



## Parshat Behaalotecha

No 1070:

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### STARTING POINT

#### Moshe's Job Description - by Rabbi Amnon Bazak

When Yehoshua hears Eldad and Meidad acting as prophets within the camp, he is upset. "My Master, Moshe, put them in prison!" [Bamidbar 11:28]. Moshe responds with mild criticism. "Are you jealous for me? If only all of the nation of G-d would be prophets, if G-d would spread His spirit over them" [11:29]. Why was Yehoshua upset, and why did this matter not bother Moshe at all?

The explanation can be seen from the way Yehoshua is described in the Torah portion, as "Moshe's servant" [11:28]. This title is given to Yehoshua in two other places in the Torah, and in both cases the subject is the way that Yehoshua related to Moshe's unique prophetic ability. The first time is when Moshe climbed Mount Sinai, at the end of the Torah portion of Mishpatim. "And Moshe and Yehoshua his servant rose, and Moshe climbed up the mountain of G-d. And he said to the elders, wait here until we return to you." [Shemot 24:13-14]. Even though Moshe went up the hill by himself, these instructions differentiated between Moshe and Yehoshua on one hand ("until we return") and the elders ("wait here").

The second time was after the sin of the Golden Calf, and it was similar in nature. "Moshe took the Tent and placed it outside, away from the camp, and he called it the Tent of Meeting. And it happened that anybody who wanted to consult with G-d would go out to the Tent of Meeting... And when Moshe entered the Tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the Tent, and talk to Moshe... And his servant, Yehoshua Bin Nun, a youth, would not move away from the tent." [Shemot 33:7-11]. One of the results of the sin of the Golden Calf was that Moshe distanced himself from the camp and went alone to speak to the Almighty. Only Yehoshua stayed with him, dedicated and close by.

This explains why Yehoshua found it hard to accept that the phenomenon of prophecy was expanding among the rest of the people. Up to then, Yehoshua had viewed prophecy as a unique trait belonging to Moshe, his beloved and adored mentor. He felt that being separated from the camp was a necessary condition for prophecy. But now seventy new men started to prophesize, and this new phenomenon even spread out, within the camp. And that explains why Yehoshua said the men should be put into prison. He felt that the phenomenon should be stopped, since it showed disrespect for Moshe's honor and glory.

Moshe understood very well exactly what was bothering Yehoshua, and that is why he asked, "Are you jealous for me?" As Rashi explains, his question is, "Are you showing the

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jealousy that I might show?" Moshe therefore explains that he does not see prophecy as his personal and exclusive privilege. In fact, it is upsetting that until this point he was the only person at a high enough level to be a prophet on a regular basis. From the ideological point of view, "If only all of the nation of G-d would be prophets, if G-d would spread His spirit over them."

It should be noted that Yehoshua did learn his lesson, and when he became the leader of the nation he was careful to include the elders in his decisions. "And Yisrael worshipped G-d all the days of Yehoshua and all the days of the elders" [Yehoshua 24:31]. This corresponds to the beginning of the Tractate of Avot, "Moshe received the Torah from Sinai and passed it on to Yehoshua, and Yehoshua gave it to the elders..." [1:1].

### POINT OF VIEW

#### Crime and "Aliyah" (Pun Intended) - by Rabbi Yisrael Rozen

One meaning of the word "aliyah" is to rise, to be on the increase. This country is inundated with harsh and shocking crime. Every day brings worse cases than before: murder, robbery, rape, and pedophiles. "We are almost like Sedom, we can be compared to Amarah" [Yeshayahu 1:9]. We are slowly learning to accept crime and to "live" with it. Relatively minor cases of theft, robbery, harm to innocent passersby, "routine" illicit relations in a family, wanton violence – all of these no longer impress us. We live in an age of cruel criminal terrorism, hard to believe.

Even without any scientific studies, it is clear that there has been a sharp increase of the number of crimes and their severity. We are getting used to hearing a police officer say that "I have never seen such a scene, in dozens of years of service on the force." We see severed heads, scorched bodies, children as victims, ragged women, and much worse, anything that can be conjured up by a sick imagination.

A large fraction of this shocking crime is related to usage of alcohol and drugs. Quite often the criminal-terrorist is clouded by their effects, and in some cases the victims have been drugged too. If my readers feel that there is some bottom to this pit of crime, you are wrong. The ultimate depth of the next crime, one that has yet to be invented in twisted minds, has not yet been seen. The lowest filth of the current wave of crime will become routine, a level from which it is possible to slide down to ever greater depths.

