

SHAVUOT
THE HEART
OF OUR
NATION



WRITTEN BY
ELISHEVA LAVI

SHAVUOT
THE HEART
OF OUR
NATION



WRITTEN BY
ELISHEVA LAVI

Elisheva Lavi

Shavuot: The Heart Of Our Nation

Copyright © 2024 by Elisheva Lavi

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning, or otherwise without written permission from the publisher. It is illegal to copy this book, post it to a website, or distribute it by any other means without permission.

Elisheva Lavi asserts the moral right to be identified as the author of this work.

First edition

Advisor: Mark Lavi

Editing by Dan Martin

This book was professionally typeset on Reedsy

Find out more at reedsy.com

Contents

[1. Welcome](#)

[2. Introduction](#)

[3. The Soul's Journey](#)

[4. Month of Sivan](#)

[5. Shavuot](#)

[6. Isru Chag](#)

[*About the author*](#)

1

Welcome

The vision of this book is to share the greater aspect of the holiday Shavuot and the month of Sivan. The depth of the Hebrew calendar and holidays has always surprised me with its profound mystical teachings and guidance that are greatly relevant to our lives today. When I started my studies in Kabbalah and the Hebrew calendar, I noticed that many more Jews were unaware of these secrets, so I made it part of my mission to share what I learned to guide people in connecting to these auspicious times and their Judaism. I am lucky to have my father guide me in creating this product as he is the one who has shown me the hidden messages. Thank you, Hashem for granting me the strength and means to produce this book. May it bring more depth and understanding to our nation as we embark on a path of returning to a unified whole.

I hope this book will reveal to your soul a deeper message that will uplift your holiday experience and, ultimately, your connection to Judaism.

Let's begin.

2

Introduction

The Torah mentions three holidays, the Shalosh Regalim or the three pilgrimages. Shavuot is one of the three major festivals mentioned, with the other two being Pesach and Sukkot. For these three holidays, Jews from all across the land and in the diaspora would make their way to Jerusalem to celebrate and offer a sacrifice during the Temple period. The Shalosh Regalim are mentioned in the Torah in Deuteronomy 16:16

שְׁלוֹשׁ פְּעָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה יֵרָאֶה כָּל-זָכוֹרְךָ אֶת-פְּנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר—בַּחַג הַמַּצּוֹת
וּבַחַג הַשְּׁבֻעוֹת, וּבַחַג הַסּוּכוֹת; וְלֹא יֵרָאֶה אֶת-פְּנֵי יְהוָה, רֵיקָם.

Three times a year—on the Feast of Matzah, on the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Booths—all your males shall appear before your God in the place that [God] will choose. They shall not appear before God empty-handed

The whole flow of the Hebrew calendar is a trek for the soul. Each month has peculiar opportunities, influencing energies such as the Hebrew letters and

constellations (mazalot) corresponding to the month. Months with dedicated holidays are an auspicious time. Kabbalah teaches that the same energy present during the original time returns yearly on that holiday. That means the same energy and light present during the original Matan Torah returns yearly on Shavuot. As the Mekublim would say, each holiday is an opportunity to absorb and benefit greatly from that light, not only to observe it. Therefore, we partake in specific actions such as a seuda, a festive meal, lighting candles, prayer, learning, and such (depending on the holiday) to draw down the light and claim it. This is a manifestation opportunity, and our actions ensure that we earn the blessings to receive.

The journey to Shavuot is a 49-day process that begins the second night of Pesach. However, Shavuot is similar to Purim, and Purim's placement in the Hebrew calendar is also important. As brought down in Kabbalah - Purim is a "dress rehearsal" for receiving the Torah on Shavuot. How can this be? How can these even be related? Let's take a look. In a nutshell, Purim is the celebration of the survival of the Jews after the decree to annihilate them by Haman in the Persian Empire, dating to the 5th century BCE. The story takes a turn when Queen Esther (a Jew) convinces Achashverosh to change the decree, thus saving the Jewish people. Because the decree had already been sent to annihilate the Jews, Queen Esther sent out messages that the Jews were allowed to fight back against anyone who tried to kill them. The secret to our survival, as written in Megilat Esther and explained deeper in Kabbalah, was the unification of the Jews. Esther called the nation to do a collective fast for the sake of her survival before appearing in front Achashverosh on her own. She gathered the nation together to fight against the common enemy, and as a result of the nation's unity, the nation survived. Esther knew that the only chance they had at survival was if

the nation was united because when the nation is divided and separated, it is vulnerable to attacks by enemies.

