

BILVAVI
SIVAN
TALKS

Avodah · Essence · Mazal · Tribe



REVISED AND EXPANDED

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Sivan – Keep Going

Sivan – The Month of “Walking”

Every month has a special power in it, and the special power found in the month of Sivan is “*halichah*” – walking.¹ This is not referring to physical walking, but walking with our soul. What is walking with our soul? It is not just another ability we have, but it is a power which encompasses the full spectrum of our soul.

When a child grows into an adult, at a certain point he stops growing. A woman at a certain point in life stops being fertile. Physical growth is limited - but spiritual growth never ends. When a person studies a profession, like if he studies to become a doctor or a lawyer, he learns much knowledge, and there comes a point in life where he has reached the peak of how much he can know about these fields. The growth in areas of knowledge eventually stops. Here we will speak about a kind of growth that never stops: our spiritual growth.

Endless Growth

Chazal say that Torah scholars are always advancing to another level, and they never stop². The kind of walking that is the power of the month of Sivan is this kind of endless walking – *halichah* - it is an ability in a person to have endless growth.

¹ *Sefer Yetzirah* 5:5

² *Berachos* 66a

There is no person who doesn't have times of growth in his *Avodas Hashem* (spiritual improvement and service towards G-d). We all have a desire to grow in spirituality. But most people experience this desire only temporarily, and then people usually go back to their routine in life, and then they stop desiring to grow. Even when people do restart their spiritual growth, it is not a continuation from where they last left off, but they have to start all over from scratch.

We need to find a place within ourselves that enables us to have endless growth – to never stop growing in spirituality. As one of the Sages said, “I have seen those who grow spiritually, but they are few.”³ There are people who are constantly advancing in their spiritual growth.

The question is: don't we all need to rest sometimes? How is it possible to always be involved in growth? Don't we need to relax...?

How To View Breaks

Here we come to a great fundamental in life. All of us go through stages in our life – we go through times that are hard either physically and emotionally. One who constantly grows spiritually learns how to grow from these situations, while a non-growing person falls apart from difficult times.

One who wants to constantly grow more in his spirituality knows that he has to relax as well, but he understands that resting is in order to re-energize so that he can have return to progress. A non-growing person, however, relaxes so he can sit back and take it easy – he does not desire to continue his growth. When he relaxes, he disconnects from spiritual growth.

It is impossible for a person to constantly be in growth mode when it comes to our spiritual progress. This is because we all have times that are simply too difficult. We all have times in which we are slowed down to a halt, times in which we feel like we can't go on anymore. So we all need to take a break sometimes from our progress - but the only issue is how we *view* these situations. Are we looking at these breaks as a way to give up on our growth – so that we can sit back and just take it easy - or are we looking at our breaks as a way to refresh ourselves so that we can have more energy to go on?

3 Berachos 45a

That is the question we should ask ourselves: we need to realize how we view our necessary breaks, with what attitude are we going about it.

Holding Onto Our "Fire" When We Go Dry

There is another way to deal with the times in our life in which we don't feel any drive to grow.

[To illustrate the concept we are about to mention], let's say a woman is cooking supper for her family, and suddenly she realizes she needs to leave the house to take care of an errand. Either she can put out the fire on the stove when she leaves, or she can lower the flame a little. What's the difference? If she turns off the flame completely, the food gets cold, and she may have to start cooking it all over again when she comes back. But if she just lowers the flame, the food will stay warm, and when she comes back, she can continue cooking from where she left off without having to start all over again.

The same can apply to our own personal situations in life. When we have to "stop" sometimes and take a break, we need to be able to hold onto our inner "flame" of growth, and not to put it out just because we're relaxing. That is how we should go about our difficult times, in which we lack the motivation to grow: by knowing that even though we can't grow fully, at least we can grow a little. Hold onto your "flame" at least a little, even though your flame isn't being ignited so much – and in this way, you retain your aspirations and hold onto them even as you're not actively involved in spiritual growth. You can do this by remembering the times in which you *did* grow.

Good Times and Bad Times

Rabbeinu Tam writes in *Sefer HaYoshor* that every person has "Days of Love" and "Days of Hatred" – in other words, we periodically have "good" times and "bad" times. Our "good times" are when our soul feels opened, and we thus feel good about ourselves. During our good period, our emotions and our thoughts are positive. Our "bad times" are when our soul feels closed up – when we feel negative about ourselves, and we aren't experiencing positive emotions and thoughts.

What are we supposed to do during our bad times – our "Days of Hate", as Rabbeinu Tam describes it?

Rav Chaim Shmulevitz *zt"l* said that the way is to hold onto our inner fire, as we described above. We should hold onto our previous growth even though we are currently in a time when we aren't growing. In this way, we connect our current dismal period with our uplifting periods. By holding onto some of our growth even as we take a break, we form a connection between our "bad" times and "good" times, and then we can survive even the bad times!

For example, if a man always was used to learning five pages of *Gemara* a day when he felt that he was in a period of growth, and now he finds himself in a period where he feels that his willpower has weakened, he can still learn four pages of *Gemara*. He can tell himself that although right now he's not up to it to learn five pages of *Gemara*, at least he's able to learn four pages of *Gemara*.

Another example: If someone learns with a *chavrusa* (study partner) for ten minutes a day and then a day comes where he doesn't feel like learning with his *chavrusa*, he can at least learn with his *chavrusa* for two minutes a day.

If someone has ten a minutes a day in which he or she sits quietly and talks to Hashem, and then a hard day comes in which a person feels that he/she has no motivations whatsoever to do this, then one can at least do it for two minutes. That is something one can do no matter how hard of a period he/she is in.

In this way, even if you aren't actively involved in a period of spiritual growth, you are still somehow involved in growth, in spite of the dismal period you're going through.

We Need Both Attitudes

We mentioned two ways how we can survive difficult times in which we don't feel like working on ourselves. Let us summarize them – and we will see why in reality, we need both.

The first way is that when we are in a hard time, we can tell ourselves that really we want to grow right now, but we are just taking a break so we can re-energize and have more strength to later progress. The second way is to take some small growth with us even into the times when we don't feel like growing, "lowering the flame", as opposed to putting it out totally.

We need both ways simultaneously. Everything in life has an external layer to it and an internal way to it. The first way we mentioned is the external layer of our avodah here, while the second way is the inner layer of the avodah here.

Let's say a person only uses the second way, which is the inner way. The person is in a rut, so she decides that she will grow at least a little, even though she can't grow fully. This alone won't be enough, because a person has to realize as well that her break from growth is really a way for her to reenergize. A person has to realize that even if I can't grow fully right now (because I am growing through a very hard time right now and I am too stressed out to work on myself), I am taking a break right now so that eventually, I will be able to return to my growth, reenergized.

And if a person only uses the first way, which is to view the situation as only a temporary break – but she doesn't try to grow at all during a hard time – it will also not be enough. When a person completely stops *Avodas Hashem* and gives up totally from continuing – even if it's only a temporary period of total despair - then the person's desire to grow in *Avodas Hashem* may become lost totally.

So when we go through a hard time in our life and we don't have the strength to work on ourselves and grow, we need two things: we need to look back at the times of growth even as we are not actively growing, and in this way we hold onto some growth even as we're in a rut; and we also need to know that although right now we are taking a break from growth, the plan is really to return to eventually return to our growth.

Failures Are Not Failures

Finally, there is a third step we will add onto this and clarify.

When a person is in a difficult time and he doesn't feel a drive to grow, there are two attitudes he can have. One attitude is to completely give up: "That's it. I've had enough, and I can't take it anymore. Today is a bad day, and I'm only going downhill. I can't work on myself today."

But the other attitude he can have is to have a different perspective on the situation: "My soul needs a break sometimes. I can't always be growing. It's really not a *bad* day – it's a day that I have to go through, because it's normal for my soul

to feel closed up sometimes, [since Rabbeinu Tam has written that] everyone has these “Days of Hate”.”

We can compare this to going to sleep. Although sleep is not productive, is sleep a bad thing? No one looks at sleep as unproductive, because we all realize that we need to go to sleep in order to reenergize. We can't function unless we get our sleep. Taking a break is part of life, and we must not look down at ourselves for this.

The difficult times in our life are thus really not “difficult” or “bad”. Rather, they are like our sleep. It is necessary for us sometimes to pull back from growth, and let us not beat ourselves up that something is wrong with us that we don't feel any willpower to grow spiritually. If you have those days in which you don't feel like learning or *davening* or making any spiritual progress, realize that it's normal, and that it is actually a necessary part of your growth to go through these times in which you lack motivation.

This can change our whole attitude about life! Our soul needs to rest sometimes – we can't always grow and reach higher levels. This is not a fall from our level – it is a necessary part of our growth. “Failures” are thus not really “failures” – they are needed for our growth.

This is important to know even while you're in a period of growth and you feel fine. You need to prepare yourself for those times in which you will find it hard, by telling yourself that in order to grow, we need to go through a constant cycle of rising and falling from our level.

In Conclusion

In the month of Sivan, we didn't just receive the Torah. We received the power of a Jew – the power to always grow, no matter what we feel like we're in. Our difficult times are like times in which we go to sleep.

This power is revealed in the month of Sivan, but we must take it with us to the rest of the year: remember that no matter what, a Jew never gives up.

Questions & Answers with the Rav

Q1: *What is an example of a good point to hold onto when we are going through difficult times?*

ANSWER: Good question. There are two opposite powers in the soul: despair, and hope. When a person is in a going through a dismal period and he despairs, and he is too accepting of the despair, he is weakening the “fire” of his hope. The only thing a person needs to do, in order to access the power of tikva/hope, is for a person to know that “I will soon return to the way things were.” Practically speaking, a person should understand that his soul needs to go to “sleep” sometimes, just as the body needs sleep [meaning that the soul isn’t able to perform at it best, during a dismal period].

