



## Tosefet Shabbat

By Moshe Davis (י"ז)

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*Editor's Note: Kol Torah would like to wish a Mazal Tov to the author of this article, Mr. Moshe Davis, on the birth of his daughter last Shabbat in Yerushalayim.*

After discussing Yom Kippur, the Torah states, "Shabbat Shabbaton Hu Lachem VeInitem Et Nafshoteichem BTish'ah LaChodesh BaErev MeiErev Ad Erev, Tishbitu Shabbatchem," "It is a Shabbat of complete rest for you, and you shall afflict yourselves on the ninth day of the month at evening; from evening to evening you shall rest, on your day of rest" (VaYikra 23:32). Earlier (16:29), it is stated that Yom Kippur is observed on the tenth day of the month, but here it is stated that Yom Kippur begins during the evening on the ninth day of the month. The Gemara (Yoma 81b) uses this Pasuk to derive the obligation of adding to both the start and end of Yom Kippur, and the Gemara extends this obligation to include Shabbat and all other holidays.

Most Rishonim explain that the obligation of Tosefet Shabbat, adding onto Shabbat, is mandated by the Torah. However, Rambam disagrees and explains that only Yom Kippur is biblically mandated. The Magid Mishneh and Kesef Mishneh differ as to whether the Rambam believes that Tosefet Shabbat is required only on a rabbinic level or whether the requirement is non-existent. There is a rather simple explanation for the Rishonim who state that Tosefet Shabbat does not exist. Since the underlying reason behind the Mitzvah of Shabbat is to commemorate the creation of the world, one should not add to Shabbat, just like Hashem did not add to the creation of the world on Shabbat. However, if Shabbat primarily commemorates Yetzi'at Mitzrayim, then Shabbat is just a day of rest, and there would be no problem adding to it.

Tosefet Shabbat can be looked at in two ways. The first is that it is just a precautionary action taken to avoid doing Melachah on Shabbat, and the second is that Tosefet Shabbat actually has a fundamental value. Rashi (BeReishit 2:2 s.v VaYechal Elokim BaYom HaShevi'i) states that people that are not precise with time must add onto Shabbat as a protective measure, whereas the Ran (Beitzah 30a) holds that one should add onto Shabbat even more than one would for just precautionary purposes. We can infer from this that the Ran believes Tosefet Shabbat has intrinsic value.

There are many different opinions as to how much time must be added to Shabbat. The two most common answers are given by the Mishnah Berurah and Rav Moshe Feinstein along with Rav Ovadiah Yosef. The Mishnah Berurah writes (261:23) that one should accept Shabbat twenty minutes prior to sunset. However, Rav Moshe (Teshuvot Igrot Moshe Orach Chaim 1:96) and Rav Yosef (Teshuvot Yabia Omer 5: Orach Chaim 21) are of the opinion that one may add any amount of time, even just a few minutes.

There is a story told by a student of the Chafetz Chaim that illustrates the enormity of the Mitzvah of Tosefet Shabbat. There was once a child who became gravely ill, and the physicians were unable to cure him. In desperation, the parents approached the Chafetz Chaim for guidance. He urged them to begin Shabbat early each week, ensuring to have the table set and the candles lit well before the twenty minute period prior to sundown. The couple followed his advice, and the child was miraculously cured. This story illustrates how impactful it can be to add just a few minutes onto Shabbat. By realizing the importance of every minute of Shabbat, we will hopefully be able to observe it to its fullest extent and make every second of it meaningful.

## Fostering as Opposed to Forcing Kedushah

By Rabbi Yoni Mandelstam

Because a Kohen has a higher level of sanctity, he may not marry certain women. For example, the Torah (VaYikra 21:7) states that a Kohen may not marry a woman who committed inappropriate, sexual behavior in the past. The question then arises as to how the Torah responds to a case when a Kohen does in fact marry a woman whom he was not allowed to marry. Rashi (ibid. 8 s.v. VeKidashto) quotes the Gemara (יבמות פה:) which states that Beit Din actually forces the Kohen to divorce this woman against his will. Moreover, when presenting this Halachah, the Shulchan Aruch (אבן העזר ו:ו) goes so far as to say that, “a Kohen who married someone forbidden to him is excommunicated until he divorces his wife. Similarly, anyone who does business with such a Kohen is also excommunicated until the Kohen divorces his wife.” Simply put, the Halachah goes to great lengths to remind this Kohen that he must divorce his wife and honor his true status as a Kohen.

