



# Torah U'Tefilah

*A Collection of Inspiring Insights*

כ"ב תשרי  
22 Tishrei

## Besamei HaTorah

...Beneath the Surface

By: R' Shmuel Winzelberg

וימת שם משה עבד ה' (דברים לד:ה)

And Moshe the servant of Hashem died there.

(Devarim 34:5)

Rabbeinu Yaakov ben Rabbeinu Asher writes in his *Sefer, Tur Orach Chaim* (סימן רצ"ב), in the name of Rav Sar Shalom, that the reason we say the three *Pesukim* of צדקתך צדק on *Shabbos* at *Minchah* time, is for a memorial for the three צדיקים—righteous men, that died at that time: Moshe, Yosef and Dovid (The *Tur* mentions Moshe and the *Bach* adds Yosef and Dovid). The *Sefer Bnei Yisas'char*, quoting the *Sefer Tashbatz* (סימן תמ"ה), notes that Moshe's death is hinted at in *Sefer Yehoshua*, which is the *Haftorah* of Simchas Torah. The *Pasuk* says, משה עבדי מת (א:ב), Moshe my servant has died (1:2). The second letter of these three words spells out the word שבת, thus hinting that Moshe Rabbeinu died on *Shabbos*. (*Chaim shel Torah*)

## Simchas Torah Thoughts

Ideas and Reflections

By: Rabbi Aron Moshe Jacobsohn

Many people are bothered by the idea of Simchas Torah following Succos, as it would seem to be more appropriate to be part of Shavuot. Rav Yaakov Galinsky, *zt"l*, explains that only after we have spent seven days living in temporary dwellings and separating ourselves from our attachment to worldly desires, can we properly celebrate the *Torah*. The *Lev Simchah* of Ger explained that only after we have held the *Lulav* bundle, which represents all the different types of people joining together in unity, can we approach Simchas Torah. The *Torah* can only be properly celebrated when we are a cohesive unit, similar to the way it was at *Har Sinai* when the *Torah* was given. This unity can be witnessed when one opens a page of *Gemara*. The *Mishnah* was written in *Eretz Yisroel*, the *Gemara* in Bavel (Iraq), *Rashi* lived in France, the *Baalei Tosafos* were in France and Germany, *Ein Mishpat* was written by a Spaniard living in Italy, the *Bach* lived in Poland, the *Vilna Gaon* in Lithuania, and Rav Akiva Eiger lived in Prussia. On one page, we have such diversity amongst our Jewish history, and they are all united for one cause—the *Torah*. The way we will all be able to have the *Torah* and to celebrate it properly, is by being one cohesive unit!

## שמיני עצרת - שמחת תורה תשפ"ו

*Shemini Atzeres - Simchas Torah 5786*

Compiled by: Rabbi Yehuda Winzelberg

## Simchas Torah Treasures

The *Chazon Ish*, *zt"l*, greatly encouraged the formation of *Yissachar-Zevulun* partnerships, where one person supported the *Torah* learning of another, and both would get *S'char*. He felt that arrangements like these were important, even for those with limited capabilities, as long as they were sincerely devoted to learning. Rav Avraham HaKohein Pam, *zt"l*, explains the words of *Chazal*, "A son earns merit for his father." It is the greatest privilege for parents to allow their children to grow in *Torah*, even if it requires much financial sacrifice to do so. No *Nachas* is greater than when parents see their son or son-in-law become a *Talmid Chacham*. The *Yissachar-Zevulun* partnership is a win-win situation. The 'Yissachar' does not forfeit any of his reward for *Torah* learning, for spiritual achievement cannot be "bought" like physical property is passed from one to another. Since a 'Yissachar' loses nothing when he makes such an agreement, he is considered selfish if he refuses to do so, because he is depriving his friend of the great merit of supporting *Torah*. This is why the *Posuk* says (*Devarim* 33:18), "Rejoice Zevulun AND Yissachar", in this wonderful partnership which has eternal benefits for both of you!



At dancing by *Hakafos* on Simchas Torah, the *Baal Shem Tov* was known to dance with a lot of *Kavanah*, concentration and focus, and intensity. He would dance with great excitement and delight with the *Sefer Torah*, but even when he would not be holding the *Torah*, he would still dance with the same enthusiasm. A close student of his explained this phenomenon. "When the *Baal Shem Tov* dances with the *Torah*, he is passionate because of his great love of Hashem, His *Torah*, and the learning of *Torah*. When this exhilaration continues even after the *Baal Shem Tov* isn't holding the *Torah*, it is because he has simply put aside the physical *Torah*, but he has taken up the spiritual *Torah*!" To the *Baal Shem Tov*, the *Torah* was perceived on many different lofty levels, and this was part of his celebration on Simchas Torah!

## Pearls of Wisdom ... A Word for the Ages

It is an accepted custom that after picking up a *Sefer* which has fallen to the floor, one honors it with a kiss. Rav Avraham HaKohein Pam, *zt"l*, would point out that there is an even better custom, and that is to learn from the *Sefer* for a minute or two, or say a *Pasuk* or two from inside it. This is surely a higher level of honor than giving it a mere kiss. Rav Pam would use this lesson as an analogy to explain how one should view Simchas Torah. First, we express our love for the *Torah* by dancing with it and kissing it. However, when the *Hakafos* have ended and the *Yom Tov* has gone by, we must take that expression of love that we showed the *Torah* and turn it towards a renewed dedication to learning *Torah*!

