

אבות פרק א'



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by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

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and more...



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Ephrayim Yurowitz
Tzvi Blech



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Shabbos Zmanim

2024 Early Friday Mincha, 18 Main
1:45pm and every 15 minutes until 5:00

8:12pm Candle lighting	7:15pm Mincha in tent א	8:22pm Chabad Mincha	8:30pm Shkiya
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SHABBOS SHACHRIS MINYANIM:

4:44am <small>Vasikin, followed by 2 Daf Yomi Shiur 20↑</small>	8:00am <small>Shachris 2 18 main</small>	9:15am <small>Shachris 3 Tent א</small>	10:00am <small>Shachris 4 Bais Chabad 20↑</small>	10:00am <small>Shachris 5 18 main</small>
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2:00pm Pirchei	8:10pm Mincha followed by Shalosh Seudos	8:30pm Shkiya	9:10pm Maariv 1	9:15pm Maariv 2
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Late Maariv Motzei Shabbos Every 15 Minutes!
9:45 pm - 12:00 | 18 Main

Weekday Zmanim

Zmanim for the week of June 16 - 22

Shacharis — 20 min. before Neitz
Mincha & Maariv — 12 min. before Plag and more (see posted times)

	Neitz	Shma Magen Avraham	Shma Gra	Tefila Gra	Chatzos	Plag	Shkiya
Sunday	5:24am	8:15am	9:10am	10:25am	12:57pm	6:56pm	8:31pm
Monday	5:24am	8:15am	9:10am	10:26am	12:57pm	6:56pm	8:31pm
Tuesday	5:24am	8:15am	9:10am	10:26am	12:57pm	6:57pm	8:31pm
Wednesday	5:24am	8:15am	9:10am	10:26am	12:57pm	6:57pm	8:31pm
Thursday	5:24am	8:15am	9:10am	10:26am	12:58pm	6:57pm	8:32pm
Friday	5:25am	8:15am	9:11am	10:26am	12:58pm	6:57pm	8:32pm
Shabbos	5:25am	8:16am	9:11am	10:27am	12:58pm	6:57pm	8:32pm

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The Wise man and the Chosid

Rav Moshe Chaim Luzzatto, known as the Ramchal, was a brilliant *talmid chacham* from Italy. The Goan of Vilna proclaimed that if he lived in the same generation he would walk all the way from Vilna to Italy to study by the Ramchal. The Vilna Goan also said that in his life of Torah study he only has recognition to his Rebbe that taught him the *Alef Bet* because after that, he gained all of his knowledge on his own. Nevertheless he felt it would be worthwhile to spend months traveling by foot to study by the Ramchal. The Ramchal had moved to Amsterdam and printed his works and then moved to the holy land. He passed away at an early age of 39, and is buried in Teveria next to Rabi Akivah. The great kabbalist concluded that the Ramchal was a reincarnation of Rabi Akiva and his 39 years of teaching the secrets of Torah was what Rabbi Akiva missed out on the beginning years of his life, before he became learned.

Recently the Russian government allowed access to the library of the famous Baron Rothchild which contained the handwritten manuscripts of The Ramchal. They found part 1 of the famed work of Mesilat Yesharim, "The Path of the Just". The writing style of the Ramchal is a dialog or a debate between a wise man and a *chosid*. The wise man is on a quest to understand the life of a *chosid*; how he can be satisfied with saying a few chapters of *tehillim*, long *tefilot*, and immersing in ice cold *mikvah*. How are they intellectually stimulated? The day comes and the wise man meets his childhood friend who became a *chossid*, and they engage in conversation, resulting in an animated debate. The wise man starts to understand the concept of "*shlaimut hama'ase*" – perfection in one's actions. It doesn't really matter how much one accomplishes, but rather the quality of his accomplishment.

Finally, the *chosid* asks the wise man, who dedicated much of his life to the study of Torah, a simple question. What does Hashem want from us? I am sure many of us ask ourselves the same question. In *parshat Eikev* the same question is asked. The Torah tells us of only five things Hashem requests from us: #1 to fear/ awe Hashem #2 to love Hashem #3 to go in His ways #4 prayer #5 to observe all the mitzvot. The *chosid* asks the wise man; the verse seems to be redundant because #1 to fear/ awe and #2 to love Hashem is included in #5 to observe all the *mitzvot*. Why does the Torah put them as separate concepts? The *chosid* explains that there is a difference between the actual *mitzvah* and the emotional component of how to go about the *mitzvah*. The first four requirements are the emotional aspects of our service; the last part is the physical action. The *chosid* challenges the wise man saying, by studying all day you accomplish just 20% of Hashem's will. How do you explain yourself?

I find this to be a tremendous *chidush*, a novel insight, to our way of life when defining our priorities. As the *Mishna* teaches us, any study that does not come to action is a waste of time. The Ramchal explains that the action of the person doing the *mitzvot* and the study of the *mitzvot* is only 20% but the duties of our heart and the way we go about doing things comprises 80% of our service to Hashem. It's something to think about.



Accepting Shavuos Early

by Rabbi Daniel Coren

The *Mishna Berura* writes in *siman* תצ"ד that we wait till *tzais hakochavim* before we daven *maariv* the night of *Shavuos*, in order to make sure that we have full 49 days of *sefirah* – תמימות. Many *Achronim* question this *psak*. As the Yaavetz writes in his *siddur*, the source for this stringency of not being able to daven early is the Taz, and yet the Taz himself writes in *Hilchos Sukka* that once a person accepts Yom Tov early, they have turned the day into night, and if so there should be no problem doing so on *Shavuos* night as well.

If we investigate the history of this debate, we find nothing in the *Gemara* or the *Rishonim* that implies that we can't make *kiddush*, and certainly daven early for *Shavuos*. The main source starts in the 16th century, when the שו"ת משאת בנימין writes not to make *kiddush* before *tzais*. Based on his concept, the *achronim* don't allow even davening before *tzais*. And as I said, the Yaavetz and many others have difficulty with this *psak*. One famous Rav who was close in time to the משאת בנימין, the author of יוסף אומץ, quotes this *minhag* from Rav Yakov Falk and he says that he never saw any of the great distinguished rabbis of his time observing this *minhag*.

The custom today is to wait till *tzais* to daven and then make *kiddush*; however, based on the above, many great *poskim* like Rav Ovadya and Ashkenzic *poskim* permit making *kiddush* before *tzeis* when needed, such as in areas where the night is very late, and certainly one can be *maykil* in nursing homes.

Although there are other attempts to resolve this puzzle, I want to suggest my own answer to the contradiction in the words of the Taz. Since the days of *sefirah* are designated to purify and cleanse our *middos*, then every second of each day of *sefirah* is precious, and is needed in order to be ready for *Shavuos*. Therefore, although technically you can accept *Shavuos* early, but if you do so, you will be missing a few minutes of the days of *sefira*, and the lesson is as *Chazal* say, את קונה עולמו בשעה אחת you can acquire your life in one minute.

just so you should know...



