



**TAL**  
TORAH  
INSPIRATION  
ENTERTAINMENT  
**FOR SHAVUOT**  
5782/2022



# SHABBAT & YOM TOV TIMES

Shabbat Begins	20.56
Shabbat Ends	22.15
Motzei Shabbat / Shavuot starts	22.15
Tikun Learning At TAL Centre (Saturday night)	00:15
Sunday Night Candle Lighting	22:17
Monday Night Chag Finishes	22:18

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# SNIP LOOK AT OUR NEW PROGRAMS



TAL  
TorahActionLife

12TH  
2-6PM JUNE

LEGENDARY  
5-A SIDE FOOTBALL  
TOURNAMENT

★★★★★

POWER LEAGUE MILL HILL  
£100 A TEAM  
CASH PRIZE  
TROPHIES

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TAL  
TorahActionLife

FRIDAY  
NIGHT  
DINNER

9TH  
8:30PM JULY

£15 EARLY BIRD, THEREAFTER £20  
TAL CENTRE | AGES 18-25

Honourary Guest  
Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis









## INSIGHTS TO SHAVUOT

Rabbi Jonathan Tawil

Every year on June 6th, we commemorate the day that British, Canadian, and US forces were landed at Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword beaches in the largest amphibious operation in history.

By night-time on 6 June 1944, about 156,000 Allied troops had landed on Normandy's beaches, despite challenging weather and fierce German defences. By the end of D-Day, the Allies had established a foothold in France and within 11 months Nazi Germany was defeated and the war was over.

A few years ago, the British Prime Minister Mrs May told the ceremony that she was humbled to be able to mark the moment with veterans, who belonged to a "very special generation".

"A generation whose unconquerable spirit shaped the post-war world. They didn't boast. They didn't fuss. They served,"

"And they laid down their lives so that we might have a better life and build a better world.

"If one day can be said to have determined the fate of generations to come in France, in Britain, in Europe and the world, that day was June 6, 1944,"

Where we come from is extremely important, we must acknowledge and learn from our rich history, but it is not the end story.

The Midrash (Yalkut Shimoni 684) relates that when the Jews were receiving the Torah, the other nations asked Hashem, "Why are You giving the Torah only to the Jews? We also want the Torah!" Hashem told them that they should bring their Sefer Yuchsin — records of family pedigree — to Him, just as His children — the Jews — were bringing their Sefer Yuchsin to Him, as stated, "and they established their genealogy". The Jewish people descend from such greats as Avraham and Sarah,

Yitschak and Rivka and Yakov and Rachel and Leah — they had an impressive Sefer Yuchsin. But what was just as impressive was that they continued their legacy even in the tough exile of Egypt. At the giving of the Torah, only the Jewish people were able to produce a Sefer Yuchsin for they alone cherished the memory of their ancestors while the other nations of the world were busy discarding and decrying them. Since the Torah is a "heritage" (Devarim 33:4), and not an inheritance, Hashem could only trust that the Torah would be preserved intact for the next generation by the Jewish people because they alone have a fidelity to the past.

So did we receive the Torah because of our glorious past? What about the present day Jew, do we really deserve the Torah?

When the Maggid of Meseritch, Rav Dov Ber was five years old, he witnessed his home unfortunately going on fire. His mother stood by the charred remains and wept bitterly.

He asked why she was so distraught.

"It is not for the house that I weep," she explained to the child, "but for the records of our family tree which have been burnt. Our family tree was written there, tracing our lineage up to king David — and now it's all lost."

The little child looked up to his mother and said in an encouraging voice, "Don't worry mother, I will write a new one — and it will start from me!"

Torah is not just based on the past, it is a constant acquiring. It is not only about the glorious history, but it is about the future. Today is tomorrow's history that we are about to produce.

The Midrash (Shir Hashirim 1:4) relates that Rabbi Meir said: When the Jews stood before Sinai to receive the Torah, G-d said to them: "I swear, I will not give you the Torah unless you provide worthy





guarantors who will assure that you will observe its laws."

The Jews responded, "Master of the world, our forefathers will be our guarantors!"

"Your guarantors themselves require guarantors!" was G-d's reply.

"Master of the world," the Jews exclaimed, "our prophets will guarantee our observance of the Torah."

"I have grievances against them, too. 'The shepherds have rebelled against Me' (Jeremiah 2:8)," G-d replied. "Bring proper guarantors and only then will I give you the Torah."

As a last resort, the Jews declared, "our children will serve as our guarantors!"

"They truly are worthy guarantors," G-d replied.

"Because of them I will give the Torah."Therefore, when we speak of the history of our nation, when we recall the great people who came before us to ensure our safety, we also recognise the strength of our children.

The Jewish Children were — and still are — the guarantors and transmitters of the Torah. Our commitment to their education has always been the best assurance to the continuity of Torah and Mitzvot. We pride ourselves at TAL seeing the impact on so many young lives strengthening their Jewish journey and guaranteeing our future. When G-d gave the Torah on Mt. Sinai, every Jewish child was present. Let us join together to ensure that all our children will be there this year too!

