**Shavuot 2019 - Selected Passages from the Sources**

**1. Rabash. Letter 52**

It is known that Shavuot is regarded as *Malchut* in the worlds and the heart in man. It is as Baal HaSulam interpreted about *Mekadesh Shevi’i* (seventh sanctifier) that *Shevi’i* comes from the words *Shebi-Hu* (who is in me).He means that the Creator is clothed in the heart, and the time when we can interpret that the Torah dresses in the soul. This is why it is called Shavuot and “the giving of the Torah,” meaning that at that time the Torah dresses in the hearts of each and every one from the whole of Israel. During the count from Passover to Shavuot it is the purification of the *Kelim* (vessels), which is purification in heart and mind. When the *Kelim* have been perfected, we are rewarded with the Torah.Therefore, before Passover, the preparation of purifying the *Kelim* was with faith, called *Mitzva*(commandment/good deed). Through the exodus from Egypt they were rewarded with faith, as in “I am the Lord your God who took you out from the land of Egypt.” After Passover begins the work on purification as preparation for reception of the Torah. When the Torah dresses in the soul it is called “Shavuot, thetime of the giving of our Torah.”

**2. Rabash.Letter 59**

Concerning the *Omer* count [a count of seven weeks beginning on Passover eve and ending in Shavuot], it is known that man’s primary work is to connect himself to the Creator.*Omer* comes from the word [in Hebrew] “gathering sheaves.” RASHI interpreted, “as it is translated, gathering sheaves, collecting.” It means that by becoming mute and not opening the mouth with complaints against the Creator, but rather, for that person ‘Everything that the Merciful One does, He does for the best’ (*Berachot* 9), and says that he, meaning his thought and desire, will be only for the Creator, then he is gathering.That is, by connecting all of one’s thoughts and desires with a tight connection of having only one goal—to bring contentment to the maker—a person is regarded as “gathering.”The interpreters say that the *Omer count comes from the words, “and under His feet there appeared to be sapphire brick, as pure as the bodies of the sky.” This means that by a person connecting himself to the Creator, he is rewarded with the revelation of the light of the Creator appearing on him. It follows that by a person gathering, tying all the desires in one knot, meaning to one purpose—for the Creator—then that Omer shines. This is the meaning of the Omer [gathering] count, where a person shines with the light of the Creator.*

**3. Rabash. Letter 59**

And since a Jew consists of seven qualities, which must be corrected into being for the Creator, and there is a rule that each quality comprises the others, then we have seven times seven, thus forty-nine days. This is why we count forty-nine days to the days of the reception of the Torah.Omer comes from the word Seorim [barley/measures]. This means that it comes from measures, by measuring in the heart the greatness of the Creator, as the holy Zohar interprets the verse, “Her husband is known at the gates.” The holy Zohar says, “Each according to what he assumes in his heart,” to that extent the light of the Creator is on that person.This is called “faith.” When a person is rewarded with faith in the Creator, it is regarded as a “beast.” This is the meaning of the Omer being of barley, which is animal food, meaning that he has not yet been rewarded with the view of Torah. But on Shavuot, when rewarded with the reception of the Torah, one receives the view of Torah. For this reason, we offer the offering of wheat, which is food for man, who is the speaking. But before one is rewarded with Torah, which is the speaking, it is regarded as an offering of barley, which is animal food. At that time it is called “gathering sheaves,” regarded as being mute, which is only animate, and not speaking, for only by the Torah are they rewarded with being “speaking.”

**5. Baal Hasulam. Shamati 66 Concerning the Giving of the Torah – 1**

The matter of the giving of the Torah that occurred on Mount Sinai does not mean that the Torah was given once and then the giving stopped. Rather, there is no absence in spirituality, since spirituality is an eternal matter, unending. But since, from the perspective of the Giver, we are unfit to receive the Torah, we say that the cessation is by the upper one.However, then, at the foot of Mount Sinai, the whole of Israel were ready to receive the Torah, as it is written, “And the people camped at the bottom of the mount, as one man in one heart.” At that time, the public was prepared; they had but one intention, which is a single thought about the reception of the Torah.However, there are no changes from the perspective of the Giver—He always gives, as it is written in the name of the Baal Shem Tov that each day one must hear the ten commandments on Mount Sinai.

