashem hears the sound of the shofar, it arouses His mercy and forgiveness.



Zemiros | L'Maancha By Eitan Katz

Before Shabbos, scan the QR-Code below to listen and prepare this week's song for the Shabbos table!



Lyrics: *L'maancha Elokeinu aseh velo lanu re'eh amidatenu dalim vereikim*

HaNeshamah lach vehaguf po'olach chusah al amalach



Jokes: Mitzvah Gedolah Lihiyot B'Simcha!

1. Good Year

A man came home on the first night of Rosh Hashanah with a brand new tire. His wife asked him, "What in the world is that about?" He smiled and explained, "In our family, we have a *minhag* (custom) to eat tires on the first night of Rosh Hashanah as a *siman* that we should have a GOODYEAR!"

2. Honey

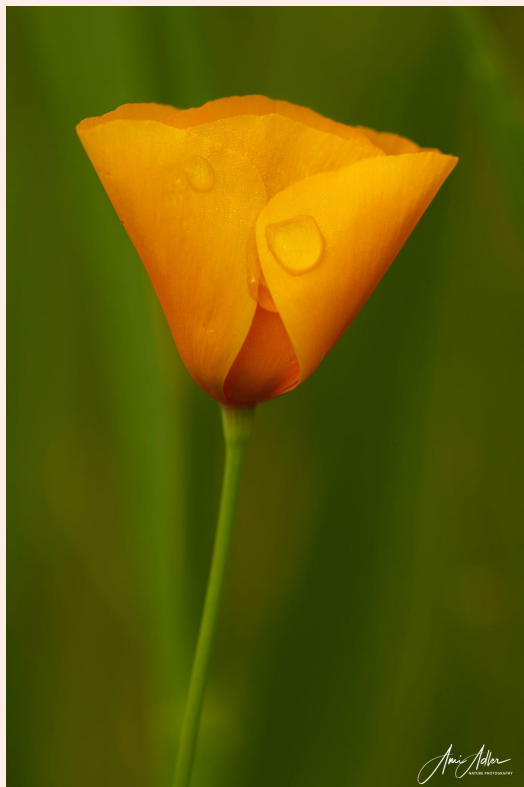
Q) Why do bees have sticky hair?
A) *Because they use honey combs!*



Reader Submissions

We are super excited to announce the newest addition to the *Shabbos Chizzuk* Newsletter! We welcome and would love to include your Divrei Torah, art, stories, jokes, or any other idea you may have!

Scenes for the Soul (for kids) | By Ami Adler



Sometimes we feel happy and sometimes we feel sad. When you look at the water drop in this picture do you see a dewdrop or a teardrop? Sometimes we can see things differently depending on how we are feeling. The important thing to remember is that even when you are feeling sad, that feeling won't last forever. Just like the water drops in this picture – when the sun came out later in the day, these drops went away. The same is true for our feelings – sometimes we just have to wait for a new day or for the sun to come out and we can feel better. If we let Hashem's warmth into our heart, we can start to feel better and remember that Hashem loves us and will always do what is best for us – even when it doesn't look that way in the moment.

In his blog, "Scenes for the Soul," (<https://scenesforthesoul.com/blog>) Ami shares a photo he has taken, along with some background details and a spiritual message that we can apply in our daily lives.

Wishing everyone a safe, healthy, beautiful, happy, uplifting, and restful Shabbos Kodesh, a Ketivah v'Chatima Tovah, and a Shana Tova u'Metuka!

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