**Wishing you a Chag Sameach.**





## ESSENTIAL FOR JEWISH SURVIVAL

Rabbi Jonathan Tawil

Baron Horace Ginzburg was a resident of St. Petersburg in Russia and a person of significant influence there in the latter part of the nineteenth century. It was a solemn Yom Kippur and the Baron was in the great synagogue whilst the bidding started for “Peticha” (the opening of the ark where the Torah scrolls are kept) at Neila – the most precious time of that holy day. Baron Falk was also in attendance and was excited to get the Mitzvah. He bid a whopping 2000 Roubles (roughly today worth £300,000) for the opportunity to open the ark. The short silence in the synagogue was eagerly followed by a 25% increase in the bid by Baron Ginzburg – “2500 Roubles” – he shouted. Within seconds he had won the bid. As the commotion died down, Baron Ginzburg turned to his colleague on the right and said, “What’s Peticha?” Bewildered his colleague gazed at the Baron and asked “Baron Ginzburg, you have just paid 2500 Roubles for Peticha on Neila and you don’t know what Peticha is? Why did you bid so much for it if you don’t know what it is?” The Baron smiled answering his colleague, “I don’t know what Peticha is, but I sure do know that Baron Falk is a masterful business man. If he bid 2000 Roubles, I know it must be worth much more!” The world is full of many great blessings, yet we find ourselves sometimes oblivious to their true value. If you had to pick a mitzvah that you consider essential for the survival of Judaism, what would it be? Would you choose one of the Ten Commandments or ‘love your neighbour?’ How about a Jewish holiday or Shabbat? Such a choice is a subjective matter but there is no question in my mind which one I would choose: Talmud Torah, making time in one’s daily life for the study of Torah. If I could inspire people to do only one thing in their daily lives on a regular basis it would be to study Torah not as a leisurely activity but as a mitzvah and a daily discipline. The sages could not say enough about the importance of learning. We begin our day by acknowledging our responsibility to occupy

ourselves with Torah.’ Torah study is of more value than the offering of daily sacrifice in the Bet Hamikdash (Eruvin 63b). A single day devoted to the Torah outweighs 1,000 sacrifices (Tractate Shabbat 30a). One cannot overstate the emphasis the sages placed on living a life of learning. Such learning does not even end in this world. The image of Olam Haba, the World to Come, as a great Yeshiva where those who are worthy merit the right to sit at the table studying Torah, is a popular image. The story is told of one man who was given a glimpse of the World to Come. Just a bit disappointed, he asked. “Are these people in heaven?” His host said: “These people who are studying Torah are not in heaven; rather heaven is in them!” So why is there so much emphasis on Talmud Torah? Perhaps it’s because learning Torah is the doorway to everything else in Jewish life. That is why the Talmud says, “The study of Torah is equal to all the other commandments.” (Shabbat 127a) After the counting of the Bnei Yisrael and most of the tribe of Levi in Parshat Bamidbar, our Parasha continues with the counting of the sons of Gershon: “Take a census of the sons of Gershon also.” Rabbi Avraham Saba z”l (Spain, 1440-1508) asks why the Torah stresses the word “also”. He explains that Gershon was the oldest son of Levi, and his descendants had a claim to be counted before the descendants of Gershon’s younger brother Kehat. Since the family of Kehat was already counted at the end of last week’s Parasha, our Parasha says, “Take a census of the sons of Gershon also.” And why were the descendants of Kehat counted first? R’ Saba explains that the Torah honours Kehat for his Torah knowledge, just as we read in Divrei Hayamim I (4:9), “And Yaavetz was honoured more than his brothers.” As the Gemara explains, Yaavetz was one of the greatest Torah scholars of the generation following Moshe Rabbenu. Similarly, Kehat’s family was honoured over the family of the firstborn Gershon because of the former’s association with the Torah. On the verse



(Mishlei 3:15), “It [the Torah] is more precious than perinim / pearls,” the Midrash comments: “More precious than a firstborn” (a play on “lifnim” / “earlier,” i.e. the firstborn, who is the early one). The family of Kehat carried the Ark which contained the luchot. Moreover, Kehat used to assemble crowds and teach them Torah.

They were thus honoured with being counted before the firstborn Gershon. The Tzror Hamor explains that Kehat’s name alludes to his assembling crowds, just as King Shlomo is called “Kohélet” because he also assembled large audiences; however,

King Shlomo has an additional letter “lamed” (“Kohélet” vs. “Kehat”) because the Mishnah (Avot ch.6) states that a king has 30 special attributes, corresponding to the Gematria of “lamed” which is 30. Our Torah is priceless and if the Torah put so much emphasis on the mitzvah of studying Torah, you can bet like Baron Ginsburg that it is worth a great deal. The Rambam states (Talmud Torah Ch1 8-10): “Every Jewish man is obligated to study Torah, whether he is poor or rich, whether his body is healthy and whole or afflicted by difficulties, whether he is young or an old man whose strength has diminished. Even if he is a poor man who derives his livelihood from charity and begs from door to door,

even if he is a husband and a father of children, he must establish a fixed time for Torah study during the day and at night, as [Joshua 1:8] commands: “You shall think about it day and night.” The greater Sages of Israel included wood choppers, water drawers, and blind men. Despite these difficulties, they were occupied with Torah study day and night and were included among those who transmitted the Torah’s teachings from [master] to [student in the chain stretching back to] Moses, our teacher. Until when is a person obligated to study Torah?

Until the day he dies, as (Deuteronomy 4:9) states: “Lest you remove it from your heart, all the days of your life.” Whenever a person is not involved with study, he forgets.” A few days ago we commemorated the great event at Har Sinai where we were blessed with G-d’s most precious gift – the Torah. Today we read the longest Parasha in the Torah to reinforce the idea of Torah learning and we gain an insight as to how important Torah learning is for our continuity as a people. Let us strengthen our Torah study, appreciate its sweetness and understand its true essential value.









