

# Zera Shimshon

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Published Mantua 1778\*

## Chapter XLV: Va'etchanan (Deut. 3:23–7:11)

### Essay 13. Preparing for the Sabbath, and for the World to Come

**עבודת זרה פֶּרֶק קמ"א היום לעשותם, ולא למָחָר לעשותם.**

In Tractate **Avodah Zarah, the first chapter** (page 3a) says: “But doesn’t Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi say: What is [the meaning of] that which is written, ‘You shall therefore keep the commandment, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which I command you this day, to do them’ (Deut. 7:11)? **Today**, [i.e., in this world, is the time] **to do them, but tomorrow**, [i.e., in the World to Come,] **is not** [the time] **to do them**. [Furthermore,] today [is the time] to do them, but today is not [the time] to receive a reward, [which is granted in the World to Come].”<sup>1</sup>

הטעם על זה הוא כי עקר קיום המצוות הוא לְכַרֵּר הטוב מהרע, וְהַעֲוֹלִים הַבָּא נִקְרָא שְׂפָת וְהַבּוֹרֵר בְּשֵׁפֶת חַיִּיב חֲטָאת. אֲמַנָּם הַעֲוֹלִים הַזֶּה נֶשְׁהֶם יְמֵי הַחֹל מִצְנָה לְכַרֵּר כֹּל מֵה שְׂצָרִיךְ לְיוֹם הַשַּׁבָּת.

**The sense of this is that the principal of fulfilling the commandments is to separate** [לְכַרֵּר] [*levarer*], i.e., distinguish, **good from evil. The World to Come is called the Sabbath. Regarding** the actual Sabbath, we know that **if one separates** [בּוֹרֵר] [*borrer*] what is undesirable from what is desirable **on the Sabbath, he is obligated** to bring a sin offering. **But in this world, which** represents **the weekdays, it is a commandment to separate all that one needs for the Sabbath day**, i.e., for the World to Come.

That is, we are enjoined from performing 39 categories of work on the Sabbath. One of these prohibitions is *borrer*, using a utensil on the Sabbath to separate intermixed materials by removing the undesirable elements, leaving behind a purified, refined component. For example, if pebbles are mixed in with grain, it would be a violation of the prohibition of *borrer* to use a utensil on the Sabbath to remove the undesirable pebbles, leaving behind the desirable grain. Whatever type of work is needed to be performed for the Sabbath must be done ahead of time, during the weekdays.

Similarly, we need to make preparations for the World to Come in this world. We do so by fulfilling the commandments, which can be considered as a form of “separating,” removing the undesirable, i.e., what is evil, and leaving behind the desirable, i.e., what is good.

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<sup>1</sup> This also appears in Eruvin 22a.

וכי היכי דעיקר דרדג הבירור הוא בכלי כף עיקר הבירור נעשה על ידי התורה שיהיה כלי אומנותו של הקב"ה בבריאת העולם.

**Just as the main way of separating the undesirable from the desirable is by using a utensil, similarly the main way of separating all one needs for the World to Come is done through the Torah, which is a utensil of the handiwork of the Holy One, Blessed be He, in the creation of the World.**

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