Dvar Torah Outline

The Sanctity of Shabbat: Three Forms of Toil and the World's Ultimate Rest

Abstract

Rabbi Shulman continues Rav Tzadok of Lublin's Kedushat HaShabbat, explaining how prayer, Torah study, and constructive action express three inherited dimensions of Jewish spiritual life. These forms of effort enable humanity to sustain and complete creation, while Shabbat represents the rest that follows that work. Extending this pattern to world history, Rav Tzadok reconciles natural and miraculous descriptions of the messianic era through the distinction between the six working days and the approaching sanctity of Shabbat.

I

Abraham, the Liver, and the Inheritance of Three Forms of Service

A. *The bodily dimension of spiritual life*

- Rabbi Shulman begins with Rav Tzadok's association of **Abraham with the liver**, represented by the letter **כ** in **מלך**.
- The liver is described as the dwelling place of blood, which carries the bodily life force.
- Rabbi Shulman illustrates its concentration of blood through the laws of kosher preparation:
  - Liver requires broiling; salting alone does not adequately remove its blood.

B. *Why this dimension corresponds to Abraham*

- Abraham represents the pillar of **acts of kindness and practical action**.
- The liver's connection to bodily activity therefore parallels Abraham's service:
  - Using one's physical capacities to perform commandments.
  - Translating devotion to God into concrete deeds.

C. *Every Jew inherits all three dimensions*

- The descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob inherit the combined spiritual capacities of all three patriarchs.
- Even a Jew of the lowest spiritual standing retains a connection to each dimension.
- The three pillars developed throughout the lesson are:
  - **Prayer**
  - **Torah study**

– **Acts of kindness and practical service**

II

How the Jewish People Acquired the Three Pillars

3:09

A. *Prayer: human initiative in Egypt*

- Prayer belongs to the heart, the arena of choice and personal effort.
- A person can recognize the Creator and turn to Him without first receiving a revelation from above.
- The Jewish people exercised this capacity through their suffering in Egypt.

Exodus 2:23: > וַיְהִי בַיָּמִים הָרַבִּים הָהֵם וַיָּמָת מֶלֶךְ מִצְרַיִם וַיֵּאָנְחוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן הָעֲבֹדָה וַיִּזְעָקוּ וַתַּעַל שַׁוְעָתָם אֶל הָאֱלֹהִים מִן הָעֲבֹדָה: > (During those many days, the king of Egypt died, and the children of Israel groaned because of the labor and cried out; their cry because of the labor rose to God.)

B. *Prayer again at the sea*

- Their cry at the sea provides another expression of this self-initiated turning toward God.

Exodus 14:10: > וּפַרְעֹה הִקְרִיב וַיִּשְׂאוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת עֵינֵיהֶם וְהִנֵּה מִצְרַיִם נֹסֵעַ אַחֲרֵיהֶם וַיִּירְאוּ מְאֹד וַיִּצְעֲקוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶל ה': > (Pharaoh drew near, and the children of Israel lifted their eyes and saw Egypt advancing after them. They were very afraid, and the children of Israel cried out to the Lord.)

C. *Torah: a gift that must come from God*

- Through prayer, Israel subsequently merited receiving the Torah.
- Rabbi Shulman emphasizes the distinction:
  - **Recognizing God and praying** can begin through human initiative.
  - **Receiving the Torah** requires God to give it.
- The Torah is a divine gift, but receiving it creates a responsibility to **labor in its study**.

D. *Practical service: building the Tabernacle after the golden calf*

- After the sin of the golden calf and the loss of their spiritual crowns, Israel received another avenue of service: **constructing the Tabernacle**.
- Its construction encompassed the ***39* primary categories of labor**.
- These categories represent the fundamental ways people meaningfully transform the physical world.
- Rabbi Shulman illustrates this through ordinary acts of service:
  - Preparing food for someone in need.
  - Building a home.
  - Directing productive work toward God's purposes.

E. *The national sequence*

- **Egypt:** prayer.

- **Receiving the Torah:** Torah study.
- **Building the Tabernacle:** practical action and the sanctification of physical work.

III

Humanity's Task: To Sustain and Complete Creation

7:00

A. *Human beings are born for purposeful effort*

- Rav Tzadok understands human toil through these three forms of service.
- Rabbi Shulman explains that their purpose is not merely personal achievement:
  - They **sustain the world**.
  - They **repair and complete what God entrusted to humanity**.

B. *God deliberately left work for humanity*

- God did not create a world requiring no further human contribution.
- Rather, He left room for people to participate in its completion.
- Torah, prayer, and constructive action are the principal channels of that partnership.

C. *The weekly pattern reflects creation*

- God created over six days and rested on the seventh.
- Human beings, created in His image, follow the same pattern:
  - **Six days of productive effort**
  - **A seventh day of rest**
- Shabbat is therefore connected to the purpose of work: it is the rest that follows meaningful participation in creation.

D. *Sacred time as a recurring pattern*

- Rabbi Shulman uses the image of a **spiral** to describe time:
  - The pattern returns repeatedly.
  - Each recurrence expresses the original rhythm of creation.
- The six-day-and-Shabbat structure thus continues throughout history rather than remaining only an event of the first week.

IV

From the Weekly Shabbat to the Seventh Millennium

11:00

A. *The same pattern operates on several scales*

- **Days:** six working days followed by Shabbat.
- **Years:** six agricultural years followed by the sabbatical year.

- **World history:** six millennia of effort followed by a seventh millennium characterized as Shabbat.

