

When we rejoice on *Simchas Torah*, we must constantly remind ourselves about what are we rejoicing. Is it for us to have fun, to laugh and sing with unrestrained outbursts, which can lead to a complete lack of decorum and respect? Or do we rejoice with *Hashem*, His *Torah*, in His *Beis Medrash*? Even joy and fun must be done properly.

הלכה למעשה

A SERIES IN HALACHAH
LIVING A "TORAH" DAY
Zmanim Relevant to Shemini Atzers/Simchas Torah Learning Vezos Habracha. On *Simchas Torah* we finish the yearly cycle of reading the whole *Torah* in public. This is also the time for individuals to learn the *parsha* of *Vezos Habracha*, twice each *posuk* and once *Targum Onkelos*. This is also the end of the private cycle of learning each year the whole *Torah* (2x plus *Targum*). The assumed deadline to finish is by *Simchas Torah* when one's *minyan* finishes their reading of the *Torah* or at least before the end of that day. It is however not clear how early one can fulfill his obligation on this last *parsha* of the year. Since this *parsha* is not read on a *Shabbos*, the regular time span of the whole week, Sunday through *Shabbos*, might not apply.

Regarding the ideal time, some *Poskim* mention *Hoshana Raba* (1), others say *Shemini Atzeres* (2) while others say *Simchas Torah* itself (3). Some contemporary *Poskim* (4) write that these might indeed be the only appropriate days and one cannot fulfill his obligation earlier. Others (5) say that the above mentioned times are just the preferred times but one can start the day after (or according to some the minute after) this *parsha* was read in *shul*. However, which *Shabbos* is itself debatable. Some say that right after the first time that it is read (*Shabbos* of *Haazinu* by *Mincha*) is already time to do the *mitzvah*. There might be another opinion that right after *Shabbos* is only good if it will be read the next *Shabbos*.

הוא היה אומר...

R' Yitzchok Hutner ZT"l (Pachad Yitzchok) would say:

"*Shirah* - song, is the ecstasy of the soul overflowing from joy in the performance of the Will of the Almighty. The *Simchas Bais Hashoeva* is the one occasion reserved for the song of the *Baal Teshuva*, as the *gemara* (סוכה ג.) tells us that in the *Bais Hamikdash* they sang: 'Happy is our old age which has atoned for our youth.' After the many days of repentance, *Sukkos* is the *Yom Tov* of rebirth and rejuvenation through our *Teshuva*; can there be anything more natural than a song for *Baalei Teshuvah* on *Sukkos*, at the *Simchas Bais Hashoeva*?" "

R' Eizel Chorif ZT"l would say:

"*Shir HaShirim* begins with the words, '*The Song of Songs of Shlomo*.' We are told no more about the author, yet Rabbi Akiva stated that the Book of *Shir HaShirim* is the holy of holies. On the other hand, the Book of *Koheles*, also written by Shlomo, tells us his lineage: '*The words of Koheles, son of Dovid, King in Jerusalem*.' Yet *Chazal* even considered leaving it out of *Tanach*. We see from here that *Yichus* is entirely irrelevant to a book's author!"

A Wise Man would say:

"Happiness is a perfume you cannot pour on others without getting a few drops on yourself."

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שבת חול המועד / שמיני עצרת / שמחת תורה

Shabbos Chol Hamoed / Shemini Atzeres / Simchas Torah

י"ג תשרי / ט"ז - ט"ז תשרי תשס"ט - October 11 / 14 - 15, 2008

מאת הרב שלום פערל שליט"א
משפיע רוחני בק"ק בית שמש

מאוצרותיו של המגיד

תורה צוה לנו משה מורשה קהלת יעקב וגו' (לג-ד)