Milchigs and fleishigs on Shavuos – What You Need to know

~Night Kollel~ ~Kollel Boker~

by Rabbi Nachum Scheiner, Night Kollel & Morning Kollel



There is a well-known custom to eat *milchigs* on the *yom tov* of *Shavuos*. Whether you fulfill this custom with a small *milchig kiddush* or a five-course dairy meal, it is universally accepted to partake in some dairy on this *yom tov*. What about waiting after *milchigs*? Is there any reason to wait before starting to eat meat? Let us first clarify the *halacha* for all year around and then we can see if *Shavuos* is different.

The *Shulchan Aruch* writes clearly that it is not necessary to wait at all after eating *milchigs*, as long as the other rules – cleaning one's mouth and hands – were followed. The *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* also writes that it is not necessary to wait.

But the *Shelah Hakadosh*, after discussing the *minhag* of eating *milchigs* on *Shavuos*, writes that one should also have meat to fulfill the *mitzvah* of *simchas yom tov*. He points out that one must be careful to fulfill the *minhag*, while keeping the *halacha* properly. He explains that this means doing *kinuach* and *hadacha* – cleaning one's mouth and hands – **as well as bentsching and waiting an hour**, and then putting out a new tablecloth.

This concept of waiting is based on the *Zohar*, which is quoted by the *Gra*, that one who eats meat and milk within the same hour will have a picture of a goat on his face for forty days. Since the *Zohar* does not differentiate between if it was milk after meat or meat after milk, it seems clear that, according to the *Zohar*, one should wait after milk, as well. The *Gra* adds that this is not necessary according to *halacha*, but is a *chumra* of the *Zohar*. The *Kaf Hachaim* adds that one who has *yiras shamayim* should wait.

Waiting a half hour

There is a widespread *minhag* to wait a half hour after eating *milchigs*. There are different reasons given for this *minhag*. The *Shevet Halevi* and *Teshuvos V'hanhagos* suggest that this comes from the fact that a half hour is *halachically* considered in close proximity. Waiting a half hour is a way of keeping the *milchigs* and *fleishigs* separate.

Rav Belsky explained this in a similar fashion. He says that the aforementioned *Zohar* writes that one should not eat milk and meat in one hour. He suggests that when the *Zohar* uses the expression of "an hour," it does not necessarily mean an hour on the clock, but rather not to eat both within one "time period." Since we find that, *halachically* speaking, more than a half hour is considered to be in a different time period, waiting a half hour would suffice.

Bentsching or Brocha Achrona

If one has a *milchiga kiddush* is it necessary to recite a *brocha achrona*, before eating *fleishigs*? The *Issur V'heter* writes clearly that there is no need, and one can eat both in the same meal. This is also the opinion of the *Magen Avraham* and the *Mishna Berura*.

However, the *Beis Yosef* refers to the stringency of the *Zohar*, mentioned above, that one who eats meat and milk within the same hour – **or in one meal** – will have a picture of a goat on his face for forty days. By reciting the *brocha achrona*, the meal has ended and the *Zohar's* requirement has been fulfilled. The *Darkei Moshe* and the *Gra* also make mention of this. The *Pri Megadim* also writes that, after *milchigs*, one should *bentsch* before eating meat, even on *Shavuos*.

Rabbi Nachum Scheiner

מוהל מומחה

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Shavuos

There are those that say that on *Shavuos*, one can rely on certain leniencies more than the rest of the year. The source for this is the *Kol Bo*. The *Chok Yaakov* adds that there are those who allow having *milchigs* and *fleishigs* in one meal, without waiting at all in between. The *Pri Megadim* writes similarly that some are lenient and suffice with reciting the *brocha achrona* after *milchigs* and immediately start the *fleishiga* meal. The Noam Elimelech (*Parshas Mishpatim*) also mentions that some don't wait on *Shavuos*, although they wait the rest of the year.

The *Chok Yaakov*, however, concludes that the *poskim* agree that one should not be any more lenient on *Shavuos* than they are the rest of the year. The *Shelah Hakadosh* mentioned above – discussing the *minhag* of eating *milchigs* on *Shavuos* – also holds the same, spelling out the requirement to **bentsch and wait an hour**. The *Mishna Berura* – quoting the *Pri Megadim* – also writes emphatically that one should keep all the rules and regulations of separations between *milchigs* and *fleishigs*, not allowing the *minhag* to cause a violation of *halacha*.

Summary

According to *halacha*, there is no need to wait after *milchigs*, as long as the other rules – cleaning one's mouth and hands – were followed. But, based on the *Zohar*, some *bentsch* and wait an hour or at least a half hour. While some are more lenient on *Shavuos*, the *poskim* conclude that we should keep all the rules and regulations of separations between *milchigs* and *fleishigs*, and not allow the *minhag* to cause a violation of *halacha*.

Rabbi Scheiner

KOLLEL BOKER | 7:00-8:00am

- Chavrusa learning - Gemara
- Currently: מסכת מועד קטן
- Friday - Shuirim Beinyonei Dyoma and relevant topics

NIGHT KOLLEL | 8:15-9:45pm

- Chavrusa learning - Halacha
- Currently: הלכות קידוש

SHIURIM BY ROSH KOLLEL & FEATURED GUEST SPEAKERS

- Daf Yomi | 8:45-9:45pm
- Mishna Yomis | 8:45-9:00pm

- ZERA SHIMSHON SHIUR | 8:15-9:00pm Thursday Nights

ADDITIONAL LEARNING PROGRAMS:

- Yarchei Kallah / Shuirim on Legal Holidays - by acclaimed Guest Speakers
- Yeshivas Bein Hazmanim
- Yeshivas Kiyumu v'Kiblu / Purim Shushan Purim
- Shovevim Program / Early Friday morning learning b'retzifus.
- Evening Shuirim in Halacha and Hashkafa by prominent Morei Horah



The Proposal

There is an enigmatic Talmudic passage explaining a peculiar phrase in the Torah reading of Shavuot, from the portion of Yisro: "They (the Jewish people) stood in the bottom of the (Sinai) mountain"

What is the meaning of the words "in the bottom of the mountain"? The Talmud explains that the Jews were actually standing inside the mountain. "G-d enveloped them with the mountain as though it was an upturned vat, and He said to them: "If you accept the Torah, fine; if not, this will be your burial place."

The event at Sinai is viewed as the marriage ceremony between G-d and the Jewish people. Imagine a groom, who on the day of his wedding, placed his bride under an elevator and declared: "If you marry me, great; if not, the elevator will come down on your head." How enduring can such a relationship be? Couldn't G-d have found a more "romantic" way to convince the "bride" to marry Him?

What is even more puzzling is the fact that according to the biblical narrative, the Jewish people had already expressed their willingness to accept the Torah before this event. Why was it necessary for G-d to coerce them into something they had already agreed upon?

Let us present the explanation offered by one of the greatest spiritual masters of all time, the Baal Shem Tov.

