



SHAVUOS

THE KEDUSHA OF THE DAY

What happens when two *tzaddikim* and *mekubalim* of the stature of Reb Shlomo Alkabetz and Rav Yosef Caro spend the awe-inspiring night of Shavuos together in Tzfas?

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 sections of the Torah. [These sections 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 *minyana*. 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 *minyana*.

"That night, because of our joy at having a *minyana*, 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 conducting ourselves with especial *kedusha* on this night."

(של"ה הקדוש מס' שבועות נר מצוה ה')

The Frieddiker 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' וד' סיון)

"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 מוה"ש ע' 73)

The Frieddiker 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)

RECEIVING THE TORAH

The Frieddiker 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 קין ה'ש"ת ע' 116, תש"ג ע' 129)

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 Frieddiker 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)

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)

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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CURRENT EVENTS

ט"ז סיון



TRAINING TO DO SURGERY

May a student doctor perform surgery (under the supervision of an experienced doctor) in order to gain experience, if it will necessitate putting the patient under general anesthesia for a longer period of time?

- This question was posed by a doctor before Rav E. Y. Waldenberg¹, author of *Tzitz Eliezer*. The questioner reported that there is a risk associated with a general anesthesia, and that surgery done by a student doctor would take longer than if done by an experienced one. It would follow that the patient would be under a general anesthesia for a longer period of time, resulting in an increased risk factor.
- The Shulchan Aruch rules² that one should only engage in the medical profession if he is proficient and if there is no doctor available who is more competent. One who ignores these provisions, is considered to have engaged in murder.
- Though most of our doctors today are **not** the top in their field, it is permitted for them³ to perform routine procedures based on accepted methods. [Furthermore, since it is impossible for the best doctor to see every patient and not everyone can afford his fee, a doctor who is not top of his field may also make more complicated medical decisions]. Likewise, it would be permitted for a medical student to administer routine medical care under supervision when there is no additional risk factor.
- In our scenario, where a more skilled doctor is at hand, and prolonging the time the patient would need to be under a general anesthesia would increase the risk factor, Rav Waldenberg categorically forbade the student doctor to perform a surgery.
- The doctor then questioned that this *psak* left no opportunity for student doctors to gain experience, which is vital to enable them to help others in the future. Rav Waldenberg replied that nevertheless this does not give him the right to endanger the life of the patient upon whom he desires to practice.
- Rav Waldenberg proposed three possible solutions for a student to gain experience:
 - (1) If the law of the land permits such a practice, one would be permitted to follow it in the case of operating on a non-Jew, being that the course of action regarding his medical treatment is determined only by secular law.
 - (2) Practice with surgeries that only require a local anesthetic.
 - (3) Additionally, if prolonging the general anesthesia will not involve a greater risk to the patient, it would be permitted.

1. שו"ת ציץ אליעזר ח"ד סי' פד-פה
2. יו"ד שלח ס"א
3. ספר רמת רחל שבציץ אליעזר ח"ה סי' כב

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

RASHBATZ

R' Shmuel Betzalel Sheftel, known among Chabad *chassidim* as the "Rashbatz", was one of the prominent *chassidim* of the Tzemach Tzedek, Rebbe Maharash and Rebbe Rashab. In the publications of "Hatomim", the Frieddiker Rebbe describes the amazing journey he took as a young man from his *misnagdishe* town to Chassidus Chabad and the Tzemach Tzedek. The Rebbe Maharash entrusted him with the education of his son, the Rebbe Rashab, who later on entrusted him with the education of his son, the Frieddiker Rebbe. In the year תר"ס (1900), he was appointed as the leading *mashpia* of Tomchei Temimim, a position which he kept until his last day. He was *niftar* of the 15th of Sivan תרס"ה (1905) and was buried, according to his wish, within 50 *amos* of the *ohel* of the Tzemach Tzedek and the Rebbe Maharash.



The Rebbe Rashab said: The Rashbatz is a *penimi*; he lives with a *vort*. Each concept, however deep it may be, the Rashbatz makes into a *vort* which encompasses the inner light of the matter. With this *vort* he davens, goes to bed, falls asleep, and with this *vort* he arises.

(סה"ש תש"ז ע' 136)



The Frieddiker Rebbe recounts: My teacher the Rashbatz came to Lubavitch for the first time on Friday *Parshas Mishpatim* תר"ח (1848), and in later years, he would call this day his "birthday." Every year on Thursday night of *Parshas Mishpatim*, he would stay awake all night, keeping a clock in front of him on the table. When it would strike two o'clock a.m., he would say, "At this time I set out to go to Lubavitch!" and when the clock would show 4:30 a.m., he would say, "At this time I crossed the threshold of the Rebbe's shul!". Every year on Friday *Parshas Mishpatim*, he would make sure to don *tefillin* at the exact time that he had gone into the Tzemach Tzedek for *yechidus* for the first time.

(אג"ק מוהרי"צ ח"ג ע' תה)

לזכות ר' שלום מרדכי הלוי שי' בן רבקה

A MOMENT WITH THE REBBE

EVERYTHING MUST BEGIN WITH TORAH

Reb Leibel Kaplan was a *yungerman* in the *Kollel*. On *Tes Zain Tammuz* 5733, he was called to the Rebbe's room and told the following:

"The north of Eretz Yisroel is distant from the centers of *yiddishkeit* in the land. It is vitally important to create a *ruchnius'dike* center in the north, most naturally in *Tzefas*. The *Kiryas Chabad* will be a center of *yiddishkeit* for the entire surroundings. "Since everything must begin with Torah," the Rebbe continued, "therefore, the foundation of the *kiryah* will be with the establishment of a *kollel*."

Within two weeks, Reb Leibel was already in *Tzefas*, to be followed by his wife ten days later. A month later, the *Tzefas Kollel* was opened with ten *yungerleit*.

It is said that when the *Yom Kippur* war broke out a few months later, and the Rebbe was asked to daven for the northern border, the reply came, "In the north we already have an outpost..."



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