



A collection of
Torah thoughts
produced by the
Kollel

חידוש Chiddush

אין בית המדרש בלא



LAG BAOMER 5774

Farbrengen

Kollel Lag Baomer celebrations started on Shabbos with a Chassidische Farbrengen in the Kollel Minyan.

Rabbi Winner farbrenged with the mispallelim and bochrin, continuing until Mincha. He spoke about the Rashbi as the true example of Tzaddik Hador.

Avos Ubonim

Motzai Shabbos was a special Avos Ubonim program. Over 50 boys came to learn, with special Lag Baomer learning provided.

Family Celebrations

This was followed by a family BBO and bonfire run in conjunction with Yeshivah Shule. Over 150 people participated in the festivities complete with a jumping castle, live music and videos of Lag Baomer parades with the Rebbe playing throughout the night.

Proceeds of the BBO will be used to support our amazing Avos Ubonim program.

Strengthening the Shlichus

Finally on Sunday afternoon and the Great Parade, the Kollel families came together for a BBO hosted by the Herbst family.

The focus of the evening was to inspire the Yungeleit in their Shlichus of spreading Torah and Chassidus within our community.

In this issue

Dayeinu **P.1**

Flowers on Shabbos & Yomtov **P.2**

Dayeinu

At the Pesach seder, when singing Dayeinu we say *if only He had brought us close to Har Sinai and not given us the Torah - Dayeinu, it would have been enough for us.*

The whole purpose of coming to Har Sinai, indeed the very reason for Yetzias Mitzrayim was to receive the Torah. How could it be that coming to Har Sinai without receiving the Torah would be sufficient?

On Rosh Chodesh Sivan Bnei Yisroel arrived at Har Sinai. The Gemora relates that over the next few days Moshe instructed the people on how they were to prepare for receiving the Torah.

The second day of Sivan is known as *Yom Hameyuchas*, when Hashem communicated His love for the Jewish people, describing them as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, *גוי קדוש*, ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש.

On the 3rd of Sivan Moshe told the Jewish people about the Mitzvah of Hagbala, to fence off the mountain and not to ascend it. Finally on the 4th of Sivan Moshe instructs the men to separate from their wives for a 2-day period to be able to receive the Torah in purity. This would be the 4th and 5th of Sivan.

On Shabbos, the 6th of Sivan Hashem descended onto Har Sinai and gave the Torah.

On Rosh Chodesh, the day the Jewish people arrived at Har Sinai, Hashem did not issue any directives or commands. The Gemora says that this was due to the *חולשא דאורחא*, tiredness from the journey. Hashem gave Bnei Yisroel a chance to rest.

The Rebbe questions why this rest was necessary. They had not travelled a great distance from Refidim. Nor did they travel at a rapid pace. The question is even more significant according to Rabbi Yosi who records that Rosh Chodesh Sivan was a Sunday. Bnei Yisroel had already received the Mitzvah of Shabbos at Marah. Why after an entire day of rest on Shabbos would they be tired and weary the following day?

Their weariness, concludes the Rebbe, was not from a physical journey but a spiritual one. Each of the 42 travels through the desert, from Mitzrayim to Eretz Yisroel represents different stage of spiritual growth and development.

The spiritual ascent achieved on the day of their arrival at Sinai was particularly strenuous.

The Torah describes how on their arrival at the foot of Har Sinai, *ויחן שם*, they camped there. From the use of the singular form, *Chaza"l* deduce that they camped in a state of absolute unity, *כאיש אחד בלב*, like one people with one heart. This is in contrast to their other journeys and campings which were mired with *machlokes*.

Chaza"l describe not only a superficial or external unity *אחד כאיש אחד*, but also a deep inner oneness, *בלב אחד*. Achieving such a degree of love and unity takes tremendous inner strength and *Avodah*.

אחלשא can also mean weakness. When each person is resolute and stands strong in their opinions, *achdus* is not achievable. True *achdus* is achieved through humility. This is also the message of Har Sinai, the smallest and humblest of mountains.

