

Parashas
Noach

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א' חשוון תשפ"ז

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י"ל ע"י

קהילת שבתי בבית ד'

בנשיאות מורנו ורבנו הר"צ

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טיב הקהילה

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באנגלית

טיב הפרשה

הרושם לדורות ממעשי האדם

The Lasting Impact of a Person's Deeds for Generations

וַיֵּרֶד ה' לִרְאוֹת אֶת הָעִיר וְאֶת הַמִּגְדָּל אֲשֶׁר בָּנוּ בְנֵי הָאָדָם: (יא, ה)

Hashem came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of man built. (11:5)

Rashi explains: The sons of man – but, then, the sons of whom else? Perhaps the sons of donkeys and camels? Rather, they were the sons of Adam, the first man, who was ungrateful and said (3:12), 'הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר נָתַתָּה עִמָּדִי' – 'the woman whom You gave to be with me'. These people too were ungrateful, by rebelling against He Who channeled goodness to them, and rescued them from the Flood.

Besides teaching us the simple meaning of the posuk, namely, the meaning of the words "the sons of the man," Rashi's words also teach us that every action a person performs leaves an impression that lasts for generations. After all, from Adam HaRishon until the Generation of the Dispersion, nearly two thousand years had passed, and they were already approximately the twentieth generation from Adam HaRishon. [According to the calculation, this was in the days of Avraham, who was the twentieth generation from Adam HaRishon. It is quite possible that some people among them belonged to even later generations, because the sons and daughters born throughout those generations may have had children at a much younger age, making the generations much closer together. If we estimate that each generation consisted of approximately twenty years, as is common nowadays, we would arrive at nearly one hundred generations.] Nevertheless, they still traced their sin back to their earliest ancestor, Adam HaRishon. This means that the sin of ingratitude committed by Adam HaRishon was what caused a spiritual blemish that affected generation after generation. That very blemish also caused his descendants to be drawn toward the same sin.

From here, we learn just how careful we must be with our actions. Sometimes a person commits a transgression and imagines that, apart from that particular sin, he has done nothing else. He does not consider that, in addition to committing the sin, he has caused damage to his own soul. A sin leaves an impression upon a person's very essence. Besides causing him to desire to repeat his foolish behavior, that same blemish is passed on to all his descendants who are born while he remains spiritually blemished. As a result, they, too, may stumble into that very sin. Sometimes, that sin will even become the means through which an additional, far more severe transgression is committed. We see this here: Adam HaRishon merely displayed ingratitude toward the goodness of Hashem, yet as a result, the Generation of the Dispersion stumbled into a more serious sin and even sought to rebel against their Creator, Rachmana litzlan.

We see the same principle at work with good deeds. When a person performs a good deed, he transforms his very essence for the better, and the impression of that deed is passed on to his descendants after him. These ideas are explained in the Gemara (Megillah 13b). We will quote its words, with some additional explanation.

Rabbi Elazar said: What is the meaning of that which is written (Iyov 36:7), 'לֹא יִגְרַע מִצִּדִּיק עֵינָיו', – "He does not withdraw His eyes from the righteous"? HaKadosh Baruch Hu keeps His eyes upon the deeds of the righteous in order to reward them, even after a considerable amount of time has passed. We see this from the following examples: "As a reward

טיב המערכות

צא מן התיבה

Go out of the ark

In the previous generation, there was a distinguished man in Bnei Brak named Reb Dovid Leib Schwartz zy"u. Every evening, he would make his way among the many wedding halls in his city, collecting money. Many people wondered why he needed so much money. When he was young, this man had been summoned by his Rebbe and teacher, the Rebbe of Vizhnitz zy"u, who asked him to help collect funds for the yeshiva that he wanted to establish. As a loyal chassid, he began collecting money, and indeed, he was blessed with success in his efforts. He managed to collect substantial sums that greatly helped with the establishment of the yeshiva. In the meantime, the Rebbe passed away, but the loyal chassid continued collecting money, because the Rebbe had never told him to stop...