**6.Rabash. Article 943. Three Discernments in the Torah**There are three discernments in the Torah:
1) Tushia, which Mateshet [exhausts] a person’s strength,
2) the Torah as a spice,
3) the light of Torah.
The first two discernments are regarded as a preparation to receive the Torah. Only the third discernment is called “Torah,” which is the essence, in the sense of doing good to His creations. The first two are considered “corrections of creation.”

**7. Rabash. Article 3 (1990) “What It Means that the World Was Created for the Torah“**

Our sages said about this, “The Creator said, ‘I have created the evil inclination; I have created the Torah as a spice.’” In other words, through the Segula [merit/virtue/remedy] of Torah and Mitzvot, a person can obtain the desire to bestow. This is the only way by which one can be rewarded with vessels of bestowal, and our sages said about it, “The light in it reforms him.” It follows that through the Torah, a person will obtain vessels of bestowal, and then he will be able to receive the delight and pleasure that the Creator wants to give to the created beings. In this respect, the Torah is called “613 counsels,” meaning 613 tips by which one is rewarded with vessels of bestowal. Afterward, once he is rewarded with vessels of bestowal through the Torah, he must receive the delight and pleasure that is found in the thought of the Creator. That delight and pleasure is also called “Torah,” meaning that at that time, the 613 counsels become 613 deposits [...] the 613 *Mitzvot* become *Pekudin*, from the word *Pikadon* [deposit], for in each *Mitzva*, the light of a unique degree is deposited.”... which corresponds to a unique organ in the 613 organs and tendons of the soul and the body.

**8. Rabash. Article 29 (1989) What Is the Preparation to Receive the Torah in the Work - 2**in order to receive the Torah, a person must prepare himself—to have a need called a *Kli*, that the Torah can fill. This applies specifically when he wants to work for the sake of the Creator, for then he encounters the resistance of the body, which yells, “What is this work for you?” But a person believes in the sages, who said that only the Torah can deliver a person from the control of the evil inclination. This can be said only of those who want to be “Israel,” meaning *Yashar-El* [straight to the Creator]. They see that the evil inclination does not let them emerge from their control, and then they have a need to receive the Torah so the light of the Torah will reform them. Now we can understand what our sages said, “A word of Torah is not to be given to an idol-worshipper, as was said, ‘He did not do so for any nation, and let them not know the ordinances,’” since they have no need for the Torah. One who does work that is foreign to us, meaning for his own sake, can live without the Torah, for he does not need the help of the Torah. Only Israel—those who want to work for the sake of the Creator—need the light of Torah, for “the light in it reforms him.” That is, it is impossible to defeat the evil within him without the Torah.

**9. Rabash. Records. Article 704. Why Was the Torah Given to Israel**“Why was the Torah given to Israel? Because they are fierce.” RASHI interpreted, because Israel are fierce, they were given the Torah, which wanes the strength and subdues their hearts (*Masechet Beitza* 25).
We should understand the following:
1) This implies that the Torah was not given to the nations of the world because they are not fierce, and therefore have no need for the Torah.
2) After the Torah, they will no longer be on the same degree as the nations of the world.
We should say that “foreigner” means working for oneself, and “Israel” means that one is serving the Creator. When one wants to be Israel, he sees that he is fierce in both attributes and views, which are fiercely against the *Kedusha* [holiness]. This is why they were given the Torah. But one who works for his own benefit is regarded as a foreigner. At that time, his attributes are not against the *Kedusha* and are not fierce, so they have no need for the Torah, which wanes their strength, meaning the power of lusts. “Subdues their hearts” means that all the desires surrender before the *Kedusha* because the light of the Torah reforms him, and then he feels the greatness of the Creator and receives the strength to subdue his qualities. But when one works for oneself, he cannot see that he has bad attributes and views because for one’s own sake, the body gives strength to work and does not show him any lack in the work.

