

# World Peace & Shabbat

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Since I was a young child I have enjoyed following current events and listening to the news. But as I grow older, I have started losing interest in what seems to be the same story being told over and over again, with only the names and places being modified (or sometimes not even those!). Almost every story seems to be about different people or groups fighting with each other, whether in politics or actual physical altercations. What is causing all this strife, and how can we go about bringing some peace and harmony into this fractured world?

On a personal level, this world is in a constant state of war – namely, the war between the body and the soul. Our bodies and their physical cravings try to forcefully subdue our souls and their spirituality. However, as much as we may have fallen prey to our base desires, the body can never fully constrain the soul. Even if someone were completely wicked, his inner soul would still bitterly scream out for its Source.

The only real force of this world is God's *ratzon* (will). God created this world specifically so that lower beings would serve Him, and therefore the body serves the soul. The soul, which emanates from God, is constantly yearning to fulfill this Divine purpose. It is actually here that the battle lines are drawn between physical and spiritual; from here, the battle extends outward, causing the world to become a fractured and conflicted place.

The Tzaddikim teach us that it is possible to gain total mastery over physical desires and for the body to become soul-like. Someone who has attained this level merits to live in total inner peace and tranquility. In the future, when the world will realize that the only truth is God's will, all conflict and war will disappear.

But for now, no matter what level we may be on, each of us has Shabbat. On Shabbat we don't turn on the radio but rather tune in to the screaming of our thirsty souls. Shabbat is a taste of the World to Come, where the realization of Godliness will permeate creation. Therefore we greet each other, "Shabbat Shalom!" ("Shabbat Peace"), because on Shabbat every Jew can find the inner peace that he and the world so desperately needs.

*Based on Likutey Halakhot, Hilkhhot Chadash 3*