



SELF EDUCATION

Almost every year on Shavuos, the Rebbe spoke about three important figures who are connected with this yom tov: Moshe Rabbeinu, Dovid Hamelech, and the Baal Shem Tov. Moshe Rabbeinu gave us the Torah on Shavuos, and Dovid Hamelech and the Baal Shem Tov both passed away on this day.

In this sicha the Rebbe points to a common denominator between the three of these individuals that can teach us a vital lesson in our own lives.

“I WAS NEVER TAUGHT...”

Some people think they cannot change their behavior for the better. They were not raised to appreciate Torah values such as *ahavas Yisroel*, they say. How then can they be expected to show unconditional love towards their fellow Jew?

But the truth is we all have the power to change our behavior for the better, regardless of the education or upbringing we received.

In this regard, we can look towards the three great figures in Jewish history who are connected to Shavuos—Moshe Rabbeinu, Dovid Hamelech, and the Baal Shem Tov.

MOSHE RABBEINU

Moshe Rabbeinu obviously did not receive a proper education. From the age that he was weaned—formative years in a child’s education—he lived in the house of Pharaoh. He was self-educated in the ways of the Torah and *ahavas Yisroel*, and if Moshe Rabbeinu was able to rise

above his circumstances and his education, so can every single Jew.

And every Jew can emulate Moshe Rabbeinu, for as the Gemara says about *yiras Shamayim*: לגבי משה מלוא זוטרתא היא—for Moshe Rabbeinu it is a simple matter, and every Jew can live up to this expectation as well.

DOVID HAMELECH

Dovid Hamelech was a shepherd in his youth. We can assume that he didn’t have much time to spend in the *beis hamedrash* for a proper education. The great Dovid Hamelech too was self-educated.

(True, Yaakov Avinu was also a shepherd for many years, but this was at a later stage in life. He first spent many years in the yeshiva of Shem and Ever, and only later began tending sheep in the house of Lavan. Dovid, however, was a shepherd even when he was very young.)

BAAL SHEM TOV

The same is true about the Baal Shem Tov. We are told that he was



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לע"ג
הרה"ח ר' יצחק נח ע"ה בן האדמו"ר
משה מנחם מענדל מסלאנים סילווער
גלב"ע ח"י סיון ה'תשמ"ב
הרה"ת ר' בנימין זאב ע"ה בן יבלחט"א
הרה"ת ר' אברהם יוסף שיחי' סילווער
גלב"ע כ"ב סיון ה'תשע"ג
נדפס ע"י הרה"ת ר' אברהם יוסף
וזוגתו מרת צביל הינדא שיחיו
סילווער

orphaned at a very young age. The only *chinuch* that his father was able to impart to him was that he never fear anyone other than Hashem. We can infer from this that he was too young to have been taught Chumash, and definitely too young to have been taught Gemara or *pnimiyus haTorah*.

In spite of never having received even a basic education, the Baal Shem Tov rose above his circumstances and educated himself, eventually becoming the one who brought *pnimiyus haTorah* to the masses.

THE COMMON THREAD

The lesson is clear: the fact that one may not have been taught something as a child should by no means stop him from doing the right thing. As soon as he learns that this is the way of Torah, he should waste no time in implementing it in his life.

Especially in the realm of *ahavas Yisroel*, which is a “fundamental principle in the Torah,” this means that we must always conduct

ourselves in the spirit of *ahavas Yisroel*. It cannot be that this is beyond our reach, for Hashem does not ask us to do something that is beyond our capabilities.

EVERY DAY ANEW

This idea, that we must implement every aspect of the Torah regardless of our past or our level of education, is reflected in *halacha* as well.

Every day we make a *bracha* on the Torah, despite the fact that we made a *bracha* the previous day.

Seemingly, the command to study Torah is constant, every minute of every day of our lives. Why then must we make a *bracha* anew every day? We should make one *bracha* at our bar mitzvah and that should extend through the rest of our lives!

The reason we make a *bracha* every day is because each day we are created anew, and we thus receive the Torah anew.

With this in mind one can overcome the fact that he may have

not been raised to follow a certain aspect of the Torah. He can forge ahead regardless of the past because every day is truly a new day.

If this holds true with regard to every aspect of the Torah, then it definitely applies to the mitzvah of *ahavas Yisroel*, the basis of the whole Torah. We can train ourselves to love every single Jew, regardless of how we were yesterday or the day before that; for every day we are born anew.

When we treat a fellow Jew with unconditional love, we can truly reach out to one who is far and bring him back into the fold. When we behave in this manner it is sure to bring the *geulah*, when “one-by-one” Hashem will gather every Jew in from *golus*, and bring us to Eretz Yisroel, to Yerushalayim, and the Beis Hamikdash, now!! **T**

1. Adapted from the *sicha* of the second day of Shavuos 5743