Numb Days

There are days when we are emotionally in touch with our inner idealism, spirituality and G-dliness. At such times we are inspired to live deeply and to love deeply.

But then come the days when we feel estranged from our souls. We are emotionally numb, experiencing ourselves merely as self-centered and materialistic creatures seeking to satiate nothing more than our momentary cravings. We are simply not in the mood for our higher, refined aspirations. G-d does not appeal to us. At such times of spiritual alienation, we often succumb to mundane and selfish behavior. Since we feel disconnected, we act as though we are indeed disconnected.

This is a mistake. By G-d forcing the Jewish people to enter into the relationship – even though they had already agreed – He demonstrated to them the truth that their relationship was not based on the fact that they were consciously passionate about it.

Instead, the relationship was inherent and essential to their very chemistry. Man is an innately sacred and Divine creature. "Even when you are not in the mood of me" G-d was intimating, "our relationship is as strong as ever. You can act on it."

Yet you may still think, "Fine, I will behave, but let's face it, the relationship is not happening. It is all but dead." So G-d says "no." By placing the mountain on their heads at the moment of Revelation, during the profoundest moment of intimacy between G-d and his people, G-d was saying that a relationship inspired by the knowledge that this is the truth, though you may not feel it, is a genuine and authentic relationship. It is a real union.

Though there is no passion, when you behave in a moral and sacred fashion knowing that this is who you really are, it is a true bond.

I don't feel like spending time with my children right now. I do not feel like going to the wedding. I do it anyway. But I feel it is lifeless and devoid of meaning. So the Torah says: Not at all. It is real, authentic and valuable. What I feel or don't is never the barometer of whether it is right or wrong.



Rabbi YY Jacobson

Never confuse your moods with your values. I may not be in the mood of something, for 1000 different reasons. That does not diminish in the slightest my inner connection to it: it remains my value, my innate desire and commitment.

Rocky Moments

In the Jewish tradition, the marriage of each man and woman reflects the cosmic marriage between G-d and His people. There are days when we feel truly grateful for our spouses and experience deep love towards them. At such times we crave to give of ourselves to our spouses and make their lives happier.

But at other times, we become cold and apathetic. We just want to do "our own thing" and simply are not in the mood of the relationship. Sometimes, a marriage goes through tough seasons.

In the majority of cases, it would be a sad error to act upon those feelings of detachment. The Kabbalah teaches that a wife and husband are essentially "two halves of a single soul" At their core, they are one. Thus, when a couple enters into marriage, it needs to recall what G-d reminded us on the day of His marriage: Whether we are in the mood of each other or not, we are married, and we are one.

Such a commitment could save many marriages when they encounter rocky times. After all, it saved the marriage between G-d and the Jews.

Womens Shiur **Tuesday** 9:30am (18 Main)
Chassidus Shiur **Monday & Thursday** 7:45am (18 Main)
Shabbos: Friday Night – before Barchu (20 Upstairs)
Morning 8:40 (20 Upstairs) | After Davening 12:00pm (20 Upstairs)
Please Note: Rabbi Jacobson's Shabbos morning shiur will now begin at 8:40 am, followed by the Minyan at 10:00 am.

UFARATZTA



To someone who asked if he should learn alone or with a chavrusa:

... It is a known *Mishna* that one of the forty-eight things that the Torah is acquired through is *dibuk chaverim* – studying together. Therefore, the right way is to learn with a *chavrusa*. Yet it is self-understood that you should not hold back from learning, even if you don't have a chaver to learn with. *Chazal* already said that even when one person is sitting and learning, the *pasuk* says about him: "I will come to you and bless you..."

==== *Igros Kodesh V11 P172.*



בס"ד

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הלכות שבת קידוש

יום ד' פרשת בהעלותך

Wednesday, June 19

18 Main Bais Medrash

9:00 PM



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ראש ישיבת היכל התורה בציון

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יום ב' פרשת בהעלותך

Monday, June 17

Tent 4

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18 Main

Bais Medrash



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Begins Sunday, June 16

יום א' פרשת בהעלותך

Days and Weeks Rabbi Zvi Sobolofsky

As *sefiras hamoer* reaches its culmination, we are actually concluding two different counts; Chazal (*Menachos* 66a) teach us that there are two parts to this *mitzvah*, i.e. the counting of days and the counting of weeks. These two dimensions of *sefiras hamoer* conclude with the *yom tov* of *Shavuos*, which celebrates the completion of both days and weeks. Although we are all familiar with the one-day celebration of *Shavuos* (with a second day outside of *Eretz Yisroel*), during the time of the *Beis Hamikdash* there was an entire week of celebration. Specifically, if a person couldn't bring the *korbanos* of *Shavuos* on the first day, there was a week of *tashlumin* to make up these *korbanos*.

The *Ohr Sameach* suggests that there may be *halachic* ramifications that emanate from the dual count. The counting of days which culminates in the one-day celebration of *Shavuos* does not depend on the *Beis Hamikdash*, as this one-day celebration occurs in all places at all times. Therefore, the counting of days is a *mitzvah d'oraysa* even today. The counting of weeks, on the other hand, which concludes with the week-long celebration in the *Beis Hamikdash* does not apply *midioraysa* today in the absence of *Beis Hamikdash*. This is the rationale for the view of *Rabbeinu Yeruchum* who maintains that, in fact, the counting of days today is *midioraysa*, whereas the counting of weeks is *midirabanan* as a *zecher lamikdash*.

These dual aspects of counting go beyond the actual *mitzvah* of *sefiras hamoer* and subsequent celebration on *yom tov*; there is a fundamental distinction between the unit of time of a day and that of a week. Days correspond to the physical reality of the earth rotating on its axis. Other units of time, such as a month and a year are also rooted in the world of astronomy – a month measures a lunar cycle and a year

measures the earth's revolving around the sun.

A week, however, corresponds to nothing in the physical universe. The unit of a week only has meaning because Hashem created the world in six days and sanctified the seventh. The counting of days relates to this world, whereas the counting of weeks belongs to the world of *kedusha*. Counting of days can exist even without a *Beis Hamikdash*, whereas the counting of weeks is in the realm of the *Beis Hamikdash*. *Shavuos* is the culmination of both counts, because the essence of *zman mattan Torahseinu* is our ability to count both days and weeks.

Chazal relate to us how the angels tried to dissuade Hashem from giving the Torah to the Jewish People. It was only the response of Moshe that we, as human beings, need the *mitzvos* of the Torah which are not relevant for pure, spiritual beings such as angels, which ended the argument in favor of giving us the Torah. On *Shavuos* we celebrate our ability to infuse *kedusha* into a physical world, our ability to combine the counting of weeks to complement our counting of days.

