

TEFILLAH TIPS

Atoh Echad Veshimcha Echad III

Unfortunately there are millions of Jews that do not observe the Shabbat. Why not? The first answer is because they were not brought up with Shabbat and don't know about the commandment and its importance. But what if we go and explain it to them? We show them that there is a Biblical commandment to guard and celebrate the Shabbat. We will say that one fulfills the *mitzvah* by enjoying physical, emotional, and spiritual pleasures and pursuits. We spend time with our families/friends, attend meaningful prayer services at synagogue, wear our best clothing and enjoy lavish meals, abstain from all of the pressure filled responsibilities of the week; no cell phones, no emails, no tweets or texts.... Who wouldn't want to sign onto this contract? Yet, millions are not rushing through our doorways to learn about Shabbat! What's stopping them? What are they thinking? What can we say to them?

What they might say-

1. I'm a busy person; I cannot close down my life for one day a week
2. I need to work – Saturday is my busiest day.
3. If I don't keep up with my life for 25 hours a week I will sit there worrying and agitating just waiting for it end.

What we could answer-

* Whatever your talents/skills are – computers, playing a musical instrument or playing the sport of your choice, we all agree that there are professionally recommended styles and forms to best learn how to learn and excel at any of these endeavors. Living life well is also a skill; and the professional that directs us is none other than G-d. The manual He has prepared for us is the *Torah*. The *Torah* teaches us that *Shabbat* is the quintessential *mitzvah* that promotes spiritual growth and tranquility coupled with family peace and harmony (when done right).

The crux of these ideas is found in phrases of Atoh Echad:

1. *Menuchat Ahavah Unedavah* – (You give us) a rest of love and generosity.
* Typically people rest when they are tired or lazy, *Shabbat* rest demonstrates our loving relationship with G-d because we rest for G-d's sake and not our own, and we are promised we will receive immeasurable blessings as a reward.

2. *Menuchat Emet Veemunah* – a rest of truth and faith/trust.

* Typical resting is to refresh and garner physical strength; Shabbat rest is not about physical rest, it is about ceasing from the daily grind, reconnecting with our Creator and connecting with eternal truth.

3. *Menuchat Shalom Veshalvah Hashkeyt Vavaetach* – a rest of peace, serenity and security.

* Typical *couch potato* resting breeds a lack of productivity and resentment. Shabbat rest inspires more family time, husband/ wife time, parent/child time. The average Sabbath observant family spends more time together on Shabbat than the average American family does in an entire week.

Take Home Tip: The *Midrash* teaches that G-d told Moshe, “I have a **great gift**; it is literally a piece of the *Next World*”; it is called *Shabbat*. If we celebrate *Shabbat* with this in mind it will elevate our *Shabbat*; and hopefully inspire more Jews to observe *Shabbat* as well.

Shabbat Shalom,

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