



פרשת בהר בחקתי
שבת מברכים סיון
אייר תשפ"א

SHABBOS SHIUR

All men and women are invited to join a shiur on the Parsha

Between Mincha and Maariv in the Yeshiva Shule with Rabbi Yaakov Winner.

DOR LEDOR

Last Motzai Shabbos, in honour of Lag Baomer, the Dor Ledor program was followed by a special Melave Malka, with hotdogs and hot soup. See picture.

The Melave Malka was sponsored by the Slavin family in memory and for the Aliya of the Neshama of Rabbi Slavin's grandfather.

The boys recited Tehillim for those who were injured in Meiron and Rabbi Slavin shared a personal story of his Zeida.

Join us this week for Dor Ledor at 7:30pm in the Mezzanine

TUTALTZ PROGRAM

Anash Melbourne is joining the international learning in the Rebbe's Sichos on the Rambam's Halachos of Moshiach.

We will be coming together this Sunday night for a communal learning evening.

**Sunday 28th of Iyar - May 9,
8:00pm in the Werdiger Hall.**

SHAALOS UTESHUVOS

Join Rabbi Y. Johnson on Sunday morning, 9:30am in the Kollel for the Shaalos Uteshuvos shiur.

This week: Davening at Kivrei Tzaddikim - Why is it permitted?

A collection of Torah thoughts produced by Kollel Menachem



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Baking bread - curse or blessing?

Rabbi Simon bar Yochai was visited by two of his students, Rabbi Yonason ben Asmai and Yehuda ben Geirim. When they took leave of him, Rabbi Shimon sent his son after them to request a blessing.

When he asked them for their bracha they said to him "May it be Hashem's will that you sow but not reap, that you take in and not bring out, bring out and not take in, let your house be destroyed and your inn inhabited, let your table be disturbed and may you not see a new year."

Distressed, he returned to his father and said that instead of blessing him, the Talmidim had cursed him. But on hearing what his Talmidim had said, Rabbi Shimon exclaimed "these are all blessings".

That you sow but not reap means that you will have children and that they will not die. That you take in and not bring out means that you will take in daughter-in-law and your sons will not pass away and so your daughters-in-law will not leave. That you bring out and not take in means that you will have daughters and when they marry, their husbands will not die and they won't have to return.

Let your house be destroyed and your inn inhabited is because this world is only temporary like an inn. After death is likened to a house which is permanent. The blessing was that he should not die so that the inn will be inhabited rather than the house.

Let your table be disturbed refers to the birth of children who create disorder in the home. And may you not see a new year means that your wife will not die and you will not need to remarry and have another Shana Rishona.

The Meforshim offer various explanations why the Talmidim disguised these beautiful blessings in the form of curses.

Chassidus explains that hidden in curses are some of Hashem's deepest blessings. These blessings are so lofty that they cannot come down in a revealed way and must be hidden. Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai was a master of the inner dimension of Torah and was able to unlock the curses and reveal the blessings within.

Parshas Bechukosai contains within it the Tochecha,

the rebuke and punishments that would befall Bnei Yisroel if they should fail to follow Hashem. Following the approach of Rabbi Shimon, the Kabbalists and Chassidic masters explain these verses of curses according to the inner dimension of Torah. They reveal to us some of the hidden Brachos that lie beneath.

One of the curses in the Tochecha is "when I break for you the staff of bread, and ten women will bake your bread in one oven, and they will bring back your bread by weight, and you will eat, yet not be satisfied".

In Likutei Torah, the Alter Rebbe explains the inner meaning of these words.

Torah is likened to bread. Just as bread nourishes the body, Torah sustains the soul. Even though bread comes from a lower order of creation than man, it has a lofty Divine source. Torah in its source is the Tree of Life (the staff). With the breaking of the Luchos, the Torah descended from its G-dly source to be enclined within physical matters so that we can access it.