When I hear about a son who burns his mother's body, about a serial killer, about drunken rape, about murder of a watchman, and about such terrible things as dismembering bodies, and when I see from the name of the suspect that he is a recent immigrant, I hear an inner voice: He is probably not a Jew! A Jewish criminal, no matter how vile, would never act in such a beastly way! This is not a "blow within our ancestral home" (see Yalkut Shimoni Mikeitz 148) but something that has been imported from a foreign culture, from the sons of Cham and Yefet. And quite often (but not always) it turns out that I am right!

Until recently, this information was considered indiscreet, and it was expected that it would not be discussed in public. While it was widely known to sociologists, investigators, and statisticians, at least in terms of nonscientific feelings, the subject was considered taboo, not to be mentioned in public. But recently, a senior police officer was interviewed on a live broadcast, and he was followed by Knesset members and public figures, all willing to ask out loud, "Is this Naomi?" [Ruth, 1:19]. Should this be called "Aliyah" – rising up – or "yeridah" – a downfall? Don't we have enough Jewish criminals of our own? Is this the message of the Law of Return?

It is also possible to add a legal note. The Law of Return (5710/1950) gives the Minister of the Interior the right – or perhaps the obligation – not to give recognition as an Oleh to anyone who: "(1) acts against the interests of the Jewish nation, (2) might endanger public health or national security, or (3) has a criminal record and might endanger the public peace." I think that this last option has never been invoked except in the case of the notorious Mafia leader, Meir Lansky.

It is true that the above clause refers only to people "with a criminal record," but there is probably room for a broad interpretation of the law. There is no real reason to pursue the descendents of the Jewish nation as far as the depths of the former Soviet Union, in order to scratch the bottom of the barrel in a search for drunkards, potential criminals, and even anti-Semites, only as a way to inflate the "numbers of Olim" in Jewish Agency reports.

The legal aspect is even more problematic with respect to the enthusiasm for immigration from Ethiopia. Why is it that for years now almost the only Olim from Ethiopia are those who are called Falash-Mura, who add their own contribution to the national increase in crime? They are not included in the Law of Return, and many of them are clearly not Jewish – that is, many of them are not descendants of the "Beita Yisrael" sect, which has been recognized as Jewish. Most of the Ethiopian leaders object to bringing them here, and similar voices can be heard from other institutions that are involved in immigration.

"The Riffraff Among Them Increased Their Desire" [Bamidbar 11:4]

The word "asafsuf" – translated as riffraff above – is used today to denote marginal people, those who gather in the streets, a group of empty and irresponsible people, in general a group prone to crime. This is the only place that this word appears in the Tanach. Based on the approach of the sages, Rashi explains

that it refers to "Eirev Rav," foreigners who joined the nation when they left Egypt. In this week's Torah portion, they can be perceived to be an active element, with a negative effect, leading to the result that "Bnei Yisrael wept" [11:4].

## SERMON BY A GUEST

### Miriam, Guardian of Yisrael - by Aliza Lavi

The Torah portion of Behaalotecha ends with what happened to Miriam after she complained about Moshe. "And Miriam and Aharon talked about Moshe, with respect to the dark woman that he had taken, for he had taken a dark woman" [Bamidbar 12:1]. Miriam criticized her brother because he left his wife. This was not the first time that Miriam had expressed criticism of this same act. "And a man went from the house of Levi' [Shemot 2:1]. Where did he go? Rabbi Yehuda Bar Zavina said, he followed his daughter's advice. We have been taught: Amram was the leader of the generation, when Pharaoh decreed, 'Every boy that is born shall be thrown into the Nile' [Shemot 1:22], he said: We are laboring in vain! So he divorced his wife. And all the other men divorced their wives. His daughter said to him: Father, your decree is worse than that of Pharaoh. He made a decree against the males, but you have made a decree against the males and the females... So Amram married his wife again, and they all took their wives back." [Sotta 12].

Thus, Miriam's character, as an independent person who has an effect on others, could be seen at a very early age. Miriam's criticism of her father led directly to Moshe's birth and thus influenced the continued existence of the people of Yisrael. In her new criticism about the way Moshe behaved, Miriam remained true to her principles, insisting that the continuation of the nation is a supreme value to be protected under all conditions. According to the Midrash, Moshe left his wife Tzipora. Miriam's constant fear, from the days of her childhood in Egypt, that the concept of separation would be adopted by the entire community and thus cause harm to the continuation of the nation, together with her sympathy for her sister-in-law's distress, were what led her to voice her criticism. In her words, she compared her status and that of Aharon to that of Moshe. "And they said, Has G-d spoken only to Moshe? Hasn't He spoken to us too?" [Bamidbar 12:2].

