

The Weekly Farbrengens



829 • למען ישמעו • במדבר תשפ"ה
EDITOR - RABBI SHIMON HELLINGER

SHAVUOS

AN AUSPICIOUS DAY

What happens when two *tzaddikim* and *mekubalim* of the stature of Reb Shlomo Alkabetz and Rav Yosef Caro spend the awesome night of Shavuos together?

The answer is recorded in a 16th-century manuscript written by R. Shlomo Alkabetz: "The *Beis Yosef* and I decided to stay awake on the night of Shavuos and read passages of the Torah. [These passages are the basis of what later became the *Tikkun Leil Shavuos*.] After *chatzos*, as we reached the section of *Mishnayos*, a sweet voice was heard aloud from the mouth of the *Beis Yosef*. We all fell on our faces from sheer fright. The voice grew ever louder, until even the neighbors were able hear it, though they were unable to understand it. The voice, having been created by the *Mishna* we had learnt, told us of the pain suffered by the *Shechina* [in exile], and the great impact our learning this night had, silencing all the *Malochim* and piercing all the heavens. It then spoke of our great *zechus* of staying awake this night, and the greater effect it would have had with a *minyan*. The voice then encouraged us to continue learning throughout the night, not wasting even a moment. Finally, the *Shechina* instructed us to stand up and say *Boruch Shem*... aloud, as is done on Yom Kippur.

We wept profusely, from the joy of our experience and for the pain of the *Shechina*. "When we met three other *chachomim* in the *mikve* the next morning, we related to them what had happened that night. They were understandably distressed, and we resolved to gather again on the second night, this time with a *minyan*.

"That night, because of our joy at having a *minyan*, the voice of the *Shechina* began speaking as soon as we started reading the *Aseres HaDibros* of *Devarim*. The voice praised our attainment, told us of the *ruchnius*-like fire surrounding the house, and then directed us to say *Boruch Shem*. As the time of *chatzos* drew near, the *Shechina* spoke again and told us that for hundreds of years no such accomplishment had been attained."

The Shaloh HaKadosh copied this story from the manuscript of Reb Shlomo Alkabetz and concluded: "It is apparent in his writing that there was much more that he was not allowed to reveal. From this story we must learn how important it is to conduct ourselves with a special *kedusha* on this night."

(של"ה הקדוש מס' שבועות נר מצוה ה')

The Friediker Rebbe said:

Shavuos is an *eis ratzon*, when *HaShem* confuses the one who accuses Yidden, just as He confuses him during the sounding of the *shofar* on Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur.

Shavuos is an opportune time to make every effort to improve one's Torah learning and *avoda* in *yiras shamayim*, and to strive to do *teshuvah* concerning one's Torah study, without Satan's interference.

(היום יום, ג' ד' סיוון)

CONSIDER

What brought the revelation of the Shechina in the beis medrash of the Beis Yosef: their learning or the auspicious night?
What should one do to receive the revelation of Matan Torah?

RECEIVING THE TORAH

The Friediker Rebbe said: Every year on Shavuos, the same revelation of *HaShem* that was revealed at the time of *matan Torah* is revealed anew, and a Yid who at this time arouses himself to establish set times for studying Torah is successful in his *avoda*.

(סה"ש קיץ ה'ש"ת ע' 116, תש"ג ע' 129)

"Once," related the Rebbe Maharash, "on the first night of Shavuos, I went to say *Gut Yom-Tov* to my great-uncle Reb Chaim Avraham, son of the Alter Rebbe. I found him sitting with his hands covering his tear-stained face. I asked him why he was crying on *Yom-Tov*. He explained that the Baal Shem Tov said that when one prepares himself properly during *Sefiras HaOmer*, he is found worthy on Shavuos of being admitted to the Fiftieth Gate of *kedusha* - "and I can't feel it," concluded Reb Chaim Avraham."

