

# SICHA POEM

*Likkutei Sichos, Vol. 28*

## Erev Shavuos

— By Mrs. Chanie Gourarie, Chabad Toms River

Before the giving of the Torah,  
Moshe's schedule is discussed in the Gemara.  
Moshe went up and down the mountain on the first four days of Sivan,  
And on the fifth day he built a Mizbeach and he offered on it a Korban.

But in the Torah we find that there is more that did transpire,  
After Moshe built an altar,  
To the youths he gave an instruction,  
To bring sacrifices called עולות and שלמים.

Then he brought the Jews into a covenant with Hashem when they did declare,  
“Naaseh V'Nishma - we will do and we will hear.”  
Next Moshe took the book of the covenant and read it to the people,  
Then from the sacrifices that the youths did bring, blood Moshe did sprinkle,

If the sages' intention was to give an explanation  
For why Moshe was too busy to ascend the mountain,  
Then the covenant which was time consuming should have been chosen,  
Especially since it is one of the most central elements in the preparation.

On the other hand what makes a sacrifice on an altar so unique,  
That would override climbing to the mountain's peak?  
The Gemara isn't referring to the sacrifices that the youths did bring,  
But rather for the altar to be complete, Moshe sacrificed on it, his own offering.

To do this task he had lots of people to ask without a doubt,  
But all matters that related to receiving the Torah Moshe had to carry out.  
This altar and offering with thought and intent reached the core of Hashem's will,  
He accomplished something new that no one before him was ever able to fulfill.

Before the giving of the Torah there was a separation,  
Between earth and heaven.  
Into this physical world holiness could not penetrate,  
And to the spiritual realms there was nothing that we could elevate.

After Hashem descended on Har Sinai,  
This decree Hashem did nullify,  
We finally got the ability,  
To make physical things holy.

On the 6th of Sivan the change happened it's true,  
But on the 5th of Sivan the Yidden got a preview.  
The altar that Moshe built had the power to elevate and got the ball rolling,  
For the magnificent change that on the next day would be happening.

Not only did the altar possess this unique quality,  
But it was seen in the sacrifices that were brought that day clearly,  
The Korban Olah which was brought from that day on, twice daily,  
Was brought for the first time on the 5th of Sivan specifically.

“The continual burnt offering which was made at Mount Sinai,” has the status,  
Of all the Mitzvos that after Har Sinai we practice.  
This implies that the pre Sinai Korban Olah,  
Has the post Sinai details of skinning and cutting according to Rabbi Akiva.

The general principles and the specific details were given,  
At Har Sinai is Rabbi Akiva's opinion.  
Since the 5th of Sivan comes immediately before the 6th day,  
The impact of the 6th day extends to the 5th day in every way.

“He who toils on Erev Shabbos will eat on Shabbos,” our sages say,  
The preparations for Shabbos and Yom Tov begins on the preceding day.  
This doesn't only pertain to the person who must be ready,  
On Erev Shabbos and Erev Yom Tov, there is a trace of the holiness already.

To a wolf Shabbos does compare,  
It snatches from in front of it and from the rear.  
Adding time to Shabbos is not just an obligation for every Jew,  
But the holiness of Shabbos expands to the time near it too.

Even earlier - on Erev Shabbos or Yom Tov after midday,  
Tachanun we don't say.  
**Erev** Shabbos and **Erev** Yom Tov get a title so fine,  
Because for the entire day a glimmer of Shabbos and Yom Tov does shine.

An illustration of this the Yom Tov of Pesach does provide,  
At midnight, on the 15th of Nissan the first born Egyptians died.  
But the Passover sacrifice was offered on the 14th of Nissan from the very first year,  
Because on Erev Pesach the dynamics of Yom Tov already do appear.

The Torah is a gift from above,  
The covenant was a preparation from the Jewish people's part with love,  
By only mentioning the altar and sacrifice the Gemara emphasizes the Matan Torah novelty,  
From the 5th of Sivan, to elevate even stones and animals became the new reality.

On the 5th of Sivan the mountain Moshe didn't climb,  
Not because he couldn't find the time,  
But because the work of refinement must take place down here,  
Therefore Hashem didn't elevate the Jews to heaven to give them the Torah there.

Between Torah and the wilderness there is a connection,  
Therefore before Shavuos we always read the Bamidbar Torah portion.  
On the 5th of Sivan was the Naaseh V'Nishma declaration,  
Like a desert it represents complete self nullification.

The reason that the the Torah was given specifically in the wilderness,  
Was because the Torah as an object is ownerless.  
The setting of a Jew's service resembles a desert so low,  
How to transform it into a dwelling place for Hashem the Torah does show.

On the 5th of Sivan the service does begin,  
From the spark of Moshe that we have within,  
We have the power to make this world into a dwelling place for Hakadosh Baruch Hu,  
By transforming the physical world we will merit the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu!

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