As we approach the *yom tov* of *Shavuos*, we realize that our ability to truly transform our physical world into a world of *kedusha* is inhibited by our lack of a *Beis Hamikdash*. Chazal understood that even without an actual *Beis Hamikdash* we must continue to count weeks, albeit as a *zecher lamikdash*. It is our constant yearning to once again have a *Beis Hamikdash* that keeps us focused on the fact that our physical world is not yet complete. As we anticipate the counting of weeks and the celebrating of the entire week of *Shavuos* in the *Beis Hamikdash*, we look forward to the day when *kedusha* will infuse our physical world. When Hashem returns to us that opportunity, *zman mattan Torahseinu* will have finally achieved its goal. May we merit that day very soon.

Second Day Schedule ב"ה

יום ב' ד'שבועות - Thursday

Minyan	Time	Locations
Megilas Rus Yizkor		
Shacharis (Vasiklin) Neltz 5:23	4:45 am	20 Upstairs
Shacharis	8:00	18 Main
Shacharis	9:45	Tent א
Bals Chabad Shacharis Yizkor 11:30	10:00	20 Upstairs
Shacharis	10:30	18 Main
Zman Krias Shema	8:14/9:09	
Mincha Followed by Neilas Hachag	8:10 pm	Tent א
Bals Chabad Mincha Followed by Neilas Hachag Farbrungen with Rabbi Jacobson	7:00	20 Upstairs
Shkiah	8:29	
Maariv	9:10 9:15	Tent א 18 Main
Bals Chabad Maariv	9:21	20 Upstairs

Erev Yom Tov & First Day Schedule ב"ה

יום א' ד'שבועות - Tuesday-Wednesday

Minyan	Time	Locations
For early Mincha schedule, please see page 6		
Mincha	8:15 pm	Tent א
Bals Chabad Mincha Followed by Maariv	8:20	20 Upstairs
Candle Lighting	8:11	
Shkiah	8:29	
Maariv	9:14	Tent א
Shacharis Pre-Neltz	4:20 am	Tent ט
Shacharis (Vasiklin) Neltz 5:23	4:45	Tent א
Shacharis	9:45	Tent א
Bals Chabad Shacharis Aseres Hadibros 11:15	10:00	20 Upstairs
Shacharis	10:30	18 Main
Zman Krias Shema	8:14/9:09	
Mincha Followed by Maariv	8:10 pm	א Tent
Bals Chabad Mincha Rabbi Jacobson will speak Followed by Maariv	8:20	20 Upstairs
Shkiah	8:29	
Candle Lighting	After 9:19	(50 min)

Saved from the Throes of the Sea

“אדרת אליהו - 6:25 יאר ד' פניו אליך ויחנך” – *“May Hashem illuminate His countenance toward you, and endow you with grace.”*

Eisav wanted to be the ruler over Yaakov, for the *posuk* says, “בבד את אביך ואת אמיך,” and the *Gemara* in *Kesubos* 103a says that the “את” comes to include the *bechor* – that the *bechor* is also to be honored; thus, Yaakov must honor the *bechor*, Eisav. However, when *Klal Yisroel* is toiling in the *Torah Hakdoshah*, Eisav’s argument does not apply, for Yaakov would have a better reason that Eisav actually must honor him.

The *posuk* in *Devorim* 6:13 says, “את ד אלקיך תירא” – and the *Gemara* on *Pesachim* 22b says that the word, “את” in the *posuk* comes to include a *talmid chochom*; one must be in awe of, and honor, a *talmid chochom*. When there is a younger brother who is a *talmid chochom*, his older brother is obligated to honor him. Although there is the *drosha* of “את” to teach us that the older brother should be honored, nonetheless, the honor of the Torah is more important, and thus the older brother needs to give *kavod* to his younger brother, the *talmid chochom*. Chazal also tell us that it is in the *zechus* of the *Torah Hakdoshah* that the *geulah* will come, as the *posuk* in *Vayikra* 16:3 says, “בזאת יבא אהרן אל הקודש”. The *Midrash* tells us that, “בזאת” – in the *zechus* of the Torah, which is called, “יבא אהרן אל הקודש”, “זאת” – Aharon will be *zoche* to go into the *kodesh*, with the coming of the *Geulah*.

Yaakov and Eisav made a deal to split the two worlds: Yaakov got *olam haba*, and Eisav got *olam hazeh*. If Eisav received *olam hazeh*, then how can *Klal Yisroel* have any benefit from *olam hazeh*? Without the Torah, there would not be a world. Since without the Torah study of Yaakov, *Klal Yisroel*, there would not be a world, that means that Eisav’s world is lost, and *Klal Yisroel* is saving it. Since *Klal Yisroel* are the ones giving life to this world, they are entitled to it, as the case of זוטו של ים, stated in *Bava Metzia* 24a. If someone rescues an object that is not his from the throes of the sea, he is allowed to keep it. Since it was in the sea, it was lost from the person who originally owned it, so someone who saves the object is allowed to keep it.

The same applies with *hana'ah* of matters of this world, *olam hazeh*. “יאר ד' פניו אליך” – through the light of Torah, much good will come upon *Klal Yisroel*: Firstly, “יאר” – they will be saved from the dominion of other nations, for since they have the Torah, the other nations need to have *kavod* for them, as the Torah says, “את” – “את ד' אלקיך תירא” – to include *talmidei chachomim*. If they need to honor the *talmid chochom*, they certainly are not allowed to subjugate them. Additionally, learning Torah will cause, “ויחונך” – that *Klal Yisroel* will be *zoche* to the *geulah*. Thirdly, “ישא ד' פניו אליך” – *Klal Yisroel* will be *zoche* to great riches and wealth even in this world, for since it is their Torah that is keeping the world going, it is like the case of זוטו של ים – and thus *Klal Yisroel* are *zoche* to *olam hazeh*.

RABBI BEN ZION SNEH



The Right Stuff

In *Pirkei Avos*, Shamai says: One must learn Torah, making it the most important thing in one’s life. Speak little and accomplish much. But lastly, treat all people with respect and honor them no matter who they are.

We can learn much from the juxtaposition of all of Shammai’s statements.

Yes, we must learn Torah, understanding that it is important. So important that the world itself rests upon our learning of the Torah.

We must not brag about our learning, we must speak little and accomplish much, Shamai tells us. *Middos* are important – don’t think you are better than everyone else if you take the time to work on yourself. Remember, humility is a worthy goal, sterling *middos*, and *kabbalos* or resolutions – are all wonderful and praiseworthy, the right things for us to concentrate on.

But, once we start to grow, we should never become haughty and think that we are better than others who have not undertaken to learn and to correct their *middos*, because that would be inconsistent with the Torah itself!

We must treat all people with respect. If we honor and love our fellow Jews we will accomplish much. Our Torah learning and the good *middos* we strive to perfect should never ever lead to us demeaning anyone!

Sefirah is over. But we still need to work on our *middos*. Let’s work on one important one.

Being nice!

Good Shabbos! Good Shabbos!

Future Leaders

Rabbi Yissocher Frand



Megillas Rus begins with the narration that a man from Bethlehem in Yehudah went to live in the fields of Moav, because of the famine in Eretz Yisrael. Chazal, our Sages, criticize this person for abandoning his people in their time of need and fleeing with his family to Moav.

