

You must not kindle a fire in all your dwelling places on the day of Shabbos. (35:3)

Chazal (*Shabbos* 70a) debate the reason for the singling out of *melechtes havarah*, kindling a fire, on *Shabbos*. Some say *l'laav yatzah*, it is singled out to teach a negative precept, (*lo saaseh*) that one who lights a fire is subject to the death penalty, *kares*, Heavenly excision, or bringing a sin-offering – as is the law regarding any other one of the *avos melachos*, 39 primary categories of labor prohibited on *Shabbos*. The other position vis-à-vis *havarah* is *l'chalek yatzas*, it was singled out to separate the *melachos* of *Shabbos*. This means: If one, out of ignorance, transgresses the various major labors on *Shabbos*, they are considered separate, distinct and unrelated. Thus, he must bring a separate *Korban Chatas*, sin-offering, for each and every *melachah*. This is in contrast to when one commits the same *melachah* over and over again, in which case he brings only one *korban*.

This is the third instance that *Shabbos* is mentioned in *Sefer Shemos*. First, in the *Aseres HaDibros*, Ten Commandments, “You must not do any work... (on *Shabbos*)” (*Shemos* 20:10). Second, in *Parashas Ki Sisa* (*Shemos* 31:14), “You shall preserve the *Shabbos*... for whoever does work on it, shall be cut off from the midst of the people.”

Horav Moshe Shmuel Shapiro, zl, writes that he heard from the *Brisker Rav, zl*, that these citations concerning the prohibition of *Shabbos* follow a specific sequence. In the *Aseres HaDibros*, the Torah begins by introducing the concept of *Shabbos*. It follows up in *Parashas Ki Sisa* with an exhortation concerning the punishment (*sekillah*, stoning, or *kares*) for one who desecrates *Shabbos*. Last, once the Torah teaches the concept of *Shabbos*, then follows up with its punishment, it can now distinguish between *havarah*, a *lo saaseh*, which incurs punishment, and a *l'chalek*, which teaches that *melachos* are separated. The *Rosh Yeshivah* noted the *Brisker Rav's* brevity, making a comment (which is laden with commentary) allowing for it to sink into the listener's mind – and moving on.

At another occasion (*Rav Moshe Shmuel reminisces*), the *Rav* spoke at the *bar mitzvah* of his son, *Horav Meir, zl*, which was attended by *Horav Isser Zalmen Meltzer, zl*. The *Brisker Rav* held forth concerning the *nusach ha'Tefillah*, text of the *siddur*, *Shabbos Shacharis: V'chein kasuv b'sorasecha, v'shomru Bnei Yisrael es ha'Shabbos... bris olam*; “It is written in your Torah *Bnei Yisrael* will guard the *Shabbos*... (to make *Shabbos*) an eternal covenant (for all their generations). He asked why *Chazal* selected this *pasuk* rather than any other *pasuk* relating to the *mitzvah* of *Shabbos*. He explained that it follows the statement (in *Shemoneh Esrai*) that relates to *Moshe Rabbeinu's* descending *Har Sinai* with the *Luchos*, upon which were engraved the *mitzvah* of *Shabbos*. It is well-known that Hashem gave the *Luchos* as a covenant between Hashem and the Jewish People. Thus, every *mitzvah* engraved on the *Luchos* retains “covenant status.” Likewise, *Shabbos* is a covenantal *mitzvah*. Therefore, the *nusach*, version, of the *Shemoneh Esrai* follows with a *pasuk* that addresses *Shabbos* as an eternal covenant.

This was the gist of the *Brisker Rav's* remarks at his son's *bar mitzvah* – rendered in the presence of the senior *Rosh Yeshivah* in *Eretz Yisrael*, *Rav* Isser Zalmen Meltzer. Once again, the *Rav* was succinct and brief, making his statement and allowing for it to be absorbed in its unembellished, almost abrupt form.

Rav Moshe Shmuel explains that was the *Brisker Rav's* approach to speaking (veritably to everything). He spoke the truth in its unvarnished form. What can one add to the truth? On the contrary, the more one speaks, the more he detracts from the truth. The more one repeats himself, the more he is likely to give the impression that what he says requires qualification. Truth needs no qualification. It is an absolute, and, as such, is pristine in its brevity.

Horav Koppel Reich, zl, *Rav* of Budapest for over half a century and leader of Hungarian Orthodox Jewry, was a prolific orator, a brilliant *talmid chacham*, Torah scholar; his message was profound, his oratory dynamic and compelling. Nonetheless, he never spoke without first preparing. Regardless of the audience, he spoke only after having reviewed in his mind and collected his thoughts in such a manner that his words would have the greatest efficacy. One day, prior to a *bar-mitzvah* celebration in which he was scheduled to speak, his grandson observed him pacing back and forth in his study speaking to himself. “*Zayde*, what are you doing?” the young man asked. “I am preparing my *drashah*, speech.” “*Zayde*, over the years you must have delivered hundreds of *drashos*. Do you still need to prepare your speech?” *Rav Koppel's* reply should serve as guidance for every speaker, “I am not preparing what to say – but what not to say!” Redundancy, repeating phrases and words, while, at times used for the purpose of emphasizing an idea, is more often an indication that the speaker is concealing something. He may be struggling to gather his thoughts or trying to convince the listener to accept his deception. Someone who is sure of himself and what he has to say need not be verbose.