



A LESSON FOR SHAVU'OS

Just You!

We customarily scatter [flowers and] greenery on Shavu'os, in synagogues and homes... and in many places they have the custom of eating dairy foods on the first day... (Shulchan Aruch, O.C. 494:3)

WHAT'S THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THESE TWO customs?

Rabbi Shim'on ben Eliezer says: Ezra decreed that Israel should read the curses in [Parashas B'chukosai, in Vayikra] before Atzeres [a.k.a. Shavu'os] and those in [D'varim] before Rosh Hashanah.

RABBI TZVI FISHMAN



Why? Abaye said—some say it was Reish Lakish—so that the [old] year and its curses will be finished.

...But is Atzeres the beginning of a new year? Yes... for the fruit of the trees. (Talmud, Megillah 31b)

IT FOLLOWS, THEN, THAT WE SHOULD READ Parashas B'chukosai and then celebrate Shavu'os. Why do we interrupt this sequence with Parashas B'midbar?

Take a census (lit., "raise the head") of all of the Children of Israel. (1:2)

This shows us that, from the start, the main theme of Parashas Bamidbar is counting the *Yidden* (the Jews), one by one.

Why is it so important to count every *Yid*?

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein explains that, when you count every single person, it shows the *chashivus*, the significance, of every *Yid*. No matter his status—young or old, poor or rich, successful or unsuccessful—every *Yid* is a world in himself and special in the eyes of Hashem. The Baal Shem Tov once said that every *Yid* is considered a *ben yachid*, an only child, in the eyes of Hashem.

The nature of a person is to look at others and their accomplishments, and to lament: "Look how successful he is! But I am not!"

The Torah's response is, "Se'u es rosh kol Adas Yisroel—lift up the head of every single *Yid*," as if to emphasize how special he is. Realize how he serves Hashem; focus on his talents. The same Hashem who created the smarter mind created the weaker mind.

One Purim, Reb Naftali of Amsterdam visited his mentor, Rabbi Yisroel Salanter, and he started to cry: "Rebbe! If only I

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A TIMELY HALACHA

RABBI CHAIM HEINEMANN

Birchos haTorah on Shavu'os Morning

One of the biggest questions that arise on Shavu'os morning is whether one who did not sleep may recite *Birchos haTorah*, the blessings recited every morning before one learns Torah. The issue is as follows: Jewish law (O.C. 47:13) states that one recites *Birchos haTorah* upon awakening in the morning. Some say that someone who was awake all night is not required to recite the blessings, since there has been no *hefsek* (interruption, i.e. of sleep) since the blessings which were recited the previous morning (see *Magen Avraham* 47:12 and *Chayei Adam* 9:9). Others maintain that *Birchos haTorah* were instituted to be recited every day and, accordingly, new blessings should be recited, even if one hasn't slept. (M.B. 47:28)

Therefore, it is advisable and customary to do one of the following:

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SHAVU'OS 5777 AT THE KOLLEL

EREV YOM TOV TUESDAY, MAY 30

8:40 MINCHA

9:50 MA'ARIV

TIKKUN LEIL SHAVU'OS
CHAVRUSA LEARNING ALL NIGHT

12:45-1:45 AM GEMARA SHIUR
(SUGYOS OF MATAN TORAH)
RABBI CHAIM HEINEMANN,
IN THE BACK OFFICE

ORGANIZED LEARNING FOR BOYS
IN GRADES 4-8 - BY RSVP ONLY

1-1:45 AM RABBI MOSHE TZVI CRYSTAL
2-2:45 RABBI MOSHE FUCHS
3-3:45 RABBI DOVID TZVI MEISSNER
4-4:45 RABBI TZVI FISHMAN

FIRST DAY WEDNESDAY, MAY 31

5:30 AM SHACHARIS

6:12 AM SUNRISE (HENETZ)

5:00 PM FATHER & SON LEARNING (AT CZE)

SECOND DAY THURSDAY, JUNE 1

7:15 PM MINCHA FOLLOWED BY LEARNING
& NETILAS HACHAG

9:50 PM MA'ARIV

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to all the volunteers and contributors
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A TIMELY HALACHA