When the *Megillah* first tells us of this person's departure, he is mentioned anonymously ('a man'). However, we do not remain guessing about his identity for very long. In the very next verse we are told that "The name of the man is Elimelech".

The question can be asked, why not write this story more 'economically' and tell us the name of the man and what he did in one *pasuk*? Why the mystery in the first *pasuk*, followed immediately by the revelation of his identity in the second *pasuk*?

It is interesting that the very same type of sentence construction occurs in a different place in the Torah: "And a man went from the House of Levi and he married the daughter of Levi" [Shmos 2:1]. The Torah later identifies these mysterious individuals as Amram and Yocheved, the parents of Moshe. So, again, why the initial anonymity? Why not say straight out "And Amram went and married Yocheved"? The Baal HaTurim in Shmos points out that these two places are the only times in Tanach where the Torah uses the expression "And a man went" (*vayelech ish*).

The Baal HaTurim comments that the *pasuk* "A man went from the Tribe of Levi" brought about the first redeemer (Moshe) and the *pasuk* "A man went from Bethlehem Yehudah" led to the final redeemer (Moshiach – who will descend from King David, a descendent of Rus).

The Shemen HaTov elaborates on this Baal HaTurim. The person who produces the Redeemer can be an anonymous person. One does not need to be the great leader of his generation — an Amram or an Elimelech — to produce the Redeemer. Any Jew is capable of producing a child who will be the greatest personage in his generation and in fact a Redeemer. One does not necessarily need to be great himself or have superior lineage or wealth or power. Any anonymous Jew can potentially produce the future leader of the Jewish people.

Birkat Kohanim and Shabbat

Rabbi Eli Mansour



The Torah in *Parashat Naso* presents the *mitzva* of *birkat kohanim* – the special blessing with which the *Kohanim* are to bless the people each day. G-d introduces this *mitzva* by saying to Moshe, "Speak to Aharon and his sons, saying: So shall you bless the Children of Israel – say to them, 'G-d shall bless you and protect you...'"

Rashi notes the unusual verb form used in this verse reference to the *kohanim's* blessing – "*Emor*." To explain the meaning of this word, Rashi comments that it resembles two famous terms used in reference to the *mitzvah* of *Shabbat* – "*zachor*" ("remember") and "*shamor*" ("observe"). Grammatically, this means that the word "*emor*" connotes consistency, that is to say, the *kohanim* should always use this text when blessing the people, just as "*zachor*" and "*shamor*" require us to always have the observance of *Shabbat* on our minds throughout the week, on an ongoing basis.

The question remains, however, as to why Rashi brought specifically these examples of this grammatical construction. There are other instances in Tanach where this verb form appears. If Rashi chose to cite the examples of "*zachor*" and "*shamor*," it appears that he found some connection between *Shabbat* and *birkat kohanim*.

The *Kedushat Tziyon* (Rav Bentzion Halberstam, the second Rebbe of Bobov, 1874-1941) explained that *Shabbat* is unique among all the sacred days we observe in that it is determined entirely by G-d. All the holidays are observed on specific dates on the calendar, and thus they depend on the monthly declaration of the new month made by the Sanhedrin (the highest Rabbinical court; nowadays, we use the fixed calendar system instituted by the great sage Hillel). *Shabbat*, however, occurs every seventh day without any input whatsoever from the Jewish People. It arrives entirely independent of anything we do.

For this reason, the *Kedushat Tziyon* explains, Rashi alluded to a comparison between *birkat kohanim* and *Shabbat*. The *Midrash* notes that the *mitzva* of *birkat kohanim* might mislead us into thinking that the Jewish People's blessing depends on the *kohanim*, that they are empowered to bring us prosperity and success. But this is incorrect, and in fact, G-d concludes the command of *birkat kohanim* by proclaiming, "*Va'ani avarechem*" – "And I will bless them." For reasons which we do not necessarily understand, G-d wanted the blessing to come through the *kohanim*, but the source of the blessing is G-d, not the *kohanim*. When the *kohanim* bless us in the synagogue, it is really G-d who is giving us *beracha*.

This is the connection between *Shabbat* and *birkat kohanim*. Although we are obligated to observe *Shabbat*, it is sacred regardless of what we do; similarly, although the *kohanim* bless us, the blessing in truth depends on G-d.

We must never belittle the importance of *birkat kohanim*, whereby we receive a *beracha* directly from G-d. Many people will travel across the world to Israel to receive blessings from famous Rabbis, but they do not have the patience to wait in the synagogue until *musaf* on *Shabbat* to receive an extra blessing from G-d Himself. Each day, we are given a special privilege to receive a *beracha* from G-d Himself. Let us take advantage of this opportunity by attending the service and paying close attention to this *beracha*, so we will be the beneficiaries of the greatest blessing at all – the blessing that comes directly from G-d, the source of all blessings in the world.

**הרה"ג ר יצחק בוילן ר"מ ישיבת מקור התורה
עם משב"ק הרה"ק מריבנץ ר' משה הערש בערקאוויטש**



LEARNING GEMATRIAS AT OHR CHAIM



NIGHT KOLLEL



RABBI DANIEL GLATSTEIN SPEAKS
ABOUT PREPARING FOR KABBALAS HATORAH



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הערות הרב חיים קנייבסקי של הפרשה

למנוח אדרבה היה מרבה את המחלוקת שהיה טוען אח"כ לעומתה ראי שגם המלאך אומר כמותי... רק יבוא אל החייב ויסביר לו כי אינו צודק ושיודה לזכאי, ועל ידי כך יבוא השלום ביניהם.

וכך היה מעשה אצל מרן החזון איש זצ"ל שהייתה מחלוקת גדולה ומרן זצ"ל סבר כצד אחד שהוא צודק, ושלה להודיע לזה שאינו צודק – שהוא אינו צודק, ולא שלח להודיע לצודק את צדקתו.

בני כמה הם היו מנוח ואשתו? מסתמא מבוגרים. וכבר אמרנו כי כתוב שבפי שמתנהג בגיל 8 כך יתנהג בן 80. אבל עם תורה אפשר לשנות ולהשתנות גם בזמן קצר.

עוד אמר רבנו "ותאמר לו אשתו לו חפץ ה" ובחז"ל אמרו שמנוח היה עם הארץ שלא הבין את מה שהיא הבינהו צריך בירור לשם מה כתב הנביא את הפרט הזה שהוא היה עם הארץ. והתשובה: ללמדנו שאדם צריך להיזהר בדיבורו עם אשתו. אילו ידע מנוח שזה יכתב לדורות כמה היה נזהר מלדבר!

יימחה שמי על המים

"לימדה אותך התורה שתהא וותרן בתוך ביתך, נשפך היין הוי וותרן [מדרש רבה נשא].

רבנו היה מבכה ומצטער על מריבות שמתייצבות בפתחי בתי ישראל, ודמעותיו על לחייו כאשר שומע את צערם. והוא גם הורה על מי לוותר ומתי לוותר.