Q2: *So when a person is awakening the power of hope, there is nothing specific which a person needs to hope for?*

ANSWER: You only need to be on the proper level to do so, to have hope that you will certainly return to the way things were before, and that you can certainly succeed. This doesn’t meant to simply say “I hope” superficially, but to feel truly confident that Hashem will certainly help you succeed.

Q3: *If a person gets sick and is physically not able to do anything, and he doesn’t even have a minute or two minutes a day to work on the idea of increasing the power of “hope”, is there anything she can do, to grow right now?*

ANSWER: If he doesn’t have 2 minutes, he can still find half a minute for this.

Q4: *The sick person can only think about hope, but he has no one to work on it together with and speak about. For example, he was used to learning every day with a chavrusa, and now that he is ill, he has no one to verbalize his hope with.*

ANSWER: So he can do it while learning alone.

Q5: *But there are days when an ill person will find even this too difficult for him to do.*

ANSWER: He still has a second or where he can find time to work on this – in spite of the fact that the yetzer hora (evil inclination) is very strong.

Q5: *If a person’s ratzon (will) dries up, how can he get it going again?*

ANSWER: During a dismal period, a person should not focus on action (maaseh) that much, and instead he should focus more on maintaining whatever willpower (ratzon) he has acquired until now. It will be too difficult for a person to “create” a ratzon now for more growth, now that his will for growth has stopped. But this much, he will still be able to do.

Q6: *I have learned that a person needs to keep doing what he needs to do and to keep serving Hashem, even when he doesn’t feel like it and he has no enthusiasm or will to serve Hashem. For example, a person should daven to Hashem even if he doesn’t feel particularly enthusiastic about davening right now. But according to what the Rav is saying here, it sounds like we need to keep awakening our emotion and will.*

ANSWER: Only a person who has reached a very high level of pnimiyus is able to do so. A person will never build his inner world if he serves Hashem without feeling. If a person has already developed his pnimiyus, then he is able to have times in which he serves Hashem even when he doesn’t have any will. But for most people, it is not a proper approach to always serve Hashem without any feelings.

Q7: *But perhaps the approach (of action over emotion) would work better for women, who are usually more action-oriented.*

ANSWER: Actually, it is the opposite. Since women are more usually emotional than men, they need to work more with their emotions, than with trying to act when they don't feel like it. By contrast, men, who are less emotionally inclined than women, are better equipped to do what they have to do even when they don't feel like it. But this doesn't either mean that men to need to act robotic and mechanical, with no feeling in what they do. Everyone needs to open their hearts. This should not be about "doing what you have to do even when you don't feel like it."

Q8: *Do we have any way of knowing when these "good times" or "bad times" will come?*

ANSWER: We do not have any control of when they come and go, but the more a person works on himself, the less the "bad times" will come, and the less intense they will be. But there is almost no one in the generation who never goes through these "bad times."

Q9: *During a dismal period, a person wonders if he's going on the right path or not. How can person indeed know if he's going in the right path?*

ANSWER: During the "bad times", it is too difficult for us to know if we are going on the right path or not, so we will have to wait for the "good times" when we can think more objectively. During a dismal period, if a person feels that he needs to improve in certain areas or take a different path, it is usually coming from an unhealthy place in the soul, from feeling down and broken. So in order to analyze one's path, one will need to wait for the dismal period to pass, and analyze his path later, when "good times" return.

Q10: *How do you know if you're going through those "Bad Days"? Can it be that for two hours a day that you're going through "Bad Days?"*

ANSWER: "Bad Days" ("Days of Hate") can last well beyond 2 hours or half a day. They can go on for several days, and sometimes they can even go on for several weeks. Sometimes you can feel physical aches from them. But if you feel like you're in a dismal period for more than a few months already, that's a sign that there is a problem. Then it is not just a period of "Bad Days" anymore – it is a sign of depression.

Q11: *Why does our soul need to go through this state of "sleep", or "Bad Days"? And is there any way we can prolong our periods of "Good Days?"*

ANSWER: Hashem created the world that everything needs sleep, even our soul. Since our soul needs sleep, we need to also go through "Bad Days." There is nothing we can do about it. But the more we work on ourselves, the longer our "Good Days" will last.

Q12: *How do we start serving Hashem? Where do we begin?*

ANSWER: Start by working on a point that is closest to your heart. But you need to also daven to Hashem for help in this. Every person's soul is different [when it comes to where a person should start].

Sivan – Walking Towards The Endless

Sivan – “Walking”

The month of *Sivan* is the month when we received the Torah. Each month contains a special power, as our Sages taught; the power of Sivan is called “*hiluch*”, “walking.”⁴ What is the connection between *hiluch*\walking and with the giving of the Torah? And what exactly is the power of “*hiluch*”, “walking”?

The Constant Spiritual Progress Of A Torah Scholar: Where Is His Serenity?

The *Gemara*⁵ says that Torah scholars have no *menuchah* (serenity), not on this world and not in the next, for it is written, “**יִלְכוּ מִחַיִל אֶל חַיִל**”, “*They go from place to place.*” If Torah scholars have no rest on this world or in the next, what kind of situation are they in?

They are always in a state of *hiluch* – they are always ‘walking’, going, progressing.

However, there seems to be a contradiction. A Torah scholar, our Sages say, is the epitome of *menuchah* (serenity). The Torah says about the Yissocher, who is blessed with Torah scholars as his descendants, that “*he saw that serenity is good.*” The wisest of all men, the greatest Torah scholar ever, was Shlomo HaMelech, yet he is called ‘*ish menuchah*’, a ‘man of serenity’. But the *Gemara* we brought above says that a Torah scholar has no *menuchah*, not on this world and not on the next! How do we reconcile these two statements?

Making the question stronger, there’s another statement of our Sages that says, “A Torah scholar is called *Shabbos*.” *Shabbos* epitomes the concept of *menuchah* – serenity and rest. Here again we see that a Torah scholar is the epitome of *menuchah*.

Therefore, the statement of our Sages that “A Torah scholar has no *menuchah* (rest\serenity), not on This World, and not on the Next World” is a matter which

⁴ Sefer Yetzirah 5:5

⁵ Berachos 64a

needs understanding. If they are always progressing and moving forward, when do they ever get to have *menuchah*?

And if a Torah scholar is the epitome of *menuchah*, why does he keep aspiring for more and more spiritual levels?

Defining The Concept of Hiluch\Walking\Progressing

In order to know this, we will first need to understand what the concept of “*hiluch*” (“going”) is. What does it mean that Torah scholars are in always in a state of “*hiluch*”, that they are always ‘going from place to place’?

The way that a Torah scholar progresses and ‘goes’ [from one spiritual attainment to another] is not in the same way that we understand how a person simply ‘goes’ from one place to another. It’s not the same kind of “*hiluch*”. The Sages make a contrast between angels and Torah scholars: an angel is always standing, whereas a Torah scholar is always ‘walking’. In this statement, the Sages are revealing to us that the Jew has the special power in his soul to keep progressing to higher levels; to constantly be in a state of “*hiluch*”. In that sense, there is no *menuchah* (serenity), because there is always more spiritual growth for a person to reach.

There are two types of *hiluch*\walking. One way is when a person ‘goes’ from one place to another, and another case is where he leaves his own “*daled amos*” (four cubits); the Torah defines a person’s *daled amos* as his actual *makom*, space. In other words, one kind of person will go from place to place by simply leaving his place, while another person can move from place to place while still being able to remain in it – he can move around within his own space of *daled amos*, and it is not considered as if he is gone anywhere.

On Shabbos, it is forbidden to leave the *techum* (boundary of the settlement). Within one’s own *techum*, though, one is allowed to move around in on Shabbos. It would seem that moving within one’s own bounds is the same kind of movement as moving past one’s bounds, but they are actually two different kinds of movement. Understanding this deep difference will help us understand what the *hiluch* of a Torah scholar is.

One kind of *hiluch* is where a person moves from one place to another and as a result, he loses his *menuchah* (serenity). This is where a person leaves his place, and he goes to another place. When a person is always going from place to place, he cannot have *menuchah*. But when a person is remaining in his space, even as he's moving within it, he can have a degree of *menuchah* there.

Avraham Avinu left for Eretz Yisrael, and Yaakov Avinu was promised Eretz Yisrael, when Hashem folded the entire land of Eretz Yisrael and placed it under his head. In both of these situations, they were staying within one “place”. Yaakov clearly had the entire place of Eretz Yisrael, but even Avraham was remaining in the same place the whole time; he was not actually leaving one place to go to another place. How?

When one walks in Eretz Yisrael, it is as if he is staying in one place the whole time, whereas walking outside of Eretz Yisrael is considered going from one place to another. What is the difference? Of Eretz Yisrael it is said, “*From beginning of the year, until the end of the year*”. The entire land of Eretz Yisrael is considered to be one “place”. The Sages teach that Hashem is called the “Place” of the world.⁶ When one feels this perspective, even as he walks from one place to another, he does not feel like he is leaving one place and going to another. Rather, he knows that he is always found in the same place – for the only “place” of the world is Hashem.

When one walks within his own property, we say that he's walking within his own place and that he hasn't left his place. But if one leaves his property and goes to another person's property, we say that he has gone from one place to another. We can learn from this that if a person views two different places as one place, he is not leaving that place, wherever he goes. When a person understands that only Hashem is called the “Place” of the world, he sees every place in the world as all one place – Hashem's.

