



SHAVUOS

Revelation from Above

What happens when two *tzaddikim* and *mekubalim* of the stature of Reb Shlomo Alkabetz and Rav Yosef Caro spend the awesome night of Shavuos together?

The answer is recorded in a 16th-century manuscript written by R. Shlomo Alkabetz: "The *Beis Yosef* and I decided to stay awake on the night of Shavuos and read passages of the Torah. [These passages are the basis of what later became the *Tikkun Leil Shavuos*.] After *chatzos*, as we reached the section of *Mishnayos*, a sweet voice was heard aloud from the mouth of the *Beis Yosef*. We all fell on our faces from sheer fright. The voice grew ever louder, until even the neighbors were able hear it, though they were unable to understand it. The voice, having been created by the *Mishna* we had learnt, told us of the pain suffered by the *Shechina* [in exile], and the great impact our learning this night had, silencing all the *Malochim* and piercing all the heavens. It then spoke of our great *zechus* of staying awake this night, and the greater effect it would have had with a *minyan*. The voice then encouraged us to continue learning throughout the night, not wasting even a moment. Finally, the *Shechina* instructed us to stand up and say *Boruch Shem...* aloud, as is done on Yom Kippur.

We wept profusely, from the joy of our experience and for the pain of the *Shechina*.

"When we met three other *chachomim* in the *mikve* the next morning, we related to them what had happened that night. They were understandably distressed, and we resolved to gather again on the second night, this time with a *minyan*.

"That night, because of our joy at having a *minyan*, the voice of the *Shechina* began speaking as soon as we started reading the *Aseres HaDibros* of *Devarim*. The voice praised our attainment, told us of the *ruchnius d'ike* fire surrounding the house, and then directed us to say *Boruch Shem*. As the time of *chatzos* drew near, the *Shechina* spoke again and told us that for hundreds of years no such accomplishment had been attained."

The Shaloh HaKadosh copied this story from the manuscript of Reb Shlomo Alkabetz and concluded: "It is apparent in his writing that there was much more that he was not allowed to reveal. From this story we must learn how important it

is to conduct ourselves with special *kedusha* on this night."

(של"ה הקדוש מס' שבועות נר מצוה ה')

An Opportune Time

The Friediker Rebbe said: Shavuos is an *eis ratzon*, when *HaShem* confuses the one who accuses Yidden, just as He confuses him during the sounding of the *shofar* on Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur.

Shavuos is an opportune time to make every effort to improve one's Torah learning and *avoda* in *yiras shamayim*, and to strive to do *teshuvah* concerning one's Torah study, without Satan's interference.

(היום יום, ג' ד' סיון)

The eminent chossid, Reb Aizik Homiler, recalled that once before Shavuos, a number of chassidim discussed what they should ask of *HaShem* on the night of Shavuos. They decided to ask the Mittlerer Rebbe, and assumed that he would surely speak of the study and understanding of *pnimiyus haTorah*.

Instead, the Rebbe shared his own wish: "I would wish to have the fiery flame of *matan Torah*."

(סה"ש תש"ה ע' 108)

Every Shavuos, Reb Peretz Beshenkovitzer, a poor and humble chossid who served as a *melamed*, would visit the Rebbe Maharash in Lubavitch. One year so many *orchim* came for Shavuos that Reb Peretz assumed that he wouldn't have a chance to be admitted to the Rebbe's study for *yechidus*. However, the Rebbe on one of his walks noticed him, and asked the gabbai Reb Levik to call him in.

Once inside, Reb Peretz bemoaned the fact that he was like an empty vessel, totally unworthy.

The Rebbe said, "In order to truly feel that lack, one must do something. Do you shed tears as you say *Tehillim*?"

Reb Peretz responded that he did. The Rebbe then instructed him to say two *kapitlach* in this manner every day for the rest of his life, and concluded, "But for *kabbalas haTorah*, when one is preparing himself to accept the Torah, he must do so with *simcha*."

In later years Reb Peretz related that every Shavuos, recalling this *yechidus*, he would contemplate how the Rebbe had lowered himself from *Gan Eden* all the way down to his level, in order to direct him in his *avoda*.

Regarding this, the Friediker Rebbe related, "On the night of Shavuos in the year תרמ"ז (1887), when I was seven years old, I quietly left via the back door of our home to visit the *beis midrash*. Amongst the large crowd, I noticed two Yidden whose tears flowed down their cheeks as they read from their '*siddurim*' (which I later learned were *tikkunim*). One of them was Reb Peretz Beshenkovitzer."