While this Halacha may seem harsh on the surface, the Ohr HaChaim HaKadosh sees tremendous sensitivity on a deeper level. Specifically, when presenting this law, the Torah states that the Kohen should be forced to terminate his forbidden marriage, “**Because** he is holy – כִּי קֹדֵשׁ.” The Ohr HaChaim explains that, generally speaking, “Kedushah,” holiness, cannot be forced onto a person. Therefore, we would have thought that Beit Din should not force a Kohen to divorce his wife, even if that is the right thing to do, because the Kohen needs to come to such decisions on his own. This is why the Torah emphasizes that the Kohen **is already holy**.” Those forcing the Kohen to embrace his role are not imposing outside holiness onto the deviant Kohen. Rather, they are bringing out a holiness that is already hidden within the Kohen. It is only because the Kohen is “already holy,” that the Halachah allows us to “force him” to accept his position.

This comment of the Ohr HaChaim has practical ramifications on the field of Chinuch and parenting. Often, parents and teachers are unsure how to respond to children and students who seem to be completely unmotivated to grow spiritually. I think that this comment of the Ohr HaChaim teaches us a few things about how to respond. Firstly, by nature, holiness is

something that needs to be natural. Forcing people to “be holy” is not genuine “holiness.” This being said, we know that we must discipline and “force” the Torah to be kept in our homes. This is where the second part of the Ohr HaChaim comes into effect. Parents and teachers must realize that they “have home court advantage.” No one is trying to impose an outside concept of Torah and Mitzvot onto a Jew. By nature, a Jewish Neshamah is already holy and wired to connect to our traditions in one way or the other. In other words, there will be some form of natural connection between every Jew and some part of the Torah. It is the role of the teachers and parents to foster those aspects of our children’s personalities which seem to be the most “naturally holy.” For example, if a particular Neshamah is more wired towards “Chessed” as opposed to “Talmud Torah,” it is important to highlight that connection. When we highlight a student’s natural strengths, that encouragement often leads that student to grow in other areas as well.

While teaching and parenting require patience and Tefillah, let us not forget the teachings of the Ohr HaChaim. We must not force Kedushah but rather foster Kedushah. It is important to remember that there is so much Kedushah already present inside every Jew. May we all be Zocheh to receive the proper help from Hashem and guidance from our leaders, friends, and peers to allow us all to foster a community of genuine Kedushah.

## Rut’s Motivation to Convert

By Rabbi Chaim Jachter

### Boaz: Rut is an Ideal Convert

Boaz presents Rut as the ideal convert. In Perek 2 Pasuk 11, Boaz describes Rut’s decision to leave her homeland and family to follow Naomi in the same terms as Avraham Avinu leaving his homeland for Eretz Yisrael. In fact, in Halachik documents, a convert is identified as Ben or Bat Avraham Avinu. It is indeed a very high honor to be identified as a child of Avraham Avinu.

Moreover, in the next Pasuk, Boaz describes Rut as coming under the wings of the Shechinah. This describes the very essence of Geirut. Milah and Tevila (immersion in a Mikvah) are merely the acts (Chovat Ha’Eivarim) of conversion. These are merely the external manifestation of the convert’s inner experience (Chovat HaLeiv) of seeking shelter under the comforting wings of the Almighty. Indeed, Rambam (Hilchot Dei’ot 6:4 and

Hilchot Issurei Bi'ah 13:4) follows in the footsteps of Boaz and eloquently describes the core of conversion as coming beneath the wings of the Shechina.

### **A Problem – Does Rut Love Hashem or Naomi?**

However, over the years TABC Talmidim have noted that Rut in Perek 1 Pesukim 16-17 does not utter an iconic Jewish expression of devotion to Hashem such as “Hashem Hu HaElokim” or “Shema Yisrael”. Rather she couches her devotion to Torah in terms of her devotion to Naomi “Your nation is my nation, your God is my God, where you will go I will go, where you will sleep I will sleep, where you will die I will die and there I will be buried”.

The Talmidim argue that Rut seems to be devoted to Naomi, rather than Hashem! In the words of one Talmid “had Naomi worshipped sea monsters, Rut would have become a devoted sea monster worshipper”. Why then, they ask, do Chazal (Yevamot 47a) view Rut’s declaration to Naomi as an ideal expression of full commitment to Torah?

### **Basis for Our Answer – A Teshuva from Rav Moshe**

The following situation described in Teshuvot Igrot Moshe (volume nine Even Ha’Ezer 14). Rav Moshe Feinstein responded to an inquiry from Brazil regarding the daughter of a non-Jewish woman (and a Jewish father) who was raised Jewish, attended Jewish schools, and was observant of Halachah. This girl discovered that she was not Halachically Jewish only upon becoming engaged to marry a fully observant Jew. The question posed was whether the Beit Din should be wary of converting such an individual. Rav Moshe answered that the Beit Din should not hesitate to convert her. Even though one might have argued that such a conversion should be deemed a conversion for ulterior motives (i.e. to be able to marry the man to whom she was engaged), that was not the case, as the reason she was interested in marrying a fully observant Jewish man was because of her Jewish upbringing and commitment to a Jewish life.