After the earth had dried, HaKadosh Baruch Hu said to Noach (8:15), "צא מן התיבה, אתה ואשתך ובניך ונשי בניך אתך. כל החיה אשר אתך מכל בשר בעוף – "Leave the ark, you, your wife, your sons, and your sons' wives with you. Every living creature that is with you, of all flesh, birds, animals, and every creeping creature that crawls on the earth, bring out with you." We must understand why Noach needed to be commanded to leave the ark. After all, the reason he had entered the ark was because of the waters of the Flood. Since the Flood had ended and the earth had dried, could he not leave on his own? Even if we say that he did indeed need a command, we must still understand why the command had to be so detailed, with HaKadosh Baruch Hu telling him separately to take his wife, his sons, and his sons' wives, as well as each type of animal.

We can suggest that the holy Torah is teaching us a way of life. When there is an explicit command, one cannot draw conclusions independently and make decisions on one's own. Rather, one must do so only when the Torah itself provides a different instruction. Therefore, Noach needed to receive a detailed command to leave the ark, because his instructions for entering it had been equally explicit. Had he not received this command, Noach would have had to continue waiting in the ark, even until this very day...

We, too, must learn from this that following the word of Hashem Yisbarach with wholehearted simplicity must be our guiding light. Even when the yetzer comes to confuse us—and it certainly will—we must remember that the word of Hashem and His will are written explicitly in the four sections of the Shulchan Aruch, and we must not deviate from them to the right or to the left.

The Chazon Ish zy"u, testified about himself that whenever he encountered a doubt, he would consult the four sections of the Shulchan Aruch. When we conduct ourselves in this manner, we will fulfill the command (Devorim 18:13): "תמים תהיה עם ד' אלוהיך" – "You shall be wholehearted with Hashem, your G-d."

Tiv HaTorah - Noach

for the modesty that was present in Rachel, she merited that Shaul descended from her, and he was modest." And "as a reward for the modesty that was present in Shaul, he merited that Esther descended from him," and she, too, merited the trait of modesty. The Gemara asks: What modesty was present in Rachel? As it is written (Bereishis 29:12), 'ויגד יעקב לרחל כי אחי אביה הוא' - "Yaakov told Rachel that he was her father's brother." This is difficult to understand. Was Yaakov truly her father's brother? He was actually the son of her father's sister! Rather, Yaakov said to Rachel, "Will you marry me?" She answered, "Yes! However, you should know that my father is a deceiver. Even if he promises to give me to you as a wife, he may deceive you, and you will not be able to outsmart him." Yaakov replied, "I am his brother in deception!" This is what he meant when he said that he was her father's brother. Rachel then asked him, "Is it permissible for righteous people to engage in deception?" He answered, "Yes, in such a situation it is permissible, as it is written" (Shmuel II 22:27): 'עם נבר תתבר ועם עקש תתפל' - "With the pure, You act purely, and with the crooked, You act cleverly." Yaakov then asked her, "And what deception might he employ?" Rachel answered, "I have an older sister, and my father will not marry me off before her." Yaakov immediately devised a plan and gave Rachel certain identifying signs so that he would know that it was Rachel, and not Leah, who was being brought to him. The Gemara continues: When night arrived, the night on which Rachel was supposed to marry Yaakov, Rachel realized that her suspicions had not been unfounded. Her deceitful father was preparing to deceive Yaakov. Rachel said, "Now my sister will be humiliated!" After all, Yaakov would discover the truth through the identifying signs. Rachel's compassion for Leah was aroused, and therefore she handed over the identifying signs to Leah. In doing so, Rachel

acted with modesty, because she concealed her ability to establish the truth through those signs. This is the meaning of the posuk (Bereishis 29:25): 'ויהי בבקר והנה היא לאה' - "In the morning, behold, it was Leah!" The wording implies that until then, it had not been Leah. How could that be? Rather, because Rachel had given the identifying signs to Leah, Yaakov did not realize who she was until that point.

