

TEFILLAH TIPS



Vayechulu

After *Atoh Kidashta* we recite the passage from Genesis 2:1-3, *Vayechulu*, that describes the conclusion of the Divine creation of the world *ex nihilo* and the infusion of the holy *Shabbat* into the world. *Shabbat* is the culmination and the crowning jewel of Creation.

This passage *Vayechulu* must contain quite a significant message because we recite it **3 times** every Friday night. We recite it in the *Amidah*, we recite it after the *Amidah*, and we recite it a 3rd time during *Kiddush* on Friday night. Why the repetition?

The Abudraham explains that when *Shabbat* falls together with *Yom Tov*, the *Amidah* must contain *Atoh Vechartanu*. Therefore, *Vayechulu* needs to be inserted after the *Amidah* instead. Once we are saying it after the *Amidah* on *Shabbat* of *Yom Tov*, we say it every Friday night as well. The commentaries also state that there was concern that only the attendees in shul would recite *Vayechulu*, and the family at home would miss out. Therefore we also recite *Vayechulu* during *Kiddush*. What is it about *Vayechulu*?

The Abudraham explains that the passage of *Vayechulu* is actually *edut* – testimony. When a Jew recites *Vayechulu* on Friday night, he is literally testifying in front of the world that *Hashem* created the heavens and the earth and infused the world with the blessings of *Shabbat*. The laws of testimony require the witness to testify as a twosome while standing. Therefore the *Halachah*/law is that *Vayechulu* should preferably be recited with another while standing in order to provide proper testimony.

A statement in the *Talmud Shabbat* 119:B also demonstrates the strength and significance of the recital of *Vayechulu*. Rava once stated (though some say it was Rabbi Yeshoshua Ben Levi), even an individual must recite *Vayechulu* on *Erev Shabbat*. Rav Hamnurah taught that anyone who prays Friday night and recites *Vayechulu* is considered to be a **partner with G-d in Creation**. The Maharsha explains that just as G-d created the world with *Dibbur* – utterances, so too we become partners with G-d when uttering *Vayechulu*. The question is, how?

Rav Matisyahu Solomon shlitta writes in *Matnat Chaim*, that an intrinsic part of the creation of the world was that the greatness and complexities of the Creation be recognized and appreciated by G-d's prized creation – man. Until Adam and Eve were created, there was no one in the world who could relate to and understand the beauty and profundity therein.

Therefore when Adam, Eve, and now you and I recite *Vayechulu* on *Erev Shabbat*, we literally partner with *Hashem* in the Creation of the world.

Take Home Tip: Notice how we recite *Vayechulu* three times on Friday night. While we recite it let's remember that we are literally testifying that G-d is our Creator as well as partnering with G-d in sustaining and fulfilling the blessings of the creation of our world.

Shabbat Shalom,

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