B. *The six millennia are the arena of choice*

- Rabbi Shulman connects free choice with effort:
  - Choosing well requires work rather than passive drifting.
  - Each person must exert himself in Torah, prayer, and acts of kindness according to his abilities.
- This reflects the rabbinic teaching that the present is the time for performing the commandments.

Deuteronomy 7:11: > וְשָׁמַרְתָּ אֶת הַמִּצְוָה וְאֶת הַחֻקִּים וְאֶת הַמִּשְׁפָּטִים אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם לַעֲשׂוֹתָם: > (You shall observe the commandment, the statutes, and the ordinances that I command you today, to perform them.)

C. *The seventh millennium: a world of rest*

- In the framework Rav Tzadok develops, the seventh millennium is a period that is **entirely Shabbat**.
- Rabbi Shulman explains the description of a time with neither new merit nor guilt:
  - The concealment that makes present-day moral struggle possible will be removed.
  - Divine reality will be clear.
  - Physical existence itself will be transformed.
- This is the ultimate rest that follows humanity's long period of effort.

V

Reconciling Natural and Miraculous Descriptions of the Messianic Era

14:00

A. *The apparent disagreement*

- **Shmuel:** the difference between the present world and the messianic era is freedom from foreign domination.
  - The natural order otherwise continues.
- **Other rabbinic descriptions:** the messianic future involves profound supernatural transformation.
- The apparent question is whether redemption is fundamentally **natural or miraculous**.

B. *Both views can express truth*

- Rabbi Shulman highlights the principle: **אלו ואלו דברי אלוקים חיים** (Both these and those are the words of the living God.)
- In practical law, a ruling must determine what to do.
- In matters of theological interpretation, different opinions can describe distinct, complementary aspects of reality.

C. *Rav Tzadok's reconciliation: different stages of the future*

- Rav Tzadok explains that the opinions address **different possible periods of messianic history**.

- If the Messiah comes substantially earlier:
  - A lengthy messianic era can unfold within the ordinary natural order.
  - Israel is no longer subjugated, but humanity's work continues.
- Near the culmination of the sixth millennium:
  - The world approaches its Shabbat.
  - Miraculous transformation becomes part of that transition.

D. *Early redemption and the remaining work of history*

- Rabbi Shulman relates this to the possibility of an **accelerated redemption**.
- He also cites the rabbinic division of history into:
  - Two thousand years of disorder.
  - Two thousand years of Torah.
  - Two thousand years designated for the possibility of the messianic era.
- Had redemption occurred much earlier, there could have been a long period of natural messianic life.
- Thus, Shmuel's description and the miraculous descriptions need not contradict one another.

VI

Adding to Shabbat: The Transition from History to Redemption

20:01

A. *The weekly obligation to begin Shabbat early*

- Jewish law requires adding some weekday time to Shabbat.
- Rabbi Shulman discusses the range between early acceptance of Shabbat and stopping work shortly before sunset.
- The exact required duration is not settled in this discussion.
- The essential point is that **Shabbat's sanctity extends into the time immediately preceding it**.

B. *Rav Tzadok applies this principle to world history*

- If the seventh millennium corresponds to Shabbat, the end of the sixth millennium corresponds to **the additional time before Shabbat**.
- Consequently, the world's transformation need not wait until the seventh millennium itself.
- The final portion of the sixth millennium can already share in the character of the coming rest.

C. *"Thursday" versus the approach of Shabbat*

- Rabbi Shulman illustrates the distinction:
  - A Messiah arriving, metaphorically, on "Thursday" or "Friday morning" leaves considerable time for ordinary work.
  - A Messiah arriving immediately before Shabbat ushers in the transition to a different kind of existence.

- During the earlier stage, human effort remains necessary.
- During the final transition, the world begins entering its promised rest.

D. *The fulfillment of prophetic promises*

- Rav Tzadok places the extraordinary promises of the prophets within this approaching-Shabbat stage:
  - Peace replacing predation and conflict.
  - The disappearance of the evil inclination.
  - The end of death.
- These changes can begin **toward the end of the sixth millennium**, before the seventh millennium fully arrives.
- The discussion presents a conceptual framework for redemption, not a fixed date.

VII

Returning to the Weekly Shabbat: What Kind of Toil Ceases?

24:30

A. *Every Shabbat reflects the ultimate rest*

- Just as history moves from sustained effort toward its ultimate Shabbat, each week moves from work toward rest.
- Human beings labor to sustain creation and then cease, following the pattern established by God.

Exodus 20:9: > שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבֹד וְעָשִׂיתָ כָּל מְלַאכְתֶּךָ: > (Six days you shall labor and perform all your work.)

B. *The unresolved question*

- Rabbi Shulman closes by identifying the question for the next lesson:
  - If human toil includes **Torah study, prayer, and practical action**, what does resting from toil mean on Shabbat?
  - Does the parallel imply resting from Torah and prayer as well as from ordinary work?
- The question is left open.
- The next step is to clarify the difference between **weekday effort** and the character of spiritual service on Shabbat.

VIII

In Summary

- **Three inherited capacities:** Every Jew has a connection to prayer, Torah study, and practical service, rooted in the patriarchs.

- **Three stages of national development:** Israel developed prayer in Egypt, received Torah from God, and sanctified physical labor through constructing the Tabernacle.
- **The purpose of toil:** Human effort sustains creation and completes the work God entrusted to humanity.
- **Shabbat as a pattern of history:** The rhythm of six periods of work followed by rest applies to weeks, sabbatical cycles, and the millennia of world history.
- **Two descriptions of redemption:** Rav Tzadok reconciles natural and miraculous messianic futures by assigning them to different stages of the world's approach to Shabbat.
- **The closing question:** If Torah and prayer are also forms of toil, their relationship to Shabbat's rest requires further explanation.