Based upon the above, we can understand the difference between the “walking” of a Torah scholar, with the “walking” of one who is not a Torah scholar, an ignoramus. To a Torah scholar, every place is all one place, for only Hashem is the

⁶ Nefesh HaChaim, Gate III

“Place” of the world. In his perspective, he is never leaving one place and going to another, because every place is really Hashem’s. But someone who does not have the perspective of the Torah scholar thinks that he goes from one place to another, and that is why he will not have *menuchah* (serenity), because according to his perspective, he’s always on the go.

“By the mouth of Hashem they shall journey, and by the mouth of Hashem they shall camp.” The Gemara says that from this verse, we learn that only Hashem is called the “Place” of the world, for wherever we go, we must follow Hashem; that makes every place into Hashem’s place. This is how a Torah scholar progresses – he has the perspective that every place where he goes to is really all one place. It is all Hashem’s place. It is like when the entire land of Eretz Yisrael was folded and placed under the head of Yaakov Avinu, and it is like walking in Eretz Yisrael, which is entirely one place – *“By the mouth of Hashem they shall journey, and by the mouth of Hashem they shall rest.”*

Hiluch \ Walking – Uncovering More Depth In The Same Area You Are In

Now let us explain this in terms that apply to our own personal souls.

Every person goes through all kinds of situations in life, where they are moving and progressing from one area to another. Some people are progressing in their spiritual attainments, whereas others are making progress in areas that are spiritually harmful (may Heaven save them). The Vilna Gaon says that a person is either ascending or descending, in his spiritual progress. No one stays in one place for long; either a person is rising, or falling.

Sivan is the month of *halichah \ hiluch* (walking \ progressing). The Torah is the revelation that whenever I go, I am in a place where Hashem is. “Hashem looked into the Torah, and created the world” – from the Torah, it is revealed that all of Creation is really one “place”: it is all Hashem. The Sages said this explicitly of Eretz Yisrael (that anyone who walks in it is walking in Hashem’s place), but it also applies anywhere outside of Eretz Yisrael, except that there it is more hidden.

The Torah is all one unit. There is no such thing as two different versions of the Torah, *chas v’shalom*. We find that a “place” can be divided, such as how the land of Eretz Yisrael is divided amongst the portions of the twelve tribes. But at the root,

all is one. When a person sees the world through an inner lens, when he sees the root of this Creation, what does he see in the world? All he will see in the “world” is “Torah”, for that is what the world was created from, and therefore only the “Torah” is the “world” (when one has the inner perspective).

If a person sees the world through superficial vision, however, he has the perspective that one can move from place to another, that he can be uprooted from his place and find rest in another place. With such a perspective, he has no real stability, so he will never have *menuchah* (serenity). But if a person only sees “Torah” in Creation (for “Hashem looked into the Torah and created the world”), he will see all places of the world as one single place.

Thus, the meaning of “Torah scholars have no *menuchah*, not on This World and not in the Next World” is that they don’t stop moving within the place they are in. They are not moving out of one place and into another. Rather, in the very place they are in, they keep moving. In that respect, they don’t have *menuchah*.

What does it mean that Torah scholars keep progressing, from one spiritual attainment to another, ילכו מחיל לחיל? Does it mean to finish all of *Talmud Bavli* and then *Talmud Yerushalmi*? Along the lines of the same question, what essentially is the difference between a Torah scholar and an ignoramus?

The true Torah scholar is always revealing more depth to the very same verse of Torah he is learning, or in the very same page of Gemara he is learning. He keeps progressing spiritually within the same place, and that is he is always in movement, but without leaving the place where he is, by revealing more depth within the place where he is at.

Thus, the special ability of the Torah scholar is that he can keep “walking”\progressing in the very area of Torah he is learning, by seeing another angle of understanding to it, another layer of depth to it, endlessly.

Hiluch \Walking \Progressing – The Way To Receive The Torah

What is the connection, though, between this concept of *hiluch*\walking\progressing and receiving the Torah? It is because the Torah is the revelation of the very idea that a person can keep walking\progressing, endlessly, within the very same place that a person is in. One can keep revealing more depth

to the same verse of the Torah he is learning, to the same Mishnah he is learning, to the same subject of Gemara he is learning. The amount of depth one can keep uncovering is infinite.

The Menuchah (Serenity) of Learning Torah In-Depth

To illustrate the concept, Rav Chaim of Brisk told his students to spend 40 days learning the same page of Gemara. It is because one can keep uncovering more and more depth within the very same area of Torah he is learning about, without moving on to a different area.

Now we can also understand how this also provides a Torah with *menuchah*. The soul cannot have true serenity when it keeps viewing a different page of Gemara every day; it never finds any place to rest in. But if it has 40 days to keep seeing the same words of the Gemara, it can be serene there. This is on condition, of course, that a person keeps studying the words with the intention to uncover more depth of understanding.

The *menuchah* in learning Torah comes from spending time learning the same page of Gemara for a while, getting yourself deeper and deeper into it. Compare this to digging a pit in the ground in order to lay a foundation to build a home upon. The deeper you dig into the ground, the more stable of a structure it will be, because the foundation is stronger when it is placed deeper. This is the meaning of true “*menuchas hanefesh*” (serenity of the soul).

A Torah scholar therefore does not simply ‘go’ from one subject to another in Torah. Rather, in the same subject of Torah he is studying, he keeps revealing more and more depth in that area. Now we can understand why Shlomo was called “*ish menuchah*”, a man of serenity. He was the one who built the *Beis HaMikdash*, the deepest spiritual place that there is in Creation. It was the gate to Heaven that was on this world of action, and it was a gate that led to the most absolute spiritual place [and since he uncovered the most depth, he attained serenity].

Reaching The Infinite

At Har Sinai, Hashem opened up all of the heavens and showed them “*Ain Od Milvado*”, that there is nothing else besides for Hashem. What was the reason for

this? It is because the Torah enables a person to reveal more and more depth, until a person reaches *HaKadosh Baruch Hu*, which is the recognition of “*Ain Od Milvado*”.

That is what it means to have “*hiluch*” (walking) within Torah; it means to keep “walking” and moving within one place, within the very same area he is thinking about, until one reaches the Infinite - the deepest place possible to reach.

Sivan is the month when the Torah was given. The Torah is “*longer than the earth and wider than the sea*”, but besides for this, the Torah also reveals a power to keep “going” within the same place where one is, to keep revealing more and depth within the place that one is, until he reaches the *Ein Sof*, (the Infinite).

This is not a matter which comes by itself to a person [as an automatic byproduct of learning Torah]. Rather, it is a matter which needs to be acquired, and it is the meaning of what it means to be a “Torah scholar.”

In order for a person to see the depths of the Torah, when he sees the “deep waters” that the Torah is, he must become an “*ish tevunah*”, “a man of understanding”. This refers to the concept of the “50 Gates of Understanding”.

The Depth of Sefiras Ha'Omer: Getting Deeper Into The Gates of Understanding

There are “50 Gates of Understanding” to the Torah. There are 50 days of *Sefiras Ha'Omer*, and the inner reason for counting each day of the *Omer* is so that one can keep entering deeper and deeper into the spiritual realm within him; until the innermost gate is reached.

The Vilna Gaon says that each of the 50 gates of understanding contain 50 levels, so when one reaches the 50th gate, he will find himself before another 50 gates to traverse. Thus, the depth of *Sefiras Ha'Omer* is to keep entering deeper and deeper into one's inner spiritual realm, until one gets to the “giving of the Torah” that is reached when one gets to the recognition of *Ain Od Milvado* (“There is nothing besides Him”).

Counting *Sefiras Ha'Omer* is therefore not just a verbal act of the mouth, but a matter of the soul. When the Torah says, “Count fifty days”, the intention is to

keep entering deeper, past another gate and another gate, into one's inner spiritual dimension.

That is the depth of the concept of "*hiluch*". It is about digging deeper and deeper, into everything. In everything we encounter, there is always more depth to uncover, because there are always "50 gates of understanding" in everything.

The first 49 days of *Sefiras Ha'Omer* represents the external part of our task in preparing to receive the Torah. What is the preparation that we need to make in order to receive the Torah? To reveal more and more depth in whatever we see! *Sefiras Ha'Omer* is about revealing depth, to enter into another gate and into another gate.

Reaching The "50 Gates of Understanding" – Through Exposing The Heart

The *Nefesh HaChaim* explains that the root of Creation is that the Torah reveals all of Creation. The depth of this matter is that Torah can be found in any place where one is; it is not limited to any one place. A Torah scholar can see, in everything he comes across, the "50 gates of understanding". He doesn't only see it in one particular place; he can see it in any place, in anything he sees.

In order to reveal the depths of the Torah, one must reveal the "50 gates of understanding" in his own heart. The heart contains 50 gates. When one reveals his heart, he can enter into the 50 gates that are within the heart. Shlomo HaMelech said, "My heart has seen much wisdom." The 50 gates of the heart became opened to Shlomo, and that is how he was able to reach the 50th gate of the Torah, for his heart became a proper vessel that could receive the 50 gates of understanding in everything.

In order to see the 50th gate of understanding in anything, one cannot reach it through his intellect. The intellect is not capable to reaching the 50th gate of understanding in anything, because the 50th gate is always beyond intellectual comprehension. Only the heart, which contains 50 gates of understanding, can reach it. The Torah speaks of those who are "wise of heart", and this is not referring to intellectual wisdom, but "heart" wisdom. Only with this "heart wisdom" can a person reveal the depths of understanding in something.

Purifying The Heart – Through Revealing Depth Within The Heart

It is written, “*A pure heart you created me with.*” If a person wants to comprehend the Torah, he first needs to go through an inner process, of revealing the depths of his heart.