But to nourish a person, bread must be baked. Raw dough will not be digested and become part of the body. Torah too needs to be baked so that it becomes one with us. Otherwise the Torah and the one learning it remain separate.

The Neshama has a fiery love for Hashem and desire to cleave to Him. These fires are hidden within the heart and are revealed through meditation on Hashem's oneness (one oven). When one channels this love into their study, the bread of Torah is baked.

The ten women represent the 10 conscious faculties of the soul. They are referred to in female form representing the 'receiver'. This is the humility to recognise that all of our spiritual qualities and strengths are given by Hashem and not of our own making.

When Torah is studied with this passion and desire to connect to Hashem, "you will eat and not be satisfied". Kohelet describes "Whoever loves silver will not be sated with silver". No matter how much they have, they still want more. So too, our appetite and craving for Torah will not be sated. This bread gives Chayus to the Neshama so that no matter how much we learn, the words of Torah will remain 'like new in our eyes'.

1. Shulchan Aruch Harav 267:1

2. Gemara Brachos 27a. Shulchan Aruch Harav 267:3

3. OC 494

4. OC 494 based on Teshuvos Masais Binyomin

5. Beginning of Mesechta Shavuot

6. 494:2

7. Piskei Teshuvot 494:2, Lehoros Noson 7:31

8. Lehorot Natan 7:31

9. 2:56 by Rabbi Shimon Sofer, son of the Ksav

Sofer and grandson of the Chasam Sofer

10. Tosfos Brachos 27a. Yoma 81b. See Shulchan Aruch Harav 261:4

11. Haamak Davar Vayikra 23

12. Yechave Daas 6:30

The weekly Halacha analysis

Davening Maariv early on Shavuos

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

Even though Shabbos and Yomtov come in at Shkiya (sunset), one is able to bring in Shabbos and Yomtov early. One may Daven the Shabbos or Yomtov Maariv before nightfall from Plag Hamincha onwards, even though it is still light. It is considered praiseworthy to bring in Shabbos early¹.

One may also make Kiddush and eat their Shabbos or Yomtov meal from Plag Hamincha². Many people will do this as a matter of convenience throughout the Summer months.

Based on Kabbalah, one should always daven Maariv after Tzeis Hakochavim. Nonetheless, one may still bring in Shabbos and Yomtov early and indeed it is praiseworthy to do so.

Whilst one may bring in Yomtov early for every Yomtov, the Ta"z³ writes that on Shavuos we delay the davening if Maariv until Tzeis Hakochavim... with the exception of the first night of Shavuos.

The reason for this is because before Shavuos, we must count the seven weeks of Sefiras Haomer. The Torah states *שבע שבטות תמימות*, that the seven weeks must be Temimos – complete.

By davening Maariv early, one is ushering in the new day and concluding the preceding day. Doing so on the eve of Shavuos would mean that one has shortened the last day of Sefiras Haomer and they would no longer be Temimos.

The Magen Avraham⁴ is likewise concerned about the issue of Temimos, writing that we do not make Kiddush on Shavuos until after Tzeis Hakochavim.

Machatzis Hashekel writes that it appears that according to the Magen Avraham, the concern only applies to making Kiddush. One would be able to daven Maariv early. This would be like the opinion of the Shela"n⁵ that the Kpeida applies only to Kiddush.

He infers this from the continuation of the Magen Avraham who writes that since one is staying awake the entire night and will not say the bedtime Krias Shema, they should be careful to recite the Shema after Tzeis Hakochavim. This warning would not be necessary if one was not allowed to daven Maariv before Tzeis.

The Alter Rebbe⁶ writes that one should not make Kiddush for the same reason as not davening Maariv early. It is not clear how the Alter Rebbe understands the Magen Avraham. However he Paskens like the Ta"z that davening early is also problematic.

The same concern would apply to women bringing in the Yomtov of Shavuos by lighting candles before nightfall⁷. This is so, even though women are exempt from the Mitzvah of Sefiras Haomer.