At this time of year, we start mentioning *Mashiv HaRuach U'Morid HaGesheim* in *Shemoneh Esrei*. By inserting this into our prayers, we are asking *Hashem* to help the crops grow by causing the winds to blow and the rains of blessing to fall. We are acknowledging that *Hashem* is the Source for everything we have, and we ask for His blessings to continue to provide for us. It has been taught that the words of *Mashiv HaRuach U'Morid HaGesheim* can possibly be understood in a different way as well. *Mashiv HaRuach*— may the *Ruchniyus* be uplifted, *U'Morid HaGesheim* — and let the *Gashmiyus* be lowered. These words are a charge for us, as we enter the winter months ahead, to increase our *Ruchniyus*, our spiritual pursuits, and that our *Gashmiyus*, our physical pursuits should be diminished. With this *Tefilah*, we are asking *Hashem* to allow us to have a year filled with the lofty quest for spiritual attainment, while at the same time, requesting to be spared from the snares of *Gashmiyus*!

***Pearls of Wisdom ... A Word for the Ages***

After *Hakafos* on Simchas Torah, when everyone left the *Shul* to go home for the *Yom Tov Seudah*, the *Chofetz Chaim* would stay behind to learn for an hour or two. Someone once asked the *Chofetz Chaim* about this, “Why don't you go home first and enjoy your meal? Afterwards you can learn *Torah*.” The *Chofetz Chaim* gave the following answer: “If you arrive at a wedding in the middle of the celebration, you will find everyone dancing. You won't be able to tell who belongs to the family of the *Choson* or *Kallah*. However, if you want to find out who is related to the family, you must wait until after the banquet is over. Then, everyone will leave except for the close family members. During *Hakafos* everyone is dancing and celebrating. Now that the festivities are over, I want to show that I am a ‘close family member’ of the *Torah*, and that is why I stay behind to learn after everyone else has left!”

***Pearls of Wisdom ... A Word for the Ages***

In Vilna, when the *Aron HaKodesh* would be opened on Simchas Torah, and the *Sifrei Torah* were taken out, the *Gra* would burst into joyous and cheerful dancing, which did not stop until the *Sifrei Torah* were later returned to the *Aron*!

Rav Shlomo Leinstein relates the following story. Rav Mordechai Rabinowitz is the *Rosh Yeshivah* of *Yeshivas Oheiv Yisroel* in Petach Tikvah. It is a school that caters to highly motivated students, and it is very difficult to gain entrance to this *Yeshivah*. One day Rav Mordechai received a call from Rav Michel Yehudah Lefkowitz, *zt"l*, who asked, “Rav Mordechai, would you like to sit together with me in *Gan Eden*?” Rav Mordechai said, “Of course I would like that!” Rav Michel Yehudah continued, “There is a young student in one of the *Yeshivos* who refuses to attend any school but yours. Will you accept him?” Rav Mordechai replied, “Yes, *Rebbe*. I will accept him— no questions asked.” A few weeks passed, and Rav Michel Yehudah called again to inquire about how the boy was doing. However, Rav Mordechai informed him that although the boy had been accepted, he never arrived at the *Yeshivah*. When Rav Michel Yehudah heard this, he began to cry. He said, “Oy! We lost a child to *Torah*! How sad that this boy will not attend *Yeshivah*!” Rav Mordechai felt terrible about the boy. Nonetheless, Rav Mordechai asked Rav Michel Yehudah if the fact that the boy did not show up at the *Yeshivah* would affect their agreement, and he asked if he could still look forward sitting together with the *Gadol* in *Olam Haba*? Rav Michel Yehudah said, “Absolutely! Our deal still stands!” When Rav Eliyahu Mann heard this story, he approached Rav Chaim Kanievsky, *zt"l*, with a question: “How was Rav Michel Yehudah allowed to welcome a guest to *Gan Eden*?” Rav Chaim opened a *Sefer* of *Midrash Agadah* on *Sefer Bereishis* (84:1) where it says: “Rebbi Avahu said, ‘In the future, people (*Neshamos*) will wonder at the seating arrangement in *Gan Eden*. Individuals who had never studied *Torah* will be sitting in close proximity to the *Avos*! *Hashem* will explain His choice for including these seemingly simple people together with the most elite of the nation. These people listened to Me with whatever I asked of them, and they immediately carried it out.’” Rav Chaim said, “Someone who listens to *Hashem*'s call to save a Jewish child from falling, will surely have a special place reserved for him in *Olam Haba*. After all, this person is following in the ways of *Hashem*. This is how Rav Michel Yehudah knew he was able to do this!”



Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, *zt"l*, was more than the *Rav* of Yerushalayim, he was a world leader, and he was a recognized and respected *Talmud Chacham*. Yet, on Simchas Torah, he would dance with the children. He would hold their little hands while dancing and swirl them around the *Sifrei Torah*, while the onlookers would clap and sing. Rav Yosef Chaim was not so young and healthy. Despite suffering from various illnesses and advanced age, each year he would gather all the children together and dance the *Hakafos* with them again and again. Children were his life. When he heard about certain accomplishments that children would make, he would award them prizes and rewards. He did this in order to instill within them the sweetness of *Torah*. He did not have to do this, but he wanted to. He could have easily asked others who were younger than him and who did not hold such a distinguished position to do this for him, and they would have happily taken over, but Rav Yosef Chaim wanted to impart the beauty of the *Torah* to the children himself!

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לעילוי נשמות: יוסף בן שמואל זנוויל ז"ל, חיה הענא בת יהודה דוב ז"ל

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