The spiritual structure of the heart is a complicated to know, because it is not one single layer. The “heart” itself is not the emotions of a person; it is a deeper dimension than just emotion, and there is depth upon depth to it. If a person has not yet purified his heart, he will only feel the outer dimension of his heart, which is the emotions, and if he stays that way his entire life, he will remain at the same emotional level of a child, yet he will feel certain that he’s using his heart.

When a child feels happy, or when he feels sad, he feels that this is all there is to his heart. All of his recognition is based on the level he is at. But true “heart recognition” is only when one reveals new depth within his heart; one can keep entering deeper and deeper into it, traversing through the 50 gates that are hidden in his heart. That is where a person receives the “wisdom the heart”.

This is the meaning of Shlomo HaMelech’s words, “*My heart has seen much wisdom.*” The wisdom he uncovered was the depths of the Torah, and he saw more and more depth in everything in the Torah.

The level of one’s Torah learning will depend on the level he has reached in his own heart. When a person truly comprehends anything in Torah, it is not reached due to any intellectual prowess. If one is intellectually gifted when it comes to Torah learning, that is only the external part of Torah learning. One reaches true understanding in Torah only to the degree that he has revealed the depth within his heart. The more one uncovers the depth of his heart, the more understanding he will reach in Torah. The highest point one can reach is the “heart” itself. Beyond that, we are not able to know.

In Conclusion

And so, preparing to receive the Torah is through *hiluch*, “walking.” It doesn’t mean to “go” from one “place” to another “place”, which is the perspective of the ignoramus. Rather, it means to keep walking\going further and further into our

own depths; to the depths of recognition in our heart. That is the vessel that one needs in order to contain the depths of the Torah's wisdom.

“My heart has seen much wisdom” – to the degree that one has purified his heart, that is how much wisdom he will reach in Torah. Any of our previous sages and Gedolim who merited to receive much wisdom did not reach this from any of their intellectual abilities, but according to the degree that they purified their hearts. They therefore merited to become a *“maayan hamisgaber”* (mighty wellspring) that can reach understanding in Torah.

May Hashem give us the ability to go from one spiritual accomplishment to another, to reveal more and more depth in the Torah, and the Creator Who lays hidden in it.

Sivan – Reuven

The Month of Sivan Corresponds To The Tribe of Reuven

We are now entering, with *siyata d'shmaya*, the month of Sivan (may it come upon us for a blessing).

When the Jewish people left Egypt, Hashem gave them the *mitzvah* of Rosh Chodesh. We have 12 months in the year. The Sages teach that everything which exists in time also exists in the soul.⁷ If there are 12 times of the year known as Rosh Chodesh, where do we find 12 souls who correspond to these 12 months? Those were the 12 sons of Yaakov Avinu (the 12 tribes). Each month corresponds to a different tribe. The month of Sivan, according to our teacher the Gra, corresponds to tribe of Reuven.⁸

What is the connection between the tribe of Reuven and the month of Sivan?

Kayin, Reuven, and Yisro

Leah named her firstborn son “Reuven” because when he was born, she said, “*Reu, bni*”, “See that I have a son”, which affirmed that she deserved to be the wife of Yaakov Avinu, for now she had borne the first of the 12 tribes. Another reason, Rashi says, is because she said, “*Reu bein bni, l'bein chami*,” “See the difference between my firstborn son and the firstborn son of my father-in-law (Yitzchok), who is Esav.”⁹ Leah knew that her firstborn son Reuven would be righteous, in contrast with the wicked firstborn Esav.

The Zohar¹⁰ says a different reason for Reuven's name: The word “Reuven” is from the words *ohr ben*, a “spiritual light that is a son”. This meant that Reuven's role was to bring spiritual light to the world and thereby fix the “darkness” that came to the world through the first child of the world, Kayin. When Kayin sinned, he brought darkness upon the world. In contrast, Reuven was charged with the

7 Sefer Yetzirah 3:1

8 Peirush haGra on Sefer Yetzirah 5:1

9 Rashi on Beraishis 29:32

10 Zohar II (parshas Mishpatim) 104a

task of fixing the damage of Kayin, which would bring “light” to the world and thereby dispel the darkness brought by Kayin.

Elsewhere, Chazal revealed that Reuven was a soul reincarnation of Kayin. Yaakov Avinu said about Reuven (in the blessings) that Reuven bears the trait of *yesser se'ais*, “foremost in rank”,¹¹ and this is a hint that Reuven’s deeper soul mission was to attain the trait of *se'ais* (forgiveness) which Kayin did not attain, for Hashem had told Kayin, “*If you improve yourself, you will be forgiven*”.¹² Unfortunately, when Kayin’s soul was reincarnated in Reuven, Kayin’s damage continued and Reuven failed in his mission to fix the damage caused by Kayin.

Later in history, Kayin was reincarnated as Yisro, who was called *keini*, which hints to the word “Kayin”.¹³

Reuven’s Spiritual Light – The Power To “See” The Sounds At Har Sinai

From the words of the Zohar, we can see that Reuven’s name is rooted in the word *ohr* (light). The *Gra* says that the term *ohr* is connected with the month of Sivan, because in the month of Sivan the entire Jewish nation at the mountain “saw” all of the thunderous sounds and they were also able to “hear” the visions at Har Sinai.

The Sages take note of the fact that this was miraculous, because sounds are normally heard, not seen, and visions are normally seen, not heard. But at Har Sinai, the miracle was that the people could “see” the sounds and “hear” the visions. What gave them the power to “see” the sounds at Har Sinai? It came from the spiritual power of Reuven, which offered them the spiritual vision to “see” the sounds.

The Original Level of Light Was The Light Mixed Together With Darkness

The Sages also draw a parallel between the Ten Expressions which Hashem created the world, with the Ten Commandments of the Torah that were said at

¹¹ Beraishis 49:3

¹² Beraishis 4:7

¹³ Arizal in Sefer HaKavanos (47a), and sefer Likutei Torah (parshas Vayechi)

Har Sinai. The first expression that Hashem used to create the world was, “*Yehi Ohr*”, “Let there be light”, and this corresponds to the first of the Ten Commandments, which was “*Anochi Hashem*”, “I am Hashem”. Thus, the Torah’s first commandment, “I am Hashem”, is rooted in the first of Hashem’s expressions to create the world, which was “Let there be light.”

What is the connection? The words “*Let there be light*” was really the very root of the Torah, because the Torah is the “light” of Creation, for Torah is called *Torah ohr*, “Torah of light”, and furthermore, Hashem used the Torah to create the world with it.¹⁴ After Hashem created the “light” of Creation (which is really the Torah), Hashem testified about it that “*It was good*”. And we also find that the Torah is called “good”, as it says in the verse, “*For I have given you a good purchase, my Torah, do not abandon it.*”¹⁵ Hence, the Torah is the “good light” that Hashem created the world with.

On the first day, light and darkness were originally mixed together, and then Hashem separated them, assigning the light to the daytime and the dark to the nighttime [and at that point there was no sun and moon yet, because the luminaries were only created on the fourth day. On the first day, day/light and night/dark existed without the sun and moon]. When Hashem gave the Torah, the first commandment of “*I am Hashem*” originated in the first expression that Hashem used to create the world, which was, “*Let there be light.*”

Which light was the source of the first commandment of the Torah? Was it from the light that Hashem created on the first day, which Hashem separated from the darkness, or was it from the original state of light when it was originally mixed with darkness? It came from the light of *ohr haganuz*, the “hidden light”, the light that is hidden away for the *tzaddikim*. This light came from the original mixture of light and darkness, of which Hashem said it was “good”. That is also why it is called the “hidden” light, because it existed as part of darkness, so it was a more hidden level of light. [And when Hashem separated the light from the darkness, He hid away the original light that was part of the darkness, and He stored it away for *tzaddikim*, and this light became the *ohr haganuz*, the hidden light].

¹⁴ Editor’s Note: As stated in Zohar 161a, “Hashem looked into the Torah and created the world.”

¹⁵ Mishlei 4:2

Hence, the depth of the spiritual light revealed at the giving of the Torah – the first commandment of “*I am Hashem, your G-d*”, which was an outcome of “*Let there be light*” - was that this was really the original level of light, when light was mixed together with darkness at the beginning of Creation.

The Original Mixture of Light and Darkness Returned At The Giving of the Torah

How can we see this that there was light and darkness together at the giving of the Torah? On one hand, there was fire on the mountain, which gave off light, and at the same time, there were also thick clouds of darkness covering the sky. So there was light and darkness at once, at the time when the Torah was being given.

Bringing out this concept even stronger, the giving of the Torah was during the day (light). There is also an aspect of “darkness” at the giving of the Torah, because the Jewish people were forced to accept the Torah, when Hashem suspended the mountain over them and said, “If you accept the Torah, good, and if not, you will be buried under this mountain.” Later, they said *Naaseh V’Nishmah*, “We will do and we will hear.”¹⁶ When they were forced to receive the Torah, it was like “darkness” to them, in contrast to when they received it willingly, where they accepted it with clarity, which was “light” to them.

The Connection Between The Months of Nissan, Iyar and Sivan

There are 50 days between the festivals of Pesach and Shavuos, which concludes in the month of Sivan. This 50-day period combines together the months of Nissan, Iyar, and Sivan and unifies them. The 50 days of *Sefiras HaOmer*, from Pesach until Shavuos, is not simply a count that happens to overlap the months of Nissan, Iyar, and Sivan. Rather, all of these months are connected together through the circuit that begins with Pesach, leading into the days of the Omer, and ending with Shavuos.