The Gemara continues: Therefore, as a reward for this, Rachel merited that Shaul descended from her. He, too, conducted himself with modesty. What modesty was present in Shaul? As it is written (Shmuel I 10:16): This refers to the episode in which Shaul went to ask Shmuel about his father's missing donkeys, and Shmuel anointed him king over Israel. When Shaul returned home and his uncle asked him what Shmuel had told him, Shaul replied that Shmuel had informed him that the donkeys had been found. However, regarding the kingship that Shmuel had conferred upon him, the posuk states: 'ואת דבר המלוכה שהמליכו שמואל לא' - "But regarding the matter of the kingship, he did not tell him what Shmuel had said." Shaul concealed the fact that he had been appointed king. Therefore, as a reward for Shaul's modesty, he, too, merited that Esther descended from him. Esther was also modest and refrained from revealing her origins. This concludes the words of the Gemara and their explanation. We see from the Gemara that the same principle applies to good deeds. When Rachel witnessed what her father had done to her, she understood that if she remained silent and did not reveal the identifying signs, she would gain two things. She would retain her righteous husband, and she would also be regarded as exceptionally wise, since she had anticipated what would happen and devised a plan to prevent herself from being cheated. However, in order not to embarrass her sister, she agreed to relinquish both

her personal benefit of becoming the principal wife in Yaakov's household and her own standing and honor. Instead of being regarded as a wise woman, she would now be regarded as a fool who had not known how to protect herself from a well-known deceiver. Her willingness to be regarded as inferior rather than as wise reflects the traits of tznius (modesty) and anavah (humility). As a reward for withstanding this test, modesty became an integral part of her very essence. It also influenced the generations that followed her. They, too, merited that greatness would not blind them to their obligation to conduct themselves with modesty and humility. We see this in Shaul, who chose to remain modest even after he merited the kingship, and in Esther, who was prepared to relinquish the benefits and honor of royalty because the trait of modesty was deeply ingrained within her.

Presumably, this trait was also ingrained in her other descendants, but these two examples are recorded for us in Nevi'im and Kesuvim.

All of this is credited to our mother Rachel, whose conduct provided support and encouragement for all the generations that followed her to practice this beautiful trait. In Esther's case, we see that this very trait enabled her to save the entire generation from destruction, Rachmana litzlan. Since she had not revealed her people or her birthplace, Achashveirosh did not know that she was Jewish. He therefore issued a decree of annihilation against the Jewish people. Since Esther herself was included in that decree, he was compelled to revoke it.

In any event, we must learn from all this that every action a person performs builds something for future generations, whether for good or, Heaven forbid, for the opposite. When we find ourselves facing a test, these words should provide us with tremendous strength and encouragement.

'מלאכי השלום' 'Angels of Peace'

We were invited for a Shabbos Sheva Berachos. We very much wanted to travel with the entire family, and the family that had invited us was also putting pressure on us to come. However, HaKadosh Baruch Hu had given us a special gift: a child with a disability who requires special accommodation. Therefore, traveling to a place that is not properly equipped for his needs was simply not feasible, especially considering the arrangements needed to get from the apartment to the hall and to the place where we would daven. It was simply not possible.

My wife and I discussed the situation, and we accepted with love that we would not be able to participate in the celebration, despite our strong desire to attend.

But then, we received an unexpected phone call from a yeshiva bachur who volunteers extensively with our son, especially during the summer bein hazmanim break.

The bachur asked us the following surprising question: "Is there any chance you would let your son come stay with me for the coming Shabbos?! My yeshiva has all the necessary accommodations. Your son will enjoy himself, and my friends and I in the yeshiva will be happy as well. It will be a great time for everyone!"

We were stunned, because this was someone we trusted with our eyes closed.

He was an extraordinary bachur, all heart and responsibility, with a level of maturity far beyond his years.

Of course, we answered in the affirmative, and the call ended.

As soon as that conversation ended, while we were still speaking, another call came through. It was a relative who was trying to get our confirmation that we would attend the Sheva Berachos Shabbos.

We answered in the affirmative, and they could hardly believe their ears when they heard that we had indeed found a suitable arrangement for our son and that the entire family would be coming to the celebration!

The excitement in our home reached an all-time high. Our son had a wonderful, joyous Shabbos in the yeshiva! I received updates about how all the bachurim in the yeshiva had gathered around him. It was an unforgettable Shabbos experience for our son and for the amazing group of bachurim.

Our son cannot stop asking, "When will I get to have another Shabbos like that?!"

And we, too, had an uplifting and wonderful Shabbos—a rare Shabbos during which we were able to participate in the celebration calmly and peacefully, knowing that our son was happy!

י.י.