**10. Likutey Halachot [Assorted Rules], Hoshen Mishpat, “Rules of the Guarantor”**

It is impossible to observe the Torah and *Mitzvot* [commandments/good deeds] unless through *Arvut* [mutual responsibility], when each one becomes responsible for his friend. Since the essence of observance of the Torah, which is the desire, is through unity, anyone who wishes to take upon himself the burden of Torah and *Mitzvot*, which is primarily by overcoming the desire, must be included in the whole of Israel in great unity. For this reason, at the time of the reception of the Torah, they immediately became responsible for one another because they were regarded as one. Precisely by each being responsible for his friend, which is the quality of unity, specifically by this can they observe the Torah. Without it, it would not be possible to observe the Torah whatsoever, since the heart of observing the Torah, which is the desire, is through unity, when all are regarded as one. It follows that specifically through *Arvut*, which is when everyone are regarded as one, is the heart of observing the Torah, since the essence of love and unity is in the desire, when each one is pleased with his friend and there is no disparity of desire among them, and all are included in one desire, by which they are included in the upper desire, which is the complete unity.

**11. Rabash. Letter 42**it is written, “And the people encamped, as one man with one heart.” This means that they all had one goal, which is to benefit the Creator. It follows… We should understand how they could be as one man with one heart, since we know what our sages said, “As their faces are not similar to one another, their views are not similar to one another,” so how could they be as one man with one heart?
Answer: If we are saying that each one cares for himself, it is impossible to be as one man, since they are not similar to one another. However, if they all annul their selves and worry only about the benefit of the Creator, they have no individual views, since the individuals have all been canceled and have entered the single authority. This is the meaning of what is written, “The view of landlords is opposite from the view of Torah.” It is so because the view of Torah is cancelling the authority, as our sages said, “‘If a man dies in a tent,’ the Torah exists only in one who puts himself to death,” meaning he puts himself to death, namely his self-gratification, and does everything only for the Creator. This is called “preparation for reception of the Torah.”

**12. Rabash. Article 29 (1989) What Is the Preparation to Receive the Torah in the Work - 2**Our sages said, “The Torah exists only in one who puts himself to death over it.” We should understand the word “exists.” What does it tell us? We should interpret this according to what our sages said, “The Creator said, ‘I have created the evil inclination; I have created the Torah as a spice.’” That is, the Torah should be a spice. In whom is this so, since “There is no light without a *Kli*, no filling without a lack”? For this reason, they said that those who want to put their selves to death, meaning want to put to death the will to receive for their own sake, and want to do everything for the sake of the Creator, see that they cannot do this on their own. To them the Creator said, “I have created the evil inclination; I have created the Torah as a spice.” But in those who do not want to annul themselves and want there to be two authorities—meaning that man’s authority will remain and the Creator will give them and they will extract the delight and pleasure at His disposal and hand it over to the receivers—the Torah does not exist. That is, the Torah does not become a spice for them, since they do not want it to be a spice, and if there is no desire and need, which are the *Kli*, there is no light.

**13. Baal Hasulam. The Arvut, 17**This is to speak of the *Arvut* [mutual guarantee], when all of Israel became responsible for one another. Because the Torah was not given to them before each and every one from Israel was asked if he agreed to take upon himself the *Mitzva*[commandment] of loving others in the full measure expressed in the words “Love your friend as yourself,” as explained in the article “Matan Torah,” Items 2 and 3, examine it thoroughly there. This means that each and every one in Israel would take upon himself to care and work for each member of the nation, to satisfy all their needs, no less than the measure imprinted in him to care for his own needs. Once the whole nation unanimously agreed and said, “We will do and we will hear,” each member of Israel became responsible that no member of the nation will lack anything. Only then did they become worthy of receiving the Torah, and not before. With this collective responsibility, each member of the nation was liberated from worrying about the needs of his own body and could observe the *Mitzva*, “Love your friend as yourself” in the fullest measure and give all that he had to any needy person since he no longer cared for the existence of his own body, as he knew for certain that he was surrounded by six hundred thousand loyal lovers standing ready to provide for him.

