



שבת שולחן ניצוצות

# Shabbat Table Sparks

**Igniting Torah Learning at the Sabbath Table**

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## Insights & Questions From the Parashah

“The essence [of the mitzvah] of sanctifying the Sabbath [is to do so] at night. If a person does not recite kiddush at night - whether consciously or inadvertently - he may recite kiddush<sup>12</sup> throughout the entire [Sabbath] day. A person who does not recite havdalah at night may recite [this blessing] on the following day, and [indeed] may recite [this blessing] until [nightfall] on Tuesday [if he does not fulfill his obligation beforehand].” *Mishneh Torah, Sabbath 29:4*

### Parashah Ki Tisa Exodus 30:11-34:35

**א** *This shall they give...Ex. 30:13* Rashi brings down that HaShem showed Moses an image of a coin made of fire. According to Rabbi Munk, “Moses was concerned how money, the symbol of the material aspect of our lives, could acquire the sanctity denoted by the expression *sacred shekel*. HaShem showed Moses the likeness of a coin of fire to indicate that when money is offered with the sacred fire of a love of G-d it can serve the noblest purposes.” **How might this relate to us giving tzedakah?**

**ב** *You shall make a copper Laver...Ex. 30:18* The Priests were to wash their hands from the Laver before entering the Holy Place to minister. It was a spiritual cleansing; to wash the hands is a symbolic act of washing the whole body. Thus, hand washing is like a mikvah. We wash our hands each morning as a result of this law. Why? Because we are starting our day as ministers unto HaShem. The Laver itself was made of mirrors donated from the women of Israel. **What was the purpose of the mirrors? What did the water represent?**

**ג** *It shall be for them an eternal decree...Ex. 30:21* Rabbi Munk points out that we do not know why HaShem gave us the sanctification of the hands and feet. It is a *chok*, a law without a clear meaning. However, he says that a hint may be found in the verse Genesis 1:2, “the Spirit of G-d hovered upon the surface of the waters.” So the mikvah is a return to the primordial waters of creation. To emerge from the mikvah is to resurrect to the time of Gan Eden. **Why do you think HaShem uses water for such an important spiritual symbol?**

## Psalm of The Parashah

### Psalm 75

For the music director: “Do not Destroy,” a psalm of Asaph, a song. We praise You, we praise G-d, for Your Name is near. People declare Your wonders. “When I appoint a set time, I Myself will judge uprightly. When the earth wavers with living on it, I Myself hold its pillars firm. *Selah* I say to the arrogant, ‘No more boasting!’ And to the wicked, ‘Do not be lifting up your horn.’ Do not lift your horn up high. Do not speak with outstretched neck.” For exaltation comes not from the east nor from the west, nor even from the desert. For G-d is the Judge: He lowers one and lifts up another. For in the hand of *HASHEM* is a cup of foaming wine mixed with spices, and He pours it out. Surely all the wicked of the earth will drink, draining it down to the dregs. But I—I will declare it forever, I will sing praise to the G-d of Jacob. I will cut off all the horns of the wicked, but the horns of the righteous will be lifted up.



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**T** *A copper laver..Ex.30:18:* The Chassidic Insights say, “As described above, the Tabernacle and its furnishings reflect the process of spiritual refinement we undergo as part of our ongoing aspiration toward unity with G-d. When entering from the outside, one first went into the Courtyard, encountering the laver and the Outer Altar. On a personal level, when we leave our own affairs in order to enter our personal Tabernacle and begin the process of spiritual renewal, we must first cleanse ourselves of whatever residual materialism we may carry. (This is similar to the purification process the soul must undergo, when it leaves this material world at the end of life, to be able to enter Paradise. Our personal, spiritual paradise is our inner Tabernacle; we must cleanse ourselves of our worldliness when entering this spiritual paradise as well.) This is why the first furnishing one confronts when entering the Courtyard from the outside is the laver.” ***One first encounters the outer altar and then proceeds to the Laver. After that, we proceed to the Holy Place to minister. Explain the spiritual significance of that procedure.***

**T** The Kehot Chumash says, “The purpose of washing our hands and feet is to cleanse our active faculties of any "dirt," i.e., of any orientation that could impede our effectiveness in raising and spreading Divine consciousness.” ***What are some traits that keep us from accomplishing our mission?***

## **A Mikvah Moment**

“Going to the mikvah is *not* about getting clean. It’s about becoming more *alive*. The Torah is obsessed with purity because the Torah is obsessed with life itself. Whether it’s valuing life over religious adherence, preserving fruit trees that sustain life, or even toasting *L’chaim*, “to life,” the spirituality of the Torah is anchored by life. “Keep My statutes . . . and *live* by them,” says Leviticus 18:5. In other words, our soul’s purpose is not the journey to a promised heaven or hell. It is the everyday journey through this lifetime that our souls were created for. Therefore, there is no explicit of heaven or hell throughout the entire Five Books of Moses. However, the Torah does highlight the countless stories of women and men who pursued spiritual enlightenment within the physical constraints of this reality. For it is not in death that we find the highest form of spiritual fulfillment. It is in the everyday struggle to do the right thing that you and I become “created in the image of G-d.” ***Is Mikvah Insulting to Women?*** By Levi Welton

## **An Inspirational Story**

### **Penance**

A confirmed sinner who allowed no evil desire to pass him by came to Rabbi Motel of Tchernobil, handed him a slip on which he had listed the sins he had committed in his life, and asked to have a penance imposed on him. When Rabbi Motel had read the slip of paper, he said: “I am too old to assume the burden of someone who requires such heavy penance. Go to the Rabbi of Rizhyn. He is young, he will take it upon himself.” So the man went to the rabbi of Rizhyn and gave him the list. And now the Rabbi of Rizhyn read the whole long column, the big items and the small, and the sinner waited.

Finally the zaddik said: “This shall be your penance. No matter what word of prayer you utter, from now until you die, you shall not utter a single word of prayer with empty lips; but you shall preserve the fullness of every word.”

## **A Spark Of Mussar**

“Who is *strong*? He who conquers his *evil inclination*, as it is stated in mishlei 16:32: “He who is slow to anger is better than a strong man...”

~ Avot 4:1, contributed by Batyah Gage