

# THE CHABAD WEEKLY

Vol 6, #35

## The Jew as a Sefer Torah

"It is true that a Jew is a Sefer Torah, but with a difference."

"There are two ways of making an inscription. One can write with a quill or pen and ink, or one can engrave like the Ten Commandments which were engraved in stone.

"What is the difference between these two methods? Writing with a pen, or quill, means applying ink to paper or parchment.

"The ink and the parchment are separate entities, but they are skillfully joined by the writers. But because they are separate entities, it is possible for the ink to fade, or be erased.

"On the other hand, engraving means forming letters and words within the very stone itself; nothing is superimposed upon the material -- the material and the letter are one. Such letters cannot be erased, nor can they fade.

"So long as the material exists, the letters are there. However, while no actual fading or erasure is possible in this case, there is a possibility of dust and grime gathering and covering up the engraved letters. If this happens, one must only clear away the dust and grime, and the letters will again be revealed in their original freshness."

"A Jew is a Sefer Torah, but not a written one. He is rather like the Ten Commandments -- engraved.

"The Torah and mitzvot are an integral part of the Jewish soul; they are engraved in his mind and heart. You do not have to 'rewrite' a Jew; all you have to do is help him brush away the dust and grime of environmental influences which have temporarily covered up his true self - the 'pintele Yid'. This is why a Jewish heart is always awake and responsive"(The Rebbe, L"Chaim #317)

## MOSHE, KING DAVID AND THE BAAL SHEM TOV

The festival of Shavuot is associated with three tzadikim (righteous individuals): Moses, King David, and the Baal Shem Tov.

The connection to Moses is obvious, for it was through him that Gd gave the Torah on Shavuot to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai. King David is associated with Shavuot because it is the anniversary of his passing. Similarly, the Baal Shem Tov passed away on the 6th of Sivan, also Shavuot.

In truth, these three tzadikim have much in common, as each one was a "first" in a particular area:

Moses was the first leader of the Jewish people. King David was the first monarch of the House of David. And the Baal Shem Tov was the first leader in the dynasty of Chasidut.

Another common characteristic is that all three tzadikim were shepherds. Moses tended his father-in-law Yitro's flock; David tended his father Jesse's; and the Baal Shem Tov, who used to lead young children to cheder, was a "shepherd" of schoolchildren. A shepherd, by definition, must embody patience, mercy and dedication to his flock. By choosing shepherds to lead the Jewish nation, Gd knew they could be counted on to demonstrate these qualities.

An additional point in common is that all three tzadikim were self-educated: Moses was raised in Pharaoh's household; King David was a shepherd from the earliest age; The Baal Shem Tov was orphaned as a very young child.

Nonetheless, despite these similarities, each of these Jewish leaders was unique in embodying a different "pillar" upon which the entire world rests: Moses was the embodiment of Torah. He received the Torah from G-d and transmitted it to the Jewish people. King David was the embodiment of avoda, the service of prayer. It was he who authored the Book of Psalms. The Baal Shem Tov was the embodiment of gemilut chasadim, the performance of good deeds. This is reflected in his name, which means "Master of the Good Name."

The festival of Shavuot is thus an appropriate time to strengthen our connection to each of these tzadikim, through the daily study of Torah. These studies, which every Jew should resolve to learn each day, are known by their initials, Chitas, and are alluded to in the Biblical verse "And the terror (chitas) of G-d was upon the cities."

To intensify our connection with Moses, we learn the daily portion of the weekly Torah reading, the Chumash. To intensify our connection with King David, we recite the appropriate chapters of the Psalms corresponding to the day of the month. And to strengthen our connection to the Baal Shem Tov, we study the daily portion of the Likutei, which elucidates the Baal Shem Tov's teachings. (Adapted from Likutei Sichot, Vol. 8 and Vol. 18; Hitva'aduyot 5743 and 5744, Lchaim # 569)

Chabad of North Beverly Hills, 409 Foothill Rd. Beverly Hills, 90210

beverlyhillshabad.com

Rabbi Yosef Shusterman 310-271-9063

**And it came to pass on the third day (19:16)** A Galilean scholar lectured before Rabbi Chisda: "Blessed be the Merciful One who gave a three-fold Torah (consisting of Torah, Prophets and Scriptures) to a three-fold people (comprised of Kohanim, Levites and Israelites) through a third-born (Moses, the third child of Amram and Jocheved) on the third day in the third month. (Talmud, Shabbat 88a)

The Torah is associated with the number "3" because the ultimate function of Torah is "to make peace in the world" and "3" represents the concept of peace.

Peace is unity in diversity. The number "1" implies exclusivity and singularity; the number "2" connotes diversity and plurality; the number "3" represents a state in which the diversity of "2" is superceded by a third, encompassing truth, within whose context differences no longer divide but rather unite diverse components into a harmonious whole.

This is the function to Torah: to introduce a unity of purpose to the diverse objects, forces and peoples of creation, uniting them all in the harmonious endeavor of serving the divine objective in creation. (The Chassidic Masters)

At the Torah's conclusion of its account of the creation of the world, it is written (Genesis 1:31): "And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day." What is the purpose of the additional "the" (hashishi)?

(Regarding the other days of creation, the Torah simply says, "And it was evening and it was morning, one day... a second day.. a third day, etc."; "the sixth day" implies that the verse is referring to a certain famous "sixth day").