Usually a festival will take up only one month. Pesach is in Nissan, Shavuos is in Sivan, Rosh HaShanah is in Tishrei, and Purim is in Adar. Chanukah is the only festival which overlaps two months, Kislev and Teves. The Ramban says that just like Succos has seven days followed by an eighth day, Shemini Atzeres, when we

¹⁶ see Tosafos to Shabbos 88a

celebrate Simchas Torah, so does the seven-day festival of Pesach have an “eighth day” that completes it, which is Shavuot. The festival of the Shavuot is the “Shemini Atzeres” of Pesach, because Shavuot is a celebration of Simchas Torah. Thus, Pesach begins in Nissan and ends in Sivan.

The first letters of the words “Nissan”, “Iyar” and “Sivan” spell the word “*anas*”, which means to be “forced”, a hint to when the people were forced to accept the Torah at Sinai. Through the counting of the Omer, the months of Nissan, Iyar, and Sivan become connected under one unit.

The people were forced to accept the Torah. Was this a form of “darkness”, or was it “light”? *Naaseh V’Nishma* was said with clarity, and clarity symbolizes light (just as the light makes things clear). But when the people were forced to accept the Torah, it was not done out of clarity, so this was the concept of “darkness”.

At first there was a mixture of light and dark in Creation, before Hashem separated them. Before the separation, however, when Hashem made the light and the dark, He declared that it was “good.” The original darkness was called “good”, it was a perfect creation. Only on the fourth day of Creation did Hashem declare darkness as not being good, when He made the moon smaller than the sun, because the moon complained that “Two kings cannot share one crown.”¹⁷ Ever since the moon became minimized, the nighttime and the dark fell into a state of ruination.

Reuven’s Light

As mentioned, Reuven’s name is from the words “*ohr ben*”, a son who brought spiritual light to the world. What was the nature of this light? [We will know after the following introduction.]

The original light at the beginning of Creation was called “good”. On the fourth day of Creation, though, there was another kind of light that was created, which came from the two luminaries that were placed in the sky above the earth: the sun and moon. The light that came from these luminaries was meant to become

17 Talmud Bavli Chullin 60a

perfected, but it became ruined, due to the moon's request to be made bigger than the sun. [Soon we shall more explain more about this].

Yaakov Avinu was tricked into marrying Leah instead of Rachel. Reuven was conceived from Yaakov and Leah on the night of their wedding, and when Yaakov awoke in the morning, he discovered that he had not married Rachel, but Leah. It follows, then, that Reuven's entire birth came about through a situation where Yaakov had been "forced" into marrying Leah instead. Although Yaakov was not completely forced, for he had willingly married Leah, it was not his plan to marry Leah first, and therefore on some level it was considered as if he was forced into marrying her. Thus, Reuven comes from being forced.

(Leah named her first son Reuven because she said *Reu bni*, "See that I have a son". Why was he called Reuven, then, and not *Reubni*, as his mother Leah expressed at his birth? It was because Reuven should have really come from Rachel, because Yaakov had intended that Rachel become his first wife. His firstborn son, Reuven, should have come from Rachel. Instead, he married Leah first, and therefore Leah could not name him *Reubni*, which would mean "My son", for in a sense, he was really supposed to be Rachel's son. So instead, she named him Reuven.)

How did Reuven fail in fixing the sin of Kayin? Had Reuven accessed the original light of Creation which was good, Reuven would not have sinned. Instead [by being impulsive and too quick to act], Reuven only accessed the "lower" level of light, the light that was created on the fourth day of Creation, which had become ruined, ever since the moon complained on that day when it said that "Two kings cannot share one crown."

The Gemara says that when the people said *Naaseh V'Nishma* at Har Sinai, they each received two crowns.¹⁸ Because the moon said it cannot share the crown with the sun, the people should have only received one crown. With the sin of the golden calf, the two crowns were taken away. Had they only received one crown, it would not have been taken away from them, because someone has to bear the crown. But because they received two crowns, both ended up being taken away

18 Talmud Bavli Shabbos 88a

from them after the sin with the calf. When they were forced to accept the Torah at Har Sinai, this was darkness. This was a hint that they would later fall from that level of standing at Sinai and they would lose their crowns. Had they been at the complete level when they stood at Sinai, they couldn't have sinned with the calf.

Moshe's Role Was To Reveal The "Light" of Torah Upon The World

The Sages said that when Moshe was born, the whole house was filled with light.¹⁹ He was the only one who could give the Torah to the Jewish people, because his role was to fix the darkness that entered Creation [ever since the first sin] and to reveal the "light" of the world, the Torah. If the Torah could not be given through Moshe, no one would be able to give it, because only the one who filled the house with light could be the one to give the Torah to the world - and fill the world with light.

The Danger In The Month of Sivan

In these days of the month of Sivan, we will soon be in the three days of preparing for the Torah. The word "Torah" is from the word "*ohr*", spiritual light, and the Torah itself is called *ohr*, as in the verse, "*Ner mitzvah v'Torah ohr*", "The flame of a commandment, and the Torah is light."²⁰ There is also a verse, "*The wisdom of man illuminates his face*"²¹. Every year at this time [in the days preceding the festival of Shavuot, when the nation was preparing to receive the Torah], a great spiritual light comes down to the world. But how many people make use of it?

The month of Sivan corresponds to Reuven, whose spiritual light became tarnished [due to his impulsiveness in the act of moving his father Yaakov's bed from Bilhah's tent into his mother Leah's tent, an act which was criticized by Yaakov Avinu and which caused Reuven to lose his blessing]. If we use the light of Reuven in the month of Sivan which became tarnished, then we will fall again into

19 Talmud Bavli Sotah 12a

20 Mishlei 6:23

21 Koheles 8:1

the state of the sin with the calf, which took place in the month of Tamuz, the month that follows Sivan.

Reuven acted too quickly and impulsively, and in doing so he resembled the impulsiveness of Kayin, thus he failed in fixing the damage that Kayin brought. Since Reuven failed in using his light correctly, we cannot take his path if we are to succeed. It would only lead us into sin, which led to the tragedies and destruction that took place in the months of Tamuz and Av, which came as a result of the sin with the golden calf.

“Reuven, My Firstborn” – Utilizing The Light of Reuven In The Month of Sivan

What is the possibility for us to make use of Reuven’s light, so that we will not be wearing “two crowns” (which leads to ruination), but “one crown”?

At the giving of the Torah, the entire people were “like one man, with one heart.”²² This was how they prepared for the Torah. What did this mean? It means that the way to prepare for the Torah is when two people can share one crown!

Chazal teach that the word *Anochi* is an acronym for *aryeh* (lion), *nesher* (eagle), *kaf* (which stands for *keruv*/cherub), and the letter *yud* stands for Yaakov. The prophet Yechezkel saw in his vision of the *Merkavah* (the Heavenly chariot) that the Heavenly chariot consists of an eagle in the middle, a lion to the right, the face of a man in the back, and an ox in the left. Where was the *keruv* (the cherub) in his vision? Chazal explain that at the giving of the Torah there was the commandments of “*I am Hashem your G-d*” and “*You shall not have any other gods*”, and after the sin with the golden calf, the image of the *keruv*/cherub on the *Merkavah* changed to the image of an ox, because the people had now sinned with an ox (a calf). Thus, with the sin of serving the golden calf, they damaged the level of “*keruv*” that was in the Heavenly *Merkavah*.

In the *Aron Kodesh* (the Holy Ark), the *keruvim* (cherubim) faced each other, and this resembled the state of the Jewish people when they all had one heart at the giving of the Torah. But this was not the case anymore after the sin with the calf. The first two commandments (“*I am Hashem*”, and “*You shall not have any other*

22 Rashi Shemos 19:2

gods before Me”) were two commandments that were essentially one commandment (the concept of belief in G-d), and it corresponded to the concept of two people sharing one crown. After the sin with the calf, the Jewish people fell from their exalted level, of two being one, down to the level where they are all “two”, where each person is separated from the other, where they do not all have one united heart, where they are each wearing two crowns and they are not all sharing one crown.

Had the people not sinned, the image of the *keruv* in the *Maaseh Merkavah* would have remained. What was the significance of the image of the *keruv* in the *Maaseh Merkavah*? The word *keruv* contains the same letters as the word *bechor* (firstborn), hinting to the primary *bechor*, Reuven. This was the original spiritual power contained in the month of Sivan, which is the month of Reuven – the power that was represented by the *keruv*, the ability to be united.

Because of Reuven’s sin, the status of the *bechirah* (firstborn) was lost from Reuven and transferred to Yosef. Yet, even after Reuven lost his blessing, Yaakov still called him “*Reuven, bechori*”, “Reuven, my firstborn.”²³ This means that on some level, Reuven’s power to the *bechor* remains intact. After the sin with the golden calf, the people fell from the exalted level of *keruv*, and now the image of the *keruv* on the *Merkavah* changed to the image of an ox. The hint of this was that they had fallen from their level of oneness, represented by the *keruvim* who were like one, and now they had fallen to the level of oxen, which gore and attack one another.

(Although the “ox” represents a fallen state, as implied by the sin with the golden calf which corresponds to the ox (the calf was a baby cow, and a cow is an ox), even the level of the “ox” can be repaired. This was the role of Yosef, who received the firstborn status from Reuven. Yosef’s role was to repair the level of the “ox”. Yosef is referred to as an “ox” in the blessing of Yaakov. This was a hint that Yosef was the “ox” on the side of holiness, and his role was to fix the “ox” on the side of evil, which is called the *shor muad*, a “wild ox”, which an owner pays full damage. Yaakov was called *ish tam*, a wholesome man, and Yosef continued

23 Beraishis 49:1

Yaakov's role of *ish tam*, by remaining pure in Egypt. He became like *shor tam*, the "tame ox", and in doing so he repaired the "ox" on the side of evil.)