The Rebbe Maharash concluded, "My great uncle Reb Chaim Avraham was then seventy seven years old and

was completely removed from all worldly matters. Yet on the night of Shavuos, he wept for the revelation of the Fiftieth Gate. This left me with a deep impression."

(ספר התולדות אדמו"ר מהר"ש ע' 73)

The eminent chossid, Reb Aizik Homiler, recalled that once before Shavuos, a number of chassidim discussed what they should ask of *HaShem* on the night of Shavuos. They decided to ask the Mitteler Rebbe, and assumed that he would surely speak of the study and understanding of *primiyus haTorah*.

Instead, he shared his own wish: "I would wish to have the fiery flame of *matan Torah*."

(סה"ש תש"ה ע' 108)

Recollecting his experience of Shavuos in תרמ"ה (1885), when he was a child of five, the Friediker Rebbe once said:

"On *erev* Shavuos, our *melamed* told us how Moshe Rabbeinu led the Yidden to *matan Torah*. He then called to us, *Kinderlach!* Come with me and I will take you to *matan Torah*.' He took all thirty of us to Reb Binyomin's *beis medrash* and told us that the next morning, the first day of Shavuos, we should wake up an hour earlier than usual and come to this *beis medrash* for *kabbalas haTorah*.

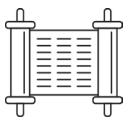
"On Shavuos morning I awoke at seven o'clock and prepared to go there. My mother [Rebbetzin Shterna Sara] wanted me to eat something before leaving, but I insisted that I wouldn't eat before *matan Torah*. I set out to the *beis midrash*, where I found all of my classmates, and after *davening* our *melamed* took us all on a walk."

(סה"ש תש"ה ע' 100)

It was the custom of the Friediker Rebbe, and also of the Rebbe, to wish all Yidden the *brocho* of *kabbalas haTorah besimcha uviprimiyus* - that we receive the Torah with joy, and that it permeate us.

The Rebbe explained this dual blessing as follows: Appreciating that we are *HaShem's* holy nation and that we are able to connect to Him via the Torah and its *mitzvos*, we are joyful - and this joy will enable us to be permeated by the Torah and not regard it (*chas veshalom*) as a burden.

(לקו"ש ח"ח ע' 292)



LAB-PRODUCED MEAT

Is lab-created cultured meat kosher? And is it pareve or fleishig?

In the past decade, technological breakthroughs have enabled scientists to produce meat in laboratory settings. Through advanced bioengineering techniques, animal cells are carefully cultured in controlled environments where they develop into muscle tissue that closely resembles natural meat in texture, appearance, and taste. In recent years, the industry for such "clean" meat has rapidly grown.

The Gemara relates that certain Amoraim were able to create a calf through their study of Sefer Yetzira and would enjoy this supernatural meat for their Shabbos meals. Several *poskim* observe that the prohibition of *ever min hachai* did not apply to such a creature. Some further note that the meat from this supernatural creation wasn't even considered *fleishig*.¹

Lab-created meat, however, differs significantly as it is produced through natural biological processes starting with animal cells, and therefore retains its fundamental status. The Mishna establishes the principle that "whatever emerges from a non-kosher animal is non-kosher."² Following this principle, the starter cells must be sourced from a kosher animal that has undergone proper *shechita*. Harvesting cells from a living animal would violate the prohibition of *ever min hachai*.

A significant halachic challenge involves the culture medium that nourishes the stem cells as they multiply and develop. Currently, most laboratory protocols utilize serum, which is derived from animal blood with the cellular components removed. While some *poskim* suggest this processed substance no longer retains the halachic status of blood, others maintain that it's prohibited, and a non-blood alternative would need to be found for the culture medium.³

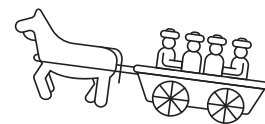
Assuming all kosher guidelines are meticulously followed in the cell culturing process, is the resulting meat considered *fleishig*?