This teaches that G-d stipulated with the works of creation and said to them: "If Israel accepts the Torah (on the sixth of Sivan), you shall exist; but if not, I will turn you back into emptiness and formlessness." (Talmud, Shabbat 88a) – chabad.org

## Original Ideas

*Rabbi Joseph Caro (author of the Shulchan Aruch, 1488-1576), once encountered an extremely difficult passage in his study of the Talmud. After many days and nights of toil, he finally succeeded in comprehending its meaning.*

*At a nearby table in the study hall sat a man who would come every evening for an hour or two of study. Although his business consumed the bulk of his day and his study-skills were limited, he diligently pursued his nightly page of Talmud. Rabbi Joseph noticed that this man (who was studying aloud, as is customary in the study of Torah) was approaching the very passage that had given him such difficulty; curious as to how his neighbor would deal with it, Rabbi Joseph listened in. To his great surprise, the businessman mastered the passage without any difficulty, immediately hitting upon the very interpretation which he had himself arrived at only after so much effort.*

*Rabbi Joseph was greatly distressed by the incident. Obviously, he thought, there is something grievously lacking in my understanding of Torah. Why else would it have taken so much time and toil on my part to see what is so readily obvious to even a part-time, rather unexceptional student of Talmud?*

*That night, Rabbi Joseph had a dream, in which it was revealed to him the significance of what had occurred. Know, he was told, that from the time that the Torah was given at Sinai, no man had comprehended the particular insight which you have uncovered. This is why you had to labor so strenuously -- this facet of the divine wisdom had yet to enter the world of earthly intellect. But your efforts opened the channel by which this truth was revealed. Having opened this channel, you have made this truth readily accessible to every mind that approaches the study of Gd's Torah. (As rendered by Yanki Tauber) – chabad.org*

The Baal Shem Tov passed away on Wednesday, the first day of Shavuot, 5520 (1760) and is interred in Mezibuz. The Ater Rebbe Commented (on Wednesday, the 20th of Kislev 5559 (1798) in Petersburg): "On the fourth day the luminaries were taken away."<sup>1</sup> (FROM REBBE'S HAYOM YOM, SIVAN 6.)

Procedure for the congregant during the blessing by the kohanim (p. 268): When the kohanim say yevarech'cha, face forward; When kohanim say Hashem, turn head to right (which is the left of the kohein pronouncing the blessing). When the kohanim say v'yishm'recha, face forward. While kohanim say ya'eir, turn head to left (which is to the right of the kohein pronouncing the blessing), etc. At shalom face forward.

Say Ribono shel Olam only while the kohanim sing (the wordless accompanying melody); but when they pronounce the words, one must listen. When the kohanim sing the wordless melody prior to saying v'yaseim, say Ribono until hatzadik. During the similar choral introduction to l'cha, say from v'im until Elisha. Likewise before shalom say from Uch'sheim until l'tova. As the kohanim finish pronouncing the word shalom, say v'tishm'reini u't'chaneini vetirtseini.

Adir bamarom is said after responding amen, while face is still covered by the tallit. (FROM REBBE'S HAYOM YOM, SIVAN 7.)

*In practical terms: On Shavuot, a Jew is told that "deed is paramount," and therefore, after the Giving of the Torah, he must endeavor to influence a Jew to put on tefillin, and perform the other mitzvos. If such Jew claims he would rather influence another Jew in Torah study ('the Season of the Giving of our Torah'), but it is unseemly for him to "lower" himself to engage in propagating mitzvos, actual deed - the answer is that the precondition for receiving of the Torah was that deed would precede understanding. -The Rebbe*

**PARTICIPATE IN WEEKLY CLASSES**

<u>Sunday</u>	8:00 AM	Gemara-Tractate Rosh Hashana (men)
<u>Monday</u>	8:00 PM	Chumash (men and women)
<u>Tuesday</u>	8:00 PM	Gemara-Tractate Sukka (men)
<u>Wednesday</u>	8:30 PM	Halacha and Tanya (women)
<u>Thursday</u>	10:00 AM	Chassidus (women)
	8:00 PM	Class for Beverly Hills Highschool Students
<u>Daily</u>	6:45 to 7:15 AM	Chasiddus
	Between Mincha and Maariv	Halacha

**SHAVUOT SCHEDULE - 5763**

☆ <b>Thursday night – June 5 : Candlelighting:</b>	<b>7:44 PM</b>
<b>Mincha:</b>	<b>8:00 PM</b>
<i>ALL NIGHT LEARNING: THURSDAY NIGHT starting at 12:00 Midnight.</i>	
☆ <b>Friday- June 6, Shacharit:</b>	Early Minyan..... <b>5:15 AM</b>
	LATEST SHEMA..... <b>9:16 AM</b>
	Regular Minyan..... <b>9:30 AM</b>
<i>followed by cheesecake, Kiddush and ice cream</i>	
<b>Mincha.....</b>	<b>7:40 PM</b>
☆ <b>Friday evening - June 6 : Candlelighting</b>	<b>7:44 PM</b>
<i>from a pre-existing flame.</i>	
☆ <b>Shabbos –June 7: Shacharit.....</b>	<b>9:30 AM</b>
<b>Yizkor.....</b>	<b>11:00 AM</b>
<b>Mincha.....</b>	<b>7:45 PM</b>
<i>(followed by learning)</i>	
<b>Havdala.....</b>	<b>8:44 PM</b>

*Happy Birthday* to Sara Meisel.

*Yartzeits:* Moshe Ben Zalman Tompkins – Sivan 3, Charles Cohen - Sivan 8, Naftal Sternlight - Sivan 9.

**There will be no class on Tuesday, June 10**

**DAILY MINYONIM**

**Shacharis: Mon -Fri: 6:00 AM & 7:30 AM**  
**Sunday: 9:00 AM**

**Mincha/Maariv: 8:00 PM**

**GOOD SHABBOS AND CHAG SAMEACH!**