# RECIPE

## HALLOUMI- MUSHROOM SALAD

By Sophia Hassoun From @syrian\_in\_israel

### INGREDIENTS FOR THE SALAD :

- 1 bunch kale or other leafy green of your choice (washed checked and dried)
- 1 c shredded purple cabbage
- 1 large sweet potato cubed and roasted with a little oil and salt until soft OR 2c sweet potato crisps
- Handful of cherry tomatoes
- 1 package hallumi cheese cubed
- 1 box fresh mushrooms (clean any dirt with a damp cloth and quarter them)
- 3 tbs teryaki sauce
- 1 tbs sesame seeds
- 1 tsp oil

### Method

1. Halloumi and teryaki mushrooms:
2. In a frying pan add cubed halloumi and brown (use non stick). set aside
3. In the same frying pan pour 1 tbs oil and sauté mushrooms for 5 minutes until wilted
4. Then add in teriyaki sauce and let bubble and coat the mushrooms. Pour 1 tbs sesame seeds and mix .
5. Dressing –
6. in a bowl mix 3 tbs mayonnaise
7. 2 frozen garlic cubes
8. 2 tsp vinegar
9. 1 tsp honey
10. Salt and pepper to taste
11. In a bowl layer greens, cabbage and tomatoes
12. Drizzle some dressing
13. Then top with halloumi, sweet potatoes and mushrooms.
14. Enjoy !

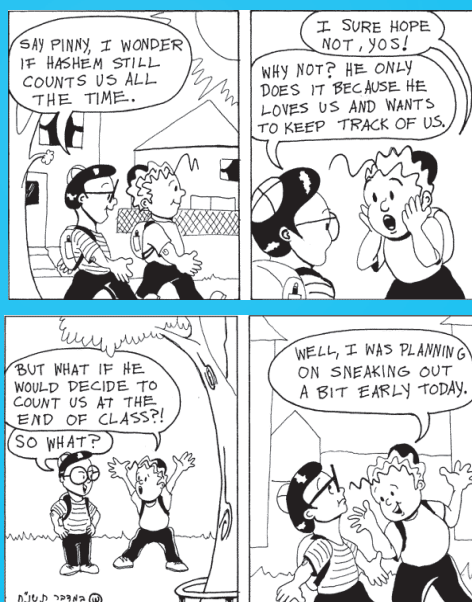
# KIDS TIME

## QUESTIONS

1. Which two people from the Book of Esther does Rashi mention in this week's Parsha?
2. Why did the levi'im receive ma'aser rishon?
3. Which groups of people were counted from the age of one month?
4. Name the first descendant of Levi in history to be counted as an infant.
5. Who assisted Moshe in counting the levi'im?

## ANSWERS

1. 3:7 - Bigtan and Teresh. 2. 3:8 - Since the levi'im served in the Mishkan in place of everyone else, they received tithes as «payment». 3.3:15, 40 - The levi'im, and the firstborn of B'nei Yisrael. 4. 3:15 - Levi's daughter Yocheved was born while the Jewish People were entering Egypt. She is counted as one of the 70 people who entered Egypt. 5. 3:16 - Hashem







## THE PROPHECY OF BILOM AND HASHEM'S KINDNESS

Rabbi Rabbi Meir Markovic

In the end of the first chapter of Berochos ,12b it says that Chazal wanted to insitute parshat Bolok as the third chapter of Kriat Shema as it mentions yetziat mitzrayim.(They didn't add it due to it's length). However the Gemora in Bova Basra 14b says that Moshe Rabenu wrote the Torah and the portion of Bilom. Taking this at face value, it appears that parshat Bilom is a) not an integral part of the Torah- is it an added piece? and b) contradicts the Gemoro that Chazal wanted to make Parshat Bilom part of Kriat Shema as it wasn't part of the Torah?

In Yevomos 49b the Gemoro describes the difference between the prophecies of Moshe and other prophets. Moshe's prophecy is described as 'aspaklirya hamiro' seeing through a clear glass, whilst the other prophets saw from a non clear glass – 'aspaklirya sheino meiro'. Moshe Rabenu was able to see everything with clarity due to his achievement of great heights, as the Torah testifies 'Velo kom novi oid beyisroel keMoshe' (Devorim 34 10). The other prophets saw their prophecies from a frosted glass as they didn't reach the madrego of Moshe Rabeinu. The Sifri in Devorim (ibid) says 'Velo kom novi oid beyisroel keMoshe, beyisroel lo kom' meaning that in the nations of the world there was such a person who had arisen, namely Bilom, as his prophecy was equal in clarity to Moshe.

How can we understand this as Moshe was the greatest of men whilst Bilom was the lowliest of mankind? (Avot Chapter 5, Mishna 22 ).

What was Bilom thinking when he went to curse Klal Yisroel after Hashem explicitly told him not to curse them and how did he think he would be able to curse them? The Mahril Diskin explains that Bilom thought that the prophecy he would get wouldn't be clear.

This would enable him to interpret it the way he wanted, as each prophecy is a mirror image of the individuals own madrego, thus it would allow him to curse Klal Yisroel. Hashem in His most infinite kindness gave over this prophecy 'beaspekliro hameiro' – in a clear vision like the prophecy of

Moshe in order that it should be turned into a blessing. This is what the Sifri meant,- in the nations of the world there was a prophet like Moshe – Bilom ,but just this once and at that moment in time.

With this knowledge we can explain the Gemoro in Bovo Basra that when Moshe Rabeinu wrote down the Torah he wrote it with his clarity of prophecy. When it came to writing down parshat Bilom, since Bilom saw 'beaspekliro hameiro' Moshe had nothing to add, he just transcribed it.