On Purim, we fought back against our enemy, and we took the Torah back upon ourselves as a nation and made the obligation to pass it down to our future generations - קימו וקבלו היהודים עליהם ועל זרעם - Megilat Esther 27 - the Jews undertook and irrevocably obligated themselves and their descendants. In comparison to Pesach, the Israelites did not know how to fight back since they were coming out of slavery. As a result of not fighting back when we left Egypt, today, we are doing a tikkun (rectification). This is why we have Purim before Shavuot: that is when we declared our obligation to the Torah and the responsibility to pass it on to future generations, while at Matan Torah our ancestors said we listen and then do -

וַיְקַח סֵפֶר הַבְּרִית, וַיִּקְרָא בְּאָזְנוֹ הָעָם; וַיֹּאמְרוּ, כֹּל אֲשֶׁר-דִּבֶּר יְהוָה נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע

- Exodos 24:7

At Matan Torah, there is no reference to future generations; Na'aseh VeNishma was for the souls present at Har Sinai. It is a mitzvah to teach our future generations the Torah. Still, the future generations can say that because they weren't physically at Har Sinai for Matan Torah, only our ancestors accepted the Torah physically, and subsequent generations didn't, so they may come to think not obligated to accept it. So, Purim ensured the future generation's obligation to Hashem's Torah.

Here are a few more examples of how Purim prepares us for Shavuot: on Purim, we give Mishloach Manot (gifts to our neighbors). This action begins unifying our nation, and we give Matanot LeEvyonim (gifts to the poor), which helps them shift a poor person's focus from lack to spiritual health, teaching us

sustenance is important for our spiritual wellbeing. Additionally, on Purim, we drink “until one does not know”; in Kabbalah, this is “עד דלא ידע” (pronounced “ad d’lo yada”), an Aramaic phrase. This is to remove Mochin de Katnut (מוחין דקטנות), translating to “limited or small intellect.” This concept refers to one’s intellectual or spiritual consciousness as small, restricted, or limited. According to Kabbalah, drinking on Purim removes Mochin de Katnut for Mochin de Gadlut (מוחין דגדלות), a Kabbalistic term that translates to “expanded or big intellect” or “heightened consciousness.” It refers to enhanced spiritual awareness and understanding, where one’s intellect is broadened or elevated to higher levels.

In Kabbalah, human consciousness is believed to have the potential for expansion and growth, allowing individuals to attain deeper insights into spiritual truths and connect more fully with the divine. Mochin de Gadlut represents the culmination of this process, where one’s consciousness reaches a state of heightened perception and enlightenment.

On Pesach, we received Mochin to understand Godliness, to receive the Torah, and to be free from the slavery mentality. Both Purim and Pesach have a commitment to the Torah and Mochin de Gadlut. Receiving and giving Matanot on Purim reminds us to be like one man with one heart כאיש אחד בלב אחד (Exodus 19:2), it prepares us for the ultimate unity at Matan Torah. Additionally, it reminds us that if we want to defeat our enemies, we must be united! Every action we did in Purim reflected Shavuot and Matan Torah.

Lastly, a significant reflection of Purim and Shavuot is the reveal of the Shechina. The Shechina is the divine feminine aspect of God; it provides protection and is the source of abundance. Women are the manifestation of the Shechina. In

Purim, we have Esther, who guarded us in exile and fought back Haman, and in Matan Torah, the Shechina was with us.

