



Torah Bytes

A weekly Dvar Torah on the Parsha by Rabbi Dovid Horwitz
and the Rabbanim of the Ra'anana Kollel
Shavuot 5784



RA'ANANA COMMUNITY KOLLEL

In the merit of our soldiers and captives

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Issue 36

There is a famous question asked by the Magen Avraham, one of the major commentaries on the Shulchan Aruch. Based on the Gemara in Shabbat that describes the events of Matan Torah, the Jewish people left Egypt on a Thursday and the Torah was given to the Jewish people on Shabbat.

Originally, Hashem had wanted to give us the Torah on Friday after two days of spiritual preparation, however, Moshe asked Hashem for a third day for them to prepare and to purify themselves. As a result, Hashem gave them the Torah one day later than He intended. Accordingly, the Torah was actually given to us on the 51st day of the Omer which was on the seventh of Sivan.

We of course, celebrate the Chag of Shavuot on the 50th of the Omer, the sixth of Sivan. This in and of itself, is not problematic, for it does not state anywhere in the Torah that the Chag of Shavuot was given to us to commemorate the giving of the Torah at Har Sinai. The problem is that our Sages have linked the two together in a firm bond. In all of the prayers we daven on Shavuot, we mention the fact that this is the festival of the giving of the Torah! The Magen Avraham questions why our Sages linked them when indeed we observe Shavuot one day before we received the Torah at Har Sinai.

Another point to ponder is why that if, as our Sages say, the festival is a celebration of the Torah, why does the written Torah itself not reveal this fact to us. Regarding Pesach, the Torah states that it is a commemoration of leaving Egypt. Sukkot is to commemorate the tents of glory that Hashem sheltered us in as we travelled through the desert. Why does the Torah hide this fact regarding the chag of Shavuot? And if indeed the Torah does feel the need to hide this fact, why did our Sages reveal it?

Rav Yitzchak Arama, the author of "Ha'akeida" answered that all

of the other festivals were given to us to commemorate a one time event and therefore it is sufficient to celebrate them once a year. Receiving and studying the Torah is not a one time event. Once it was given to us, it was meant to remain with us every single day forever and ever. The receiving of the Torah was not a historical event, a miracle that was needed in order to save us from our enemies, or to show Hashem's love for us. The event at Har Sinai was the start of a perpetual relationship with the Torah that needs to be cultivated every single day.

Had the Torah mentioned that the festival of Shavuot serves to commemorate the receiving of Torah, it would imply that it is sufficient to receive, study and exalt it once a year. Just as we do not give a second look at Matzah 51 weeks out of the year, we would, G-d forbid, not give Torah its proper honor the rest of the year. Therefore, the Torah itself hides the fact that Shavuot is the time we received the Torah, for in truth, from that point in time onwards, we have been receiving the Torah anew every single day! Therefore affixing a date to Torah would be detrimental to our observance of it.

With this in mind, we can answer the Magen Avraham's question! For some reason, our Sages felt that the later generations needed to know that Shavuot is a celebration of the receiving of Torah, despite the fact that the written Torah felt the need to conceal it. However, in order that we shouldn't fall into the trap of thinking that celebrating the Torah is sufficient only on this day, they deliberately chose the **wrong** date to celebrate!

By choosing the wrong date, they are telling us that there is no right day to study and embrace Torah and there is no wrong day. Every day is the right day for it is an everlasting covenant between the Jewish people and Hashem! The Torah is our tree of life and we must cling to it, study it, and cherish it every day of our lives!

Not Just Another Joe

The Gemara states that there is a dispute among the Sages whether a Jew must divide his Yom Tov between spiritual matters, such as davening and learning Torah, and physical ones, such as eating festive foods, etc. One Tanna says that a person could choose to devote the entire day to Hashem, neglecting his material pleasures, whereas the other claims that we need to indulge in both. Regarding the chag of Shavuot, however, all agree that we need to enjoy the festival with physical pleasures as well as spiritual ones. One would think that from all of the festivals, it

would be Shavuot that one could devote solely to Torah and tefilla! Why is it that this is the one festival that all agree must also appeal to one's physical side? The message is clear! The Torah is not only good for our souls; it is good for our bodies as well. Living a life of Torah not only guarantees us spiritual reward in the world-to-come. Living Torah also gives fulfillment and meaning to our physical lives. As Rav Yosef says, "If it weren't for this day (of receiving the Torah), how many Joes would there be in the marketplace!" The Torah enhances our lives in this world too!

Lectures for Men & Women Shavuot night!

1:00 am Of Mice & Minyan at KLR

2:00 am Gog uMagog at KBA

3:00 am Are Two Crowns Better
than One? at Leibadik

4:00 am Group learning at KLR

with Rabbi Dovid Horwitz



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LEIL SHAVUOT LEARNING PROGRAM

SHIURIM SCHEDULE

- 11:45 R Grant Leboff
- 12:30 am Rav Harry Amdurer
- 01:15 am Uriel Gochin
- 02:00 am Rav David Horwitz
- 02:40 am R Baruch Lipman
- 03:20 am Ilan Chasen

04:00
Special Guest Speaker
4:40 am Vatikn Shachrit,
starting with Megilat Rut

TEL CHAI 6
Youth learning with Rabbi Gibli 1.45 am till late.