לקחי חיים ודברי התעוררות
נסדרו עפ"י פרישיות השבע

לצאת בגמרא (ברכות נ"ז.) "אל תקרי מורשה, אלא מאורשה", היינו שהתורה היא ארוסתו של עם ישראל וצריך להבין משמעות ענין זה. איתא בגמרא (יבמות סב.), "כל אדם שאין לו אשה, שרוי בלא שמחה, דכתיב 'ושמחת אתה וביתך', בלא חומה וכו'". ומבאר המהר"ל "כי כל שמחה הוא מפני השלימות, וכאשר האדם הוא בשלימות אז בא השמחה, ואין האדם בשלימות כאשר אין לו אשה, ולכך הוא שרוי בלא שמחה", וממשיך לבאר, מדוע שרוי בלא חומה, "כי על ידי האשה, האדם הוא שלם ואינו חסר, והדבר שהוא שלם יש לו חוזק כמו חומה, ולכך כאשר אין לו אשה והוא חסר, אין לו חומה, שהוא בחוזק". ומבואר, שהאשה היא השלמת האדם, ולכן רק כשיש לו אשה, יש לו שמחה וחומה, המתקיימים רק בדבר מושלם. וכן מפורש בגמרא (שם סג.) "כל אדם שאין לו אשה אינו אדם, שנאמר 'זכר ונקבה בראם, ויקרא שמם אדם', והיינו שלא השיג עדיין את שלמותו.

והנה במובן הגשמי אנו רואים זאת, כמבואר בגמרא (שם) "כתיב 'אעשה לו עזר', במה אשה עוזרתו לאדם וכו', אדם מביא חיטין, חיטין כוססין, פשתן, פשתן לובש, לא נמצאת מאירה עיניו ומעמידתו על רגליו?", ומבואר שהאשה דואגת לצרכיו הגשמיים, ובזה היא משלימתו. וזהו סימן להשלמת האדם על ידה גם במובן הרוחני, שחי הנישואין

וכן מבואר במדרש (ויקרא רבה ל"ה, ז') "עשיתם אתם", אמר להם, אם שמרתם את התורה, הריני מעלה עליכם כאלו עשיתם את עצמכם", היינו שהתורה משלימה את האדם. כשנתבונן בזה, נבוא לידי שמחה עם התורה, בהכירו שהיא המביאה לידי שלמותו. כשנתבונן בזה, נבוא לידי שמחה עם התורה, בהכירו שהיא המביאה לידי שלמותו.

הגד"צ ר' גמליאל הכהן רמנוביץ שליט"א
ראש ישיבת שער השמים בירושלים ע"ה

טוב התבלין

קודש אברך הוא אורייתא ישראל אחד הם

צריך לכון ליחוד יחד ישראל קוב"ה ואורייתא ואהוא יחודא שלים. וכדי שיהיה היחוד ביחודא שלים, אנו עושים את כל הכבוד הראוי לתורה לשמוח בשמחתה ולכבדה בכל עניי הכיבוד, ואז גם התורה תכבד אותנו, ויתגלו לנו רזין ועמקי הסודות הטמונים בה. ומנשקים את התורה לבקש מחילה שלא הלכו בדרכיה בכל השנה, ובקבלה על העתיד לשפר את הדרכים לילך בדרך התורה. ואז, בעת התעוררות האהבה הגדולה עליו, בין אבינו קוב"ה ישראל ואורייתא - עליו להתחנן ולשפוך שיח תפילתנו, שנוכה לשמור מצוותיה, ולא תמוש התורה הזאת מפנינו ומפני זרענו עד עולם. וכיון שהיא דוגמת יחוד עליון ביחודא שלים, אנו מתפללים שיימשך היחוד ולא ייפסק, ויתחזק ויתעורר היחוד, עד שיגיע לתכלית התקיון בשלימותו, בביאת גואל צדק בב"א.

מעשה אבות סימן לבנים

A casual observer to the synagogue on *Simchas Torah* would undoubtedly recognize that the focal point of the exuberant singing and dancing, the main object upon which all eyes are focused and which is continuously surrounded by joyous enthusiasm is the *Sefer Torah*. Little children come to *shul* with their miniature *Sifrei Torah* and older men cling tightly to the larger variety as if to squeeze out every ounce of wisdom and purity. We read from the *Torah*, again and again, until everyone has had a chance and then we roll it to the beginning and start reading once again.

The greatest *sofer* (scribe) in the history of the Jewish people was **Ezra Hasofer**. Seventy years after the Jews were driven in exile to Babylonia, Ezra persuaded the king of Persia to permit the Jews to return to the Holy Land and rebuild the *Bais Hamikdosh*. Ezra was a *tzaddik* and a beloved leader of his people and he was a scribe par excellence. One can see, therefore, why a *Sefer Torah* written by the great Ezra Hasofer would be highly prized by all Jews.