Miriam was not punished for her criticism, and she was certainly not punished for her determined will to guard the future of the nation. She was not scolded for her earlier complaint when the leaders of the nation left their wives and for her insistence that the people return to proper family living. Rather, her sin was that she did not take into account the unique and special circumstances surrounding Moshe. She had predicted his birth by prophecy, saying, "My mother will give birth to a son who will save Yisrael" [Sotta 13a]. But she did not understand her brother's unique status, different from any other human being, even among the most exalted chosen people. In the end, it was Miriam's criticism that led to the explicit description of Moshe's unique role: "My servant Moshe is not like this, he is a trusted visitor throughout my house. I speak to him mouth to mouth... and he can see the image of G-d" [Bamidbar 12:7-8].

It is interesting to note that the nation delayed its journey during the seven days that Miriam was separated from them, while she endured her punishment. The nation, about which she was so concerned, waited with her until her atonement was complete. "The way that a person treats others is the way that he himself is treated" [Mishna Sotta 1:7].

## MOUNT MORIAH

### The Temple as a Focus of Kindness - by Rabbi Yitzchak Levy, Yeshivat Har Etzion

The Temple – Expressing Compassion for Others

The Mishna describes the direction of motion around the Temple Mount. "On the first and second days, the mourner would not go to the Temple Mount, and on the third day he would enter from the left. Here are the people who walk around from the left: a mourner, one who has been excommunicated, one who has a sick person in the house, and one who has lost an item... If he said, 'I am in mourning' – the person would reply, 'Let He who dwells in this house comfort you.' 'I have been excommunicated' – 'Let He who dwells in this house make their hearts become closer to you.' These are the words of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Yossi said to him, You have made it sound as if he has been forgiven for his wrongdoing. Rather, they would say, 'Let He who dwells in this house make your heart listen to the words of your colleagues, so that they will come closer to you.' One who has a sick person in his house is told, 'Let He who dwells in this house have pity on you immediately.' From the very beginning, Shlomo built the Temple on the condition that anybody who is troubled will come there to pray about his problems."

Thus, the sages describe a very simple and ingenious device. Everybody who moves along the Temple Mount in a direction opposite to the normal path is immediately perceived to be an exception. A mourner is to be consoled; one who has been excommunicated will be the subject of special prayers; one who has a sick person in the house will be given prayers to cure him; one who has lost something will be given help. This device involves emotional empathy, a demand for mutual caring and for people to pay attention to somebody moving in an unusual direction. It causes every person to pray for his colleague and to help him in his hour of need.

The Midrash presents a similar approach. "Shlomo saw that the trait of kindness is important to the Almighty. So when he built the Temple, he made two pillars, one for grooms and one for mourners and the excommunicated. And the people would go on Shabbat and sit between the two pillars... so that all of Yisrael would fulfill their obligation of kindness to others." The Midrash presents what Shlomo did as giving the entire nation an opportunity to fulfill the obligation of kindness within the Temple, the site which joins all of Bnei Yisrael together.

Charity in the Temple

"The room of secrecy: Those who are afraid of sin would put money there in secret, and the poor people would take the

money in secret." This means that the charity in the Temple was at the highest possible level: those who gave money did not know who received it, and those who received the money did not know who had given it. In addition, everybody who came to the Temple was required to give charity. This was derived from the verse, "Do not visit my face empty handed" [Devarim 16:16 - Sifri, Re'ah]. A man appears before G-d by giving charity, and by giving he affirms his appearance in the Temple.

Kindness

Moshe's blessing of the tribe of Levi includes this verse: "Your wholeness and your light are for the man of your kindness" [Devarim 33:8]. The Zohar explains that a Kohen is named for "kindness," since this trait of "chessed" is characteristic of Aharon. "You should be a student of Aharon, one who loves peace and pursues peace, one who loves the people and gets them closer to the Torah" [Avot 1:12]. There are many examples of this principle. Aharon carried the names of Bnei Yisrael on the Choshen when he entered the holy site. The death of the High Priest is the trigger that allows one who has killed by accident to return home from the sanctuary city where he was held, because the High Priest should have asked for mercy for his generation to prevent accidental killing. The High Priest atones on Yom Kippur for himself and for his family, and then for the entire community of Yisrael. The fact that the High Priest proceeds from his personal and family needs to the level of the entire nation is an act of kindness. This is also related to the way the Kohanim bless Yisrael, with love in their hearts.