Sivan Is The Month of "Twins" – The Level of Brotherhood

The inner level of the month of Sivan is also represented by its *mazal*, which is called *te'umim*, "twins", similar to the twin pair of *keruvim*. At Har Sinai, the entire people had one heart. They resembled the faces of the *keruvim* when they were facing each other, two that are one. The Sages state that the *keruvim* were either like two children facing each other, or like a *chosson* and *kallah* greeting each other. This was the level of standing at Sinai: resembling the unity of twins, which were like the *keruvim* facing each other.

The true spiritual light of Reuven which must be revealed in the month of Sivan is the concept that Reuven is the *bechor* who represented the level of the *keruvim* when they face each other. At the sin with the golden calf, the Jewish people fell from their unified state and now they were like an ox which gores. Instead of being one man with one heart, each of them were now commanded to kill their own brothers (those who sinned with serving the golden calf).

When two people cannot become disconnected from each other, they are called *achim*, brothers, from the word *achvah*, unity. Shimon and Levi were called *achim*, because Yaakov saw that they cannot become separated from each other. However, Shimon and Levi used their brotherhood to sin by banding together to wage war on Shechem, and Yaakov cursed their actions, because it was not the true use of *achvah*, since it was done through weapons and violence. Only the *bechor*, who was Reuven, who came before his brothers Shimon and Levi, could reveal the true level of brotherhood.

The Two Spiritual Lights Available In Sivan

The month of Sivan therefore contains two different levels of spiritual light that can be revealed: a lower level of light, and a higher level of light. The lower level of spiritual light in Sivan is the power to become forced to accept the Torah, and this corresponds to the level of the two crowns that everyone received, which were

eventually taken away from us. The higher level of spiritual light in Sivan is the very light of the Torah itself.

There is an amazing introduction of the Ramban in his commentary on the Torah. The Ramban said that the Torah preceded the world by 2,000 years, and this was a kind of Torah which was not divided into any letters yet. This original, undivided level Torah was contained in the first two commandments which were said together at Har Sinai: *“I am Hashem, and You shall not have any other gods.”* This level of Torah, which preceded the world, is the hidden level of Torah which does not become divided into any letters. At the first two commandments, when we heard such a level of Torah, we did not hear two different things. Rather, we heard two commandments that were one, and we heard it as one. When we merit accessing the light of the original level of Torah which does not divide into any letters, that is how we access the inner spiritual light.

The 600,000 souls of the Jewish people, who all stood at Sinai “with one heart” were only able to united together only through the level of Torah that preceded the world, which was not divided into any letters. Only the undivided level of Torah could unify everyone together. The 600,000 souls of the Jewish people, who correspond to the 600,000 letters of the Torah, cannot be connected together through the level of Torah that we have now, which divides into many different letters. They could only be connected together through the original, undivided level of the Torah which preceded our world.

“Had We Just Been Drawn Close To Har Sinai....It Would Have Been Enough”

This is the depth of what we say in the *Hagaddah* by *Dayeinu*, “Had we just been drawn close to Har Sinai and we would not have received the Torah, it would have been enough.” How could just standing at Sinai have been enough, without receiving the Torah?! The secret of this is because all 600,000 souls of the Jewish people were only able to stand together Har Sinai due to the light of the Torah which preceded the world, the level of Torah which did not divided into any letters, which was the level of Torah that unites the entire Jewish people together.

It would have been enough for us to stand at Sinai without receiving the Torah we have now, which divides into 600,000 letters, because the hidden, original level

of the Torah was what enabled us to get there in the first place. This hidden level of Torah, which does not divide into the 600,000 letters of the Torah that we have now, would have been enough for us [because it was all-inclusive of the entire Torah, since it consisted entirely of the first two commandments, “I am Hashem” and “You shall not have any other gods”, which form the basis of the entire Torah].

In Conclusion

It is our blessing now that every one of the Jewish people with the help of Hashem should merit to return to this inner light and to connect to all 600,000 souls of the Jewish people and to all 600,000 letters of the Torah, as well as to the Creator of the world, in the level of complete unity. Amen, and Amen.

Sivan – Twins

Sivan \ Twins – and The Giving of The Torah

The *mazal* of Sivan is *te'umim* - twins (as is well-known).

That will imply that the receiving of the Torah, which took place in the month of Sivan, is connected with the *mazal* of *te'umim* \ twins. In other words, the Torah is [somehow] revealed to us through the concept of “twins” [which we will soon explain].

The Jewish People Are 'Twins' with Hashem and with the Torah

The simpler understanding of this matter is because there is a verse, “Open [your heart to Me], My sister, My dove, My love, My perfection.”²⁴ The word for “My perfection”, תַּמְתִּי, is interpreted by our Sages to mean תְּאוֹמְתִי, “My twin.” In other words, Hashem refers to the Jewish people as “twins” with Him, so to speak. Chazal explain that Hashem is saying to the Jewish people, “I am not greater than you, and you are not greater than Me.” So there is a relationship of “twins” between the Jewish people and Hashem.

In addition to the ‘twin’ relationship that the Jewish people have with Hashem, there is also a ‘twin’ relationship between the Jewish people and the Torah. How do we see this? Chazal state the word “*Beraishis*” refers to the Jewish people, who are called “*raishis*”, the beginning; therefore, the world was created for the sake of the Jewish people. Chazal also interpret the word “*Beraishis*” to refer to the Torah – “for the sake of the Torah, which is called “*raishis*”, the beginning. So both the Jewish people and the Torah are called “*raishis*”, the beginning, for which the world was created for; in this aspect, we can understand that the Torah and the Jewish people are ‘twins’ with each other.

So there are two aspects of the ‘twin’ relationships between the Jewish people and Hashem: One aspect of it is the Jewish people are called ‘twins’ with Hashem Himself, and the another aspect of it is that the Jewish people are ‘twins’ with Hashem’s Torah.

²⁴ Song of Songs 5:2 [translation here follows the Artscroll].

Is Sivan Connected With The Number 3 (Third Month) Or The Number 2 (Twins)?

Here is a question. The Gemara explains that the Torah was given in the month of Sivan because it is the third month of the year, for the number ‘three’ represents permanent establishment, thus the Torah was given in the third month of the year to show that it is firmly established into the Jewish people. So the month of Sivan is connected to the number three. But if the month of Sivan contains the *mazal* of “twins”, that would imply that Sivan is linked with the number two, for twins are two people, not three!

This apparent contradiction of what Sivan is about, is a matter that needs understanding. In order to reconcile this matter, let us try to understand a little about the concept of twins, and with the help of Hashem, we hope to draw these matters as close as possible to our own souls, so that we can each practically act upon these matters in our own life.

“Twins” In The Side of Holiness and In The Side of Evil

The first time that the Torah mentions twins is regarding Yaakov and Esav, whom the Torah says explicitly about them that they were *te’umim*, twins. Later the Torah writes about the twins born to Yehudah, who were Peretz and Zorach. However, by Esav, the Torah spells the word *te’umim* without the letter *aleph* (והנה) (תומים בבטנה), whereas by Peretz and Zorach, the Torah spells it fully, with the letter *aleph* (והנה תאומים בבטנה). The reason for this is to show that Esav was a wicked twin, whereas Peretz and Zorach were both righteous twins.

So there are two kinds of twins mentioned in the Torah – a pair that was a mixture of good and evil, and a pair in which both were righteous. Yaakov and Esav were twins that were a mixture of good and evil. Yaakov was the good part of the pair, and Esav was the evil part of the pair. The twin pair of Peretz and Zorach were both righteous, and they are the root of the revelation of our righteous Moshiach, who descends from their father Yehudah.

Peretz and Zorach represent the holy manifestation of twins. The word *te’umim* (twins) contains the letters of *Urim U’Tumim* [the source of the Divine inspiration contained in the breastplate of the Kohen Gadol]. Chazal explain that the ‘*Urim*’ refers to Zorach, and the “*Tumim*” refers to Peretz.

Twins (In Holiness) Represent Temimus \Wholesomeness

What lies behind the concept of ‘twins’ on the side of holiness?

The Gemara²⁵ explains that the word “*Urim*” refers to a power that would “illuminate” the words of the breastplate (by explaining what it meant²⁶), and the word “*Tumim*” refers to a power that would “complete” its ruling (and render if a certain decree was irreversible²⁷). The word “*tumim*” is from the word *temimus* (wholesomeness), which implies something that is completed. This is referring to the holy trait of *temimus*, and this is represented by the *tumim* of the *Urim V’Tumim*, which is represented by the holy pair of twins that came from Yehudah.

Yehudah admitted his error about the episode with Tamar, when he said, “*She is more righteous than me*” [This implies the *temimus* of Yehudah and Tamar]. The birth of Peretz and Zorach, who came from the union of Yehudah and Tamar, were the holy pair of twins who descended from Yaakov, who was called *ish tam*, “wholesome man”, referring to his trait of *temimus*. Yaakov is the holy kind of twin; his trait of *temimus* is the holy aspect contained in the concept of *te’umim* \twins. Tamar gave birth to a holy set of twins, who had the quality of *temimus*.

So there are two kinds of twins. There is a pair of twins like Yaakov and Esav, a pair that was a mixture of good and evil, where one ‘side’ was good and the other ‘side’ was evil. There is a pair like Peretz and Zorach, where both of the ‘sides’ were good. Tamar’s birth of Peretz and Zorach was the revelation of *temimus* upon both ‘sides’ of the twins. This symbolizes that there are two kinds of *temimus*. There is a higher kind of *temimus*, which is perfected, and there is a lower kind of *temimus*, which is the impaired level.