### **Explaining Rut**

Just as the bride in Rav Moshe’s case was interested in the observant Jewish man because of his values, Rut also loved Naomi and was so devoted to her due to the Torah values Naomi represents. As much as Rut loved Naomi, no healthy minded individual (and it is clear that Rut is a self-assured healthy minded person, from her conversations recorded in Megillat Rut) would have

joined Naomi in her journey to Eretz Yisrael had the foundation of her commitment to Naomi not been grounded in a love and devotion of Hashem. Indeed, it is for this very reason that Orpah returns to Moav. Rut’s love for Naomi brought Rut to love Hashem.

Rut’s love for Hashem emerged as independent of her love for Naomi.

Boaz, in turn, is deeply touched by Rut’s devotion to her mother-in-law and the Jewish people. He sees how hard Rut works, her willingness to collect among the poor; he sees her loneliness, and her dogged determination to help her mother-in-law and herself. If not for Rut’s deep devotion to Hashem, she would have simply left this miserable existence and returned to Moav.

### **Sanhedrin 99b**

Rav Moshe suggests that this was precisely Chazal's criticism regarding the Avot’s handling of Timna's attempt to convert (Sanhedrin 99b). They viewed Timna’s interest in conversion as being motivated by her interest in marrying a member of the families of the Avot, and they, therefore, rejected her. While it was true that she was interested in marrying into the family, her primary motivation was altruistic, and her interest in marrying into the family was solely because those were the people who shared her belief system.

### **Menachot 44a**

In the case recorded in Menachot 44a<sup>1</sup>, the woman's incredible sacrifice clearly demonstrated that her interest in marrying the Jewish man was motivated by her desire to marry a man with a similar belief system. For this reason, the great Rabi Chiyah felt she is entitled to convert.

### **Conclusion – The Discerning Beit Din**

There is a subtle difference between one who converts simply for marriage and one who is interested in marrying an observant Jew due to his or her Torah values. It takes a discerning eye to draw such a distinction.

The Beit Yosef (Yoreh Dei'ah 268) argues that "all depends on the judgment of the Beit Din." Beit Din may perform a conversion when the candidate has a Jewish marriage partner if it is convinced that the candidate's conviction is sincere and resolute. If the candidate demonstrates he or she is following in the footsteps of Rut then he or she will be accepted with open arms into

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<sup>1</sup> The Gemara famously relates:

"[A Torah student] heard that there was a woman of ill repute in a faraway city who charged four hundred gold talents for her services. He sent her the exorbitant fee and set an appointed time to meet her. When he arrived at the appointed time ...as he was unclothing himself, the four fringes of his Tzitzit slapped him in his face. He immediately slid off the bed on to the floor, where he was quickly joined by the woman. "I swear by the Roman Caesar," the harlot exclaimed, "I will not leave you until you reveal to me what flaw you have found in me!" "I swear," the Jew replied, "that I have never seen a woman as beautiful as you. However, there is one Mitzvah that we were commanded by our God, and Tzitzit is its name. Concerning this Mitzvah the Torah twice states 'I am the Lord your God' -- 'I am the one who will seek retribution, and I am the one who will reward.' Now the four Tzitzit appeared to me as four witnesses, testifying to this truth. "I still will not leave you," the prostitute said, "until you provide me with your name, the names of your city, Rabbi and the school in which you study Torah. "He wrote down all the information and handed it to her. The woman sold all her possessions. A third of the money she gave to the government (as a payoff so that they would allow her to convert to Judaism), a third she handed out to the poor, and the remaining third she took with her -- along with the silver and gold beds -- **and she proceeded to the school which the man had named, the study hall of Rabi Chiya. "Rabbi," she said to Rabi Chiya, "I would like to convert to Judaism." "Perhaps," Rabi Chiya responded, "you desire to convert because you have taken a liking to a Jewish man?" The woman pulled out the piece of paper with the information [and apparently related to Rabi Chiya all that transpired with the Jew she had encountered]. "You may go and claim that which is rightfully yours"** Rabi Chiya proclaimed. She ended up marrying the man."

the fold and counted as a proud successor to Rut, Avraham Avinu, and all the many outstanding Geirim among our people.

<p><b>Editors-In-Chief:</b> (Uncle!) Kivi Davis and Ariel Kryzman <b>Publication Editors:</b> Micah Cyrulnik, and <del>Azarya Tiger</del> <b>Chief Distribution Officer:</b> Sariel Rotblat <b>Assistant Distribution Officer:</b> Gavri Segal <b>Communications:</b> Shira Bat Moshe Yonah HaLevi Davis <b>Rabbinic Advisor:</b> Rabbi Chaim Jachter</p> <p>Questions, comments? Contact us at: Phone: (201) 837-7696 <a href="mailto:webmasters@koltorah.org">webmasters@koltorah.org</a></p>
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