Like the Kohanim, the Temple is a focal point for unity of the nation, for peace and for justice. "One time Rabban Yochanan Ben Zakai left Jerusalem, and Rabbi Yehoshua followed him, and he saw the ruins of the Temple. Rabbi Yehoshua said, Woe is to us that it has been destroyed, it is the place where Yisrael's sins are forgiven! He replied, My son, do not feel bad, we still have a way of atonement that is the same. What is this? It is acts of kindness, as is written, 'What I want is kindness and not a sacrifice' [Hoshaya 6:6]."

The Second Temple was destroyed because of unreasonable hate. In "Orot Hakodesh," Rabbi A.Y. Kook says that just as the Temple was destroyed because of unreasonable hate, so it will be rebuilt because of unexplained love. It will be good for us to clarify for ourselves, in the study halls and in our homes, how to put this unexplained love into practice in our lives. Let us hope and pray that we will be privileged to increase our love and our kindness, so that we will see the rebuilding of the Temple and the return of the Shechina to its home, as soon as possible.

## THE WAYS OF THE FATHERS (Pirkei Avot)

### Chapter 6 Mishna 10 - by Rabbi Yehuda Shaviv

"The Almighty took charge of five possessions in His world, as follows: Torah is one possession; Heaven and earth, one possession; Avraham, one possession; Yisrael, one possession; and the Temple, one possession. What is the proof that Torah

is a possession? It is written, "G-d made me in the beginning of His path, before His other works" [Mishlei 8:22]. What is the proof that heaven and earth are a possession? It is written, "This is what G-d says: the heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; What house will you build me, and where will be the place of my rest?" [Yeshayahu 66:1]. And it is written, "How great are your wonders, G-d, you created them all with wisdom, your world is full of your possessions" [Tehillim 104:24]. What is the proof that Avraham is a possession? It is written, "He blessed him, and said: Avram is blessed before the supreme G-d, the master of heaven and earth" [Bereishit 14:19]. How do we know that Yisrael is a possession? It is written, "Until your nation passes through, until this nation passes, which you possess" [Shemot 15:16]. And it is also written, "They belong to the holy ones in the earth, all my desired objects belong to them" [Tehillim 16:3]. What is the proof that the Temple is a possession? It is written, "The Temple – G-d, your hands have created it" [Shemot 15:17]. And it is also written, "And he brought them to the boundary of His sanctity, this mountain that His right hand has acquired" [Tehillim 78:54].

The previous chapter consisted mostly of Mishnayot with enumerated lists, starting with ten items and going down to four. There are also lists in this chapter, but this Mishna is the only one with the number at the beginning. Thus, it might seem that this Mishna should have appeared in the previous chapter, between the lists of seven and four items. The reason that it appears in this chapter, which is centered on the concepts of praising Torah and those who study it, is the first item: Torah is listed as a Divine possession. The previous Mishna ends with the prophecy of Chagai, "Gold and silver belong to me, the G-d of Hosts has said" [2:8]. And this Mishna adds that while everything belongs to G-d, there are five things that are linked especially closely to Him and can be considered His unique possessions. (The word "koneh" in the Tanach refers to creating something, as in the verses, "I have created a man together with G-d" [Bereishit 4:1]; "For you have created my kidneys" [Tehillim 139:13]; "The master of heaven and earth" – quoted in the Mishna above. The sages also use the word in the same way, as is written, "Create a rabbi for you, and make for you a friend" [Avot 1:6].)

The Torah appears as the first item in the Mishna not only because it is the main subject of this chapter but also because it was first in terms of chronology. This might be another factor that the Mishna would like to emphasize. Note that this is the essence of the proof text above, "G-d made me in the beginning of His path, before His other works." This corresponds to the commentary of the sages at the beginning of Bereishit Rabba, that the Torah was "the tool used by the Almighty... He looked at the Torah and created the world." This leads to heaven and earth as the second special possession, followed by the others in chronological sequence of their creation: Avraham, Yisrael, and the Temple.

The text about Avraham does not in fact mention that he is a possession, but rather that he is "blessed before the supreme G-d, the master of heaven and earth." Perhaps this is what all the possessions have in common – they are all involved in forming a link between heaven and earth. This is true about the

Torah, which is heavenly in nature but has been brought to the people of the earth in order to raise them to a level where they will be able to combine heaven and earth. It is also true of Avraham, who traveled from place to place in Eretz Yisrael calling out to G-d, influencing people to turn their hearts and their eyes towards their heavenly father. It is also true of his offspring, Yisrael, and of the Temple, whose main purpose is to bring the holy Shechina down to the earth.