טיב **רהשגרה**

Shabbos Rest and the Merit of the Tzaddikim

It is well known that Shabbos represents sacred rest, as the Zohar states in Tikkunei Zohar: "Noach—this refers to Shabbos, in which there is rest that a tzaddik inherits."

Chazal teach that one who delights in Shabbos merits salvation from three calamities: subjugation to foreign kingdoms, the birth pangs of Moshiach, and the war of Gog and Magog. This is alluded to in the words "These are the generations of Noach." Through the rest and delight of Shabbos, a person merits being spared these three afflictions.

The three salvations are hinted at in Noach's three sons: Shem alludes to shibud malchuyos, subjugation to foreign kingdoms; Cham alludes to chevlei Moshiach, the birth pangs of Moshiach; and Yefes alludes to Gog and Magog, who are descendants of Yefes (Bereishis 10:2).

In the merit of Shabbos, Klal Yisrael will ultimately merit the complete Redemption and the rebuilding of the Beis Hamikdash in all its glory, may it happen speedily in our days. Amen.

HaRav Hagaon Rav Mordechai Aharon Sheinberger, zt"l, related the following story about his father, HaRav HaGaon Rav Yosef Chaim Sheinberger, zt"l.

In his later years, Rav Yosef Chaim became blind, and wherever he needed to go, someone had to guide him. One Erev Shabbos, as his companion was leading him to shul, he heard a beautiful voice singing from a window of a small synagogue known as the Romaynishe Shul.

The man was reciting Shir Hashirim with deep yearning and longing. The melody was so sweet to Rav Yosef Chaim's ears that he stopped and listened intently for several minutes. At last, he turned to his companion and exclaimed:

"This Shir Hashirim sounds like the Shir Hashirim of Rebbe Reb Zusha!"

Hearing this, his companion entered the shul to discover who was singing. At the back of the otherwise empty sanctuary, he found the great tzaddik Rav Yosef Dinkels, zt"l, sitting alone in his corner, pouring out his heart and soul before Hashem as he recited Shir Hashirim, a sefer whose words are Kodosh Hakodoshim.

Rav Yosef Dinkels was not a member of the Chassidic community. He belonged to the early circle of the holy Perushim of Jerusalem, and he served Hashem with wholehearted sincerity and pure devotion.

His companion returned and told Rav Yosef Chaim whom he had found. Rav Yosef Chaim replied, "I do not know, but for some reason I feel that this Shir Hashirim carries the fragrance of Rebbe Reb Zusha!"

How extraordinary is the holiness of a tzaddik! Even the way he recites Shir Hashirim, with complete sincerity

and longing for Hashem, can carry the spiritual fragrance of the great tzaddikim of earlier generations.

Among the distinguished talmidei chachamim who regularly studied in the holy Yeshivas Shaar HaShamayim in Jerusalem was HaRav HaGaon Rav Avraham Yitzchak Segal, zt"l, son of Rav Moshe Aharon Segal, zt"l.

In addition to being an outstanding talmid chacham, Rav Avraham Yitzchak was an exceptionally diligent masmid. He was renowned for his alacrity and for making use of every available moment for Torah and the service of Hashem. The two of us had the special privilege of learning together as chavrusos.

On one occasion, Rav Avraham Yitzchak went to participate in the tish of the holy Rebbe, the Beis Yisroel of Gur, zy"a. As was customary, the Rebbe would walk among the assembled crowd before the tish, looking around to see who had come. When he noticed Rav Avraham Yitzchak, he smiled and asked in Yiddish:

"Vos tutstu do? S'iz nisht far dir! Du darfst geyn lernen! - What are you doing here? This is not for you! You should be going to learn!"

The Rebbe's words reflected the young scholar's extraordinary devotion to Torah: his time was so precious that he ought to spend it learning.

Later, when Rav Avraham Yitzchak needed to marry off his children, he was forced to travel abroad and appeal to the generous Jewish philanthropists who could help him meet the substantial expenses. Several of his children had reached marriageable age, and he had to remain overseas until he had raised enough money to provide for their weddings.

In those days, traveling abroad was far more difficult and exhausting than it is today. After approximately ten months of traveling through several states across the United States, he still lacked the necessary funds. He therefore decided to travel even farther, eventually reaching the distant country of Brazil in South America.