This also clarifies how the Parsha of Bilom is of course an integral part of the Torah but didn't become part of Kriat Shema due to its length.

We can see from here how Hashem is always looking out for us, and constantly bestows upon us with great kindness.

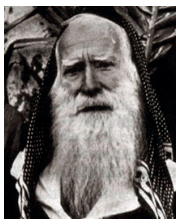
Shabbat Shalom







# OUR CHACHAMIM



## Rabbi Raphael Baruch Toledano

The illustrious Toledano family has its origins in the city of Toledo, Spain. In 5252 (1492), at the time of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, the ancestor of this family (the Gaon Rabbi

Yossef) left Toledo accompanied by his son the Gaon Rabbi Daniel, the leader of the sages of Castile. The entire family swore that never again would they or their descendants see the land of Spain. To perpetuate the memory of this vow, they changed their family name to that of Toledano (meaning “Toledo-no” – No to Toledo). When the Jews were expelled from Spain, Rabbi Daniel decided to go to Morocco. He settled in Fez and established a great yeshiva there. The two sons of Rabbi Daniel, Rabbi Haim and Rabbi Yossef, were also great Torah scholars and held rabbinic positions in the city of Meknes.

Over the course of many years, brilliant and world-renowned rabbis and judges emerged from the Toledano family. The Gaon Rabbi Yaakov Toledano was known for his immense Torah knowledge and great fear of G-d. He was very young when named President of the Rabbinic Court of Marrakech. Following that, he occupied the post of rabbi in the city of Meknes. Rabbi Yaakov was respected and venerated as much by Jews as by Muslims. Thanks to his influence, the rabbis of the rabbinic court were officially recognized as civil servants of the government.

Rabbi Yaakov had a majestic face, brilliant like the sun; he resembled a Divine angel. His son, Rabbi Baruch, was known from his youth for his pure and delicate soul. From year to year, he elevated himself in the rungs of Torah study and the fear of G-d. He possessed a vast knowledge in all fields of Torah, hidden as well as revealed. His only ambition and passion was Torah, which he studied constantly.

At the age of 10 he fell gravely ill, and to aid his recuperation the name Raphael was added to his first name. His teachers, Rabbi Haim Berdugo (the spiritual leader of the yeshiva of Meknes) and Rabbi Haim Massas (the Dayan of Meknes), opened the

doors of profound Torah knowledge to him.

After a few years, Rabbi Raphael Baruch Toledano became a great scholar in Shas and the Poskim. He then began the study of Kabbalah with his teacher Rabbi Yossef Elkubi. Rabbi Raphael revealed himself to be a master in the subject by virtue of his sharp mind and intelligence.

His love for his neighbor and devotion to every Jew constituted his greatness. His home was open to all who sought entry. No effort was too difficult for him to make when it came to saving the life of the sick or to help the poor. Nevertheless, it sometimes happened that some in the community wanted to dodge the prohibitions of the Torah. Rabbi Raphael Baruch Toledano was beside himself and led a merciless fight against such people. He was a powerful rock that watched over the holiness of the Torah in all its respects.

His deep and pure faith demonstrated itself when, during prayer, he recited the verse: “The L-RD is King, the L-RD was King, the L-RD will be King forever and ever.” He was always in the habit of saying “Why did King David, may his soul rest in peace, inverse the order of the passage and first write of the present, then of the past, and finally of the future? Logically, he should have first written of the past, then of the present, and finally of the future! This is to teach us that the basis of faith is in the present. We cannot feel the Kingdom of G-d in the past as long as we have not received His reign in the present. It is only after having deeply rooted the Kingdom of G-d in our hearts – at every present moment – that we can possibly, with a pure faith, reach an understanding of the Kingdom of G-d in the past and the future.”

His majesty and nobleness, his modesty and humility, fused together in perfect harmony, thus forming the character that was Rabbi Raphael Baruch Toledano. This marvelous harmony created a Tzaddik whose feet touched the ground and whose head reached the sky.

Rabbi Raphael Baruch Toledano traveled to Israel and settled in the city of Bnei Brak, and in the year 5731 (1971), in the month of Heshvan, he rendered his pure soul to his Creator. ■





## ISRU HAG SHAVUOT AND TACHANUN IN THE DAYS FOLLOWING SHAVUOT

Rabbi Eli Mansour

The day immediately following Pesach, Shavuot or Sukkot is referred to as «Isru Chag» and is observed as a quasi-festival. Some people make a point of wearing their Shabbat clothing and conducting a special festive meal on Isru Chag. Rabbi Chayim Palachi (Turkey, 1788-1868), in his work Mo'ed Le'kol Chai (8:43), writes that Isru Chag Shavuot is a particularly significant day, more so than Isru Chag Pesach and Sukkot, and must therefore be observed with special festivity. He goes so far as to assert that Isru Chag Shavuot is of such importance that in principle it should warrant «Issur Melacha» – a prohibition against work similar to Shabbat and Yom Tov. In practice, of course, Halacha permits Melacha on Isru Chag Shavuot, but it nevertheless should be observed as a festive day, even more so than Isru Chag of the other festivals.

