

The Weekly *Farbrengens*



MERKAZ ANASH
מרכז אנאש

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SHAVUOS

AN AUSPICIOUS DAY

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'dike* 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 a special *kedusha* on this night."

(של"ה הקדוש מס' שבועות נר מצוה ה')

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)

CONSIDER

What brought the revelation of the *Shechina* in the *beis medrash* of the *Beis Yosef*: their learning or the auspicious night?

What should one do to receive the revelation of *Matan Torah*?

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*.

(ס"ה קי"ח ה"ח ע' 116, תש"ג ע' 129)

"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)

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 Mitteler Rebbe, and assumed that he would surely speak of the study and understanding of *primiyus haTorah*.

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

(ס"ה תש"ה ע' 108)

Recollecting his experience of Shavuos in תרמ"ה (1885), when he was a child of five, the Friediker Rebbe once said:

"On *erev* Shavuos, our *melamed* told us how Moshe Rabbeinu led the Yidden to *matan Torah*. He then called to us, '*Kinderlach!* Come with me and I will take you to *matan Torah*.' He took all thirty of us to Reb Binyomin's *beis medrash* and told us that the next morning, the first day of Shavuos, we should wake up an hour earlier than usual and come to this *beis medrash* for *kabbalas haTorah*.

"On Shavuos morning I awoke at seven o'clock and prepared to go there. My mother [*Rebbetzin* Shterna Sara] wanted me to eat something before leaving, but I insisted that I wouldn't eat before *matan Torah*. I set out to the *beis midrash*, where I found all of my classmates, and after *davening* our *melamed* took us all on a walk."

(ס"ה תש"ה ע' 100)

It was the custom of the Friediker Rebbe, and also of the Rebbe, to wish all Yidden the *brocho* of *kabbalas haTorah besimcha uvipnimiyus* - that we receive the Torah with joy, and that it permeate us.

The Rebbe explained this dual blessing as follows: Appreciating that we are *HaShem's* holy nation and that we are able to connect to Him via the Torah and its *mitzvos*, we are joyful - and this joy will enable us to be permeated by the Torah and not regard it (*chas veshalom*) as a burden.

(לקי"ח ח"ח ע' 292)



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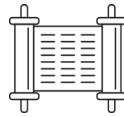
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MINYAN FOR ASERES HADIBROS

What must I know for arranging a minyan for Aseres Hadibros?

Krias haTorah, like any davar shebikdusha, requires a minyan. Even if there was a minyan for Shmoneh Esreh but one person left afterward, the Torah may not be read with less than ten present.

How many of the ten must not have heard kria before? Some hold that there must be ten men who haven't heard kria, while others hold that a majority—i.e., six—is sufficient, and this seems to be the accepted practice in Chabad.

Can one have in mind that the kria he hears in shul should not be counted so he can make up a minyan later?

As a rule, one can have in mind while doing a mitzvah not to fulfill his obligation (kavana shelo latzeis). Moreover, since krias haTorah is midrabanan, one could make a stipulation (breira) that if he is needed for the minyan later, then the kria he heard in shul won't count retroactively.

When making a kria for Aseres Hadibros, one must read the entire kria for the day (not just the Aseres Hadibros), and ensure that there is proper a proper mechitza in place.

It should be noted that the Rebbe asked for children to be brought specifically to shul to hear the Aseres Hadibros to reenact the original Matan Torah.

8. ראה נתיבים בשדה השליחות ח"ג ע' 39 הע' 6 שהביא טענת החולקים ומה שיש לדחותה, ע"ש. וכעת הוסיף ר"א מוצקת מהמשנה בתענית כ"ו ע"א "ובמנהג נכנסין וקורין על פיהן כקורין את שמעו", היינו שאנשי מעמד קראת הפרשה של המעמד, כל אחד לבדו, ומוכח לכאורה שקריה"ת היא חובה על כ"א.



REB MENDEL CHEIN

Reb Mendel Chein was born in Tchernigov in the year 5640 (1879). He studied under his father the Radatz, who served as rov of the city and was a great gaon. He traveled many times to the Rebbe Rashab in Lubavitch who was very much mekarev him.

until one man piped up and said, "You realize that Reb Chaim is not a young man anymore..." Reb Mendel became angry and said, "Do you know what it means that Reb Chaim should live one more day? That he should put on tefillin one more time?!"

In the year 5670 (1910), Reb Mendel attended a conference of rabbonim in Russia, assisting the Rebbe Rashab. There he became very friendly with Reb Chaim Brisker (who was much older than him), and their friendship continued afterwards.

Due to the different armies fighting over the city of Niezhin during World War I, chaos reigned and there was not much control and protection for the civilians. Reb Mendel went together with a priest to meet with the city officials to try to calm the situation. On their way back, they saw a group of gangsters coming towards them.

(בטאון חב"ד חוברת כ"ו)

A Moment with The Rebbe



ליכות שניאור זלמן בן חוה לאה וכל משפחתו שיחיו לכל המצטרך בגשמיות ורוחניות

HERE WE POLISH OUR HEADS

"You can remove your tie, and you don't need to look so meticulous..." the Rebbe told someone at the Shavuot 5711 farbrengen.

"One of the guests, a simpleton who came to Lubavitch from the Yiddishe colonies, was searching for a brush to polish his shoes before Shabbos.

"A story is told of the chossid Reb Michael," the Rebbe began to relate, referring to the elder mashpia in Lubavitch, Reb Michael Beliner ("der alter").

"When Reb Michael heard what he was looking for, he told him, 'Here in Lubavitch, we polish our heads, not our shoes...'"

(Toras Menachem vol 3 p. 157)

לעילוי נשמת

מרת מוסיא בת ר' אברהם ישעי' ע"ה שטראקס נפטרה כ"ה אדר תשפ"ד