In one of the ancient communities of old Egypt, stood a synagogue which offered the visitor a strange sight. Inside, on the same wall where the *Aron Kodesh* stands, was an alcove which was sealed up many years earlier. People whispered that behind the stone and plaster lay a *Sefer Torah* written by the great Ezra himself. They believed that whoever should touch this sacred scroll would meet his death within a year, perhaps within a month. But the elders of the community would tell a different story. They claimed that the *Sefer Torah* of Ezra was no longer there. Only the outer mantle remained. What ever happened to the actual scroll? This is the true story of what happened to that prized artifact.

A *Sefer Torah* written by Ezra's own hand had been brought to Egypt many years ago. The community prized this scroll as their most precious possession, and the *shamash* of the main synagogue was charged with the duty of guarding the *Sefer* against all harm. One day a visitor from Arabia came to the community. When he heard of the treasured *Sefer*, his heart was filled with an overpowering desire to own this holy work. He coveted the *Sefer* more and more, until one day he devised a scheme whereby his wish could be satisfied.

Late one evening, the visitor knocked on the door of the small cottage next to the *shul* in which the *shamash* resided with this family. The *shamash* opened the door to find the man from Arabia standing there. He revealed to the *shamash* his desire to secure the *Sefer Torah*, and offered a handsome sum of money if the *shamash* would unlock the *Aron Kodesh* and deliver it to him. The *shamash* drew back aghast. How could he betray the members of his community? The visitor, a wealthy merchant, doubled his offer. The other man's resolve began to weaken. All sorts of ideas began to flit through his mind which made this terrible deed seem quite proper after all. And he could easily claim that some thief forced him to surrender the *Sefer*. In just a few minutes the *shamash* hastened to the main sanctuary, removed the treasured *Sefer Torah* from its mantle, and delivered it to greedy hands of the stranger who waited anxiously at the door of the cottage. After handing over a small purse of gold coins, the visitor disappeared into the night and was gone by the next morning.

But the story does not end here. A few days later, the illegal owner of the *Sefer Torah* boarded a ship which would take him back home. While on the high seas, a great storm suddenly arose. Tremendous waves churned by the angry winds tossed the ship high in the air while the passengers and crew stood by helplessly. Finally a gigantic wave broke over the deck of the ship and left the vessel a complete wreck. Everyone was hurled into the depths of the water and sank to the bottom of the sea. The visitor from Arabia was also drowned, and the *Sefer Torah* of Ezra Hasofer was lost with him.

One more detail completes the story. In less than a year after the *Sefer Torah* was removed from its place in the *Aron Kodesh*, the *shamash* of the synagogue met an untimely death. Thus did the Almighty bring justice upon those whose selfish motives led them to treat with disrespect a sacred scroll from the hand of Ezra Hasofer.

משל למה חדבר רומה

משל: The students in the yeshiva of **R' Yitzchok Blazer ZT"l** would dance and sing with tremendous enthusiasm during the *Simchos Bais Hashoeva* celebrations and on *Simchas Torah*. Their energy was infectious and even R' Yitzchok, the famed *Baal Mussar* himself, who was always restrained and in control of his emotions, would get up and sing *grammen* to liven up the atmosphere.

At one point in the festivities, the boys lifted R' Yitzchok up on a chair and began singing "צדיק כתמר יפרח" with

great emotion. Normally humble to a fault, R' Yitzchok clapped his hands and urged them on to sing these words of praise over and over again. "When it comes to teaching my students to respect the *Torah* and their *Rebbeim*, I have no right to stop them, even if it appears as if I am a *Baal Gaava*!" he later explained to the astonished viewers.

But one of the revelers who was in earshot of the *Rebbe* was able to hear R' Yitzchok singing the same song albeit with words of reproach and זלזול - about himself!

מוציא אני את האשה מר ממות וכו' (קהלת זכר - סייד לשבת חול המועד)

The famous *gemara* (ברכות ה:) teaches that the Sages would ask every man, soon after he married, whether he had "found" a wife or whether he was "finding" a wife. This refers to either of these two *posukim*: "מצא אשה מצא טוב" - "One who found a wife has found goodness" (משלי יח-כב), or "מוציא אני את האשה מר ממות" - "I am finding more bitter than death a woman." What is the purpose of this question?

The saintly **Vilna Gaon ZT"l** explains that the difference lies in the tense of the word "מצא" - "found" or "מוציא" - "finding." This teaches us that our happiness is in our hands! If we decide to appreciate the great find that *Hashem* has bestowed on us, we are fortunate. However, one who is always seeking - "finding" - and is not satisfied with anything, will find trouble. People tend to misjudge the value of the marriage relationship. A wife is a helpmate, the greatest find man will ever discover.

