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CHAYEINU
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Discover the Joy
of Shabbos

A Kingly Coronation

By HaRav Eli Mansour (shiur E8)

If everyone in the world marks a seven-day week and takes off a day of rest, what makes us different? What is unique about our Shabbat? Is it simply that we refrain from certain activities?

Acknowledging the King

The notion of a seven-day week draws from Creation. It does not draw from any movement of the Earth or Moon as do the days, months, and years. The seven-day week is a convention which nearly everyone in the world uses and it has its origins in one place – Hashem's creation of the world.

The observant Jew stands, as Avraham did before us, against the whole world. The world looks for the origin of the world all over the place. In Big Bangs, in little evolutionary bangs, and so on. Anything to avoid acknowledging the Creator. We stand at the Shabbat table every week and declare our unwavering confidence in the truth of every word of the Torah. And the first page of the Torah declares that Hashem created the world in six days and created rest on the seventh. Let the world search; we have more important tasks.

Not just a declaration

It is an important first step to declare that Hashem is the King, the Creator and the One who causes everything in His world. It is the essence of our twice-daily declaration of Shema. But just saying that Hashem is the King does not connect one to that fact. It is a truth, but it is not

personal. Is it good news? Am I happy to acknowledge Hashem as my King? For that we follow the recitation of Shema with an exclamation, ברוך שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד – May His sovereign Name be declared as King forever! It is not only good news; it is the greatest news, and we wish it to be proclaimed throughout the world forever.

*We are
thrilled to be
the ones who
bear witness
to His
creation and
sovereignty.*

Prepare a feast, get dressed in our finest!

Rav Avigdor Nebenzhal shlita expounds on the great declaration that we make on Shabbat. We do not suffice with saying that Hashem is the King. We announce that we are thrilled to be the ones who bear witness to His creation and sovereignty. We gather as a community and we go home as

individuals and as a family, doing everything we can to demonstrate that we are overjoyed with the role we have been granted.

Shabbat in place of the Shofar

The Torah instructs us regarding תקיעת שופר on ראש השנה. It is with the sounds of the שופר that ה' wishes to rise from the throne of justice to the throne of mercy. תקיעת שופר would seem to be our lifeline, indispensable.



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Yet, רבה decreed that when ראש השנה occurs on Shabbat, we must refrain from blowing the Shofar. There is a remote concern. Someone who does not know how to blow the Shofar might also forget that one must not carry anything outside of one's private domain and would thereby violate the sanctity of the Shabbat. But how can we imagine going without the Shofar? And how could such a remote concern outweigh our need for mercy?

Shabbat is the declaration

The answer, explains Rav Nebenzahl, is that רבה understood the real implication of Shabbat. By

being meticulously careful about our Shabbat observance we are underscoring the essence of the Shabbat – our declaration that Hashem is the King and that we rejoice in that declaration. The People that observes the Shabbat with such care and devotion have nothing to be concerned over the absence of the Shofar; they have made an even greater sound by observing Shabbat – May His great Name be blessed forever. It is with that sound that Hashem moves from the throne of justice to the throne of mercy.

Takeaway: I will try to recognize that my observance of, and delight in the Shabbat is my joyous declaration that Hashem created Heaven and Earth.