**14. Rabash Records. Article 941. Mount Sinai**“What is Mt. Sinai? A mountain on which the hatred for the nations of the world descended” (Shabbat [Sabbath] 89). We should understand why the Torah caused hatred specifically toward Israel, and why we do not say that there is hatred between Ishmaelites and Christians, for example. We should interpret that in ethics, the “nations of the world” are their desires, meaning corporeal lusts whose wish is only to fill their stomachs. The carrier of this is the evil inclination. Conversely, “Israel” is called “the desire for the work of the Creator,” and its carrier is the good inclination. During the work, a person has desires and yearnings for corporeal lusts. It follows that the person loves the nations of the world and has a lot of work to be able to overcome so as to change these desires. But this is possible only through the Torah, whose attribute is to hate all the corporeal lusts. We should interpret that it is called “Mt. Sinai” because hatred descended to the nations of the world. That is, through the Torah, one is rewarded with hatred for the nations of the world, establishing in one’s heart hatred for the evil inclination, as our sages said, “The light in it reforms him.”

**15. Rabash. Article 18 (1987) What is the Preparation for Reception of the Torah - 1**Regarding the Creator, it is written, “And the Lord came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain.” Regarding the people, it is written, “And they stood at the foot of the mountain.” We must understand what is a “mountain.” The word Har [mountain] comes from the word Hirhurim[thoughts], which is man’s intellect. Anything that is in the intellect is regarded as “in potential.” Afterward, it can expand into actual fact. Accordingly, we can interpret “And the Lord came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain,” as the thought and intellect of man, meaning that the Creator informed all the people that the inclination of a man’s heart is evil from his youth. After the Creator informed them in potential, meaning at the top of the mountain, that which was in potential expanded in actual fact. For this reason, the people came to actually feel and everyone now sensed the need for the Torah, as it is written, “I have created the evil inclination; I have created the spice of Torah.” Now they said that through actually feeling that they were forced to accept the Torah, meaning without choice, since they saw that if they received the Torah they would have delight and pleasure, and if not, there it would be their burial. In other words, if we remain in our current state, our lives will not be lives but they will be our burial place.

**16. Baal Hasulam. Shamati 53. The Matter of Limitation**The matter of limitation is to limit the state one is in and not want *Gadlut*[greatness/adulthood]. Instead, one wants to remain in one’s present state forever, and this is called eternal *Dvekut* [adhesion]. Regardless of the measure of *Gadlut* that one has, even if he has the smallest *Katnut* [smallness/infancy], if it shines forever, it is considered having been imparted eternal *Dvekut*. However, one who wants more *Gadlut*, it is considered luxury. This is the meaning of “Any sorrow will be surplus,” meaning that sadness comes to a person because he wants luxuries. This is what it means that when Israel came to receive the Torah, Moses led them to the bottom of the mountain, as it is written, “And they stood at the bottom of the mountain.” (A mountain [Hebrew: *Har*] means thoughts [Hebrew: *Hirhurim*]). Moses led them to the end of the thought and the understanding and the reason, the lowest degree there is. Only then, when they agreed to such a state, to walk in it without any wavering or motion, and remain in that state as if they had the greatest *Gadlut*, and to be happy about it, this is the meaning of “Serve the Lord with gladness,” since during the *Gadlut*, it cannot be said that He gives them work to be in gladness because during the *Gadlut*, gladness comes by itself. Instead, the work of gladness is given to them for the time of *Katnut*, so they will have joy although they feel *Katnut*. And this is a lot of work. This is called “the main part of the degree,” which is discerned as *Katnut*. This discernment must be permanent, and the *Gadlut* is only an addition. Also, one should yearn for the main part, not for the additions.

**17. Rabash. Records. Article 218. Israel Are the Sons of Kings**Wherever one retires from enjoying and causes unification, you find in it Kedusha, since the upper light can be there because the Kelim [vessels] can receive the light of the Creator called Kedusha, for the Kedusha is present only in a place of purity. “Purity” means purity of qualities, and then the Kedusha is present in a place of purity. However, sometimes, “I the Lord, who dwells with them in the midst of their Tuma’a[impurity],” meaning that even when they still do not have Kelim that are ready to be in equivalence, in order to assist a person in achieving this, he must be aided from above. This is the meaning of Lo Lishma, that the light in it reforms him. That light is called “The Lord, who dwells with them in the midst of their Tuma’a.” This pertains specifically to one who wants to achieve Lishma but cannot overcome his body. Hence, he is given that light so he can defeat the will to receive and walk in the way of the Creator, which is bestowal.

