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What Should Women Do On Shavuos?

We are approaching the festival of Shavuos, the day where we received the Torah.

Everyone received the Torah – men, women, and children. So women also received the Torah. The men have a *mitzvah* to learn the Torah; what do women do with the Torah, since they do not have a *mitzvah* to learn the Torah?

Men stay up the whole night of Shavuos and learn Torah. What should the women and girls do? Is a girl's entire *avodah* on Shavuos to make sure not to disturb her father from his rest when he comes back from *shul*...?

What exactly is the *avodah* of a woman on Shavuos?

When it comes Pesach, we find that women have *mitzvos*: to eat *matzah* and join in the *seder*. On Sukkos, women also shake *lulav* and *esrog*. But what is the *mitzvah* for a woman on Shavuos? What connection do women have to the Torah – the most precious thing in the world?

The Light of the Torah

Torah is called "*Torah Ohr*" – the "Torah of light". Light shows a person which way to go; it illuminates the path. The light of the Torah doesn't just show us a path; it shows us the way to our soul, and it shows us how to live a life of happiness.

If a person would just do the *mitzvos* of Torah but he would he would feel no connection to the Torah in his life, it would be like trying to arrange your things in a dark room. Torah is the light of our life that helps a person see things.

What is this 'light' of the Torah?

The Torah shows us everything to do on this world, by telling us the *mitzvos*. But how do we *connect* ourselves to this light of the Torah?

Men connect to the Torah by learning the Torah. But how can a woman connect to it?

How a Woman Can Connect to the Torah's Light

One way how a woman can connect to the Torah is by connecting herself to family members who learn Torah. For example, if a girl is connected to her father who learns Torah, she has a connection with Torah. If a wife feels connected to her husband's Torah learning, she is connected to the Torah.

But there is also a more inner way for a woman to connect to the Torah. The very soul of a woman can connect her to the Torah. Thus, we need to become connected to our soul inside us, and then we will be connected to the Torah as a result.

If a woman or any person goes her whole life only thinking about what her body wants, she will not be able to get to the light of the Torah. But when a person lives a life of the soul, she enables herself to connect to and receive the light of the Torah.

Feeling Connected to the Mitzvos

To illustrate, we do a lot of *mitzvos* every day. Do we do them happily? Do we do them because we "have to" – or because we enjoy them and we *want* to do them?

When a person eats, he enjoys his food, and when he goes on vacations he enjoys it. Do we enjoy our *mitzvos* too? Do we enjoy our *davening*? Do we feel some connection to Hashem when we *daven*, or do we just say the words?

How does the *davening* of a Jew look like when he davens from his soul? When a person thanks Hashem for something as she *davens*, she is *davening* from her soul. When a person asks Hashem for something when she *davens*, if she does so because she wants to connect to Hashem, such a person davens from her heart; she *davens* from her very soul.

A person might *daven* a whole day, but it's like he is outside of *shul*, because his heart isn't in it. He doesn't feel connected to what he does. What must we be connected to when we *daven*? To our *siddur* in front of us...? People are *davening* for many years, yet their hearts aren't in it.

Another example: When a person honors his parents, does he do it because he has to, or does he do it from his heart? Do we feel connected to this *mitzvah* when we do it...?

When a person just lives a superficial kind of life, he might do everything he is supposed to, but he doesn't do it with his heart. He isn't connected to what he does. But when a person lives a life with his *neshamah*, he feels connected to what he does. He does everything from his heart.

We must see if our hearts are in what we do. We need to get used to putting our hearts into what we are doing! At least when we *daven*, let us utter one paragraph from our heart. And when we do a *chessed*, we should do at least one *chessed* a day from an inner love for others – because we really want to.

When a person does things from his heart, he will end up enjoying life. A person can only be happy when he is connected to what he does.

How can we enjoy life? Practically speaking, every day, try to do *three things* a day from your heart.

Women Connect to the Torah with their Heart

This is actually how a woman can connect to the Torah.

What is the last letter in the Torah? The letter *lamed*. The first letter of the Torah is the letter *beis*. This forms the word *lev* – heart. Based upon this observation, it is said that the entire Torah from

beginning until end, is about the heart.

Men connect to the Torah by learning to the Torah, with their intellect. But women connect to the Torah through their hearts.

If we do things without our heart, our whole *Yiddishkeit* is missing from us. But if we put our hearts into the *mitzvos* – such as when we *daven*, or when we do *chessed*, or when we honor our parents – we will enjoy a happy, Torah kind of life.

This is very practical advice: every day, for three times a day, do a *mitzvah* out of your heart. May we be *zoche* to connect to the Torah – through our hearts.

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