Purim, Pesach, and Shavuot are linked. It is a spiritual journey that the soul makes. This travel is similar to the high holidays of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Simchat Torah, Shemini Atzeret, and Yisro Chag. The Torah counts the start of the cycle from Nissan, from Exodus 12:2 -

אֶת־הַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה לָכֶם רֵאשִׁית חֹדְשֵׁי רְאשֵׁי חֹדְשֵׁי הַשָּׁנָה

- “This month shall be for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you.” Nissan, the month of Pesach, is when our nation was set free from slavery, and the following 49 days are preparation for receiving the Torah. These are 7 weeks from the Pesach Seder until Shavuot. Each day rectifies parts of our soul for receiving the Torah. It is based on the lower 7 sefirot - Chessed, Gevurah, Tiferet, Netzach, Hod, Yesod, and Malchut. Each one has its properties and specific rectifications. I highly recommend that you research each Sefira in counting the Omer.

Kabbalah teaches that the reason why we are here on Earth is to remove the bread of shame (Nehama de Kesufa נהמא דכ״סופא). Counting the Omer to Matan Torah is not only a preparation process, but according to the Mekubalim, the students of Kabbalah, it is how we remove the bread of shame. Kabbalah teaches the essence of Pesach night, is the receiving of Mochin de Gadlut, Godly intelligence. Beyond being set free physically, we received the infusion of Mochin on Seder night, and the very next day, this light disappeared because we did not earn it.

The Mochin is essential as it gives us intelligence both individually and collectively. It is the consciousness that allowed our nation to break free from the slavery mentality. Each year, we continue to practice the holiday of Pesach,

although we are not physically enslaved in Egypt. Kabbalah teaches that although we are not in Egypt, the Mochin still infuses us every Seder night, giving us Mochin to break free from our slavery and stop damaging cycles. Therefore, we count the Omer to remove the bread of shame, restore the Mochin from Seder night, and prepare to receive the Torah.

The preparation process is essential to success in our world and the spiritual. Similar to a wedding, both the bride and groom prepare for the ceremony physically by renting a wedding hall and spiritually by learning about creating a Jewish home. Another example of soul-based preparation is Elul, where we focus on Cheshbon HaNefesh before Rosh Hashana. Cheshbon HaNefesh (an accounting of the soul) takes up a full month before Rosh HaShana. The month is dedicated to self-reflection, introspection, and soul preparation for the high holidays.

3

The Soul's Journey

As previously mentioned, Nissan is the start of the Hebrew month cycles. It is the head of all the months. As we move through the year, Pesach is our birth as a nation, Iyar is a full month of counting the Omer and healing until we reach a full 49 days to Shavuot, and Sivan is the climax with Matan Torah. However, there is a fall in the nation's level of spirituality with the sin of the golden calf, the spies who spoke badly about the land of Israel, and baseless hatred. With great sin that we commit, our world shatters, and thus the Temple shatters. This is why the following month after Sivan is Tammuz and Av. These months commemorate the breach of the walls of Jerusalem on the 17th of Tammuz before the destruction of the Second Temple, Tisha B'Av (9th of Av). Although we have sinned, a fundamental principle of Judaism is returning, Teshuva, and that brings us into Elul and Tishrei, a time of returning to ourselves and God, as Kabbalah teaches, it is to return the Hei (ה), the Shechina, to our world. The Shechina is the source of our protection and abundance. Our actions cause the Shechina to hide (due to sin) or dwell among us (unity).

Although we repeat the same soul cycle every year, each time, there is still an incredible journey in the Hebrew calendar that the soul embarks on, whether you are aware of it or not. Suppose you are lucky enough to know the process. In that case, you can increase the opportunities for spiritual growth, personal development, healing, abundance, and tremendous benefits that can change how you experience life. Each cycle reveals new depth, learning, and parts of yourself waiting to be revealed. The Hebrew calendar is a map for the soul's growth.

During the cycle and taking part of the holidays, according to Kabbalah, the surrounding light (Or Makif), which protects you and isn't a fully developed part of you yet, turns into Or Pnimi (internal light) actualized potential and becomes part of you. This mirrors the process of fulfilling your potential and becoming more of yourself. The potential was there, but you decided to bring it into reality. You brought it into existence and did what you were capable of doing. Therefore, there are already many potential versions of you. It just depends on what you choose to bring into existence. The cycle is a sacred process that turns your potential into actualized potential. It integrates into your essence and exists as part of you.

