

ב"ה

RABBI YITZI'S  
**DIVREI  
TORAH**

SHAVUOS EDITION

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## Torah Is True Fusion

When the Torah tells us about the giving of the Torah it begins, "In the third month from when the Children of Israel came out of Egypt, they came to the Sinai desert." And the Talmud tells us about the giving of the Torah, "Three lights (Torah, Nevi'im and Kesuvim), to a triple nation (Kohen, Levi and Yisrael), in the third month."

Why specifically the third month? Isn't the purpose of Torah to draw down that Hashem is one? In Torah unity is the most important thing, one not three. Why specifically three?

When all alone and there is nothing to challenge the unity, you don't know if it is true unity, if it will stand up to the test of time. The only way you could know if it is true unity is if it has been challenged.

When the unity is challenged by a negative force, there are two ways of upholding the unity, you can totally ignore or negate the opposition to the unity, or you can harness the negative force, until it itself becomes a positive force upholding the unity.

As far as true unity is concerned, the second way, in which the challenging force becomes a uniting factor is far superior, because it becomes part of the unity, and it shows that the unity is a true one.

This will help us understand why specifically the third month. The first three months are Nissan, Iyar and Sivan.

In Nissan there was the exodus from Egypt, full of miracles, it was so overwhelming that there was only Hashem, perfect unity, but there was nothing to challenge the unity.

Then came the month of Iyar, which was the challenge, because in the month of Iyar the whole month they counted sefira, which is working on the body and animal soul to become in sync with the neshama, and with Hashem. The

body and animal soul are selfish by nature, they only want what will give them pleasure, they aren't interested in Hashem and the Torah, but we can train and harness them until they become a uniting factor.

Sivan is the month we received the Torah, Hashem came down on Mount Sinai, there was the fusion of the physical world and G-dliness, we got the ability to permeate the physical world with G-dliness. So the third month, Sivan, is the essence of unity, true unity.

As Tanya teaches us the difference between Torah and Mitzvos.

When you do a mitzvah, you become a chariot to Hashem, just as a chariot has no will of its own and goes wherever its master wishes for it to go, so too, when you do a mitzvah, you have no will of your own, you are just doing Hashem's will.

Mitzvos are connected to the month of Iyar, because Mitzvos are done with the body and with the physical and all the days of the month are connected with Sefiras HaOmer, when we work on ourselves to become more of a chariot to Hashem.

And this perhaps is why Iyar is an acronym for Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov and Rachel, in Kabbalah they are the legs of the Divine Chariot.

However a chariot although it connects you with Hashem, it doesn't make you one with Him, you are only, so to speak, attached.

On the other hand, Torah is the wisdom and will of Hashem, and the wisdom and will of Hashem is actually Him. When you study a part of Torah and know it well in all its details, you totally envelope Hashem with your mind and at the same time you are in the Torah you have learned, because you are into the subject, you are surrounded by Hashem. In other words, you are truly one with Him, it is the only totally true unity, total fusion of above and below, G-dliness and the mundane.

Now we understand why the Torah was specifically given in the third month, and why Torah is connected to the number three, because then you experience the highest form of unity, Hashem is one in everyone and everything.

Each and every one of us should take the time to learn Torah as much as we can and even more. If we do, we will surely merit the coming of Moshiach, when “the whole world will be filled with the knowledge of Hashem, like the water covers the sea.” Total fusion. May it happen soon.

## Why Do We Stay Awake the Night of Shavuot?

It says in the Midrash, that on the night before the giving of the Torah, the night of the first Shavuot, the Jewish people slept all night, “because the sleep of Atzeres (Shavuot) is pleasant and the night is short.” Even a mosquito didn’t bother them. In the morning, when Hashem came to give them the Torah, He found them sleeping. And this is what Hashem said, “Why did I come and there is no man, I called and there is no answer.” And this is where the tradition to remain awake on the night of Shavuot and learn Torah, to correct the mistake of sleeping on the night before the giving of the Torah.