There is a debate among the authorities as to when we resume the recitation of Tachanun during Sivan. We of course omit Tachanun on the first of Sivan, in honor of Rosh Chodesh, as well as on the second day of Sivan, which is when God declared that we will become «a kingdom of Kohanim and a sacred nation» (Shemot 19:6). The next three days – the third, fourth and fifth of Sivan – are known as the «Yemei Hagbala,» the days of preparation for the giving of the Torah, a festive period in which we omit Tachanun. We do not recite Tachanun on Shavuot – the sixth and seventh of Sivan – or on Isru Chag Shavuot, the eighth of Sivan. During the times of the Mikdash, those who were unable to bring their sacrifices on the day of Shavuot itself – which in Israel is celebrated only on the sixth of Sivan – were allowed to do so during the six days following Shavuot, through the twelfth of Sivan.

In commemoration, we omit Tachanun during this period, as well. According to some authorities, however, since in the Diaspora Shavuot is observed on both the sixth and seventh of Sivan, we begin the six-day period on the eighth of Sivan, rather than the seventh, and thus Tachanun is omitted on the thirteenth, as well.

For the Syrian Jewish community, this debate bears no practice relevance, as Syrian Jews in any event observe the thirteenth of Sivan as a quasi-festival to celebrate the «Musan» miracle when the Jews of Halab were saved from a planned pogrom. Syrian communities therefore omit Tachanun on the thirteenth of Sivan regardless of the aforementioned debate. Many other communities, however, have the practice to resume the recitation of Tachanun on the thirteenth of Sivan.

Later in this chapter in Mo'ed Le'kol Chai (Halacha 48), Rav Chayim Palachi writes that on the fifteenth of Sivan, it is proper for the Chazan to read aloud after the morning service Yaakov's blessing to Yehuda (Bereishit 49:8-12) and Parashat Ve'zot Ha'beracha. Reading these sections on this day, he writes, has the capacity to hasten the arrival of the final redemption.

Summary: Isru Chag Shavuot (the day following Shavuot) must be observed as a festive day, even more so that the day following other festivals. Tachanun is omitted from Rosh Chodesh Sivan through the twelfth or thirteenth of Sivan, depending on communal custom. It is proper on the fifteenth of Sivan for the Chazan to read after the morning prayer Yaakov's blessing to Yehuda and Parashat Ve'zot Ha'beracha. ■



## YOU DON'T NEED A TICKET TO TRAVEL !

Rabbi Jonathan Tawil

Although the travel industry has been hardest hit by Covid 19, many have discovered the art of travel without leaving their homes. By that I mean the possibility of accessing the virtual tourist films taking you to countries beyond your dreams or perhaps your pockets. One can also clock up hundreds of miles on your exercise bike or treadmill, or merely dream of cancelled holidays as they become more distant by the day.

However, when Reb Zusha of Annapol interpreted “Lech Lecha” as Hashem’s instruction to Avraham to embark on a journey of self-discovery, he was perhaps describing the most arduous journey of all; the journey to get to know our real selves. According to Rabbi Yisroel Salanter, Know yourself”, is the one journey which is required travel for every Jew. Is it not, therefore, with some irony that the very travel restrictions imposed by lockdown have handed to us the free tickets to the most important and endless journey of all?

The rewarding expedition of self-discovery. Our daily excursion through our itinerary of Torah, Avodah and Gemilus Chassodim may have been curtailed, but who will not admit that other opportunities have revealed themselves. In Torah, through more and varied shiurim at the touch of a button. In Avodah, through enhanced Kavanah free from the constraints of time or a frenzied Shliach Tzibur, and in Gemilus Chasodim, through deeper reflection in our relationships with family and friends.

The first national journey of our people from Egypt to Har Sinai may have taken everyone on the same geographical route and covered the same distance but, in an intriguing observation, the Ksav Vehakabalah indicates that for each individual the journey was a personal route of the spirit, longer for some and shorter for others. journey was a personal

route of the spirit, longer for some and shorter for others.

Accordingly, the Sinai experience for each individual was entirely commensurate with the spiritual preparation and journey undertaken, exhilarating for some and less so for others. How so?

Har Sinai is described (Shemos 24:17), a consuming fire. Consuming what? Do not all fires consume? Yes, but only to the degree that the fuel is present. The more fuel the larger the flame, and in its absence just a flicker for there is nothing to consume. The fire that was experienced at Har Sinai was nothing other than the fire of blissful ecstasy that entered the soul of each participant. But the fire needed the fuel of spiritual anticipation accumulated during that historic forty-nine-day journey that was like no other before or since. A story is told of an elderly builder who was ready to retire. He told his employer of his plans to leave the building industry and live a more leisurely life with his wife, enjoying his extended family. He would miss the paycheque, of course, but he was looking forward to retirement. They would manage somehow. The contractor was sorry to see his good worker go and asked if he could build just one more house as a personal favour. The builder agreed, but as time went by, it was easy to see that his heart was not in his work. He resorted to shoddy workmanship and used inferior materials. It was an unfortunate way to end a dedicated career. When the builder had finished the assignment, the employer came to inspect the house. He handed the front-door key to the builder and said: “My gift to you!” The builder was shocked! What a shame! If he had only known he was building his own house, he would have done it so differently.

The homes that we build and the life’s journeys we undertake remain our epitaph and ours only.