On seder night, we receive an infusion of Mochin that dissipates the next day because we did not earn them, therefore we count the Omer to restore those Mochin and allow us to receive the Torah. Our remaining work is to integrate that light as part of ourselves. Through the soul's journey of the year, we gradually expand the soul's vessel (Kli) and our capacity to contain blessings, abundance, the ability to grow through obstacles, and so much more.

4

Month of Sivan

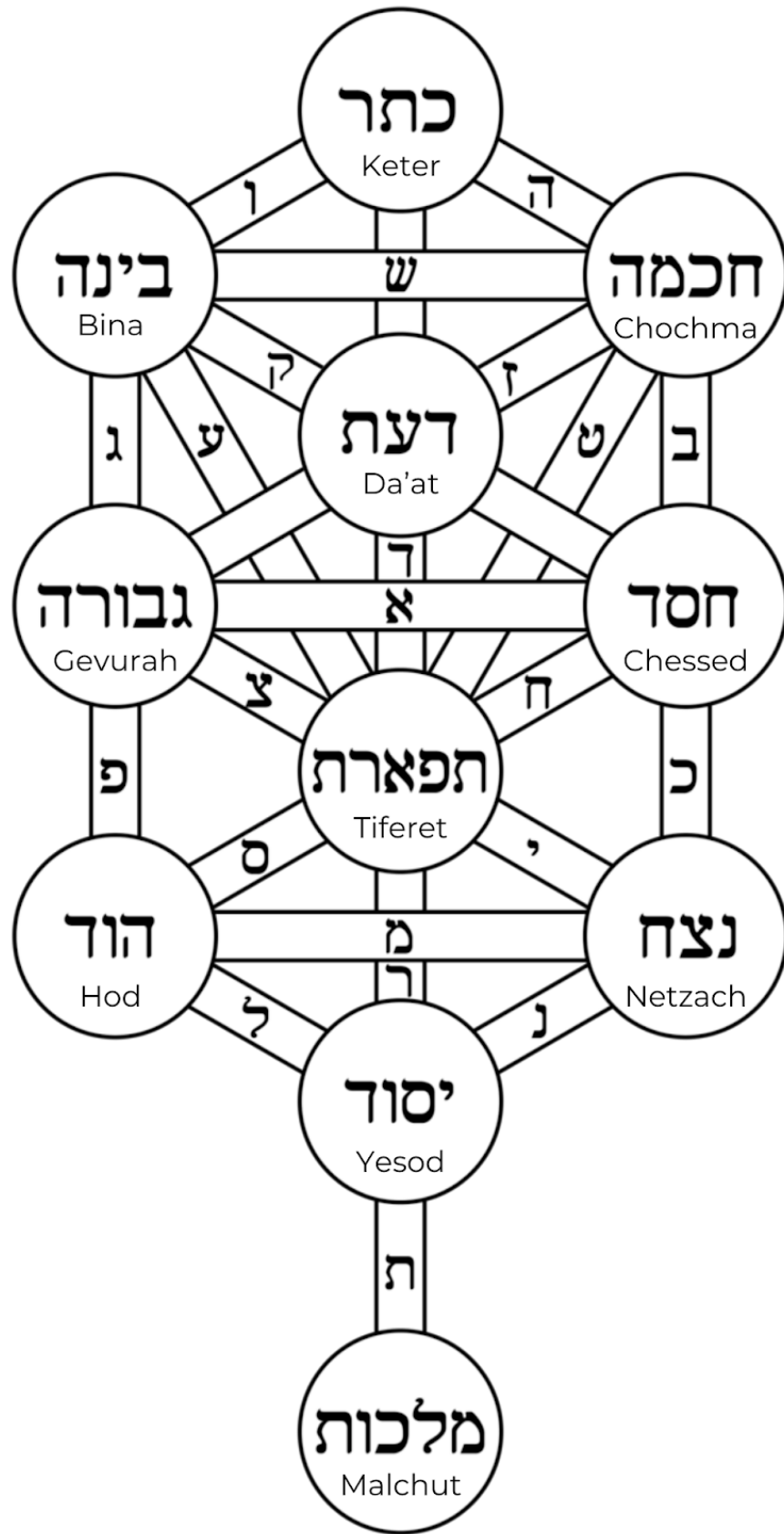
Each month has special opportunities, mystical meanings, and influencing energies. Tracing back to Avraham Avinu, Sefer Yetzirah, the Book of Formation, one of the most mysterious and original texts from Kabbalah, explores each month's creation and influences. These unique combinations of energies influence the month, such as the Hebrew letters, mazalot (constellations), or whether or not the month has a holiday. One of the central concepts of Sefer Yetzirah is the idea that the universe was created with the Hebrew alphabet and numbers. It describes the creation of the universe as a process involving the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet, which are seen as the building blocks of creation, along with the ten sefirot (divine emanations or attributes) of the Tree of Life. With specific combinations of the Hebrew letters, which relate to divine energies influencing that period, we can study them to understand the month, personal and collective benefits, and transformation.