Every story in the Torah is meant to teach us a lesson in our service to Hashem. Especially when it tells a story that reflects negatively on the Jewish people. Because Hashem goes out of His way not to say something that sounds negative, as we know that He added several words to the Torah, just not to speak negatively about impure animals. How much more so, when it comes to the Jewish people. So when there is something that sounds negative about the Jewish people, there must be an important lesson to be learned from it. What is the lesson that we are meant to learn from this story?

You can simply say, that the lesson is that we should stay awake on Shavuot night. However for that we don’t need all of the details, it would have been enough to write that we slept that night and Hashem wasn’t happy with it. But it gets into the details, “because the sleep of Atzeres (Shavuot) is pleasant and the night is short.” Even a mosquito didn’t bother them. What do we need all these details for?

We must conclude, that there is something deeper going on here, a much more meaningful lesson. What is the lesson that we are meant to learn from this story?

We also have to understand, how it is that the Jewish people could have slept to begin with that night? Because fifty days

earlier, when they heard that they would be receiving the Torah, they were so excited and so filled with anticipation, that they started to count the days. Now that they finally reached the fiftieth day, their excitement must have known no bounds. Does it make sense that they were able to fall asleep?

On top of that, when they were in Egypt, they were at the lowest level possible, the 49th level of impurity, and now with their count, not only were they getting closer to receiving the Torah, they were also working on their spiritual makeup, every day of the count they reached a higher level of the 49 levels of holiness. And on the 49th day of the count they reached the 49th level, the highest level a person can attain through his or her own effort. They were now spiritually prepared to receive the Torah. The fiftieth level would be bestowed upon them by Hashem in the morning, with the giving of the Torah. How is it possible that they fell asleep?

It is obvious that they wouldn't have just fallen asleep, there was too much excitement and anticipation. They didn't lose interest in the Torah, rather they must have intentionally gone to sleep as a preparation for the giving of the Torah.

How do we know that going to sleep was a positive thing? Because the Midrash tells us that even a mosquito didn't bother them. Now why would Hashem make that miracle happen for them. if it wasn't a good thing?

The Alter Rebbe explains, that as great as the neshama's understanding and connection to Hashem can reach while it is in the body, it doesn't compare to the understanding that it could attain when it is up on High, before it enters the body, because the body can't handle that level of connection.

Therefore, when a person is asleep, and the neshama goes on High to be refreshed, and only a smidgen of the neshama remains in the body, it is able to connect and grasp ideas that it normally wouldn't understand while in the body.

That's why it is, that when a seriously diligent student of the

Torah, one who is totally given over to it with his whole heart and soul, goes to sleep with an unanswered dilemma that is perplexing him, often he will awake with the answer. This is because his neshama was treated to the answer when it went up on High.

That is why they went to sleep, because they had already reached the 49th level, the highest level that they could attain on their own. They felt that if they go to sleep, they will attain a much higher level. And they felt that this would be the best preparation for receiving the Torah. This is the meaning of, “the sleep of Atzeres (Shavuoth) is pleasant.” They were basking in the highest levels of G-dliness.

It goes a step further. The more effort one puts into refining himself while in the body, the higher the neshama soars and the greater the levels of G-dliness it will be able to grasp. Being that they reached the highest level of refinement a person can attain, they knew that their neshamas would reach the highest levels possible. When you are at this level, “The night is short.” The darkness of the world is not existent.

And this is why the mosquitoes didn't bother them. Because when a person is at such a high level, the creatures of the world don't bother him.

However, Hashem wasn't happy with this. Because the whole purpose of the Torah is to work with the physical world, refine it and infuse it with G-dliness, making the most mundane holy. This can only be done when the neshama is in the body, and so the best preparation for receiving the Torah, is not separating from the physical, just the opposite, it is through being in the physical.

The lesson here, is that there might be a person who thinks, “I don't want anything to do with this dark world. I have already accomplished a lot spiritually, I will cut myself off from the world, and bask in the light of my accomplishments.”

To him the Torah says that it is not what Hashem wants. Even the greatest generation, who reached the highest level,

Hashem didn't want them to separate from the physical world, rather to work with the physical world, raising it up to Hashem. So too, we should work with the physical world and refine it, and infuse it with G-dliness and work with a Jew who is less knowledgeable and help him or her reach a higher level..