Some suggest that the ruling of the Ta"z not to daven before nightfall, was a safeguard so that people don't make Kiddush early, which is the main concern⁸.

Rabbi Yaakov Emden in Siddur Yaavetz writes that the basis for not davening early is very weak and that the main concern is eating before nightfall. On the contrary, one who davens early to "add from the weekday to the holy" is praiseworthy.

Tosefes Yomtov and Temimos

Shaalos Uteshuvos Hisorrerus Teshuvah⁹ questions the entire concern of not Davening or making Kiddush for Shavuos before Tzeis Hakochavim. There is a Mitzvah Deoraisa to add to Shabbos and Yomtov from the weekday, by bringing it in early¹⁰. This is referred to as Tosefes Shabbos and it seems from the Gemara that it applies to all Yomim Tovim without distinction.

If so, one is Biblically obligated to bring in Shavuos early. One must say that the requirement of Temimos for the Seifras Haomer only applies until the beginning of Tosefes Shabbos. Since Tosefes Shabbos does not have a set time amount, even if one were to daven very early, there would be no issue of Temimos.

One must say that "the same Hashem who commands us to observe Tosefes Yomtov, also commands us that the weeks of Sefiras Haomer must be Temimos". Obviously, the two laws cannot be contradictory. Rather, by bringing in Yomtov, one ends the previous day and it is still considered as being Temimos.

One cannot argue that the first day of Shavuos is excluded from the requirement of Tosefes Yomtov, because of the requirement of Temimos, because were this so, the Talmud should have mentioned Shavuos as being an exception. (It is worth noting that the interpretation of Temimos meaning that one cannot daven Maariv early, is not sourced in the Talmud, whereas Tosefes Shabbos is).

(There are Poskim who maintain based on this seeming discrepancy, that there is no obligation of Tosefes Yomtov for Shavuos).

The question of the Hisorrerus Teshuvah does not apply to those Poskim who write that Tosefes Shabbos can be observed by abstaining from

Melacha and does not require accepting on oneself the Kedusha of the day. According to these Poskim, one could observe both Tosefes Yomtov and Temimos without any question).

At the end of the Teshuvah, he justifies the practise of waiting to daven Maariv after Tzeis, because Shema must be recited after Tzeis. Those who daven early rely on the bedtime Krias Shema that they will recite later. But on Shavuos, where we stay awake all night, this would not apply and there is the concern that one may miss out on Shema.

Another derivation

The Netziv¹¹ explains that the reason for not davening early is not because of the word Temimos. If it was, then the concern would apply every night of Sefiras Haomer, because each day needs to be complete.

Rather, the Torah uses the term *בעצם היום הזה* in connection to Shavuos, meaning that we must declare the sanctity "on that very day" i.e. on the day itself. He suggests that this comes to exclude the requirement of Tosefes Yomtov for Shavuos and one may not daven early.

Many Poskim question this approach, because we cannot make up new derivations ourselves, that are not found in the Gemara.

Difficult situations

Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef¹² quotes Yosef Ometz who writes that he did not see any of the great Rabbis in Ashkenaz wait to daven or make Kiddush on Shavuos.

He continues that on the contrary, if those who stay up all night learning (the Seder Tikkun) would wait until Tzeis Hakochavim to eat, it would take up half the night of their learning time... and the night is already very short (in the Northern Hemisphere). He says that Kiddush can be recited in Beis Hashemashos.

Rav Ovadiah concludes with his Psak, that in countries where it is possible to wait until nightfall (e.g. the Southern Hemisphere), it is preferable to wait and be concerned for the Ta"z and Magen Avraham.

But in places where the night is too short and it would interfere with the learning of Tikkun or if it would be difficult for family members and young children to remain awake, one can make Kiddush and eat before nightfall. It would still be preferable to wait until Shkiya if possible.