Kabbalah teaches that every month offers an opportunity for certain tikunim (rectifications), and by learning about the month, we can rectify parts of our soul

in alignment with creation. When we look at Sivan and Shavuot, we see an opportunity to unite as a nation, put our differences aside for a greater goal, find harmony, and return the Shechina to dwell among us. Shavuot being in Sivan is intentional by design. Let's dive deeper.

Sivan's energy is balanced and harmonious. This month, two opposites came together, and we see this in the month's mazal (constellation), Gemini (תאומים). The sign for Gemini and the Hebrew translation are twins, hinting at a special explanation of Shavuot's and Sivan's significance.

Sivan is the third month counting from Nissan, and the number three in Kabbalah and Judaism has notorious parallels. We have three sections of the Torah (5 Books of Moshe 5 ספרי משה, The Prophets נביאים, and The Writings כתובים), and even Moshe Rabbenu was the third child! Another example of three are the patriarchs Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, and the Shalosh Regalim (Pesach, Shavuot, and Sukkot). In Kabbalah, there is the "three-column system or the three pillars" by which the world is supported. The right column represents the qualities of mercy, compassion, and generosity (Chessed), the left column is strictness, judgment, discipline, and justice (Gevurah), and the middle column is balance, harmony, and beauty (Tiferet). The third column acts as a mediator between Chessed and Gevurah. Kabbalah teaches to be in the middle column, the balance between the two. It is in this middle column that the two opposites become connected, and this is what the entire Torah is about - bringing two opposites into one, and this resonates with the month of Sivan and Shavuot, the third month.



The Kabbalistic Tree of Life has the names of the Sefirot and paths in Hebrew. Based on Fig. 10, page 155, of *The Bahir: An ancient Kabbalistic text attributed to Rabbi Nehuniah ben HaKana, first century, C. E.,* Aryeh Kaplan

Sivan's energy of harmony is the ability to take two opposing sides and unify them, and this is, according to Kabbalah, the greatness of Hashem's work. When we received the Torah at Har Sinai, the most significant event in our history, there was a unification between opposite elements, us and Hashem. We are finite, and Hashem is infinite. With the receiving of the Torah, we became unified, and the Torah is the result of that. This is why the Matan Torah is similar to a marriage ceremony. A man and woman are completely different, and it is a miracle that they can exist together because of their differences! However, because of their differences, they become complementary and can unify and bring life into existence. A man and woman can only know unity by knowing what disunity is. Because they were once separated, they can know what it means to be one. For example, when there is disunity at home, they can finally cherish *shalom bayit* (peace in the home) because they experienced disharmony prior.

The unification at Har Sinai in Kabbalah is known as a *Zivug* which is a concept in Kabbalah with profound meaning. It represents the cosmic union or coupling of spiritual forces. In its essence, *Zivug* symbolizes the harmonious blending of complementary energies, often depicted as the divine masculine and feminine aspects coming together in perfect balance and unity. This union is not merely physical but encompasses the entirety of existence, reflecting the interconnectedness and interdependence of all things.