(סה"ש תש"ה ע' 101)

Receiving the Torah

The Friediker Rebbe said: Every year on Shavuos, the same revelation of *HaShem* that was revealed at the time of *matan Torah* is revealed anew, and a Yid who at this time arouses himself to establish set times for studying Torah is successful in his *avoda*.

(סה"ש קיץ ה'ש"ת ע' 116, תש"ג ע' 129)

The Friediker Rebbe once said: On the first night of Shavuos, every Yid is required to wholeheartedly accept the *ol haTorah*, the yoke of Torah. In fact one should actually say, "*Ribbono shel Olam*, I accept the *ol haTorah*."

(סה"ש תד"ש ע' 127)

CONSIDER THIS!

- What brought the revelation of the *Shechina* in the *beis medrash* of the Beis Yosef: their great learning or the auspicious night?
- What should one do to receive the revelation of *Matan Torah*?

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OUR HEROES

Reb Chaim Avraham ben Admor Hazaken



Reb Chaim Avraham, the Alter Rebbe's second son, was a very talented person, a serious *masmid*, would *daven* at great length, and would not speak more than necessary. He had refined character traits and would always greet people with a smile. Reb Chaim Avraham had an awesome appearance and looked similar to his father.



"Once," related the Rebbe Maharash, "on the first night of Shavuos, I went to say *Gut Yom-Tov* to my great-uncle Reb Chaim Avraham, son of the Alter Rebbe. I found him sitting with his hands covering his tear-stained face. I asked him why he was crying on *Yom-Tov*. He explained that the Baal Shem Tov said that when one prepares himself properly during *Sefiras HaOmer*, he is found worthy on Shavuos of being admitted to the Fiftieth Gate of *kedusha* – "and I can't feel it," concluded Reb Chaim Avraham.

The Rebbe Maharash concluded, "My great-uncle Reb Chaim Avraham was then seventy-seven years old and was completely removed from all worldly matters. Yet on the night of Shavuos, he wept for the revelation of the Fiftieth Gate. This left me with a deep impression."

(ספר התולדות אדמו"ר מהר"ש ע' 73)



Reb Chaim Avraham once saw a man running in the street, and he grabbed hold of him and said to him, "Rasha! Where are you running?" The man then admitted that he was on his way to sin.

Chassidim expressed amazement at Reb Chaim Avraham's miraculous powers, but he brushed it off, "When I saw the man running, I unexpectedly thought of the *possuk* (Mishlei 19:2), "One who hurries with his feet is a sinner!"

(רשימות דברים חדש ע' 231)

Thermometer on Shabbos

May I take my temperature on Shabbos?

- Chazal prohibited any form of measuring on Shabbos or on Yom Tov¹ since it is a degradation of Shabbos and is similar to weekday activity,² and also because it may cause a person to write.³ Some examples include: Measuring ingredients for a salad dressing, determining the size of a room (even just by counting the tiles),⁴ checking one's weight or measuring height, or timing how long an activity takes. Only precise measuring is prohibited (even if later used in an imprecise manner), however approximate measuring (e.g. a cupful of baby cereal) is permissible.⁵
- Thus, when cooking on Yom Tov one should not measure the ingredients precisely, (measuring flour which can be done just the same before Yom Tov is not permitted even though cooking is permitted).⁶ However, spices may be measured if an imprecise amount will positively ruin the dish.⁷
- What about a sand clock for a game? Chazal say that one may measure for no particular purpose.⁸ One *rishon* explains that this can be understood to mean:⁹ (1) for play (an unnecessary purpose) or (2) as a joke (no purpose at all). According to the latter meaning, one may not use a sand clock for a game since one does have a purpose in this measuring. The Rebbe understands the Alter Rebbe to be siding with this second explanation.¹⁰
- Only actual measuring is prohibited. However, there is no prohibition to look at a clock or read the temperature from an already hanging thermostat.¹¹
- Chazal permitted measuring *mitzva* objects (e.g. a *mikva*, *techum Shabbos*), since it doesn't appear mundane.¹² However, if it isn't obviously *mitzva*-related, it is not permitted.¹³ Likewise, some say that if the *mitzva* object could have been measured before Shabbos (e.g. *kazayis of matza*, *revi'is for kiddush*), it may not be measured precisely on Shabbos.¹⁴ In practice, one may rely on the lenient opinion in case of need.¹⁵
- Similarly, *halacha* permits measuring for health needs, since this is also a *mitzva*.¹⁶ One may therefore measure fever with a non-electric thermometer,¹⁷ use a blood pressure device, or measure medicine for the exact dose.