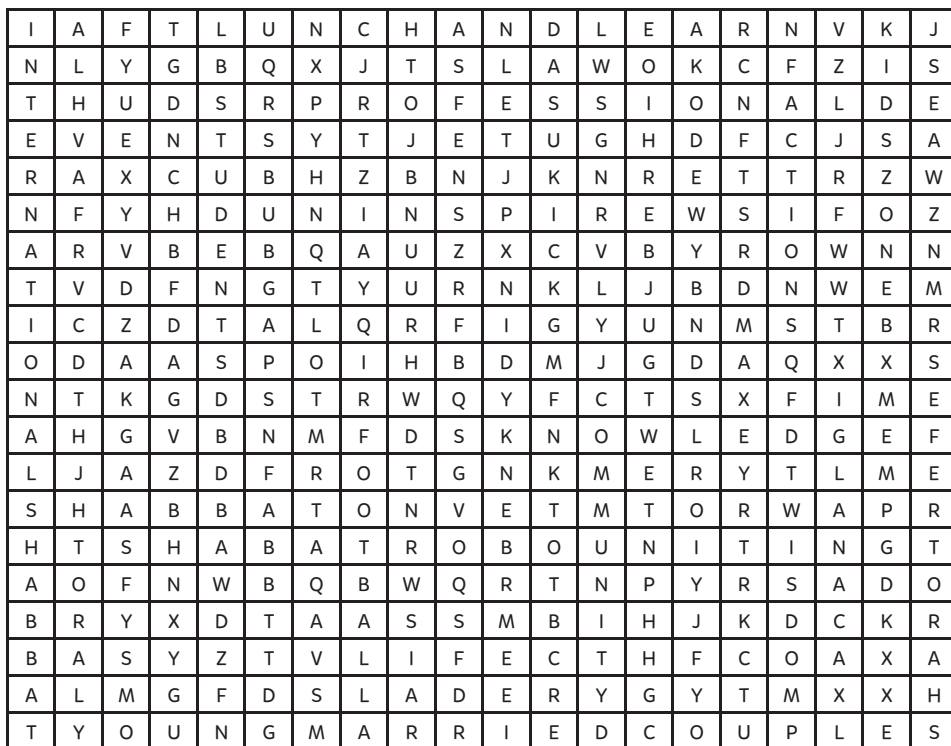


# *Happy Shavuot!*





# CROSS WORD



## FIND THE WORDS

INTERNATIONAL SHABBAT	KNOWLEDGE	KIDS ZONE
LUNCH AND LEARN	SHABBATON	BBQ
EVENTS	FOOTBALL	LIFE
ACTION	YOUNG MARRIED COUPLES	STUDENTS
COMMUNITY	UNITING	SHIURIM
WISDOM	SEFER TORAH	TAL
INSPIRE	PROFESSIONAL	



# RECIPE

## CHEESECAKE

@garlic.and.ganache by Tanya Ohana

### CRUST

- 300g digestive/tea biscuits, crushed
- 5 oz butter, softened
- Mix by hand and press to the bottom of a greased 9inch spring form pan

### FILLING

- 4 eggs, separated
- 1 cup sugar
- 500g medium fat soft cream cheese
- 250ml double cream
- 3 tbsp plain flour
- 1 tsp vanilla

### Method

1. Preheat oven to 170°C/330°F
2. Beat yolks, sugar and vanilla until light and creamy
3. Add in cream cheese, flour and cream
4. Whisk egg whites until stiff peaks form
5. Fold in egg whites into cream mixture
6. Pour into tin
7. Bake for around 30 min until just golden on the sides
8. Switch off oven and keep cheesecake in for 30 mins - prevents more cracks from forming
9. Leave oven door open and leave to cool in oven for further 30 mins
10. Store in fridge until served



# DVAR TORAH

## TAKE THE JUMP

By Rabbi Benjamin Stone



Many of us are familiar with the story of Rabbi Akiva who saw water dripping on the rock face of a well and came to the conclusion that

“if water can make an impression on a rock then certainly Torah can make an impression on me”.

He then resolved to learn Torah and spent the next forty years in uninterrupted study.

This story is a little baffling however: Had R' Akiva never seen a rock formation before? Why only now at the age of forty did R' Akiva become inspired in this way?

The great mussar giant R' Yisroel Salanter zts"l (Ohr Yisroel; letter 10) explains that R' Akiva had actually learned Torah in his youth. He put in considerable effort at the outset but found that his learning made no impression on him whether in terms of improving his character or in terms of becoming a talmid chacham. He therefore decided to give up learning and turned his attention to sheparding. When he reached the age of understanding however he saw something profound in the effect that the dripping water had had on the rock - something he had never seen before. It occurred to him that when the water began dripping on the rock, it made no discernable impression at all. Even when it continued to drip, over many years the water made no apparent indent in the rock. Only after an extended period of time - possibly hundreds of years - did marks begin to form on the rock until out of nowhere a hole suddenly formed. R' Akiva realized that the same might be true of Torah learning. We might make a conscious decision to take our learning seriously – be it through going to yeshiva (or seminary), attending a new shiur

or starting out with a new chavruta. However after some time we may ask ourselves “Why am I doing this?”; “Has my learning had an effect on me? (“I still screamed at my wife when she threw out my favourite jacket”) or “Am I even close to becoming a talmid chacham?” R' Akiva realized that when it comes to learning Torah a person needs to just keep going. He may not see the fruits of his labour for some years, maybe even a decade – but he will at some point taste success and his middot will also improve noticeably.

But there is a deeper message to be taken from R' Akiva's personal story of re-awakening (as heard from R' Yosef Elefant of Yeshivat Mir).

The verse in Devarim (18;13) famously states:

“Be tamim (“act with faithfulness”) with Hashem your G-d”.

In a fascinating passage Rashi writes that this verse is telling us

“Do not look too far into the future. Accept without question whatever happens to you and then you will be with Hashem and part of his people”.

Rashi informs us that there is a specific mitzvah not to be strategic when it comes to serving Hashem.