So great is peace amongst the Jewish people, that if only they came to Har Sinai to achieve this level of unity, *Dayeinu*, it would have been sufficient in and of itself, irrespective of what would happen 6 days later.

Each year as Rosh Chodesh Sivan comes around and we prepare ourselves to reaccept the Torah, the first and most important is to strengthen our love and respect for others. By 'weakening' ourselves, letting go of our stubbornness and arrogance we make room to accept others and their differences. If this was our sole achievement, *Dayeinu!*

May we be *zoche* בתורה בשמחה ובפנימיות and in a true spirit on oneness merit the *Geulah Shelimah* ותורה חדשה מאתי תצא ■



TORAH & CHEESECAKE

All men and women are invited to a pre-Shavuos shiur with Rabbi Y. Johnson.

Discover the deepest secrets of the custom of eating Milchigs on Shavuos and inspire yourself for Yomtov.

Enjoy a slice of cheesecake and coffee as well.

Sunday Sivan 3, June 1 - 8:00pm in the ORZ Mezzanine

TIKKUN LEIL

The Kollel will be hosting an array of fascinating topical Shiurim to keep you awake through the night. See the notices for all of the topics.

Starts 12:00am in the Kollel following the program in the Shule.

Shiurim are for men and bochurim and refreshments will be served through the night.

WINTER LEARNING

The countdown is on. Rabbi Ari Shishler returns to Melbourne for our Annual Winter Yarchei Kallah.

2-days of learning and discovery, with morning and evening sessions, amazing presenters and engaging topics.

See all the topics and download the schedule at www.WinterLearning.com

June 8-9 is a long weekend and the schools and kinders are open (Monday) making it the perfect time for moms and dads to come and learn.

Hundreds came last year. This year will be even better. Come along and invite your friends and family too. You won't want to miss it.

TRAINING SESSION

Rabbi Velly Slavin presented a workshop to the Kollel Rabbis on preparing and delivering effective adult education.

This is part of the Kollel's program of equipping our future Shluchim with real-life skills to assist them as they take up their future positions.



On Shavuos many have the custom of decorating the Shule and home with flowers¹. This is to recall the miracle that Har Sinai sprouted with grass and flowers in honour of Matan Torah². Another reason for the minhag is because the Gemora teaches that with the statement of each of the *Aseres Hadibros* the world became perfumed with a beautiful fragrance³.

The Magen Avrohom also records the custom of placing trees in the Shule. This is because on Shavuos we are judged for the fruit of the trees⁴. The Vilna Gaon⁵ nullified the custom of placing trees on Shavuos since it resembles the non-Jewish practise (Chukas Hagoy) of placing trees on their festivals. Chabad custom is not to decorate the Shule with plants.

Many families buy flowers for the home in honour of Shavuos and certainly flowers are a regular adornment to the home in honour of Shabbos and Yomtov.

Below we will explore some of the halachos relevant to flowers on Shabbos and Yomtov.

Muktzah: Flowers which were bought or picked before Shabbos for decorating the home are not Muktzah⁶. This is because they have become designated from before Shabbos as an adornment and become a functional item. This is opposed to general plant matter which is completely Muktzah, whether attached or severed from the ground.

Placing Flowers in Water: The Shulchan Oruch⁷ rules that one may 'place' flowers into water on Shabbos. This ruling is subject to the conditions described below.

Not Fully Bloomed: The Ram"o⁸ clearly states that **flowers which are not fully open may not be placed in water**. Nor may they be returned to

Flowers on Shabbos and Yomtov

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

water or even have water added to them. This is forbidden both on Shabbos and Yomtov. The reason is that the water causes the flowers to open. The *meloch* of *Zoreia* (planting) includes any action which hastens the growth of a plant. In this case, since the flowers are detached from the ground, the *issur* would be Rabbinic.

Therefore when moving a vase with flowers which have not fully opened, they should be moved slowly and gently. Sharp movement which would cause the water level on the plants to splash higher would be problematic.