The Root of Twins

Although the first pair that the Torah mentions explicitly as “twins” was Yaakov and Esav, they were not the first twins in history. The root of all “twins” began

²⁵ Yoma 73b

²⁶ Rashi (ibid)

²⁷ Rashi (ibid)

with Kayin and Hevel – they were the first twins in history. (There is actually a dispute in the words of Chazal if they were twins or not. Here we are going according to the opinion that they were twins).

However, upon deeper analysis, there was actually a pair of twins who preceded them. The Zohar explains, according to one opinion, that Adam and Chavah were originally created back-to-back with each other (*dav partzufin*). According to this opinion, the first pair of twins was actually Adam and Chavah.

The Torah says, “*Man and woman He created them*”, so Adam and Chavah, the very root of all twins, represent the perfected level of twins, where the “two” twins are really one. They are the ‘subtle’ root of all twins.

Based upon this insight, the root of the design of Creation began with twins, for Adam and Chavah (in one unit, in their original form) are the root of all creations. So ‘twins’ are the design of Creation itself. This gives us the key to understanding the matter of twins.

The original pair of ‘twins’, Adam and Chavah, were eventually separated from each other. Adam was put to sleep, and then Hashem split them apart from each other, so they became two separate beings. The fact that Adam and Chavah became split apart from each other was actually the root of how Adam and Chavah later became separated later on, when Adam separated from her for 130 years, after the sin with the *Eitz HaDaas*.

Twins Either Complete Each Other (In Holiness) Or Oppose Each Other

In retrospect, the twins Peretz and Zorach revealed a kind of ‘twins’ who are inseparable from each other. Unlike the twins Yaakov and Esav, who battled each other and went their own separate ways, the twins Peretz and Zorach were a pair of twins who did not separate from each other. Rather, they both completed each other. Peretz and Zorach represent the *Urim V’Tumim*, as Chazal explain, and both the *Urim* and *Tumim* are needed to complete each other.

There is no opposition with the *Urim V’Tumim*; they each complete each other. In contrast, the pair of Esav and Yaakov are opposing forces to each other. The Sages said, “It is a well-known *halachah*, that Esav hates Yaakov.” They represent the warring forces of good and evil with each other.

Adam and Chavah were created *dav partzufin* (back-to-back), according to an opinion in the Sages; which made them the first twins in history. Hashem created woman as an *eizer k'negdo*, a helpmate opposite man. Chazal explain that if a man merits it, his wife helps him, and if he does not merit it, his wife opposes him. The twins Peretz and Zorach were a pair that helped each other, whereas Yaakov and Esav opposed each other.

The word “Peretz” is from the word “*poratz*”, to break open, and this power exists both for holiness and for evil. The Serpent is referred to as the one who “breaks the fences of the world”, which is evil, but there is also a “Serpent” in the side of holiness, such as the ability of royalty, for “a king can break fences, and no one can protest him.”

Peretz and Zorach were a holy pair of twins, for they were both good; on the side of evil, the “*Eitz HaDaas*” was like a blemished set of twins, for it was good and evil mixed together.

Twins: Opposites Born Together

Throughout the Torah, twins possess opposite natures from each other. In the side of holiness, twins are two opposites of the same root, and when they unite, they reveal their root, which is one [and conversely, in the side of evil, twins oppose each other and they reveal disparity between them].

Yaakov and Esav were opposites of each other. When Rivkah went to acquire about her pregnancy pains to Shem and Ever, she received a prophecy that two nations were growing inside her, who would always oppose each other; when one will rise, the other one will fall, and vice versa. Peretz and Zorach were also opposites of each other, but their opposite natures served to complete each other. Chazal also revealed that each of the twelve sons of Yaakov (besides for Yosef) was born with a twin sister, and the Ramban writes that each of the brothers married a different twin sister.

All of these twins (Yaakov and Esav, Peretz and Zorach, and the twelve sons of Yaakov with their sisters) were two people who are born together who have opposite natures. Twins are therefore not just two people who were born together,

but two people who are opposites of each other, who are born together. This actually contains the secret of *temimus* [which soon will be explained].

When Hashem told Avraham to offer up his son Yitzchok as an offering, Yitzchok became sanctified with the status of an “*ayil temimah*”, “a perfect ram”. Hashem had said to Avraham, “*Take now your son*”, which symbolized a complete contradiction, for Avraham was being told to give his beloved son as an offering. Since it was a situation of contradiction, it revealed *temimus* [a perfect, simple faith in Hashem], thus Yitzchok became an “*ayil temimah*” from this.

Yaakov is the “*ish tam*” (wholesome man), he was a *tamim* (perfected), whereas Esav was the antithesis of this. For this reason, the Torah spells the word *te’umim* by Yaakov and Esav without the letter *aleph* (תומים), which connotes a breach in their twin relationship; for they were opposing forces of each other, and they did not complete each other. In contrast, Peretz and Zorach were born with opposite natures of each other, but they were two opposites who revealed that they were from one root (Hashem; in particular, the secret of the oneness of Hashem, which binds all of Creation together).

When There Is An Absence of Oneness, Darkness Descends

Man was given woman as an *eizer k’negdo*, a “helpmate opposite him”, to help complete his existence. Chazal say that when they merit (to help each other), there is *Shechinah* between a husband and wife, and if they do not merit, a fire consumes them; in other words, when they are just opposing each other, they are missing the oneness between them.

A person must reveal and connect to the oneness of Hashem, in order to connect to the Torah and to the Jewish people, for it is this oneness which is needed in order to bind everything together. Without this element, it is said, “*Those who grasp Torah do not know Me.*” Without connecting to the oneness of Hashem, a person does not merit the benefits of Torah, and instead, the Torah becomes “like deadly poison to him”, similar to how a husband and wife are harmed when they do not reveal the oneness of the *Shechinah* between them.

When a person does “merit” it, though, the Torah becomes to him “like an elixir of life.” This is a person who connects himself to the oneness of Hashem, who

reveals this oneness, and then he can have a genuine connection to Torah and to the Jewish people. To be more specific, when a person reveals how all “three” aspects of “Hashem, Torah, and Yisrael” are really all “one”²⁸ – that is where the true level of receiving the Torah lies.

What does it mean that if a person does not merit it, the Torah becomes like deadly poison to him? How can it be that the Torah, which is called a “Torah of life”, should be the very thing that harms a person?

The inner understanding of this matter is because “death” is really a situation of spiritual descent. The lowest place one can descend to is called the “*tehom*” – the lowest depths, which the Torah describes in the beginning of Creation: “*Darkness that covered the surface of the tehom (deep).*” If one learns Torah but he is not connected to the oneness of Hashem, that is really a deadly poison itself.

When a person learns Torah without reaching the very first root of the Torah, which began from “*Anochi Hashem*”, and instead he is only connected to the second root of the Torah, which is “*Beraishis*”, he will descend to “*the darkness that covers the surface of the deep*” – the “*tehom*”. He will not reach the light of the Torah; he will not reach the “*Toras Hashem Temimah*” (the “Torah of Hashem is perfect”). He will not reach the light that was contained in the “*Urim V’Tumim*”; he will not reach the level of ‘twins’ which Peretz and Zorach were. Instead of reaching a place filled with light, the person [who learns Torah without connecting to Hashem’s oneness] will instead reach a place that is “*darkness that covers the surface of the deep*”!

If a person learns Torah and he does not of the difference between a Torah that is connected with “*Anochi Hashem*” to a Torah that is disconnected from “*Anochi Hashem*”, he is found in the dark, because he has become so dulled from his situation.

²⁸ Editor’s Note: This seems to be the Rav’s answer to the question brought in the beginning of this *derashah*: Is the power of the month of Sivan because of the number 3 (it is the third month of the year since Nissan) or because of the number 2 (twins)? The ‘twins’ in the month of Sivan really require a third point to complete the pair, for a person must have a connection with Hashem, Torah, and Yisrael.

Hashem had to force the Jewish people to accept the Torah; He suspended the mountain above them in the air and said, *“If you will accept it, good; if not, there you will be buried.”* This is because the Torah opposes a human being’s nature, when it becomes “deadly poison” to him, when he learns it without being connected to the oneness of Hashem. He doesn’t have the power to accept the Torah when he lacks the connection to oneness. But when Hashem forced us to accept the Torah, we were given the ability to reveal *“Anochi Hashem”* through learning the Torah.

The Jewish people and the Torah are both called *“raishis”*, the beginning. If so, there are two “beginnings” to Creation - and this is a contradiction. There cannot be two beginnings; there can only be one beginning to Creation! After all, if a baby is born with two heads, he will surely die; so too, if the world has two beginnings, it cannot survive. Indeed, if a person thinks that there are “two beginnings” – if he thinks that both Torah and the Jewish people are both beginnings of the world, – this is the perspective which causes one’s Torah learning to become like “deadly poison” to him.

But if one reveals how *“I am the First, and I am the Last, and besides for Me, there is no god”*, this connects him to *“Anochi Hashem”*; and then all contradictions will be answered. He will be able to perceive how the two “beginnings” are not in contradiction with each other [and that they actually complement each other; for they have one root].

The natural, superficial perspective of people is that they feel they can have a connection with Torah without necessarily building a connection with Hashem; they think that a Jew has a connection to Torah even without a connection to Hashem, and that connection to Torah doesn’t require a connection to Hashem. But such a perspective causes one’s Torah learning to become like “deadly poison” to him.

Oppositions In Our Life: Dealing With The “Twins”

Now let us try to make these matters more practical in our life, as much as we can.

Every person goes through all kinds of “contradictions.” People face contradictions in their own personality, between themselves and their spouses,

between themselves and their children, and with others. But all of these “contradictions” with others are really like the concept of “twins” [who are born with opposite natures of each other, whose higher purpose is really to help each other and complete each other].