Now we will understand why we stay up the night of Shavuoth, because the giving of the Torah is all about neshamas in bodies affecting the physical world. And if we do, we will merit to see the coming of Moshiach, when the world will finally be completely refined and infused with G-dliness. May he come soon.

## Bringing Hashem Into Our Daily Lives

The first words of the Ten Commandments are “Anochi Havaya Elokecha, I Am Hashem your G-d.” The Midrash says that the word “Anochi is from the Egyptian language.”

This is difficult to understand, because the Ten Commandments, “encapsulates the whole Torah,” it encapsulates all of the mitzvahs, as Rav Saadia Gaon tells us. That is also the reason the Ten Commandments has 620 letters, is for the 613 biblical mitzvahs, plus the 7 rabbinical mitzvahs.

In the Ten Commandments itself, every one of us heard the first two, “I Am Hashem your G-d...” And “you shall not have any other gods before Me,” directly from Hashem. The first two Commandments themselves encapsulate all of the mitzvahs. “I Am Hashem your G-d...” which is positive, represents the 248 positive commandments. And “you shall not have any other gods before Me,” which is negative, represents the 365 negative commandments.

Within the first two, “Anochi, I Am Hashem your G-d...” is the greater of the two, because it’s only about Hashem, while “you shall not have any other gods before Me,” is only after one possibly has a thought about other gods.

Within the first Commandment, there is, “Anochi Havaya Elokecha,” which represents three different ways Hashem relates to the world.

Havaya surrounds the world, it is the creative force that makes the world exist. However, that light is too great for the physical world to handle. Elokecha, is the same as Elokim, it acts like a shield that protects the world by translating the light of Havaya, filling every part of existence with the exact amount of the light it needs, and thereby, it allows nature to exist. Havaya is the G-dly force of existence, Elokim allows for nature.

Anochi, is “Who I Am,” the essence of Hashem, higher than both Havaya and Elokim. According to the Zohar, the word Anochi itself, encapsulates the whole Torah. It begs the question: Why is the essence of Hashem, in the Ten Commandments, represented by an Egyptian word?!

The question becomes stronger if you consider the hierarchy of languages. The Torah is written in the Holy Language, the highest of all. It is called the Holy Language, because it doesn't have words for inappropriate things. The terms are borrowed from other languages.

The lowest of all languages, is from the most licentious and degenerate society of all time, Egypt. Anochi, which is the essence of Hashem, is written in the lowest of all languages, Egyptian. Why?

The Midrash says that the main thing that happened with the giving of the Torah, is that “What is above could now go below, and what is below could now go above.” And that is the mission of the Jewish people, to infuse the physical with G-dliness through using the physical for Torah and mitzvahs, and even more than that, to do our daily mundane activities for Hashem, “acknowledge Him in all your ways.”

How far does this have to go? How important is this to our mission?

Hashem tells us in the first word of the Ten Commandments, and the first word He ever said to us. “Anochi,” Hashem wants us to bring His deepest essence into the lowest of places, into even what represents the extreme low, the Egyptian language.

And that is what Moshe responded to the angels who wanted the Torah to stay in heaven, “did you go down to Egypt?” Are you able to draw the essence of Hashem into the lowest physical place? He doesn't want to be in heaven, but on earth, to be revealed in the lowest levels.

It is not enough to keep the letter of the Torah law, we have

to, “Acknowledge Him in all our ways.” If not, it brings the opposite, destruction, heaven forfend, as our sages tell us, “Jerusalem wasn’t destroyed, but because they established their laws in accordance with Torah law,” and not more. It is not enough to seal ourselves in a cocoon of Torah, we have to go into the world and bring Hashem’s ways into the most mundane activities, we have to “Acknowledge Him in all our ways.”

It is the same in our relationships. It is not enough to follow the letter of the law, it is not enough to do just what is expected. You have to have a heart, and be a mentch. You have to love your spouse in every way.