The capital, Brasília, had a substantial Jewish community, including many prosperous and distinguished Jews.

Since relatively few Jewish guests made the long journey to Brazil in those days, Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak was received with great joy and honor. As a distinguished talmid chacham, he was provided with a fine and respectable place to stay. Through his Torah and influence, he brought an added measure of kedushah and pure yiras Shamayim to the local community.

On Shabbos morning, he asked where he could find the local mikveh so that he could immerse in preparation for Shabbos, as was his holy custom. He followed the practice discussed by the Arizal in Shaar Hakavanos, Derushei Shabbos, derush 1.

To his utter astonishment, he was told that there was no mikveh taharah anywhere in the city!

The news struck him like a bolt of fire. Throughout Shabbos, he was aflame with distress, like a burning torch, and his soul could find no rest. He pleaded before Hashem:

"How can it be that an entire Jewish community should be left without a mikveh?!"

He did not hide his distress from his local hosts, the good and distinguished Jews of the community. Even in the derashah he delivered on Shabbos afternoon, he stirred the hearts of the people with profound feelings of spiritual awakening, bringing home to them how seriously they had neglected to consider the extent of the problem.

He would not rest or remain still. Before the impact of that spiritual awakening could fade, he immediately called for a grand Melaveh Malkah gathering to be held on Motza'ei Shabbos, where an urgent fundraising dinner would be organized to raise the necessary funds for establishing a mikveh in the community.

With the fire of kedushah burning within him, he completely forgot the personal reason for his coming to that place—to raise money for the weddings of his dear sons. Instead, he devoted his entire being to the needs of the local community, acting solely for the sake of the taharah of Yisrael.

In the merit of his self-sacrifice for the purity of the Jewish people, he was accompanied by extraordinary siyyata di'Shmaya. The community responded warmly to his sincere appeal. Immediately after Shabbos, an urgent meeting was announced to organize a grand Melaveh Malkah in connection with the establishment of the mikveh, with the distinguished guest from Jerusalem in attendance.

At the gathering itself, Rav Avraham Yitzchak explained with great wisdom and clarity just how essential a mikveh taharah was to

the community. He related stories of several great Torah leaders of earlier generations, including Rabbeinu the Chafetz Chaim, zt"l, who had gone to tremendous lengths and made great personal sacrifices to establish a mikveh taharah in every Jewish community.

When the speeches concluded, the principal stage of the fundraising began. At first, several generous donors pledged modest sums, amounts that were far from sufficient for the project. It was clear that the people had not yet grasped how much money was needed to construct a proper and dignified mikveh.

Seeing the situation, Rav Avraham Yitzchak rose in a storm of emotion and tremendous enthusiasm and declared:

"I see that you still do not fully understand the matter or appreciate its importance. Therefore, I shall be the Nachshon who jumps in first!

"You know very well that I have spent more than ten months traveling through many cities in the United States to raise money to marry off two of my children. I have accumulated a substantial sum for this purpose.

"I hereby pledge to donate the entire amount I have collected to you! Here is a significant portion of the money needed for the construction. You must now open your hearts and your wallets and raise the remaining sum!"

His words aroused tremendous enthusiasm. The members of the community opened their hearts and their wallets with remarkable generosity, and the necessary funds were raised.

It goes without saying that the mikveh in Brazil was subsequently built, and it stood as a source of purity and pride for the Jewish community there, continuing to serve as a lasting testament to Rabbi Avraham Yitzchak's extraordinary self-sacrifice for the taharah of Yisrael.

The mikveh taharah was the first of its kind on Brazilian soil, and it was established with great honor and distinction. It continues to stand to this very day. The veteran residents of Brazil recount the story of its beginnings and its founding.

As a result of this remarkable act of self-sacrifice for the sake of the taharah of Yisrael, the Jews of that community were particularly careful to honor the mitzvah of immersion in the "Shabbos mikveh"—immersing in the mikveh on Shabbos morning.

The Skulener Rebbe shlita, related that on one Shabbos he had the privilege

of staying beside his grandfather, the revered Skulener Rebbe, Rav Eliezer Zusia, zy"a, author of Noam Eliezer, who was then in the hospital.

This was already toward the end of the tzaddik's life. His illness had become extremely severe, and he lay weak and exhausted in his hospital bed, connected to various medical devices.