Every contradiction you face is really like a “twin” you are born with, whom you need to reconcile with, who will ultimately help you and complete you, when you are aware that the oppositions that come your way are really helping perfect and complete you. And when a person does not ‘merit’ it – when he doesn’t merit having this perspective - he descends into the “darkness that covers the depths”.

In whatever opposition or challenge we meet up with, either they will be like “twins” to us, who help and complete each other (**תאומים**) or they will be to us like “twins” who oppose each other (**תומים**), who are missing the letter *aleph* in their name [implying a lack of revealing the oneness of Hashem in the situation]; such situations will only oppose us, like the pair of twins in which only one of them is good. Or, even worse, it can be a situation of total “*tehom*” (the depths).

If a person is having a hard time viewing a challenge, he should see how he can go from the lower level of “twins” (**תומים**) to the higher level of “twins” (**תאומים**), which is spelled with the letter “*aleph*” – in other words, he should seek to reveal Hashem in the situation, by trying to see how Hashem is involved in the picture. Then a person can be connected to Hashem in any situation he finds himself in.

This is the secret of the letter *aleph*, which implies *emunah* (faith in Hashem), and the first letter of the words “*Anochi Hashem*”, the very root of the Torah and of Creation. When a person reveals the “*Aleph*” (the One) in his situation, when he reveals *emunah* in the situation, he can then deal with any situation.

In Conclusion

These are surely very deep words, as it always is with the way of Torah. But the perspective has been outlined. How to act it upon practically is a lengthy discussion for itself, but the general idea has been said here.

May we merit to receive the Torah - directly “from the mouth of Hashem”.

Sivan – Closer Than Twins

“My Twin”

The month of *Sivan* contains the *mazal* of *te’umim* (twins). What is the connection between the *mazal* of *te’umim* twins, and the receiving of the Torah which took place in this month, *Sivan*?

The root of this matter lies in the verse, פתחי לי אחותי, יונתי, רעייתי, תמתי, “Open [your heart for Me], my sister, my dove, my love, my perfection.”²⁹ The word תמתי, “My perfection”, is expounded upon by Chazal to mean תאומתי, “My twin” – thus, *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* and the Jewish people are called “*te’umim*”, twins, so to speak; Chazal explain that Hashem says of the Jewish people, “I am not greater than you, and you are not greater than Me”, as it were. In other words, Hashem considers us His “twin”, as if we share equal status with Him, so to speak.

The above words of Chazal require understanding. What does it mean that Hashem calls us His ‘twin’?

The Jewish People Are Above The Level of “Twins”

The Gemara says, “The Torah is not in Heaven.” In Heaven, only *HaKadosh Baruch Hu* decides, but on this world, it is the Sages of the Jewish people who decide, in the rulings given in *Beis Din*. Every Jew contains the power to decide what the will of Hashem is in the Torah. Above in Heaven, Hashem’s will can only be decided by Hashem Himself. Below, on this earth, the will of Hashem is given over to the Sages to decide.

Chazal state that “There is no *mazal* for the Jewish people.³⁰ Therefore, if the month of *Sivan* contains the *mazal* of *te’umim* twins, that would mean that the Jewish people are above the *mazal* of *te’umim* and whatever it will imply. This really means that even though the *mazal* of *te’umim* is in *Sivan*, *te’umim* does not

²⁹ *Song of Songs* 5:2; translation follows Artscoll.

³⁰ Shabbos 156a

represent the depth of receiving the Torah. Chazal also teach us that “the Jewish people are above time” (*Yisrael l'maalah min hazman*), which further proves that the Jewish people are above *mazal*, so the Jewish people are above the implications of the *mazal te'umim*.

Oneness

What will this imply? What does it mean that the Jewish people are above the *mazal of te'umim*?

It is referring to the level of “HaKadosh Baruch Hu, Torah, and Yisrael are one (*chad*)”. The Jewish people are not merely “twins” with Hashem, they are “one” with Hashem!

Concerning our “twin” relationship with Hashem, Hashem says to the Jewish people, “I am not greater than you, and you are not greater than me”, but this implies that we are ‘separate’ from Hashem. Thus, the “twin” aspect in our bond with Hashem is actually a lower aspect of our bond with Hashem.

The higher aspect of our bond with Hashem is that we are “one” with Him - where there is no separation at all.

Striving To Reach The Da'as (Thinking) of Hashem

The Gemara says that “Moshe added on a day [to Shavuos] from his own *daas* (thinking), and the *daas* of Hashem agreed with him”. Moshe reached a level in which his own *daas* paralleled the *daas* of Hashem. What is the intended meaning of this teaching? Ever since the receiving of the Torah, the Sages are given power to make decisions in Torah and render rulings. So what was unique when Moshe added on day and Hashem agreed with him? What was different about Moshe’s decision than any other decision that the Sages make?

The uniqueness of Moshe’s ruling was that it took place before the Torah was actually received. That shows us something deeper. It shows us that man was given the ability in which his own *daas* can reflect the *daas* of HaKadosh Baruch Hu!

Whenever there is a *machlokes* (disagreement) as to what the *halachah* is, there is a debate as to what the *halachah* is, but when a person is trying to understand the

daas of HaKadosh Baruch Hu in the case, when he directs his own *daas* towards the *daas* of Hashem, there is no possibility for *machlokes*. When does a person say an opinion in *halachah* that is not what Hashem says? It is only when he hasn't yet reached the *daas* of Hashem, so to speak. When a person understands what the *daas* of Hashem is, he understands what Hashem's will is, and then there is no room for *machlokes* about the issue at hand.

The entire concept of *machlokes* (disagreement) is only possible when people on this lower world aren't reaching the *daas* of Hashem. However, since the "Torah is not in Heaven", even if a person would know for sure what Hashem's opinion is about the issue at hand, the rule is that we must follow the words of the Sages about this matter. Yet, with the more a person nullifies his own *daas* to the *daas* of his Creator, the more he can reach the point in which there is no *machlokes* – the point of which it is said, "Hashem, Torah, and Yisrael are one."

When a person has a relationship of "oneness" with Hashem, he is aware that just as Hashem learns Torah in Heaven (as the Sages state), so does he learn Torah on this world. It is when a person realizes that he has no *daas* of his own.

The *daas* of people is subject to *machlokes*. But when a person wants his own *daas* to be like the *daas* of Hashem, he is directing his own mind to think like Hashem, as opposed to his own thinking. Such a person will merit a true receiving of the Torah.

Thus, when Moshe decided to add on a day, he was using his *daas*, but he was not using his 'own' *daas*. Rather, he directed his *daas* to think like the *daas* of Hashem.

This is the meaning of the concept of "*Torah of truth*" and "*The seal of Hashem is truth*." When a person truly merits Torah, he merits the seal of Hashem upon his Torah learning, and the seal of Hashem is always the truth. When a person does not reach this, of this it is said, "A judge does not see except what his eyes see."³¹

The rule is that "When an individual and the majority have a dispute, the *halachah* is like the majority" (*yachid v'rabim, halachah k'rabim*) - this does not

³¹ Sanhedrin 6b

necessarily mean that the truth is like the opinion of the majority, and that the individual did not merit the truth.

Shavuos & Receiving The Torah – The Power To Go Beyond The Level of ‘Twins’

Te’umim (twins) represent a level in which a person’s understanding is still not yet aligned with Hashem. When a person is only at the level of *te’umim* in his relationship with Hashem, his understanding can be the opposite of Hashem’s will.

The month of Sivan contains the *mazal* of *te’umim*, but we know that the Jewish people are above *mazal*, so there is a point we can reach that is above the level of *te’umim*. The entire concept of *machlokes* in Torah is only possible today because the original pair of *Luchos* were broken, due to the sin with the golden calf. Had the people never sinned with the golden calf, they would have connected completely to Hashem and they would have reached a kind of Torah in which *machlokes* isn’t possible, for everyone’s *daas* would parallel the *daas* of Hashem.

But there is a spiritual light contained in the festival of Shavuos, which returns every year at this time, which is a power that enables a person to accept the Torah contained in the first set of *Luchos*, a Torah without sin. The power available during this time enables a person to truly reach this dimension.

Shavuos gives us the opportunity to reach the power where our *daas* can parallel the *daas* of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, where our own thinking is aligned with His will. When we stood at Har Sinai, we declared, “It is our will to see our King.” The deeper implication of this is that we gave up our own thinking, and we had no *daas* of our own; whatever Hashem said became our own *daas*. It was the level of “Hashem, Torah, and Yisrael are one”.

Our Personal Avodah In Preparing For Shavuos & Receiving The Torah

If someone is really searching for truth, he can merit the truth of Torah, from the spiritual power that is contained in Shavuos.

If someone doesn’t search for truth, though, he descends from the level of “There is no *mazal* for the Jewish people” and instead he is subject to *mazal*. He will remain at the level of *mazal* of *te’umim* of the month of Sivan, which is the

incomplete level of our bond with Hashem, for being “twins” with Hashem is not nearly as close to Hashem as being “one” with Him.

Our *avodah*, then, is to leave the level of *te'umim* - to go beyond it. It is not enough for us to have a relationship of “twins” with Hashem, because twins imply separated beings from each other. We need to have a higher relationship with Hashem, a relationship of being “one” with Him, in which we are never apart from Him.

We must therefore strive to truly receive the Torah, the “seal of Hashem”, which is truth. May the Creator merit us to learn the Torah, and that we should align our own *daas* with Hashem, by *striving to reach the truth*, when we learn Torah; that we strive to reach the “Torah of truth.”



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