Shavuot is the ultimate *Zivug* between the divine and the earthly realms, where God's wisdom was imparted to humanity. Often symbolized as the divine

feminine, the Torah is compared to a bride receiving her groom, representing the cosmic union between heaven and earth, spirit and matter.

The energy of Gemini affects everyone, some more or less than others, but it is still collectively felt. Gemini is an air sign characterized by its duality. Geminis can diffuse conflicts and harmonize two opposites. They have a remarkable ability to unify the right with the left and balance the situation. The sign of Gemini, the sign of twins, is the duality found in people's personalities. For the Gemini, the duality is much more dominant.

On one hand, Geminis are intelligent and fast learners, but they don't take the time to learn in-depth about anything. They know many things on the surface, but they don't know the deeper workings behind matters.

According to Kabbalah, the tikun for Gemini is to focus, understand depth, and follow through with their ideas and projects, essentially grounding the "air." As a result of the air in Gemini, they tend to drop ideas fast and not follow through with them. This energy can affect everyone.

The letters for Sivan are Reish ר and Zayin ז - together, they form the Aramaic word "רזי", which means secret סוד. Reish (ר) created the planet Mercury and Zayin (ז) created the sign of Gemini. Regarding its shape, the letter Zayin comprises a letter Vav (ו) with a crown attached to its head with a Yud on top (י). This represents the crown that every Jewish soul received at the giving of the Torah.

The letter Reish (ר) represents lack. "Reish"* in Hebrew (רֵישׁ) means poverty. As a letter, you can see something is missing within. Gemini tend to have an empty feeling within. If they aren't working on themselves, they lack spirituality and the ability to commit to others in a relationship. They can fall into

superficial, selfish desires and emptiness that they will try to fill with endless wandering and pointless relationships if they do not work on their spirituality.

Looking at the numerology of these letters, Rish is 7, and Zayin is 200 = 207. 207 is the same numerical value as the Hebrew word Ohr, meaning Light. $207 = 200 = 7 \cdot 6 = 7 \cdot 1 = 8$. It is no coincidence that they connect, considering we received the greatest Light revealed during Sivan, the Torah.

5

Shavuot

As you have read, there is a great preparatory process until we reach Shavuot. Just like anything great, a level of preparation is required, and Jewish holidays are no exception.

On Shavuot, the Jewish people celebrate not only the giving of the Torah but also the covenantal relationship between God and Israel. This covenant is another manifestation of Zivug, signifying the eternal bond and mutual commitment between the Creator and His people. Through the observance of Shavuot, Jews reaffirm their connection to the divine and the ongoing process of spiritual union.

In sum, the Kabbalistic concept of Zivug offers a profound framework for understanding the significance of events such as the Matan Torah, the month of Sivan, Gemini, and Shavuot. It contemplates the interconnectedness of all things, the harmonious balance of cosmic forces, and the eternal union between heaven and earth. On Rosh Chodesh Sivan, the Israelites camped at the foot of Har Sinai in preparation to receive the Torah (Exodus 19:6). Notice how the word verb

“camped” is singular. It is taught that when the Israelites were about to receive the Torah, they were united in heart and mind like a single person.

From the second day of counting the Omer during the period of the Temple, an “omer offering” was brought along with a lamb as a sacrifice, Leviticus 23:9-14. This offering consists of an omer (a biblical measure) of barley. The first grain to ripen in the spring was brought to the Temple in Jerusalem on the second day of Passover, the 16th of Nissan. The harvested barley involved a ceremonial reaping process with blessings from the priests, then processed into fine flour and offered with a lamb as a burnt offering, along with oil and frankincense. This ritual marks the beginning of the barley harvest and acknowledges Hashem’s providence and the fertility of the land. It also symbolizes the dedication of the first fruits to Hashem in gratitude. The time between Pesach and Shavuot is transitioning from a lower state represented by barley to a refined state symbolized by wheat, which is at a higher spiritual level. It concludes with the offering of the Shte Halechem (“two loaves”) made from new wheat on the 50th day. The two loaves represent the twins of Gemini. Gemini shows us how to understand unity by explaining what two is. By knowing two, we can know one. If everything were united, there would be no concept of unity, and we can know unity because of separation. From duality, we can learn unity. According to Kabbalah when two entities are separated, there is no abundance, but if they are united, there is abundance. As such, with Hashem and the Shechina. Zeir Anpin (ZA) and Nukva (Nok) are the two breads. ZA and Nok are like the “Mr.” and “Mrs.” of the spiritual world. The divine emanations or attributes through which God interacts with the world. In Kabbalah, ZA is like the masculine force, representing courage, leadership, and ambition. It is the one who makes things happen in the world, sort of like the engine driving everything forward.