Other Plants & Flowers: The discussion below is specifically about flowers which are fully opened, or decorative leaves and branches which do not have flowers.

The Mishna Berura⁹ explains that the Shulchan Oruch only permits one to *return* flowers to the water that they were in beforehand. (Flowers can be removed from a vase on Shabbos¹⁰). Placing flowers into water for the first time on Shabbos would be forbidden. Similarly changing the water or adding more water to flowers in a vase on Shabbos would be forbidden. This is because of performing an extra *Tircha* to preserve the flowers.

The Alter Rebbe also prohibits the adding or changing of water on Shabbos because of *Tircha*. However, if there was already a vase or bottle/jug of water from before Shabbos, the Alter Rebbe allows flowers to be placed into it (even for the first time) on Shabbos. This is because no *Tircha* is involved. This follows the more literal understanding of the Shulchan Oruch quoted above¹¹.

According to this opinion, if someone brought flowers on Shabbos one could put them into a vase of water which had other flowers in it already. One could also prepare a vase of water before Shabbos in anticipation of guests bringing flowers on Shabbos.

All of the above applies equally on Yomtov with one difference: On Yomtov according to all opinions one

can add more water to a vase of flowers¹². Only up to half the original water may be added¹³.

Smelling Flowers: One is permitted to smell flowers on Shabbos even if they are still attached to the ground. However, fruit which is attached to the tree cannot be smelled since it could lead to picking¹⁴. Whenever smelling any fragrant flower, fruit or herb, cut or attached, the appropriate *brocha* should be recited.

Attached Flowers: There is a Machlokes whether flowers and soft herb plants while attached to the ground are Muktzah. The Mishna Berura¹⁵ is lenient. The Alter Rebbe however paskens like the Magen Avrohom and considers any attached plant to be Muktzah.

Arranging Flowers: One should not arrange a bouquet of flowers on Shabbos or Yomtov. This is considered *מתקן* - making a vessel on Shabbos¹⁶.

It is important to note that the discussion until now is only about flowers in water. Pot plants have an entirely different set of Halachos which will *iy"H* be discussed in a future Chiddush edition. ■

¹ Ram"o Orach Chaim 494:3 based on the Mahari"l records the minhag of spreading plants on the floor. Other customs were to place plants and flowers on the sides and on top of the Aron Kodesh. Bnei Yissaschar records the minhag of adorning the Sefer Torah with a crown of roses.

² Levush as seen from the fact that the Torah forbade the animals from grazing on Har Sinai.

³ Therefore the plants or flowers should be fragrant. Another reason for the minhag found in Chiddushei HaRim is that on the 6th of Sivan Moshe was placed in the reeds of the Nile.

⁴ See Shulchan Aruch Harav 494:15. Other reasons for the custom is because the Torah is referred to as an *עין* *עין*.

⁵ See also Aruch Hashulchan, Mishnah Berurah and Chayei Adam 131:13.

⁶ For this reason the plants may be spread out in the Shule on Yomtov itself. See Shulchan Aruch Harav 494:14.

⁷ See Ram"o O.C. 336:11.

⁸ *ibid.* See also Mishna Berura and Shulchan Aruch Harav.

⁹ O.C. 336:54. This is the opinion of the Chayei Adam.

¹⁰ Shemiras Shabbos Kehilchasa quoting Rabbi S.Z. Auerbach.

¹¹ The Alter Rebbe's opinion is also held by the Pri Megadim (Eshel Avraham 13). The Shaar Hatziyun writes that this opinion can be relied upon.

¹² O.C. 654 based on the Mishna Sukkah 42a concerning a Lulav on Yomtov.

¹³ Aruch Hashulchan 654:2. Adding more than half would be akin to replacing the water entirely.

¹⁴ See Shulchan Oruch O.C. 336:10.

¹⁵ Mishna Berura 336:48.

¹⁶ Igros Moshe O.C. 4:73. Ketzos Hashulchan is also concerned about the violation of the *meloch* of *Meameir*.