

Rabbi's Article III

Twilight Zone

This week, we read *Ethics of Our Fathers* (-[Link](#)), chapter 5, in which Mishna 6 teaches:

"Ten things were created at twilight of Shabbat eve. These are: the mouth of the earth [that swallowed Korach] (-[Link](#)); the mouth of [Miriam's] well (-[Link](#)); the mouth of [Balaam's] donkey (-[Link](#)); the rainbow (-[Link](#)); the manna (-[Link](#)); [Moses'] staff (-[Link](#)); the shamir (-[Link](#)); the writing, the inscription and the tablets [of the Ten Commandments] (-[Link](#)). Some say also the burial place of Moses (-[Link](#)) and the ram of our father Abraham (-[Link](#) -verse 13). And some say also the spirits of destruction (-[Link](#)) as well as the original tongs, for tongs are made with tongs."

Concerning the, "the original tongs." (a) Why does the Mishna give us a reason, "for tongs are made with tongs," and (b) *Ethics of Our Fathers* teaches us, "Things of Chassidic [Nature]," meaning, that while all other tractates teach us obligatory law, this tractate teaches us, "Beyond the Letter of the Law," hence, what are we to learn concerning our being a *chassid* from the original tongs being created at the twilight of Shabbat eve?

In order to understand this, we will need to first understand what is the concept of *Twilight of Shabbat Eve*, what the *Ten Things* have in common, and thus we will understand how their common denominator has them created specifically at the *Twilight of Shabbat Eve*. *Twilight of Shabbat Eve*: We are speaking of *after* all of the creations of the *Six Days of Creation* were completed, and instead the creation of these items are bordering on the power of Shabbat, above and beyond nature; miracles. *Ten Things*: What all the *Ten Things* carry in common is that they are all miraculous. However, *Tongs* are not miraculous, nor did the original tongs need to be miraculously created, as the Talmud (-Pesachim 54a) itself asks, "It is possible to fashion (tongs) with a mold and align it (without the need for other tongs)?"

To understand this, let us ask another basic question: Adam was created *before* the twilight of Shabbat eve, which means that these items were created *after* Adam was created. However, we have the teaching (-Sanhedrin 38:1), "Adam the first man was created on Shabbat eve (Friday, at the close of the six days of Creation). And for what (reason was this so)? ...in order that he enter into a feast immediately, as the whole world was prepared for him." Now, concerning the *Ten Things*, we can simply answer that they weren't needed for Adam's feast, being that they were miracles for events in the future. However, the *tong* is a tool needed, and hence, should have been part of the *prepared meal* of *before* Adam was created?!

The deeper meaning behind this teaching is that the *prepared meal* Adam upon his creation, is referring to the teaching (-Bereishit Rabba, Portion 11:6), "Anything created in the first six days, needs further actions." Meaning that everything G-d created, He created purposely lacking, mandating us to do the *Tikkun* (correction), hence, becoming partners in creation. This then is the difference between that which was created *after* Adam, for they don't need Adam's further actions, and that which was created as a *prepared meal*, for Adam to complete with his actions, And therefore these *Ten Things* --which were created by G-d in a state of completion-- were created near Shabbat, which is all about *rest from work*. Deeper yet, these *Ten Things* are not part of the work of *Six Days*, --in which we need to transform the mundane into holy, rather,-- within holy itself, we are to elevate these items into the state of pleasure of Shabbat.

Just as there are items that are not part of the *Six Days of Creation* (but part of Shabbat), because they are *higher* than the work of the weekdays, so too, there are items which are not part of the *Six Days of Creation*, because they are *beneath* the ordinary work of the *Six Days of Creation*. The ordinary work of the weekday is to refine and transform the mundane into holiness through the service of Torah-study and Mitzvah-observance in a fashion of (-Sanhedrin 74a), "And you shall *live* with them." For example, in the case of life-or-death on Shabbat, we desecrate the Shabbat, and drive the individual to the hospital. However, there are items and situations which demand of us to have the *self-sacrifice* of, "Love G-d... with all your might," in which our love must transcend even beyond our natural capacities. And this is why the *Spirits of Destruction* and the *Tong* were create in the *Twilight of Shabbat Eve*.

Spirits of Destruction, on the one hand, were brought about through Adam sinning earlier on that sixth day of creation, and hence, the work here is not to *fix*, but to destroy the *Spirits of Destruction* -outcome of his sin. However, in their ultimate essence, as they are creations of G-d, they are meant to be good, and not destructive. For this to happen, Adam needs to go into a real of *Teshuvah* (repentance) service of beyond "Live with them (*Six Days of Creation*) and into the, "With all your might (Shabbat)." Hence, they were created in the *Twilight of Shabbat Eve*.

In the observance of Mitzvot, there is the actual mitzvah, and there is the *preparation* of the mitzvah, such as burning wood, to make coals, to forge a knife, in order to perform the mitzvah of circumcision. Now, in the normal service of, "Live with them," these items in their own right will not become the *holy* object of a mitzvah, but only remain a *mundane* object of the *preparation* of a mitzvah. Hence, here the Mishna points out that the original tong was only for the purpose of, "for tongs are made with tongs," and nevertheless, *G-d* created the tong (and not man creating it through a mold). In *G-d's* realm every creation is *in itself* meaningful, and is not just a *preparation* for another creation. However, for *man* to experience this, is only through the absolute transparency, humility, and service of, "With all your might," of Shabbat. Hence, we also have the, "Things of Chassidic [Nature]," lesson, teaching us of how meaningful is, and how dedicated we must be in, even the *preparative* work of a mitzvah.