## HOLY AND SECULAR

### Chumous and a Soap Opera - by Rabbi Amichai Gordin

The announcer declared, with great feeling, "About 3000 children in the country did not sleep last night. They are waiting impatiently for the government to decide their fate. The Minister of the Interior will ask the government today to allow the children of the foreign workers to become citizens of the country."

After this highly emotional introduction, the "objective" correspondent continued with an explanation. "These children, who were raised here, are no different in any way from Israeli children." To avoid any doubt about the truth of this sweeping statement, he added, "These children of the foreign workers watch the soap operas and 'scrape the plate' of chumous just like any other Israeli child."

But it turns out that the authorities are trying to reject these Israeli children. The correspondent described the problems of the brave Minister of the Interior. "The ones who oppose these children are the Treasury and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. They claim that the cost of giving the children citizenship will be more than 90 million Shekels." (Source: Galei Tzahal, 20 Iyar, 07:35).

At first, when I heard the above broadcast it made me very angry. However, in thinking the matter over, I came to the conclusion that I should be happy about it. The report brought to my attention several matters which I had not noticed before. Specifically, the absurd items in the broadcast helped me better understand our current situation.

One of the most significant controversies today is our struggle for the Jewish character of the country. In recent years, the "status quo" that existed for so many years has been shattered and eroded. Instant conversions (by taking a quick trip abroad), Shabbat commerce, civil marriages, and immigration of Gentiles under the cover of the Law of Immigration – all of these are only some examples of the wide breaches that have occurred in recent times.

Every time a new controversy appears about laws related to Judaism, we quickly rise to meet the challenge, and rightly so, in an attempt to rescue whatever we can of the existing framework. However, it turns out that the real struggle for the Jewish character of the country is not in the area of law but elsewhere. What establishes the nature of our country is not the law but mainly the driving spirit behind it. The atmosphere in the country when the inhabitants are in contact with each other has a much greater influence on the character of the country

than thousands of laws that can be enacted by the Knesset. If the inhabitants of the country define themselves as "soap opera watchers and eaters of chumous," our problem is much more serious than we dared to think. If the identity of our population is defined by an ethnic food that was imported from other places in the Middle East and television programs imported from the West, we have made a big mistake. If the only factor that saves the day is the Treasury, explaining that it is too expensive to give these children citizenship, we have some very serious problems.

I must admit that I did not expect the worthy correspondent to take note of these children's lack of knowledge of the Talmud and the rabbinical laws. I was also not surprised that he did not note that the children are church-going Christians, as opposed to native Israeli children, who spend quite a bit of their time in synagogues. But I was quite disappointed that he could not think of any Jewish characteristics that set Israeli children apart from other children in the world.

It is imperative that we take note of the fact that today there is a deep crisis of Jewish identity. There are far too many people who are not religious but happily define themselves as "soap opera watchers and eaters of chumous." Before we begin to struggle in the field of laws, we must strengthen the Jewish identity of our population. We must take a significant and dominant role on this subject.

I am not referring to the role of a religious missionary institution. What we need is to strengthen the Israeli identity and the Jewish consciousness among the general community. The battle for the Jewish character of the country will be won when the general public feels that its national identity includes some Jewish elements. Even a person who travels on Shabbat should be aware that the Shabbat is the Jewish day of rest. When he and his friends internalize this concept, the stores that are open on Shabbat will close on their own for lack of business. Once the general public comes to see the Shabbat as a day for family gatherings and rest, there will no longer be any need for legal struggles about stores opening on Shabbat.

It would be wrong to be angry with the young correspondent of Galei Tzahal, all he did was to show us how we look in a mirror. If anything, the ones we might be angry at are ourselves.

## THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

### Spending a Year in Europe - by the Department of Education, World Mizrahi

A year ago, we wrote about the "Hashayara" project, which organizes educational cooperation between educators from Israel and from abroad. The following is a brief summary of the experience of a teacher from Hoshaya, Esti Boozi, a teacher in Ulpanat Shacham in Kiryat Ata, who went on a mission after reading about the program last year.