If we “Acknowledge Him in all our ways.” If we bring Hashem into everything we do, even in the most mundane, we will surely merit to see the rebuilding of Jerusalem, with the coming of Moshiach. May he come soon.

## Above and Below United

On Shavuoth we read the (Aseres Hadibros) Ten Commandments, which begins with, "(Vayedaber) And G-d spoke all these words (laimor) to say." Usually when it says laimor, it means that it should be repeated to the Jewish people or to later generations. However, at the giving of the Ten Commandments, all of the Jewish people were present, even the souls of all later generations. So, what is the meaning of the word laimor in this verse?

The Maggid of Mezritch says, that it means that we have to put the Vayedaber into laimor, we have to put the Aseres Hadibros, the Ten Commandments, which means the Torah, into the Asara Maamaros, the Ten Sayings with which Hashem created the world.

In other words, don't make the mistake of thinking that the Torah and the world are separate domains. Don't say, "when I am doing Jewish things, like praying, studying Torah, doing mitzvahs, etc. I will do as the Torah dictates, but when I am doing worldly things, eating, drinking, business, etc. I will act as the world dictates." Hashem wants us to bring our Torah way into worldly affairs, that we should eat, drink and do business the way the Torah wants us to. Even when we talk, it should be apparent that Torah is our way of life.

The Midrash tells us that when Hashem gave us the Torah on Mount Sinai, the decree, that what is above can't come below and what is below can't go above, was abolished. Our forefathers studied Torah, and did mitzvahs even before the giving of the Torah, but their mitzvahs didn't affect the physical world, imbuing the physical with holiness, above and below didn't mix.

All this changed with the giving of the Torah. Now we can infuse the physical with holiness, the mundane and the holy become one.

This is clear from the Ten Commandments themselves. From

all of the 613 commandments that Hashem gave us, He chose to give these ten personally, to every Jewish person. One would think that He would have chosen the most spiritually sublime ideas to tell us, and while He did say, "I Am the Lord your G-d," and "You shall not have any god before Me," which are holy and sublime ideas, it also has, "You shall not murder," and "you shall not steal..." which are the most basic physical no nos. Even if Hashem wouldn't tell us these, we would understand that they are wrong.

The fact that Hashem juxtaposes the oneness of G-d together with not murdering and not stealing, shows that He wants us to fuse the physical and the spiritual. This works both ways, that which is above comes below and that which is below goes above, as will be explained.

Murder and stealing are wrong, and each of us understand that, but we shouldn't only keep them because they make sense, we should keep them because of the "I am the Lord your G-d," that is hidden in these laws, meaning, that they are Hashem's will. This should be the primary reason for keeping them. And the same is true for all the Torah laws that make sense, we should keep them because they are Hashem's will. This is drawing what is above down below.

On the other hand, those who need commandments to tell them that murder and stealing are wrong, that Hashem should have to say it with thunder and lightning, otherwise they wouldn't get it, they too should contemplate on the greatness and oneness of Hashem. This is, below going above.

How do we bring the above and below, spiritual and physical together? Through mitzvahs. Because the 613 commandments that we received at Sinai, came from the essence of Hashem, as the first word of the Ten Commandments is "Anochi, I Am," which refers to Hashem's essence, above all of creation, physical and spiritual. It is the part of Hashem that has no name, and no description. Since it is above creation, it can fuse opposites, above and below, spiritual and physical together.

This is why our mitzvahs can do this, while our forefathers mitzvahs could not. Because with the giving of the Ten Commandments, our mitzvahs gained the power of “Anochi,” Hashem’s essence, which can bring opposites together.

Hashem did this because our essential purpose is to make this physical world into a dwelling place for Him. By infusing the physical world with holiness, we make it ready for Him to dwell in.

This is also hinted in the first three words of the Ten Commandments, “Anochi Havaya Elokecha.”

The name Elokecha, is like Elokim and Elokeinu, it is the only name of Hashem that is written in the plural, and it is the only name that is written in the possessive, Elokecha, your G-d, Elokeinu, our G-d, etc. This is because it refers to how Hashem relates to the physical world, and it fills everything in nature with the specific amount of G-dliness it needs to exist. It is also the only name of Hashem that people can relate to somewhat, that is why we say it in the possessive, Elokecha, your G-d, Elokeinu, our G-d. This is the name that fills the physical world, it is below.