On Erev Shabbos Kodesh, several hours before Shabbos was due to begin, his grandson noticed that his grandfather was mumbling something. Because of his great weakness, he was unable to speak properly. Only his holy lips moved, and no sound could be heard.

Since his voice was inaudible, the grandson had to bend down and bring his ear right next to the tzaddik's mouth. Then he heard him whisper:

"Ich darf Shabbos'dige kleider!" — "I need Shabbos clothes!"

The grandson was astonished. Who, in such a situation, would even think about Shabbos clothes? His grandfather was in such a grave condition that dressing him was practically impossible, since he was connected to all kinds of medical devices surrounding him.

The grandson tried to explain the situation to his grandfather. He showed him all the devices attached to his body and explained how essential they were to his medical care. It did not seem possible to disconnect them on Shabbos merely to dress him in Shabbos clothes. With Hashem's help, once he recovered and returned home in good health, he would be able to wear his Shabbos clothes again!

But the Rebbe refused to give up. He continued whispering insistently:

"Shabbos komt shoin arayn, un ikh hob nokh nisht ongeton Shabbos'dige kleider!" — "Shabbos is about to come in, and I still have not put on my Shabbos clothes!"

The grandson even tried speaking to the hospital's chief physicians and administrators about the matter, but they all rejected the idea. The doctors would never agree to it, he explained to his grandfather. Yet the Rebbe continued making the same request again and again, refusing to relent.

After quite some time, the medical devices suddenly began beeping from several directions. The readings began fluctuating wildly, rising and falling, and the doctors hurried to examine what was happening. It became apparent that the Rebbe's heart was reacting severely to his firm refusal to give up on wearing his Shabbos clothes.

Seeing the situation, the doctors instructed that his request be fulfilled, even though doing so involved

considerable difficulty and risk. There was no other choice. They had to disconnect all the devices attached to his holy body, dress him in his Shabbos clothes, and then reconnect the equipment.

When the grandson saw that his grandfather's request had finally been fulfilled, he testified that the tzaddik's countenance shone with an extraordinary, otherworldly light.

The Rebbe's joy at having merited to wear Shabbos clothes was indescribable. He exclaimed with tremendous emotion and enthusiasm, regarding each garment as he was dressed:

"Lichvod Shabbos Kodesh! — In honor of Shabbos Kodesh!"

The Skulener Rebbe, shlita, related another story connected to the same theme, concerning his father, the holy Rav Yisroel Avraham, zt"l.

Before putting on his shtreimel in honor of Shabbos Kodesh, his father had a special L'shem Yichud that he would recite. He would put on the shtreimel for only one reason: to honor Shabbos Malkah, the Shabbos Queen. He would not wear it for any other purpose.

He would explain that the Shabbos shtreimel serves as a reminder and a symbol of the mitzneses, the headdress worn by the Kohen Gadol in the Beis Hamikdash. For this reason, one must treat it with great honor and kedushah.

In accordance with this practice, when he would place a shtreimel on the head of a chassan before Shabbos, for the aliyah to the Torah known as the aufruf, as is customary in many Jewish communities, he would first recite that extraordinary L'shem Yichud together with the chassan.

After placing the shtreimel on the chassan's head, he would break into an exuberant dance with him, singing the famous Skulener niggun "U'Vayom HaShabbos" with tremendous emotion.

Those who seek the sources for this custom point to the writings of the holy Rebbe Rav Yitzchak Isaac of Komarna, zy"a. He explains the significance of the shtreimel as a notarikon, an acronym, alluding to Shabbos.

The shtreimel serves a purpose analogous to that of tefillin. As we know, we do not put on tefillin on Shabbos because Shabbos itself is a sign between Hakadosh Baruch Hu and the Jewish people, and two signs are sufficient.

The special shtreimel worn by a Jewish man on Shabbos therefore serves as a sign of honor and distinction for Shabbos Kodesh. Just as one must not divert his attention from the tefillin, so too one must never divert his attention from Shabbos and its holiness.

And just as a special L'shem Yichud was composed to be recited before putting on tefillin, so too the Rebbe established a special L'shem Yichud to be recited before putting on the shtreimel in honor of Shabbos.