Contemporary *poskim* have debated this question. Some suggest cultured meat should have a *pareve* status. Others maintain it would be *fleishig miderabanan* (similar to poultry). And a third view contends it should be classified as identical to conventional meat. At present, the prevailing ruling adopted by major Kashrus agencies is that lab-created meat produced from animal cells is *fleishig min hatorah*.⁴

It is worth noting that some Israeli startups are developing cultured poultry using cells obtained from fertilized eggs or embryos. In these cases, the resulting poultry product would be halachically *pareve*.

1. סנהדרין ס"ה ע"ב, פת"ש יו"ד סי' ס"ב
2. בכורות פ"א מ"ב.
3. הרב יעקב אריאל תחומין ל"ה - ל"ו.
4. ראה Kasher Spirit - ניסן תשפ"ה.

לע"נ מרת ציפא אסתר בת ר' שלום דובער ע"ה



R. PINYE RAKSHIKER

R. Pinchas Schreiber (5652-5703) was a chossid of the Rebbe Rashab and Frierdiker Rebbe. Born in Rakshik, Lithuania, he learned in Tomchei Tmimim in Lubavitch for eight years, and was famous for his diligence in *avodas Hashem*. R. Pinye served as a shochet in Poltava and as a Mashpia in the local branch of Tomchei Tmimim. During World War II he fled to Samarkand, where he became a teacher for the local Bukharian Jews until his untimely passing.

Due to the NKVD pursuing him, R. Pinye was forced to relocate from Poltava to the big city of Moscow. However, there too they took interest in him. One night, they arrived at his apartment building to arrest "Pinyeh Rakshiker," but they couldn't find that name in the superintendent's directory, as he was listed by his true name Pinchas Shreiber. The NKVD officers didn't realize that they merely had his nickname, and left, figuring that they were misled.

In the meantime, R. Pinye escaped and went to the home of R. Shmuel Leib

Levin, on the outskirts of Moscow. Knowing that the NKVD would carry out many such operations in one night, the Levin family stood on high alert. At the first sign of a visit, the two chassidim jumped out the back window, and were thus both miraculously saved.

(בטאון חב"ד גיליון ל' ע' 26)

During one Yud Tes Kislev farbrengen, the *mashke* finished and the participants needed someone to go out and buy some more. For men, to wander on those streets was a great risk, since they could be drafted into the army. They therefore asked two Lubavitcher women – Esther Teitelbaum and Sarah Levin – to purchase the *mashke* for the farbrengen.

When the two returned with the *mashke*, R. Pinye announced, "Since the purpose of a farbrengen is to produce 'fruit' [positive results], so too, these two women – who did not have children – should be blessed with fruit." Indeed, some time later they both had children.

(גבורה יהודית במלכות הרשע ע' 107)

A Moment with The Rebbe

לזכר נשמת מרת חוה לאה בת ר' שמשון הכהן ע"ה



JUST SEIZE AND LEARN

As the Rebbe was leaving the seuda, the second night of Shavuot 5711, the Rebbe passed by the Zal and expressed disappointment that he doesn't see any *simchas yom tov* on the bochurim. "I am going to accompany my mother home, and when I come back, I want to see what was accomplished," the Rebbe told the *hanhala*.

After returning, and being asked to farbreng, the agreed to sit for a short while.

"Some think that one must make all the appropriate preparations before learning Chassidus. Someone asked me whether he should go to the mikva every time he learns Zohar," the Rebbe

shared.

"It is therefore important to emphasize, that one should not make any calculations whether he is suitable for learning Chassidus or not, and shouldn't wait for the preparations. Just seize and learn as much as possible!

"The truth is," the Rebbe added, "that he will indeed get penalized for studying Chassidus in an improper state. How dare one learn Chassidus as an intellectual study?! But still, it's still better to learn inappropriately, and thereby connect to the Rebbeim. They will already shlep him out from anywhere..."

(Toras Menachem vol 3 p. 128-131)