The name Havaya surrounds the world, it is beyond any physical limitations. Havaya is the words, hayah hoveh and yehiyeh (past, present and future) combined in one word. In other words, it is beyond space and time. It is above.

Anochi, as mentioned above, is the essence of Hashem, beyond all of existence, physical and spiritual, and therefore, it can unite opposites, Havaya and Elokecha, above and below together.

May we be successful in bringing the two together through our mitzvahs, making this world into a dwelling for Hashem. This is the work that will bring Moshiach. May he come soon.

## Women at Sinai

In Parshas Yisro, before the Giving of the Ten Commandments, we read. “And Moshe went up to Hashem, and Hashem called to him from the mountain saying, ‘so shall you say to Beis Yaakov (the Jewish women), and you shall tell to the Bnei Yisrael (the Jewish men).”

Rashi explains that when you teach Torah to women, it should be in a soft way, meaning, stressing the positive and the rewards for keeping the Torah and mitzvahs. However, to the men, speak harshly, tell them the punishments for not keeping the Torah and mitzvahs.

Why the difference between women and men when it comes to teaching the Torah? Why did Hashem tell Moshe, to talk to the women first and only after, the men? What general lessons about how to talk to women, could we learn from here?

Jewish women have a special place in Jewish life. Most of the nurturing and upbringing of the next generation is in their hands. She is also the backbone of the Jewish home, if she wants her home to be more kosher, it will be, if she wants it to be more observant, it will be. The future and Jewishness of her family rests primarily in her hands.

It stands to reason that Hashem would want the women on board first, because so much rests on them. Therefore, she needs to be knowledgeable in Torah and mitzvahs, in order to create a Jewish atmosphere in her home.

According to Jewish tradition, women are naturally spiritual and close to Hashem, they don't need harsh words to be convinced to do what they sense is right. Harsh words would only have the opposite effect, they only cause women to close up and become unreceptive.

This is also a lesson for men. The success of your home depends on your relationship with your wife and that is dependent on

your tone of voice.

A successful Jewish home, affects the family, the community, the Jewish people and ultimately, the whole world. This is the power of a Jewish home, this is the power of the Jewish woman.

## Doing and Listening

In Parshas Yisro, in preparation for the giving of the Ten Commandments, Hashem says to the Jewish people: “And now, if you will truly listen to My voice, and you will keep My covenant, then you will be a treasure to Me...”

The giving of the Ten Commandments, is considered the marriage between Hashem and the Jewish people. What can we learn from here about our relationship with Hashem? How could this help our personal relationship?

The verse stresses two parts of a relationship, listening, “if you will truly listen,” and doing, “and you will keep My covenant.”

In response to our acceptance of the Torah, we said “naaseh v’nishma, we will do and we will listen.” Again you have doing and listening.

Our relationship with Hashem manifests itself in two ways. First there is “doing,” which means doing mitzvas and acting in accordance with His laws. Then there is “listening,” hearing Hashem’s voice, He is sharing part of His essence with us.

The first commandment starts with the word “Anochi,” “I Am.” Anochi is an acronym, Ana Nafshi Ksavis Yehavis. I have written My essence and given it (to you). Hashem wants us to know Him and so He embedded His essence in the Torah.

Sometimes we get so caught in the doing part, we lose all joy and meaning in what we are doing. It becomes a soulless action. Hashem wants more. He wants us to know Him, to know His purpose in creating the world. He wants more than just actions, He wants depth too.

Chabad chassidic teachings help you develop this area of our relationship with Hashem.

These two elements are necessary in our personal relationship as well. First there has to be the doing part, without which a

couple simply can't function. However, the listening part is vital to develop a strong, deep and meaningful relationship. Without listening, the relationship will eventually begin to feel hollow, which is followed by hurt and anger.