On the other hand, Nok is like the “Receptive Force,” embodying nurturing, receptivity, and manifestation. It’s the feminine aspect of the divine, associated with compassion and empathy. Nok is like the soil that receives the seeds and helps them grow into something beautiful.

ZA and Nok form a cosmic partnership, like a perfect dance between action and receptivity. From their union comes abundance into our world. They complement each other, with ZA giving energy and Nok receiving it. This balance is crucial for keeping the universe in harmony and ensuring everything keeps growing and thriving. Think of them as the ultimate power couple, working together to make the world go round.

ZA and Nok remind us that balance and harmony come from embracing different qualities. In Kabbalah, the event of Matan Torah is the unification of ZA and Nok, a cosmic union between the masculine and feminine aspects of the divine. The Torah is the Ketubah and the result of the unification. This is similar to a man and woman’s marriage ceremony, with a baby resulting from their union.

Kabbalah teaches that our work here is to unite ZA and Nok. That’s why, before certain prayers and actions, such as Friday night Kiddush or giving Tzedakah, we can unify ZA and Nok (Hashem’s name) by saying -

לְשֵׁם יְחִוּד קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא וְשְׂכִינְתָּיהּ

By unifying ZA and Nok, we can earn the abundance and remove the bread of shame.

According to Kabbalah, the Omer offering transforms our animalistic nature (Nefesh Behemit) as it is typically considered animal feed and reminds us to be

humble before God. In counting the Omer, we are becoming more spiritual and self-refined, a process similar to Elul's. Each of the 49 days of counting the Omer corresponds to refining one of the 49 attributes or aspects of the soul. Additionally, it corresponds to the 49 levels of impurity. While our ancestors were slaves in Egypt, they reached the 49th level of impurity, which prevented the Shechina from dwelling upon the Israelites. If they had fallen to the 50th level, there would have been no return. Counting the 49 days, our ancestors gradually cleansed themselves and transformed their animal instincts into higher, more divine qualities, thus being ready to receive the Torah on Shavuot.

Although the physical offering ceased with the destruction of the Second Temple, we continue to count the Omer in preparation for receiving the Torah, reciting special prayers and blessings each night. This is an elevation journey.

While the Israelites were enslaved in Egypt, they did not have control over their bodies and were forced to do physical labor. Thus, counting the Omer is focused on the lower Sefirot, which corresponds to different body parts. We received the higher Sefirot, Keter, Chochmah, and Binah on Matan Torah.

When we received the Torah, we were elevated to the status of a nation known as Knesset Yisrael, the unified soul of Israel. We received two gifts: 1. an identity, a sense of self after being set free from slavery in Egypt as individuals, and 2. the collective of Klal Yisrael, a nation that became one. It was then that the Jewish nation and conscious individuals were born.

The coming of Shavuot is the final closure of the journey from Pesach. On the night of Shavuot, we renew our vows with Hashem and prepare for the unification of ZA and Nok by having a festive meal and Tikun Leil Shavuot. Some even dress in white to represent a bride on her wedding day. The Tikun

for Shavuot involves men staying up all night and learning 24 books of the Torah. When we learn the Torah, we adorn the Shechina. Rather than learning something else, get the book Tikun Leil Shavuot for the proper rectification. Since the Shechina is represented by women, they do not stay awake to study Torah.

As you reflect on the journey through the pages of this ebook, may the essence of Shavuot resonate deeply within you. Just as the Israelites stood at Har Sinai, ready to receive the divine wisdom of the Torah, may we all stand again as a nation with one heart.

