

YOM KIPPUR IN SHABOS SPIRIT

By Rabbi Menachem Rokeach

Every 3 or 4 years, Yom Kippur falls on a Shabos, as it does this year, and we ponder the significance of this simultaneousness. One wishes to suggest it has the ingredients to double the uplift to a higher level. The Talmud teaches (Shabos 118b) if Israelites would observe properly two Shabosos they would immediately be redeemed. The question arises, why the need for two Shabosim. If observing Shabos brings redemption, one Shabos should suffice.

It might be because of this difficulty that the Noam Megodim Hachodosh writes that it refers to a Yom Kippur that falls on a Shabos. Since Yom Kippur is also Shabos Shaboson (Vayikro 16:31) the one day counts as the observance of a double Shabos. The question still remains why two or even a double?

A logical answer may be the application of a requirement in the observance of a mitzva, to grow in the mitzva. Each time a mitzva is repeated the second time should be observed on a higher level. Thus this requirement can only be fulfilled in two Shabosos, with the second one observed on a higher level.

This requirement is based on a teaching about the acacia wood for the mishkan, "standing erect", "OMDIM" (Shemos 26:15). "The way they grow, the stem, trunk part, on the bottom, and the extended part on top" (Sukah 45:). The homiletic application teaches that the observer should grow in his mitzva fulfillment.

When Yom Kippur falls on Shabos, one can achieve this growth on the very same day. The Shabos gains significance, growth, from

the concurrent observance of Yom Kippur, which is also called Shabos. And Yom Kippur gains significance, growth, from the contemporaneous Shabos. This may be elucidated as follows: Shabos itself is a day of repentance, but not on the level of Yom Kippur. The last passage in Vayikro reads: "And it shall be forgiven him for the things he might do to incur guilt", "LEASHMO BOH". The letters of these two words spell "L'Kail Asher Shovas Mikol Hamaasim Bayom Hashvii" (to Hashem Who rested from all works on the seventh day). This is indicative that Shabos is a day of repentance. When Yom Kippur falls on a Shabos, repentance is intensified. Thus Yom Kippur gains a higher level of repentance.

Similarly Shabos gains because of Yom Kippur. Shabos requires Oneg Shabos with three meals. On Yom Kippur, the Oneg Shabos comes not from eating three meals, but by purification and cleansing of the soul. As the worker in the department of sanitation immensely enjoys the hot shower when he comes home, so does the repenter enjoy, real ONEG, by his riddance of sin, cleansing and purifying himself. Thus the ONEG Shabos is observed on a higher level because of Yom Kippur.

It is interesting to note that the Haftorah for Yom Kippur speaks of the mitzva of ONEG Shabos (Isaiah 58:13). This is indeed a double observance of Shabos. If we would bring ourselves to such a level of spiritual ONEG we would be immediately redeemed.

The coincidence of Shabos and Yom Kippur accords us insight in a basic Shabos law, i.e. Tosfos Shabos, adding a few minutes to the Shabos, both at the incoming and the outgoing. The source for this requirement is Yom Kippur, about which the Torah instructs us to

begin the deprivation (from eating) "on the ninth of the month in the evening" (Vayikro 23:32). "Ninth day" is mentioned to teach the need to begin Yom Kippur observance a few minutes earlier, when it is still the ninth. From here we learn to add a few minutes likewise on the Shabos (Yuma 81b).

It is logical to assume that TOSFOS (addition) means adding not only in time, but also adding in sanctity and sincere repentance.

The above leaves many of us with desperate need for evaluation of our level, regarding our Shabos observance, though we consider ourselves to be strictly Shomrei Shabos. As pointed out, the advantage of two Shabosim is the growth, going "michayil el chayil", from strength to strength (Tehilim 84:8). TOSFOS means climbing higher and higher in the sanctity of Shabos.

Tehilim is divided into seven parts, with the fifteen Shir Hamaaloth (Song of ascents, 120 - 134), designated to be recited on the seventh day, i.e. Shabos. Meforshim explain that it refers to the fifteen steps in the Beth Hamikdosh, ascending higher and higher. The choice of Shabos for the recital of these chapters is obviously based on the particular opportunity of constant ascent on Shabos.

Interestingly, the Haftorah on Yom Kippur, Isaiah 57,58, concludes with the special observances of Shabos, ONEG Shabos, Kovod Shabos, purity of speech on Shabos. How timely, particularly when Yom Kippur falls on Shabos, observing double Shabos.