סיפרתי לרבנו אודות זוג שמצבם בשלום בית חמור מאד וכבר מדברים על גט.

"לא יודעים היום כיצד להתנהג. צריך לוותר ולוותר. בדרך כלל החיכוך בא על דברי שטות. לאשה קשה יותר לוותר, ועל הבעל מוטל לוותר! הכל מתחיל ממה שאמרה איזו מילה שפגעה בו וכדומה

בן תורה צריך לדעת לוותר."

יש במדרש רבה [נשא פרשה ט, ב] על הפסוק "איש איש כי תשטה אשתו, לימדה אותך התורה שתהא וותרן בתוך ביתך, נשפך היין הוי וותרן וכו' וכן נשפך שמנך וכו', נקרע כסותך וכו'. אבל אם שמעת דבר על אשתך - קום כגבר, למה שגבר את".

ומפורש במדרש שבכל מה שנוגע לגשמיות – עליו לוותר, ומה שנוגע לרוחניות - צריך שתהיה איש!

באורחות צדיקים כתב: איך שאדם מתנהג בן 8 כך יתנהג בהיותו בן 80. טבע קשה לשנות.

המשיך רבנו וציין זהירות נוספת בענין השלום. היה ויכוח בין מנוח ואשתו, הוא אמר כי היא עקרה - ולכן אין להם ילדים, והיא אמרה שהוא עקר, והייתה ביניהם מחלוקת. והמלאך בא לשים שלום ביניהם – ולהודיעה לה כי היא עקרה, ולכן דיבר עמה ואמר לה "הנה נא את עקרה" ולכן אמר "נא" בלשון בקשה כמי שאומר אל נא תריבי עם בעלך תדעי שאת העקרה.

ופסוק זה בא ללמד אותנו, כי הרוצה להשלים בין בעלי מחלוקת, לא יבוא אל הזכאי לומר לו אתה הצודק, שאילו היה בא המלאך

Deep Diving into Megillat Rut Rabbi Sacks

BACKGROUND

The story of Ruth is one of the most beautiful in the Bible. It begins in dislocation and grief. Famine leads Elimelech, together with his wife Naomi and their two sons, to leave their home in Bet Lechem, to go to Moav to find food. There, the sons marry Moavite women, but all three men die, leaving Naomi and her two daughters-in-law childless widows. Naomi decides to return home, and Rut, who had married her son Machlon, insists on going with her. There, in Bet Lechem, in a field at harvest time, Rut meets a relative of Naomi's, Boaz, who acts kindly toward her. Later at Naomi's suggestion, Rut asks him to act the part of a kinsman-redeemer. Boaz does so, and he and Rut marry and have a child. The book that begins with death ends in new life. It is a story about the power of human kindness to redeem life from tragedy, and its message is that out of suffering, if transformed by love, can come new life and hope.

The commentators make two primary connections between Rut and *Shavuot*. The first is seasonal. The key events in the

book are set during the barley and wheat harvests, the time of the counting of the *Omer* and *Shavuot* itself. The second is substantive. Rut became the paradigm case of a convert to Judaism, and to become a convert you have to enter the covenant of Sinai with its life of the commands: what the Israelites did when they accepted the Torah on the first *Shavuot*.

THE BOOK OF LOYALTY AND LOVE

All three *megillot* read on the pilgrimage festivals are about love: the stages of love as we experience it in our growth from youth to maturity to old age. The Song of Songs, read on Pesach, the festival of spring, is about love in the spring: the passion between two lovers that has nothing in it of yesterday or tomorrow but lives in the overwhelming intensity of today. The book is structured as a series of duets between beloved and lover, their voices loaded with desire. There is nothing in it about courtship, marriage, home-building and having children: the world of adult responsibilities. The lovers long simply to be together, to elope.

Donor and Recipient Rabbi Efrem Goldberg



In a mind-boggling statistic, Orthodox Jews represent 0.2% of the US population and yet make up almost 20% of altruistic kidney donors. This past Shabbos, our community hosted an incredible partnership weekend with Renewal that included a panel discussion with members of our community who have donated their kidneys and one member whose life was saved by receiving a kidney. At the energized concert with Eitan Katz on Motzei Shabbos, one of our members met his donors parents for the first time. The parents used the public setting to express endless gratitude for his having saved their daughter's life.

Listening to the donors describe what giving a kidney meant to them and speaking with our member who had now connected with the family of the girl who carries a piece of him in her, it became clear that while the kidney donors heroically answered the call to give, they had received even more than they gave.

When Rus courageously and selflessly follows her mother-in-law Naomi, they are destitute and impoverished. Rus finds a generous benefactor who invites her to glean from his field and brings the food back to Naomi to share with her. Naomi inquires about the identity of the benefactor and Rus offers a peculiar answer:

וְתֹאמַר לָהּ חֲמוּתָהּ אֵיפֹה לָקַחְתָּ הַיּוֹם וְאָנֹכִי עֹשִׂיתִי יְהִי מְכִירְךָ בְּרוּךְ וְיִתְגַּדַּל לְחֲמוּתָהּ אֶת אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתָה עִמּוֹ וְתֹאמַר שָׁם הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי עִמּוֹ הַיּוֹם בְּעַד:

Her mother-in-law asked her, “Where did you glean today? Where did you work? Blessed be he who took such generous notice of you!” So she told her mother-in-law whom she had worked with, saying, “The name of the man that I gave to today is Boaz.”

Shouldn't it say the man who did something for me, who gave to me, not the man I did something for, gave to? After all, Boaz was the donor and Rus the recipient of his generosity, why did she formulate it in the reverse?

The Midrash explains:

תְּנִי בְּשֵׁם רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, יוֹתֵר מִמָּה שֶׁבַעֵל הַבַּיִת עוֹשֶׂה עִם הָעֶנִי, הָעֶנִי עוֹשֶׂה עִם בַּעַל הַבַּיִת, שֶׁכֵּן אָמְרָה רִוּת לְנַעֲמִי שֵׁם הָאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי עִמּוֹ הַיּוֹם, וְלֹא אָמְרָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה עִמִּי, אֲלֵא אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי עִמּוֹ, הִרְבָּה פְּעוּלוֹת וְהִרְבָּה טוֹבוֹת עָשִׂיתִי עִמּוֹ בְּשֶׁבִיל שְׁהֵאֲכִילֵנִי פְּרוֹסָה אַחַת.

The poor person does more for the rich person than the rich

person does for the poor person. We derive this from Rus's statement to Naomi, “the name of the man with whom I dealt today [is Boaz].” Rus did not say “the name of the man who did something for me, but rather, “I did for him”, [as if to say] “I did so much for him, did so much good for him, all for a single piece of bread” (Rus Rabbah 5:9).