The essence of Shavuot transcends time and space, echoing through the ages with timeless wisdom and eternal truth. May the light of Shavuot shine brightly within you, guiding you on your path.

6

Isru Chag

An important aspect of each רגל festival is אסרו חג as it says in Pslam 118

אָסְרוּ חַג בְּעֵבְתַיִם עַד קַרְנוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ

- Bind the festival offering with cords to the horns of the altar

Issru Chag refers to the day after the festivals of Sukkot, Pesach, and Shavuot. “Isru” derives from the Hebrew word “Isur” (איסור), meaning “to bind” and Chag translates to holiday. The day is celebrated by partaking in a festive meal immediately after the morning prayer of Shachrit. Partaking in a festive meal allows us to capture the remaining light as it dissipates and returns, this is the last chance to capture the remaining abundance, goodness, energy, and spiritual growth. These last bits of light benefit us for the entire year.

Below is a corresponding Kabbalistic meditation to retain part of that returning light

אור חזור

Captivating the Abundance of the <i>returning light</i>							
איסרו חג-שפע		אסרו חג בעבתים עד קרנות המזבח					
			מזבח	=	אל יהוה	0	0
יהוה	+	אלף למד		=	יאר	>	<
			אלהים	=	לנו	=	=
			שנות	=	קרנות	ז"א	רחל

Scan the Hebrew letters, no comprehension is required

אמר רבי ירמיה משום רבי שמעון בן יוחאי, ורבי יוחנן משום רבי שמעון המחזוי משום רבי יוחנן המכותי: "כל העושה איסור לחג באכילה ושתייה - מעלה עליו הכתוב כאילו בנה (מזבח והקריב עליו קרבן, שנאמר אסרו חג בעבתים עד קרנות המזבח" (מסכת סוכה

Rabbi Jeremiah said in the name of Rabbi Shimon Ben Yochai, and Rabbi Yochanan said in the name of Rabbi Shimon the son of Mehoz: "Anyone who makes an addition to the festival through eating and drinking, it is as if he has built an altar and offered a sacrifice on it, as it is said: 'Bind the festival offering with cords to the horns of the altar.'" (Tractate Sukkah)

The meal of Isru Chag is like building an Alter and performing a sacrifice; all in the privacy of your home; you get the exact benefits as if you have brought a sacrifice to the Temple to atone for sins and lift your sparks that fell to the klipa on account of sin.

In Kabbalah sparks refer to fragments of divine energy that are scattered throughout the world. According to Kabbalah, the goal is to elevate and redeem

these sparks that have fallen to the Klipa by performing acts of kindness, studying the Torah, and engaging in different spiritual practices.

Kabbalah teaches that the klipa manifests as negative forces/traits and obstacles that hinder spiritual growth. Klipa translates to shell and acts like barriers that cover divine sparks within creation, obscuring their light. According to Kabbalah, liberating the divine sparks from their klipot is a central aspect of the spiritual journey, allowing individuals to uncover their true connection to the divine.

The Zohar tells us that the sacrifice goes so high that it reaches the Ein Sof (The Infinite). Depending on a person's sin, their godly sparks fall into the klipa, such as animals, fruit, trees, etc. By making a sacrifice or saying a prayer (bracha) before eating, you free the spark trapped in the animal or (kosher) food and elevate it to the Ein Sof. The meal we do for Isru Chag is equivalent to an animal sacrifice, like during the Temple period, elevating our sparks that fell into the klipa. Imagine, that parts of you unite with the Ein Sof that the sacrifice accomplishes.

Chag Sameach!

About the author

Elisheva Lavi guides and empowers women on their journey of reconnecting with their Judaism and embracing their womanhood through the profound insights of Kabbalistic wisdom and her personal story. As the founder of Bat'Ya, a Jewish movement for women to connect to their Jewish roots and womanhood through Judaism. Elisheva facilitates transformative experiences including Rosh Chodesh circles and courses, exploring the significance of Hebrew months and Jewish holidays across the globe.

To connect with Elisheva:

elisheva.lavi17@gmail.com

www.visualkabbalah.com

IG [elisheva.lavi](https://www.instagram.com/elisheva.lavi)