If one has the right attitude and works on understanding and appreciating *Hashem's* ways, he will have cause to rejoice endlessly. However, one who rejects a pious and wise woman fails the test and loses the greatest wealth. We must open our eyes and rejoice!

ביום השמיני עצרת תהיה לכם וכו' (במדבר כ-לה)

At the *Yom Tov tish* of the holy **Sochatchover Rebbe, R' Avrohom Borenstein ZT"l (Avnei Nezer)**, sat a *chasid* who was in a constant state of internal turmoil. He tried to learn *Torah* and follow his *Rebbe's* path but his impulses and evil inclinations seemed to always get the better of him. No matter how good his intentions, he found himself thinking and often acting in an impure fashion.

All was quiet at the *tish* as the *Rebbe* sat in deep meditation. Suddenly, he opened his eyes and began to

EDITORIAL AND INSIGHTS
ON THE WEEKLY MIDDAH OF...

אך שמח

דרגה יתירה

FROM THE WELLSPRINGS OF
R' GUTTMAN - RAMAT SHLOMO

שישו ושמחו בשמחת התורה וגו' (סדר הקפות לשמחת תורה)

There are many comparisons between the holy days before *Simchas Torah* and the days of *Sefirah* before *Shavuos*. They are both 50 days in length and the last day of each period, the day which culminates the entire period, is called "עצרת". Both on *Shavuos* and on *Simchas Torah* we rejoice with the *Torah* - so what's the difference?

The **Dubner Maggid ZT"l** answers with a *moshol* - parable. There was once a king who chose for himself a queen and threw a lavish wedding party. He invited many friends and guests and ordered a large feast to be prepared. It was a grand wedding and all those in attendance rejoiced in the king's good fortune. Six months later, though, the king decided to throw another grand party. He once again ordered a royal feast, hired musicians and dancers, and invited his close friends and relatives to attend. Everyone was surprised. Why was the king making another wedding party? The king explained: "When I took this woman to be my queen, I was happy and contented. However, I realized that I really did not know her very well. But now, after I've spent so much time with her, I can truly appreciate how special she is. Now, I am overwhelmingly thrilled and exhilarated! So now, I wish to make a feast and rejoice once again!"

On *Shavuos Klal Yisroel* received the *Torah* - we all said "נעשה ונשמע" - with blind faith. We rejoice on *Shavuos* for this great gift. But on *Simchas Torah*, after we've become familiar with the beauty, wisdom and sweetness of the *Torah* - now we sing and dance in pure ecstasy for we know how great is this gift, how exceptional is our תורה הקדושה!

TORAH GEMS

"וביום השמיני עצרת תהיה לכם" - On this holy day of *Shemini Atzeres*,

the *Ribono Shel Olam* enables us with a special power - "ועצר את השמים" - He restrains the evil inclination and the strength of the Satan is weakened. This special restraint is only for us - *Bnei Yisroel* - who attach ourselves to His *Torah* and *mitzvos*. Any person who immerses himself in *Torah* will be free of this evil."

The *Rebbe* lifted up his eyes and gazed directly at his young *chasid*. "In the *Torah* and those who study it, they will have no connection whatsoever!" Suddenly, the *chasid* felt as if a weight of guilt and evil had rolled right off him and from that moment on he had no further problem restraining his *yetzer hara*.

נגיל ונשיש בזאת התורה כי היא לנו עז ואורה (פיוט לשמחת תורה)

It is important to recognize that every day that one merits to spend in a *yeshivah* learning *Torah* is a great accomplishment. This is especially important in our times when there is a tremendous need for people to devote their entire lives to *Torah* study.

R' Avrohom Yaakov Pam ZT"l notes that on *Simchas Torah*, we rejoice at the completion of the yearly cycle of weekly *Torah* readings and immediately begin a new cycle with *Parshas Bereshis*. It is a time to contemplate the central role that *Torah* study plays in a Jew's life and the vital importance of supporting the growth of *Torah* scholarship. From where will the future *Torah* leaders - its scholars and *poskim* - come, if not from the great *yeshivos* and *kollelim*? As we dance with the parchment-and-ink *Sifrei Torah*, we must remember the self-sacrifice of the living *Sifrei Torah* - the *Torah* scholars. They are the future leaders of our Nation who will lead us toward the coming of *Moshiach* נב"ם.