We often mistakenly think that the person in position to give resources or time or energy is the blessed donor, generous, selfless in sharing what they have with those less fortunate or blessed. And we often assume the recipient is the nebuch, the one in need, dependent, and taking from others. The Torah tells us to reject those assumptions. The person in a position to share gains more than they give when they turn outward and care about others, when they find purpose for their possessions and meaning, and a mission for their talents. The recipient may need a particular kindness, but by graciously agreeing to receive and to accept help, they empower, enrich, and enable the other become who they are supposed to be and live the life they are meant to live.

Rus introduced us to a new perspective on chesed, demonstrating that it isn't one directional, there isn't a clearly defined generous donor, a giver on one side, and a nebuch recipient, a taker on the other. Rather, chesed goes in two directions, each one gives and each one receives, together they gain when they graciously coordinate to provide what the other is lacking: one tangible and the other something even more valuable.

The Rama quotes the Avudraham who tells us that we have the custom to read the Megillah of Rus on Shavuot. The Midrash notes that there are no new laws in the Megillah but we learn from it the reward for genuine chesed, the foundation upon which the whole world rests and the prerequisite to the Torah.

There are no shortage of opportunities to warm others from inviting and hosting, cooking meals, checking in on others, contributing to causes and volunteering time. When you give of yourself or your resources you will realize that when you warm others you are warming yourself and that while you think you are the donor, you may just be the recipient who has won the lottery

Kohelet, read on *Succot*, the festival of autumn, is about love in the autumn of life, as the heat cools, light fades, the leaves fall, and clouds begin to hide the sun. “Live well, with the woman you love,” says *Kohelet* (9:9). This is love as companionship, and it is rich in irony.

Ruth is about the love at the heart of Judaism, the love of summer, when the passion of youth has been tamed and the clouds of age do not yet cover the sky. Ruth is about love as loyalty, faithfulness, committing yourself to another in a bond of responsibility and grace. It is about caring for others more than you care about yourself. It is about Ruth setting her own aspirations aside to care for her mother-in-law Naomi, bereaved as she is of her husband and two sons. It is what Boaz does for Ruth. The root a-h-v, “love,” which appears eighteen times in the Song of Songs, appears in Ruth only once. By contrast, the words chessed, loving-kindness, and the verb g-a-l, “to redeem,” do not appear at all in the Song of Songs, but figure in Ruth respectively three and twenty-four times.

Ruth invites us to reframe Shavuot, seeing the making of the covenant at Sinai not simply as a religious or political act, but as an act of love – a mutual pledge between two

parties, committing themselves to one another in a bond of responsibility, dedication and loyalty.

The covenant at Sinai was a marriage between God and the Children of Israel. The covenant at Sinai was a bond of love whose closest analog in Tanach is the relationship between Boaz and Ruth.

One of the most sustained libels in religious history was Christianity's claim that Judaism was a religion not of love but of law; not of compassion but of justice; not of forgiveness but of retribution. The book of Ruth, read on *Shavuot*, is the refutation. Judaism is a religion of love, three loves: loving God with all our heart, our soul, and our might (*Devarim* 6:5); loving our neighbor as ourselves (*Vayikra* 19:18); and loving the stranger because we know what it feels like to be a stranger (*Devarim* 10:19).

Judaism is, from beginning to end, the story of a love: God's love for a small, powerless and much afflicted people, and a people's love – tempestuous at times to be sure – for God. That is the story of Ruth: love as faithfulness, loyalty and responsibility, and as a marriage that brings new life into the world. That is the love that was consecrated at Sinai on the first *Shavuot* of all.

PRIORITY NUMBER ONE

Chofetz Chaim Heritage Foundation

Preparing for Kabbalas HaTorah is the perfect time to set priorities. Interrupting Torah learning is known throughout the Torah observant world as something that should be avoided when at all possible. There are stories of gedolim sitting glued to their Gemaras as air raid sirens wail and as Nazis storm into the room. We even learn in Pirkei Avos (3:7) that a person should not interrupt his Torah learning to admire nature – Hashem’s creation!

But as this story of Rav Yehuda Addas teaches us, there’s a mitzvah that does in fact call for us to put our learning aside: One Thursday night, the entire Yeshiva Kol Yaakov was assembled in the beis medrash, avidly listening to the weekly Gemara shiur of their Rosh Yeshivah, Rav

Yehuda Addas. The *talmidim* sat silently, concentrating on the Rosh Yeshivah’s brilliant words, when a poor man walked in. “I have no food for Shabbos,” the man announced to those assembled in the room. The *talmidim* watched and waited to see how the *Rosh Yeshivah* would react. But they did not have to wait long. He reached into his pocket and pulled out a stack of cash. Handing it to one of the students, he said simply, “Please give this to the man.” It was enough to cover most of the man’s Shabbos expenses for that week. The shiur moved on as if nothing had happened. Amazingly, to the students, it was the *shiur*, not the poor man’s request, that had been put on hold.

The Power of a Smile

Hebrew Academy of Cleveland



It says in parshat Naso: Bnei Yisrael did so; they expelled them to the outskirts of the camps, as Hashem had spoken to Moshe. (5:4)

The Sifsei Kohen views this *pasuk* as an enormous accolade regarding the character of *Klal Yisrael*. The nation sent out from their camps only those individuals who were so enjoined by Hashem. The *zav* was sent out only from two camps: *Shechinah* and *Leviah*. *Machane Yisrael* welcomed both him and the *metzora*, despite the nature of their diseases. They did only what Hashem had asked of them – and no more. They could easily have said, “Why should we allow the *zav* and *metzora* – individuals whose illnesses are repulsive in nature and who are ritually contaminated – to remain in our camp? Why should we expose our families to them?” They did not, because they cared; they empathized; they were *Yidden*.

Let us see how this attitude plays out in the afterlife, when our *neshamah*, soul, ascends to its rightful place, but must first present itself before the Heavenly Tribunal before it may enter.

Nachum was a simple, decent Jew, a carpenter by trade. He earned a simple living, paid his bills and had very little to do with anyone. In fact, for all intents and purposes, Nachum viewed himself as a *klumnick*, a nothing, who had no effect on anyone. He sat in the back of the shul in a nondescript area. He garnered no attention to himself, because, after all, he was a *klumnick*. (Sadly, we all know somebody who views himself this way.)

Nachum’s earthly journey came to an end, and he was summoned to the World of Truth, where the true essence of an individual is illuminated. As his soul was drawing closer to

the gates of *Gan Eden*, he saw throngs of Angels standing at attention to accompany him to his ultimate place. He questioned this, “Why would such a crowd of Angels gather for a *klumnick* like me?”

The Tribunal began to play a “film” of his life. In the images before him, he observed himself entering the *makolet*, grocery store, early in the morning and bidding “*Boker tov*, good morning!” with a smile to the proprietor. The film demonstrated the positive effect of that smile. The storekeeper worked hard all day, with little appreciation for his toil. People rarely found time to compliment him, but Heaven help him if something was not perfect. As a natural reaction, the storekeeper was rarely in a good mood. All day, he was compelled to listen to the harangues of those who felt they must release their pent-up anxieties and tension on someone, and who was a better candidate than the storekeeper?