Many husbands work hard providing for their family, yet they get the feeling that their wives seem unhappy. Listening could very well be the issue. Learning how to listen will make your relationship more meaningful and her smile will return.

## *Haftarah Day 1:*

# Seeing the Divine in the Physical

The Haftora for the first day of Shavuoth is Yechezkel's vision of the Divine Chariot, of which we are told, that at the Giving of the Torah, every Jewish person experienced the Divine Chariot similar to that of Yechezkel.

Even though this is true, it seems to be a side note, the main event was that Hashem spoke to us face to face and gave us the Torah, so, why do we read this Haftora? During the year when we read the Ten Commandments in parshas Yisro, we read the Divine Chariot of Yeshayahu, which is less detailed and more focused on Hashem, which seems to be more in sync with the idea of the Giving of the Torah, experiencing Hashem. Why don't we read that Haftora on Shavuoth?

In general, we are forbidden to teach about the Divine Chariot, even in a small group, because of its holy and esoteric nature, but here it is being read for the whole community. Why?

We must conclude that there is something unique about the Divine Chariot of Yechezkel that fits the theme of Shavuoth and the reading of the Giving of the Torah, and that there is a lesson that each of us can take from the Divine Chariot, without exposing its deep secrets.

The Talmud says that the difference between the Divine Chariot of Yeshayahu and the Divine Chariot of Yechezkel, is the difference between the experience between someone who lives in a big city, compared to someone from a small town. When the king comes with his whole entourage, the city dwellers don't get all excited by the fancy carriages, the uniforms and the royal display, because they see it all the time. His only excitement is in seeing the king himself. On the other hand, when the small townsfolk see the entourage, being that they never experienced such a display, every detail is exciting. They get lost in the fancy carriages and uniforms and the king is but the center of the whole experience.

In actuality there visions were the same, the difference was how they expressed what they saw.

Yeshayahu is like the big city dweller, being accustomed to the spiritual realms, he doesn't get excited about the details, his only excitement is in seeing Hashem. Yechezkel, like a small townsfolk was not accustomed to the spiritual realms, for him every detail was exciting.

The difference between the two visions is that in Yishayahu's, the focus is Hashem, and in Yechezkel's the focus is the details, from which Hashem's greatness is experienced.

From Yechezkel's words we understand that his vision was a likeness of the higher realms, as he constantly uses the word "likeness." Whereas Yishayahu just says what he saw, as the higher realms were open to him.

Now we can understand why we read Yechezkel's vision of the Divine Chariot. The main idea of the Giving of the Torah, was that Hashem descended on Mount Sinai. It was the connecting of the higher and lower realms. Even though they were always connected, the connection was hidden and inaccessible. Everything down here in the physical world is a reflection of what exists in the higher realms. And everything down here has its source in the higher realms. Before the Torah was given, we couldn't understand the higher realms from what we experience below. When Hashem descended on Mount Sinai to give us the Torah, all that changed. Now we can understand the higher realms from what we see in the physical world. Through our efforts, service to Hashem and doing mitzvahs we reveal and see the source in everything, and we draw G-dliness from above into this physical world.

We don't see it directly, we only can understand it indirectly like Yechezkel's vision of the Divine Chariot, where he only saw a likeness, from which he understood the higher realms.

Even though not everyone is allowed to learn the details and the secrets of the Divine Chariot, this general idea, that through our efforts we can reveal this connection, can

be understood by all and does not infringe on its esoteric properties.

This will also explain why the Haftora skips one and a half chapters and concludes with, “And the spirit carried me and I heard a great mighty sound behind me, ‘Blessed is the Glory of Hashem from its place.’”

In the morning prayer, before reciting the Shema, we say, “And the Ofanim and holy Chayos rise up with a great mighty sound towards the Serafim, facing them they praise and say, ‘Blessed is the Glory of Hashem from its place.’”

Serafim, Ofanim and holy Chayos are different types of angels. Why do the Ofanim and holy Chayos make so much noise when they say their prayer? Why do they say, “from its place?” Why don’t the Serafim make noise?