1. ביצה דף כ"ח ע"א, שבת קנ"ז ע"א וע"ב.
2. תוס' שבת קכ"ו ע"ב ד"ה ומדבריהן, ושוע"ר או"ח סי' ש"ו ס"ח. וראה בשוע"ר תק"ו ס"א שמוסיף שראה כמזכר.
3. ע"פ רמב"ם שבת פכ"ג ה"ב.
4. שש"כ פכ"ט ס"ה (כשיש לו מטרה למשל לתכנן ריהוט).
5. שש"כ פכ"ט ס"ו וסמ"ב. וראה שוע"ר סי' שכ"ד ס"ב וסי' תק"ו ס"א.
6. ראה ת"ז סי' תק"ו סק"א ושוע"ר סי' תק"ו ס"א וסי' תנ"ו ס"ט. ועיי"ש שהוא אפי' בכדי לדעת השעור של חלה.
7. ביצה כ"ט ע"א. וראה מחצה"ש ריש סי' תק"ו, שוע"ר סי' תק"ד ס"ט. וראה יו"ט כהלכתו פ"ז הע' 7 ופ"ו סכ"ח. (וכיין שבד"כ א"צ מדידה מדויקת יש להזהר).
8. שבת רנ"ז ע"ב, ראב"ה שבת סי' שע"ז, שוע"ר סי' ש"ו ס"ט.
9. פסקא הרי"ד בסוף מסכת שבת (מהדורת חסידים).
10. שוע"ר סי' ש"ו ס"ט ("שלא לצורך כלל"). אג"ק
11. ע"ד להסתכל בשעון לא חשיב מדידה דאינו עושה מעשה – וראה שו"ת פמ"א ח"ב סי' רכ"ג. וראה מה שהעתיק בשו"ת יח"ד ח"ב סי' מיט וראה אג"מ או"ח ח"ה סי' מ"ט.
12. שבת קנ"ז ע"א וע"ב. וראה מג"א או"ח סי' ש"ו סקט"ז, ושוע"ר שם ס"ח.
13. שוע"ר סי' ש"ח ספ"ח, מג"א שם סקט"ז, (ולהעיר משיחת ש"פ בראשית תשי"ט שיש ללמוד תורה בשופי ולא להסתכל על השעון).
14. ראה כף החיים סי' ש"ו סקט"ג בשם פתח הדבור אות ט"ו להקל, אך דעתו להחמיר.
15. שש"כ פכ"ט הע' ק"ג (ועיי"ש שבמשקל יש יותר מקום להחמיר).
16. שוע"ר שם.
17. אבל להוריד המדידה לפני מדידת החום שנוי במחלוקת – ראה שבת הלוי ח"ג סי' כ"ח, ומנגד בשש"כ פ"מ ס"ב והע' 7. והעולם נהוג לסמוך על המקלין בפרט בשעת הצורך.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה

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A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

Those Who Come with Me

From Reb Leibel Groner's diary:

In *yechidus*, a *chossan* and *kallah* asked the Rebbe to be *mesader kidushin* for them. The Rebbe stipulated that the *kallah* must agree to always wear a *sheitel*. She refused.

"How will you cover your hair?" the Rebbe asked.

"With a *tichel*," she answered. When the Rebbe explained that a *tichel* slips, she insisted that she will immediately put it back. The Rebbe was not satisfied. "Experience has shown otherwise. In any case, if the *kallah* will not wear a *sheitel*, I cannot be *mesader kidushin*."

When the Rebbe arrived at 770 on the morning of the *chassuna*, the *chossan* approached him and disclosed that the *kallah* had accepted upon herself to wear a *sheitel*, with the hope that the Rebbe will be *mesader kidushin*.

"Now, it is too late," the Rebbe told him.

The surprised *chossan* explained that the *chuppah* was called for 7:00 pm, and it was only morning, to which the Rebbe replied, "You surely mean for not only me to come, but all those who come with me. For this it is too late."

(Teshurah Tenenbaum, 24 Adar 5764)