**18. Rabash. Article 21 (1988) What Does It Mean that the Torah Was Given Out of the Darkness in the Work**When a person wants to draw near to the Creator, meaning use the vessels of bestowal, but he cannot because the body disagrees with it, since his body extends from vessels of reception, at that time a person feels that the world has grown dark on him, for he understands that if he cannot obtain vessels of bestowal, he will never be rewarded with the upper light, which is the light of “doing good to His creations.” It follows that the darkness he feels from not being able to obtain vessels of bestowal by himself gives him the need that someone will help him obtain those *Kelim* [vessels]. According to the rule, “There is no light without a *Kli* [vessel], no filling without a lack,” it follows that now he has received a need for the light of Torah. It is as our sages said, “I have created the evil inclination; I have created the Torah as a spice.”
Thus, the Torah is given specifically to the deficient, and that deficiency is called “darkness.” This is the meaning of the words, “The Torah was given out of the darkness.” That is, one who feels darkness in his life because he has no vessels of bestowal is fit to receive the Torah, so that through the Torah, the light in it will reform him and he will obtain the vessels of bestowal. Through them, he will be fit to receive the delight and pleasure, for those two are included in the Torah: 1) The *Kli*—that he wants to bestow. 2) Then he receives the delight and pleasure into the vessels of bestowal.

**19. Baal Hasulam. The Freedom**When the children of Israel were rewarded with complete *Dvekut* on that holy occasion, their vessels of reception were completely emptied of any worldly possession and they were adhered to Him in equivalence of form. This means that they had no desire for any self-possession, but only to the extent that they could bestow contentment, so their Maker would delight in them. And since their will to receive had clothed in an image of that object, it had clothed in it and bonded with it into complete oneness. Therefore, they were certainly liberated from the angel of death, for death is necessarily an absence and negation of the existence of something. But only while there is a spark that wishes to exist for its own pleasure is it possible to say about it that that spark does not exist because it has become absent and died. However, if there is no such spark in man, but all the sparks of his selfness clothe in bestowal of contentment upon their Maker, then he neither becomes absent nor dies. For even when the body is annulled, it is only annulled with respect to self-reception, in which the will to receive is dressed and can only exist in it. However, when he achieves the aim of creation and the Creator receives pleasure from him, since His will is done, man’s essence, which clothes in His contentment, is granted complete eternity, like Him. Thus, he has been rewarded with freedom from the angel of death.

**20. Rabash. Letter 18**When we hear the voice of the Creator speaking to the heart, as in “He who comes to purify is aided,” and it was interpreted in the holy *Zohar* that he is aided by a holy soul, meaning that the heart hears the voice of the Creator and then specifically the voice of holiness receives the governance over all the desires, meaning the desire to bestow. And naturally, they will not turn back to folly, meaning he will not sin again because all the desires of reception have surrendered under the desire to bestow. At that time all the good pleasantness appears on the heart, for then there is room in the heart for the instilling of the *Shechina (*Divinity), and the gentleness and pleasantness, and flavor and friendship spread, and fill up all of man’s organs. This applies specifically when hearing the voice of the Creator. At that time the whole body surrenders and enslaves itself to holiness.

**21. Rabash. Letter 64**Once we are rewarded with faith, called *Daat*, which our sages regard as learning *Lishma* (for Her sake), then “He is rewarded with many things, the secrets of Torah are revealed to him, and he becomes as a flowing spring.” That is, once a person has been rewarded with faith, he is rewarded with the Torah, called *Hochma* and *Bina*. Afterward, once he has been rewarded with the Torah, he must extend faith once more because a person must serve the Creator not in order to receive reward. Once he has been awarded the Torah he can say that now he sees that it is worthwhile to serve the Creator because he has the Torah, which is as it is written, “The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart.” It follows that he is blemishing the faith, which is above the intellect, where he does not see for himself any existence, and only works in faith to annul reality. This is the meaning of “with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might.” That is, he wants nothing for himself and his only desire is to annul his existence completely. Therefore, once rewarded with the Torah, a person must renew the faith, which is called *Daat* (knowledge) and *Dvekut* above the intellect, and then he has *HBD*.