When we recognize that reality is different from our perception, we are amazed with wonder, and this creates a great excitement. This is what the Ofanim experience when they recognize that Hashem is creating everything. Because from their perception the world is real, but when they realize that it is really Hashem that is the force that is making everything exist, they get excited and that is the cause of the “great mighty sound.”

They say, “from its place,” because they don’t see Hashem, they understand Him through their reality, and although it’s very exciting, it is still distant.

The Serafim are from a higher realm, they are not excited because they see Hashem, it is nothing new to them.

This is also why by the Giving of the Torah there were “sounds and Lighting.” It wasn’t to frighten us, because hearing Hashem speak is frightening enough. Rather, it was the excitement of the new idea and ability entering the world, that we can bring heaven and earth together and draw G-dliness down into the physical world.

This all began at the Giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, and when our work is done, the world will be full of G-dliness and Moshiach will come.

May we merit to finish the work our ancestors started and witness the coming of Moshiach. The time has come.

## *Haftarah Day 2:*

# **The Completion of Our Mission That Began at Sinai**

The Haftora for the second day of Shavuoth is from our prophet Habakkuk. He says a prayer, and tells of many great miracles that Hashem did for the Jewish people, starting with the giving of the Torah. He is pained by the suffering of the prolonged exile, and finally has a vision of the final redemption, and he is filled with joy.

The simple reason for reading this Haftora is because it mentions the giving of the Torah, but there has to be more.

This Haftora is only read outside of Israel, where we have a second day of Shavuoth. The reason for this extra day is not the same as the extra days added to Pesach and Sukkos, they were added because of a doubt when the holiday was. Because in the times that we would sanctify the new month according to the testimony of two witnesses that saw the new moon, the community outside of Israel wouldn't know until a while later. So the rabbis Instituted an extra day, just in case the new month began the next day. Shavuoth, on the other hand, is not because of a doubt, it always falls on the fiftieth day of the Omer. Rather, the extra day is because the rabbis wanted that all the holidays have the same laws. So while the other holidays have an extra day, because maybe, that is the actual holiday, on Shavuoth, the Jewish people add an additional day of their own will, and take a day that is undoubtedly mundane and make it holy.

This is in fact the essence of the day and it captures the essence of Shavuoth as well.

Shavuoth is the day we received the Torah, it is the day our mission began. It is the day that Hashem gave us the ability to do our mission. The Midrash says that before the giving of the Torah, above and below, spiritual and physical, didn't mix. At the giving of the Torah all that changed, as it says, "And

Hashem descended on Mount Sinai.” Now there is the ability to mesh G-dliness with the physical, to make this world into a dwelling place for Hashem. We do this by learning Torah, doing mitzvahs and using the most mundane parts of our lives to serve Hashem. Our mission began at the giving of the Torah, and it ends with the coming of Moshiach.

Habakkuk was given a vision of the future of the Jewish people. He saw all of our suffering in exile, and he couldn't take it. He pleaded with Hashem, and he outright demanded on behalf of the Jewish people. But when he saw the time of Moshiach, he understood and was happy. That is why he said this prayer, to ask forgiveness for the harsh words he spoke.

In his prayer, he begins telling of the giving of the Torah, then he goes through many of the good things Hashem did for the Jewish people, then he tells of the exile, he alludes to the difficult war of Gog and Magog, that will happen right before the coming of Moshiach, and finally, he rejoices with his coming.

In other words, he is telling us that what Hashem does is good, and even if we don't see it that way, because of the harsh exile, he knows the truth, because he saw the future redemption, and it is all worth it. Just as he rejoiced, so will we.

On the second day of Shavuoth, the day that we turn from mundane to holy, we received the Torah, with which we make the world into a dwelling for Hashem, mundane to holy, and we read the Haftora about the completion of our mission, the coming of Moshiach, when the world will be a home for Hashem, the whole world will go from mundane to holy. And that is the connection between the second day of Shavuoth and the Haftora.