When any of us pick up a sefer a myriad of thoughts might cross our mind. Thoughts of hopelessness, (“How far I am I going to get through this gemarah any way”) or possibly thoughts of resignation (“I have a wife and young family to take care of. Hopefully during the summer holidays I will have the peace of mind to learn. Now it's just not possible”). The mitzvah to be “tamim with Hashem your G-d” tells us not too think or analyse too much. ►





It is encouraging each individual to live the moment, to take the opportunity he has now before him.

Why is it that if you live the moment, you become “with” or connected to Hashem? The reason is that if you live the moment then essentially you are saying that you accept what Hashem has given you. You are not saying “I want more” or a “different” or “better” life situation. This is what Hashem put on your plate. This is Hashem’s personal plan for you and you have got to take it on! It may not be perfect but your job is to learn Torah and keep mitzvot in the situation you are in, at the standard you are at and without consideration of what benefit may or may not come from your learning.

We find in the gemarah (Shabbat 88a) that this idea underpinned the process of matan Torah itself.

Rava was sitting on his fingers as he was learning and his fingers were bleeding because he was so deep in thought. A heretic said to him “You are an

irresponsible person and you come from a nation of irresponsible people who said “We will do” before saying “We will hear”. The heretic was criticizing the Jewish people for acting without forward planning. How could they accept the Torah without knowing if they would be able to keep all its laws?

Rava answered quoting a verse in Mishlei (11;3)

“The faithfulness of the upright will guard them”

Rava’s response was that the essence of the Torah life is to be able to “take the jump” without concern for what might be. This approach is based on the reasoned conviction that Hashem loves us and will protect those who seek to serve him with sincerity. This is why the B’nei Yisrael chose to “do” before they “heard”.

It took time for R’ Akiva to appreciate this point. But when he finally did so...well the rest is history. ■



# DVAR TORAH



## ALL FOR ONE

By Rabbi Aharon Gabay

Chag Shavuot is a grand time for the Jewish people. It is the reliving of the Jews receiving their beloved Torah from Hashem. It is arguably the most eventful occurrence in Jewish history. However, with some thought, it doesn't seem to be as grand as it appears. If one looks into the story of the Jewish people, it seems that there was some form of teachings well before the Bnei Yisrael stood at Har Sinai. Rashi in Sefer Bereshit refers numerous times that mitzvot, such as matsot and korban pesach, were being fulfilled. The Gemara in Shabbat (87b) also says that the Bnei Yisrael received Shabbat before they even got to Har Sinai. If there was already teachings around, what happened at Har Sinai that was so remarkable? Furthermore, in the Haggadah we say "If we came to Har Sinai and we didn't receive the Torah, it would be enough". How could it be enough just to stand and the bottom of the mountain, if the whole purpose of standing there is to receive the Torah?

Avraham was the first man to create a connection with hashem. He reached very high levels in relating to G-d not to mention going against the ideologies of the entire society that was around him. Hashem made a Brit (covenant) with Avraham and the rest of Bnei Yisrael who would follow. This began with the Brit Milah. This was the birth of Bnei Yisrael. Avraham began to spread his teachings about a one powerful G-d who ruled over all nature. He installed it into his children and they passed it on through to their descendents. The teachings continued through the descendants of the forefathers and even under the intense slavery in Egypt, they managed to keep everything they had learned until they broke out of the chains of slavery and into freedom into the desert. However, for the Jewish people, this was not

enough. When the Bnei Yisrael stood at Har Sinai they accepted upon themselves another Brit. The pasuk says that the Bnei Yisrael stood facing the mountain. Rashi says "כָּאִישׁ אֶחָד בְּלֵב אֶחָד" - like one man, with one heart. Every single soul that left Egypt was standing at Har Sinai ready to receive the Torah from Hashem. Everything they had learnt was about to materialise in front of their eyes, but it requires one thing that was not there before. Rashi says that until now there had been lack of connection between each other they did not see eye to eye and there was dispute between one and other. What enabled the Jews to receive the Torah was that they stood together with love and care which combined them as one body of people which can never be torn apart. Only through this connection were they able to receive the Torah from Hashem. That is what is so remarkable about Har Sinai and that is what we are referring to in the Haggadah - the unification of the Jewish people would be enough.

The Jewish people are not just a race who come from a country, they are an interconnected group of people who inevitably affect each other. Rav Yisrael Salanter used to say that when a Jew gossips in Kovno, a Jew in Paris desecrates Shabbat. Furthermore, the same way every single cell is vital for a human body to fully function, every Jew is vital for the Jewish people to fully function.

We have a tremendous faculty that is unique in many ways. The Jewish people feel such connection to each other throughout their entire livelihood. The kindness, generosity and hospitality we share, just because we are Jewish, is indescribable. The reason we do that is because we are a people who established an unbreakable connection. That connection was established at Har Sinai and that connection is what we relive today. ■

