



No words necessary, the Shavous Perspective 2023

The Shavous Perspective is in loving memory of Daniel Aaron Ben Yigal, Leah Mintche Bas Ya'akov Yosef, Edward Ben Efraim, Shlomo Ben Edward, and Yirachmiel Daniel Ben Gedalia. May their souls be uplifted and their memories a blessing.

We are about to celebrate the giving of the Torah with the holiday of Shavous; we hear the 10 Commandments and eat dairy foods in celebration of this momentous occasion.

Leading up to these important days, we count the Omer, a 49 day cycle that culminates on Shavous, the 50th day. During each day of the Omer, we are given a different emotion and element of ourselves to uplift and purify.

During the counting, we say, "*We are counting the Omer to purify ourselves from our uncleanness,*" hoping that we are at the highest level of holiness when we receive the Torah once again.

After reading the Ten Commandments on the first day of Shavous, enjoying a dairy meal is customary. But there is no actual Mitzvah to commemorate Shavous other than eating dairy, which is just tradition and not a commandment.

Why is there no Mitzvah to celebrate Shavous, like eating Matzah on Pesach or blowing the shofar on Rosh Hashanah? How can we commemorate this momentous and auspicious occasion of receiving the Torah?!

One of the answers given is that Shavous is an agricultural and farming holiday, as the name implies, **Chag HaKatzir - the holiday of harvest**. Since Shavous was the usual time farmers would bring the Bikkurim, the first fruit offering from their harvest to the Beis Hamikdash, there is no need to command an action.

Additionally, what are the farmers meant to offer if the field or orchard does not produce or yield any fruit? Therefore, there is no commandment in the Torah to commemorate Shavous like Pesach or Rosh Hashanah.

However, the Lubavitcher Rebbe gives a deeper and more profound explanation. He writes that Shavous is not just a harvest holiday but a time we receive the Torah on Mt Sinai. Although there is a disagreement regarding the exact date the Torah was given, the 6th of Sivan is universally accepted as the date.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe explains that Heaven and Earth became intrinsically intertwined per G-d's desire on that day. G-d bent Heaven and brought it here on earth, allowing us to change our materialistic world into a divine domain. Earth's physicality was forever changed when G-d came to the mountain to give us the Torah.

The Midrash Rabbah details the silence of nature in honor of G-d's physical presence; **the birds do not chirp, foxes didn't howl, and the sea did not move as G-d's voice echoed from the mountain.**

This stillness and lull in our physical world affirmed us as G-d's chosen representatives on earth. Our existence is a pause in the nature of this world; we are a nation so statistically insignificant yet unmatched in impact and influence.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe explains that no physical actions or words can truly symbolize the magnitude of the giving of the Torah and what it represents.

As one of the names for Shavous indicates, **Atzeres - a stop, an eternal pause in the nature of this world, symbolic of G-d's choice of representative on earth.**

This profound explanation is compounded by the reach and range of what we can achieve during this important time. The Lubavitcher Rebbe explains that the happiness and joy of this holiday are only limited to our imagination. We can experience and attain the identical level of G-d's revelation as our souls and forefathers saw and felt at Mt Sinai.

The holiday of Shavous has no physical Mitzvah because the commandment is to experience being chosen. To hear the angels dancing as G-d makes His choice and marries the Jewish people once again. To feel the embrace of our Creator as He opens the gates to His essence, the level of "**Anochi Hashem Elokecha - I, The Lord your G-d" choose you to be Mine!**

As the Lubavitcher Rebbe would say for Shavuot,

"Kabbalas HaTorah B'Simcha U'B'Pnimiyus -

May we merit to receive and internalize the Torah with happiness & joy!"

Have a meaningful & joyous Shavous!

Rabbi Sholom Yemini