At the beginning of his prayer, Habakkuk says, “I heard your message and I was afraid.” This verse is quoted by Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai in the Zohar, and this passage of the Zohar is part of the Tikkun Leil Shavuoth, that we read as we stay awake on the first night of Shavuoth. “Rabbi Shimon

rejoiced and said, "I heard your message and I was afraid," at that time it was appropriate to have fear, but in our case it all depends on love." Being that we read this in the synagogue on the second day of Shavuoth, means that it applies to us. Why does Rabbi Shimon say, that "In our case it all depends on love?"

Habakkuk said that he heard and he was afraid. Hearing is not like seeing, hearing implies distance and less understanding than seeing, therefore it is associated with fear. Seeing, on the other hand, implies closeness and deep understanding, hence it is associated with love.

We see this differentiation when it comes to studying Torah. The written Torah is associated with fear, as it says in Maseches Sofrim, "A face of fear for reading (Torah)." Why fear? Because it is distant, there is a lack of understanding, as we see, that even if one is just reading the words of the written Torah, even if he doesn't understand what he is saying, he is obligated to recite the blessing for learning Torah. On the other hand, learning Talmud, the oral Torah, is associated with love, because it must be understood.

Habakkuk heard and felt distant, therefore, he was filled with fear. Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai was close to Hashem, and his experience was of seeing, as he said, "I see now what no man has seen since the day that Moshe went up a second time on Mount Sinai."

Each of us stood at Mount Sinai, saw the great event and the greatest levels of G-dliness. Therefore we are close and our experience is one of love as well.

He continues his prayer and he talks about the power of the Aron, the Ark of the Covenant, which housed the tablets of the Ten Commandments and according to some, the Torah that Moshe wrote. The Ark symbolized the Torah. He concludes that part, "The ways of the world are His."

The Talmud concludes with a teaching on these words of Habakkuk, and it is recited in our morning prayer. "It was

taught in the school of Eliyahu, 'Whoever learns (Torah) laws every day, it is certain that he is (going to receive a portion in) the world to come, as it says, "The ways (halichos) of the world are his," don't say halichos (ways), but halachos (laws).'" Why specifically laws? Why not the study of Torah in general?

The general study of Torah has many opinions. There are 70 ways of understanding the Torah, or 600,000 ways. But there is a point where there is no division, and total unity of Hashem's will in Torah. This place has only one opinion, Hashem's essential will. This is not expressed by the general study of Torah, which has many opinions. This essential oneness of Hashem, beyond any division, is expressed in halacha, where we have one bottom line that we follow. Since it is the study of laws that brings the essential will of Hashem into the world and into practice, it guarantees one a place in the world to come.

Even more, through studying halachos, "the ways of the world" become "his." He becomes a master over worldly matters.

Habakkuk then speaks of the exile, "For the fig tree will not blossom, and there won't be food growth on the vines..."

Then he became happy with the realization that Hashem will help us. "Yet, I will rejoice in Hashem, I will be joyful in the G-d of my salvation."

What is he so joyous about? He continues, "G-d Hashem will be my army, He will make my feet as a deers, and He will lead me on high places, to the Choirmaster with my songs."

"G-d Hashem will be my army," meaning, Hashem gives us the strength to be victorious over the exile and bring Moshiach.

"He will make my feet as a deers." Why does he refer to feet? Because he is talking about the end of the exile, which is called, "ikvisa d'mishicha," the footsteps of Moshiach, when the way we serve Hashem is not so much like the head, with deep understanding, rather similar to the feet, that will go and do things that the head will never do. The feet symbolize serving Hashem through self sacrifice, which is the calling

of the last generation before the coming of Moshiach, our generation. They will be like a deer's feet, which can go far with ease. Meaning, that Hashem will give us the strength to win this war and end the exile, with ease.

“And He will lead me on high places,” meaning that we will be lifted to the highest levels, when Moshiach comes.

“To the Choirmaster (lamnatzeach).” Lamnatzeach could also mean, “to the victor,” which in this case will be Hashem and the Jewish people. “With my songs,” is our song, as we will break out in song, as it says about the coming of Moshiach, “And there we will sing a new song.”

May we merit to rejoice, just as Habakkuk did, with the coming of Moshiach. May it happen soon.



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