Warsaw! This is a name that is linked in my mind with destruction of Jews, with armed rebellion, and with trips to Poland. Warsaw, which is linked to a cemetery and to severe

could even during the spring. When I was told that I would be sent to Warsaw, I had mixed feelings. On one hand, there were the unpleasant memories of a grey and cold city. On the other hand, this was a formidable educational challenge.

During this trip, for one month, I understood that this time I was going to visit the living and not the dead. Yes, there are Jews in Warsaw! And some of them are openly attracted to Judaism. My work in the Jewish school, mainly as a teacher of Hebrew and Jewish culture, was an experience that I could not have predicted in advance. The pedagogical connection developed into a communication channel between Israel and the Jewish community in Poland. My colleagues in the school sent me home with a message: "Tell them in Israel that we exist!"

The second trip, to the school in Geneva, was different. But I still felt that the Jewish schools and kindergartens in Europe are isolated and in need of support from Israeli teachers, who have more experience and are exposed to various modern techniques.

For me, this sabbatical year was full of experiences. I feel that my contribution to the educational system in Israel and abroad was greater than what I had expected in advance.

(Source: Esti's Diary – "Hashayara" – an Educational Mission Between Israel and Europe During a Sabbatical Year. For more details, contact 02-6251833.)

## THE CHAIN OF HALACHA

### Why is Kiddush Recited Shabbat Morning? - by Rabbi Yosef Tzvi Rimon, Rabbi of Southern Alon Shevut and a teacher in Yeshivat Har Etzion

As we saw last week, Kiddush on Shabbat morning is a rabbinical requirement. Why did the sages decide to recite Kiddush in the morning? This question is especially strong in view of the fact that usually declarations of sanctity are recited only one time: for example, a man can marry a specific woman ("kidushin") only one time.

The RAN gives two answers to this question. First, "since the respect of the day is preferable to that of the night, the sages decided to recite Kiddush in the day, in memory of the main Kiddush... In addition, praise should be said over wine. Since a blessing over wine is made, which is different from other meals, this provides praise and joy to sanctify the day." [Pesachim 106a]. The first answer, that the day is more respected than the night, is based on the words of the Talmud. For this reason, if there are special foods available for Shabbat, it is best to leave them for the daytime (Shulchan Aruch 271:3). The second answer is that Kiddush during the day is based on the desire to praise Shabbat, as opposed to the nighttime Kiddush, which is related to sanctifying the Shabbat (Ramban) and to declaring that the day is preferable to weekdays (Rambam).

Why is the morning Kiddush known as "Kiddusha Rabba," the great Kiddush? Rashi explains that the blessing, "He who creates the fruit of the vine," is often used to introduce other

events, such as Havdala. Therefore, the morning Kiddush, which has only the blessing for the wine, is considered a special event. Another explanation is given by the RAN: The name is an example of reverse logic, meaning that the Kiddush is really much less important than the nighttime Kiddush. Another explanation is offered by Rabeinu David, who writes that the answer is a hidden secret. It might also be that the daytime Kiddush is greater than that of the night because Shabbat has already started and is not beginning at that moment. In any case, the nighttime Kiddush is what is required by Torah law, since this is the first time Kiddush is recited on Shabbat.

What is said in the Morning Kiddush?

The Shulchan Aruch implies that the morning Kiddush consists of the blessing on the wine, with no other verses added (289:1). However, it has become accepted practice to add a few verses, as is written by the Mishna Berura: "There are those who start with the verse, 'Bnei Yisrael shall guard the Shabbat' [Shemot 31:16] or 'Remember the day of Shabbat [20:8]. And some common people begin with the end of the verse, 'Therefore, G-d blessed the Shabbat'[20:10]. But this is not right, since we should never recite part of a verse, in a way that Moshe did not divide the verses." [289:2]. That is, the Mishna Berura mentions three different customs, but he is opposed to the third one, which involves reading only part of a full verse.

On the other hand, the Maharam Shik defends this last practice (Orach Chaim 124). He writes that the only time it is forbidden to quote part of a verse is when there is an obligation to recite it. When our purpose is to declare that G-d sanctified Shabbat and to strengthen our support of its holiness, we are allowed to recite part of a verse. This is because in reality there is no obligation to recite the verse at all. Others explain that what is forbidden is to begin a verse and not finish it, but that it is permitted to start in the middle of a verse and then quote the rest. The best practice would seem to be to follow the approach of the Mishna Berura and only recite full verses. However, one who recites the fragment, "Therefore, G-d blessed the Shabbat," should not be criticized, since he is following a reasonable alternative.

צוותי מדע ותורה



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