

# The Weekly Farbrengens



618 • במדבר תשפ"א • למען ישמעו  
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

## 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 קיץ ה"ש"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 ע' 292)

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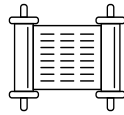


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SIX HOUR CHEESE

Is it true that some cheeses require a six hour wait afterwards?

As a safeguard to the biblical prohibition of eating milk and meat together, Chazal prohibited even eating one after the other. After eating meat, the accepted halacha is to wait six hours before eating dairy, and poskim offer two reasons for this waiting period: (1) Pieces of meat stuck in one's teeth are considered meat up to six hours after eating, or (2) the taste of the meat lingers in one's mouth for six hours.

Practical differences between these reasons would be if one chewed meat without swallowing (pieces could get stuck but no taste lingers), or if meat remains between one's teeth after six hours.

After eating dairy, both reasons don't seem to apply, and Shulchan Aruch rules that eating something else in between, washing out one's mouth and hands thoroughly is sufficient. Our custom, based on the Zohar, is to separate the meals and wait one hour in between (even on Shavuot).

The Rema quotes a discussion if one needs to be stringent by cheeses and writes that it is proper to wait six hours after eating "hard" (aged) cheese. The reason is apparently due to its sharp lingering taste, while some explain that it is because such cheese can remain stuck in between teeth and would be problematic, as the Maharam of Rotenberg once found cheese between his teeth a while after eating it.

Poskim debate what falls in the category of "hard" cheese mentioned by the Rema. Some hold that it applies to any cheese with six months of production time, while others limit it to cheese that has a very pungent taste. It is accepted to be stringent by sharp or six month cheese, e.g. Swiss or Holland cheeses, old and sharp cheddar, and parmesan. (Some say that hard cheese that was melted loses its sharpness, while others contend that the taste nonetheless lingers.)

Medium cheddar and mozzarella cheeses are typically aged between one and three months. American hard cheese is a mixture of cheddar and mozzarella. These don't fall in the above category.

Yet, some contemporary poskim hold that any hard cheese today falls into the category of "hard" cheese since modern technology expedites the process and achieves the same flavor in a shorter time. Others argue that it still doesn't match the sharp and strong cheese mentioned in poskim. While some contemporary rabbonim are stringent, the common custom is to be lenient.

1. גמ' חולין דף ק"ה, טור וש"ע י"ד סי' פ"ט ס"א.
2. ט"ז י"ד סי' פ"ט סק"א.
3. שו"ע ורמ"א שם ס"ב. וראה מהרש"ל יש"ש פכ"ה סי' ו'.
4. ראה שו"ע שם סקט"ז. ראה אג"ק ח"כ ע' רפ"ט, וראה אוצר מנהגים והוראות י"ד ע' מ"ב. וראה התועודיות תשמ"ג ח"ג ע' 1579 (שבועות). רמ"א שם ס"ב.
5. ראה ט"ז י"ד סי' פ"ט סק"ד ומשב"ז סק"א וסק"ד.
6. ראה שו"ע שם סק"ז ושפ"ד שם.
7. ראה שו"ע שם סק"ז.
8. ראה שו"ע שם סק"ז.
9. ראה ערוה"ש שם ס"א.
10. יד"י שם פיה"ק סק"ל.
11. ראה בא"ח ש"ב פ"ר שלח סט"ו.
12. קובץ תשובות לגרשי"א ח"א סי' נ"ח.
13. ראה שו"ת שלחן הלוי פכ"ב אות א'. מוריה טבת תשנ"ו בשם הגרש"א. וראה תשו"ה ח"ב סי' שפ"ח.

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



REB DOVID LEIKES

Reb Dovid Leikes, one of the great talmidim of the Baal Shem Tov, is mentioned in many of the stories which are told about the Baal Shem Tov. He was a grandfather to many chasidische Rebbes, such as Reb Yitzchak of Skver, and he was the father-in-law of Reb Motel Tchernobiler. He served as the rov in the town Bar in the Podolye region.

The Baal Shem Tov was once in the home of Reb Dovid during the time when a terrible decree had been enacted that the Talmud be burned. A day was set for the public burning of all volumes of Gemoro and the decree stated that anyone caught learning the Talmud after this event, would be burned together with the volume he was learning. On the scheduled day, Reb Dovid took a Gemoro, hid behind a large urn (used for heating water) and, as he usually did each day, engrossed himself in learning. The Baal Shem Tov, meanwhile, paced around the house, entirely immersed in his holy thoughts.

At twelve o'clock, the church bells began ringing wildly, notifying all that the time for the enactment of the decree had come. The Baal Shem Tov continued pacing despite the tumultuous ringing and gathering of spectators. Seeing this, Reb Dovid, could contain himself no longer and mustered up the courage to approach the Baal Shem Tov. "Rebbe!

How could you be silent at a time like this?!" The Baal Shem Tov looked up at his talmid and said, "The fire you displayed for the learning of Torah has extinguished their fire." Sure enough, one thing led to another and the decree was abolished.

Towards the end of Reb Dovid's life, as he neared the age of one hundred, the other dayanim of the city began handling the easier shaalos, but he would still be consulted with regarding the difficult matters that arose. On what was to be Dovid's last day, a difficult question presented itself to the Beis Din and the dayanim wanted to consult with him. Reb Dovid's family, however, refused to let him be disturbed, being that he was very weak.

Hearing the argument taking place outside, the tzaddik gathered all the strength he had and got out of bed. He called for his family, and when they came in, he banged fiercely on the table, so strongly that one of its legs fell off, and cried, "It says that any dayan who judges a din truthfully becomes as a partner to Hashem in the works of creation, and you want to take this partnership away from me?! All the dayanim should come in at once!" The dayanim came in and he guided them, helping them reach the solution of the issue at hand. Soon after, Reb Dovid passed away.

A Moment with The Rebbe



WHEN A DROP MAKES A DIFFERENCE

When Reb Avrohom Shlomo Slavaticki, a food chemist from Eretz Yisroel, stood in yechidus, the Rebbe expressed interest in his profession.

The conversation progressed, and the Rebbe asked him what his fixed times for learning Torah were. When he answered that he had a morning and an evening kevius, the Rebbe encouraged him to add another one, even if it was very short.

surely know that the quantity is not necessarily the deciding factor. Often, one could have a compound of a few ingredients, and by adding merely a drop of another component, the entire composite could be transformed.

"Likewise," the Rebbe concluded, "it is with learning Torah. Sometimes, just another short study could change your entire day."

"As a chemist," the Rebbe said, "you (Teshurah Slavaticki, Adar 5766)