But Nachum’s smile at the beginning of the day warmed the storekeeper’s heart and allowed him to be tolerant of every malcontent that “graced” his threshold. As a result, the people discovered that the storekeeper did not react negatively to their diatribes. He smiled back. A smile can be infectious, and so it was. Nachum smiled – the storekeeper smiled – the customers smiled! This continued on all day – everyday, all because Nachum, the *klumnick*, started a positive chain reaction of smiles! The Tribunal turned to Nachum and asked, “Do you still think that you are a *klumnick*?”

The change was brought on by a smile. Nachum smiled, despite circumstances that were not always favorable. He did not permit the situation to determine his smile. His smile defined the situation.

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The Wedding *Rabbi Gutman / Torah Tavlin*

Morei v'Rabbosai ... guess what? *Shavuos* is here and all our preparations for this *Yom Tov* are in high gear. Okay ... but what exactly are our preparations? What must we do for this great holiday? We are not busy cleaning, organizing, shopping, etc., as we do for weeks in advance of *Chag HaPesach*! (Yes, you can let out that sigh of relief!) We are also not busy building *sukkos*, choosing *arba minim*, or hanging inexplicable decorations that our kindergartners have brought home – not to mention the countless other activities involved in *Sukkos* preparation! We don't eat extra food in order to fast the next day, nor do we polish our *Menorahs* and replace the broken glass cups from the previous year. So then, the question begs to be asked: How exactly do we get ready for *Shavuos*? And to that end, what exactly is the special and unique *mitzvah* that characterizes the *Yom Tov* of *Shavuos*?

Interestingly enough, *Chag HaShavuos*, one of the holiest and most meaningful days of the year, has no special *mitzvah* other than what we are commanded on all our *Yomim Tovim*: "to rejoice!" To eat delicious feasts, to drink wine and to truly feel happy! Why is this and nothing else - our sole obligation on *Shavuos*?

The answer is that *Shavuos* is the day that Hashem looks to see if we are ready to "tie the knot"! It is the day of the great *chasuna* between Hashem and His beloved *Klal Yisroel*! Any matchmaker will tell you that a marriage is not valid without the full consent of both parties. If one side is not ready – say they have "commitment issues" – there can be no marriage! Each side must profess a solid love and willingness to go forward with the nuptials.

For this very reason, there are no extra *mitzvos* on this day. It is the day for us to do one thing and one thing only: To show Hashem how much we love Him! It is a time to show how excited and privileged we feel to be chosen as His bride! On *Shavuos*, each and every member of the Jewish People gets to choose to be married to the Holy One blessed be He through our own free choice! We get to express our consent to the marriage to make it valid! The level of our enthusiasm and eager anticipation will say a lot about our level of love and closeness to our Groom.

In essence, the preparation for *Chag HaShavuos* began seven weeks ago, on the first day of *sefiras haomer*. For just as a bride needs time to prepare herself for her special day, so too, the bride that is *Knesses Yisroel* begins that special countdown to this Great Event! The holiday itself is called *Shavuos*, which means "weeks," for it is the anticipation and yearning to be Hashem's beloved bride, during the seven weeks that we count the omer, that will determine our true *Yom Tov* experience! So, let us all focus on our love of Hashem, feel a deep appreciation for this unbelievable opportunity and recognize the privilege that we have to live a life of Torah and *Mitzvos*. But most of all let us REJOICE!! That's the *mitzvah* of the day! It's our wedding – so let's ENJOY IT!





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JOKES

Customer Support

One caller to our phone support service gave me his name, number and message and then said, "You know my name. What's yours?"

"We're not allowed to give our names," I replied, "but my operator number is 4136"

Sounding disappointed, he said, "May I call you by your first digit, or would that be too personal?"

One-liners

People who are wrapped up in themselves are overdressed.

An expert is someone called in at the last minute to share the blame.

A word of advice... don't give it.

If we made it illegal, do you think more people would vote?

I am logged in... therefore, I am.

A journey of a hundred miles starts with an argument over how to load the car.

Justice is blind and in some cases... deaf and dumb.

To belittle is to be little.

When fear knocks at the door, and you answer, there will be no one there.

Poverty is a condition with but one advantage, it doesn't take much to improve your lot.

The first rule of tinkering is to save all the parts.

A pessimist is a man who looks both ways before crossing a one-way street.

Once you pass 40, your "big break" will probably be a bone.

Politics isn't about hunger or taxes or equality... it's about politics.

Management's job is to keep 'em too busy to look for other jobs.

Heredity is what sets the parents of a teenager wondering about each other.

Why are lawyers not sworn to tell the truth like all the witnesses in a jury trial?

Leftovers

Two wives were bemoaning their husbands' attitudes towards leftovers:

"It gets rough," one said. "My husband is a quality control engineer and he calls them

rejects!"

"You think you have it bad," was the reply. "My husband is a mortician. He calls them remains!"

Word Plays

~ A man rushed into the doctor's office and shouted, "Doctor! I think I'm shrinking!" The doctor calmly responded, "Now, settle down. You'll just have to be a little patient."

~ Evidence has been found that William Tell and his family were avid bowlers. However, all the league records were unfortunately destroyed in a fire. Thus we'll never know for whom the Tells bowled.

~ Back in the 1800's the *Tates Watch Company of Massachusetts* wanted to produce other products and, since they already made the cases for pocket watches, decided to market compasses for the pioneers traveling west. It turned out that although their watches were of finest quality, their compasses were so bad that people often ended up in Canada or Mexico rather than California. This, of course, is the origin of the expression, "He who has a *Tates* is lost!"

~ A famous Viking explorer returned home from a voyage and found his name missing from the town register. His wife insisted on complaining to the local civic official, who apologized profusely saying, "I must have taken Leif off my census."

Music Director

During rehearsal, the high school Music Director was beside himself. The cymbal player in the band was constantly coming in at the wrong time with his cymbal clash. The young man maintained that his entry point gave a much better effect, and that he wouldn't play the piece as written. When the Music Director was asked by the Principal the next day why he fired the young musician from the band, he replied,

"It was a simple case of cymbal disobedience."



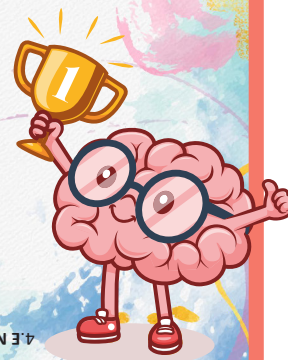
BRAIN TEASERS

What word in the English language does the following: The first two letters signify a male, the first three letters signify a female, the first four letters signify a great, while the entire word signifies a great woman. What is the word?

What English word has three consecutive double letters?

What disappears as soon as you say its name?

What are the next three letters in this combination?
OTTFSS



Answers: 1. Heroine 2. Bookkeeper 3. Silence 4. E N T (Each letter represents the first letter in the written numbers: One, Two, Three, Four, Five, etc.).

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Regarding Israel
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