# KIDS ZONE

## THE ABANDONED SEFER TORAH

By Chana Weisberg

This is the story of a very special Torah scroll, purchased shortly after the Second World War by Rabbi Pinchas Sudak, when he and his family were fleeing from Stalinist Russia. Escaping from Russia under the Communists was very dangerous. The first stage of the journey was to get out of Russia into Poland. But that was only the beginning. They still had to make their way from Poland to Prague in Czechoslovakia. The Sudaks were together with a group of forty-six other Lubavitch Chassidim who were also hoping to escape. Anxiously they waited for their chance to get out. While they were still in Cracow, in Poland, Rabbi Pinchas met a Jew who had a Torah scroll for sale. This seemed to him extraordinary, like it was arranged specifically by G-d. Immediately he decided to purchase the Torah with money he had managed to smuggle out of Russia. "Such a large a group of Jews cannot travel without a Sefer Torah in their midst," he said. So he bought the Torah, and quickly had a wooden box made to protect it. Finally it came time for the group to move. It was late at night when they set out. No one was allowed to take more than their most basic needs. Everything else had to be abandoned. In the blackness of the night the journey began. Rabbi Pinchas and his wife and three children all held onto a rough rope to keep them together. Silently they trudged through the dense forest, Rabbi Pinchas clutching his beloved Sefer Torah, his wife, Batya, carrying their youngest child. The way was difficult. As the hours passed, Rabbi Pinchas' wife grew more and more weary. Finally she could no longer carry the child. She motioned to her husband to take the baby. Rabbi Pinchas understood at once that if he would take the baby, he would have to leave the Torah behind. With tears in his eyes, he said, "Forgive me, my dear Torah. But it is either you or my child. I must leave you now, so that my children and children's children will be able to have you in their lives." Weeping, he embraced the precious scroll one last time, and gently laid it in its box, and placed it under a tree. Then he picked up his child in his arms and journeyed forward. The journey was successful. Eventually they reached freedom and settled in the Land of Israel. Time passed. Rabbi Pinchas' children grew up and married, and established homes in communities where they became Rabbis and teachers, sharing with others

the faith in Torah and Judaism they had received from their parents. "To his astonishment, his hand touched something hard and smooth..." Fifty years passed. Rabbi Pinchas' daughter, Rebbetzin Batsheva Schochet, herself already a grandmother, happened to be visiting friends in California. While there she called on a friend of the family, Mrs. Faigy Estulin. They spoke of the past, and Faigy described how their family had also escaped from Russia, after the war. "It's an extraordinary story," she said. "As my parents were making their way through the woods, my older sister, who was then only five years old, wandered off. The forest was pitch black. No one could see a thing. No one had any idea where she had gone. Everyone was in a panic. "Frantically they searched for the child, crawling on their hands and knees, groping amongst the bushes and branches on the ground. "Then suddenly my father's hand touched something hard and smooth, not a branch or a root of a tree. It was a wooden box. He opened the lid, and to his astonishment, he found a Sefer Torah inside. And there sitting right next to the box, was his little daughter, my sister! "He couldn't believe it. He kissed the Torah. And he kissed his little girl. And he kissed the Torah again, and he kissed his daughter again and again, over and over. "Then he took the Torah from its box, and wrapped it around his body, tying it round his waist with his gartel, a belt he used when praying. That's how he took the Torah with him, through the rest of their journey. "In the end, they made it to freedom. They brought the Sefer Torah with them to America, and to this day it is used in a shul in New York. "My father has been blessed with good health and a good long life. No one in our family has any doubt that this blessing is because he saved the Sefer Torah," she concluded. Hearing these words, the face of Rabbi Pinchas' daughter, Batsheva Schochet, turned white. Tears began streaming from her eyes.







# SHAVUOT

## FIND THE WORD



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N	Q	R	F	X	O	G	G	G	U	C	O	Y	A	S	X	P	K	D	T	U
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SIVAN  
TORAH  
RUTH  
SINAI  
CHEESE

HARVEST  
FLOWERS  
BIKKURIM  
DAIRY  
COMMANDMENTS

ATZERET  
WHEAT  
BARLEY  
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GRAPES  
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T'01



DING  
LIFE





# RECIPE

## SPINACH SEMOLINA GNOCCHI

@mayihavethatrecipe

### INGREDIENTS

#### FOR THE GNOCCHI

- 2 cups whole or low-fat milk
- 8 oz frozen chopped spinach, thawed
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup semolina flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup + 2 tbsp grated parmesan cheese (plus some extra to sprinkle on top)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{8}$  tsp pepper

#### FOR THE BECHAMEL SAUCE

- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil or butter
- 2 tbsp unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups whole or low-fat milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{8}$  tsp pepper
- 1 tbsp nutritional yeast (optional)

#### FOR THE OVEN-ROASTED TOMATOES

- 1-pint grape tomatoes
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{8}$  tsp pepper



### Method

#### FOR THE GNOCCHI

1. In a large saucepan, heat milk on medium-low until small bubbles start to form at the edge of the saucepan.
2. Add spinach, semolina, Parmesan, salt, and pepper mix well and cook over medium heat for 5-7 minutes, until it thickens, stirring constantly so prevent the mixture from sticking to the bottom of the pan.
3. Spread into a square 8x8 baking dish
4. Refrigerate for 30-45 minutes
5. When ready to serve cut semolina mixture into small squares and warm them up in a pan or microwave.
6. To assemble the dish, spread hot bechamel sauce on the bottom of the serving dish, place warmed spinach gnocchi and roasted tomatoes on top

#### FOR THE BECHAMEL SAUCE

1. Heat olive oil or melted butter in a medium saucepan over medium-low heat. Add flour, whisking constantly. Cook for 2-3 minutes, or until it starts to thicken and darken a bit in color
2. Add milk, salt, pepper, and nutritional yeast bring to a boil
3. Reduce the heat and simmer, whisking constantly until it thickens, coating the back of a spoon.

#### FOR THE OVEN-ROASTED TOMATOES

1. Pre-Heat oven to 375F. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper
2. Place tomatoes on the baking sheet, drizzle with olive oil, and sprinkle with salt and pepper.
3. Roll the tomatoes on the baking sheet until well coated with the oil.
4. Bake for 20 minutes

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