CONTINUED

- 1) Listen to the blessings recited by someone else who had a proper night's sleep. The person who recites the blessings should know that he is representing the listener, and the listener should have intent to fulfill his obligation this way. After responding "Amen," the listener should say a few Torah verses. (M.B. 47:28)
- 2) Sleep on a bed, for at least half an hour, on Erev Shavu'os. As long as one doesn't learn Torah immediately after Ma'ariv on Shavu'os night, he may recite *Birchos haTorah* the next morning. (Rabbi Akiva Eiger 4:12; M.B. 47:28)
- 3) Have in mind while saying "Ahavah Rabbah" (the blessing immediately before the *Sh'ma*) during Shacharis to fulfill the requirement of *Birchos haTorah*, then learn a bit after davening. (O.C. 47:7, M.B. 47:13)
- 4) Some hold that one can have in mind, when saying *Birchos haTorah* on the morning before Shavu'os, that the blessings will only cover his learning until dawn of the following day—at which point, he will be required to recite the blessings again. (*Doleh U'mashkeh*, p. 198; *Halichos Shlomo*, *Tefillah* 6:3; and Rabbi S. Elyashiv, as quoted in several sources)

Just You! CONTINUED

would have the heart of [the author of] the *Yesod V'shoresh Ha'avodah* (a guide to serving Hashem with pious devotion), the mind of [the legal authority who wrote] the *Sha'agas Aryeh*, and your character, then I would be special. Please help me!"

Reb Yisroel Salanter answered, "No, Naftali. With *your* heart, and *your* mind, and *your* character you should serve Hashem."

Before the festival celebrating our acceptance of the Torah, the Evil Inclination might try to sway a person, asking, "What's your connection to Torah? You don't learn

KOLLEL DIRSHU NEWS

We look forward to beginning Maseches Makkos this Monday morning, June 5. We plan to finish by Rosh Chodesh Elul.

Newcomers are welcome! Please speak to Rabbis Katzman and Preis. 🥂

GREAT ACTS OF ORDINARY PEOPLE

WHEN RABBI BERKOWSKY LEFT LITHUANIA AT the turn of the century, he was hired by a shul in Monticello, New York, as the *mohel*, *shochet*, and *shammash*. He eventually scraped together enough money to bring over his family. Now known as Reverend Berkowsky, he tried to imbue his children with authentic Torah values that could withstand the apathetic climate in America.

When 19-year-old Esther Berkowsky interviewed for a job at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory, she was informed that she would be required to work on Shabbos.

Esther badly needed the money, and she had many friends who violated the Shabbos.

But she remembered the sacrifices of her parents, who had told her that the Torah was not given in a particular city or country, but in a wilderness, to show that it must be observed anywhere. Despite the temptation, she declined the job.

That Shabbos afternoon, March 25, 1911, a fire ravaged three floors in the 10-story building, and 146 people perished—most of them young women.

That same day, shuls throughout the world read the following verse (Sh'mos 35:3),

MAZAL TOV!

- To **Alter & Chana Raubvogel** and family, on the birth of a boy.
- To **Rabbi Michael Soroka and Ari Rubinoff**, who have completed their study of Mishnayos Maseches B'rachos.

as much as that Torah scholar. Your mind is weaker than everyone else's. Your character traits need a lot of help. You have nothing to do with accepting the Torah."

Says Rav Moshe, that's exactly why, after putting our misfortunes behind us, we preface Shavu'os by reading Parashas Bamidbar: To teach us that every single *Yid* is counted and is special in Hashem's eyes.

We also see this in the customs of Shavu'os. Flowers are beautiful naturally, just the way Hashem created them. They don't need any enhancements. The same

LAST WEEK IN JEWISH HISTORY

RABBI MOSHE TZVI CRYSTAL

On **26 Iyar, 5621 (1861)**, Dr. David Camden De Leon was appointed by President Jefferson Davis as first Surgeon General of the Confederacy. Born in South Carolina into a prominent Sephardic Jewish family, De Leon graduated from the University of Pennsylvania Medical School in 1836 and then joined the U. S. Army. He earned the nickname "Fighting Doctor" in the Mexican War, for leading two cavalry charges after the commanding officer was incapacitated. Although he opposed secession, Dr. De Leon resigned his commission in the U. S. Army to serve the Confederacy, as did most Southern officers. As Surgeon General, he organized the Confederate Medical Department.

The Union Surgeon General was another Jew, Dr. Jonathan Horowitz. 🥂

in Parashas Vayak'hel: "*Lo s'va'aru aish b'chol moshvosaichem b'yom haShabbos*—you shall not kindle fire in any of your dwellings on the Shabbos day." 🥂

is true of milk—just milk the cow, and you have a delicious drink in your pail, no cooking required.

This is also the way *you* were created by Hashem. Every *Yid* is full of talent and greatness—of the potential to grow as a servant of Hashem. Look at the flowers, enjoy the cheese cake, and focus on the talents and gifts that Hashem gave you!

With such a mindset, you can celebrate Shavu'os with great excitement and merit to receive the Torah once again! Have a good Yom Tov. 🥂



Mazal tov—
l'chaim!