

Stories, Biographies & Wonders

The Watch is Saved!

Special thanks to Revach L'Neshama for the story

One day, a fire began on the street where the home of the Chofetz Chaim lived. The fire was spreading quickly, and all the houses in its path were in danger of being burned down. All of the houses' residents began frantically gathering their most valuable possessions, and prepared to vacate their houses. The Chofetz Chaim, who was already an elderly man, sat in his chair amidst the turmoil, deep in thought. His family was puzzled by his behavior, but the Chofetz Chaim continued to sit and think with an anxious expression on his face, ignoring the tumult around him.

Fifteen minutes passed, and the Chofetz Chaim suddenly breathed a sigh of relief. He quickly arose from his chair, and walked toward the corner of his house, where a high shelf was situated. He stood on a chair to reach it, and took down a small watch. He then gathered his other possessions, and joined his family in vacating the house.

When his family questioned him, he clarified the reason for his mysterious behavior. "A yeshivah *bochur* had asked me to keep his watch in my house. Baruch Hashem, I found it; there's a specific *mitzvah* to guard anything given to one for safekeeping." His family and students were astounded at his answer. During a time of crisis, when most people react with fear and panic, the Chofetz Chaim's first instinct was to save a yeshivah *bochur's* watch.



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Menucha

A Shabbos table companion
for the whole family

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נשא - שבועות

5776

Halacha Challenge

What Can I Pray for on Shavuos?

The day of Kabbolas HaTorah. What an opportune time to daven! Everyone of us has things to daven for. But can we make personal requests on Yom Tom? This article will explore this topic.



Moishy loves Shavuos. Not for the cheesecakes, but for the all-night learning with his friends. This year, Moishy was excited to learn all night with two of his friends.

After learning for the entire night on *leil* Shavuos, Moishy was feeling very uplifted. During *tefilla*, he felt close to Hashem and wanted to pour out his heart and ask for a year of great love for Torah. "One second!" thought Moishy. "I remember learning that on Shabbos and Yom we should

not ask for personal needs."

Q. Can Moishy make a personal request from Hashem now to have a year of *ahavas HaTorah*?

THANK YOU !

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- ◆ **Chanie and Howie Bryks** [in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson, **Simcha**]
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- ◆ **Alchovski family** [on the occasion of the birthday of their daughter **Hadassah**]
- ◆ **Bornstein family** [for hatzlacha of **Menucha bat Elisheva**]



Special thanks to kehillas **Beis Tefillah Yonah Avraham**

Help: A Braisa¹ teaches: "It is forbidden to ask for personal needs on Shabbos." For this reason, explains the Magen Avraham², at Ma'ariv on *motzei* Shabbos (or Yom Tov), we first "leave" Shabbos by saying "*ato chonantanu*" in the 4th blessing of the *Amida*, and only then continue with the weekday *nusach* of the *Amida*, where we ask for our needs.

Why did Chaza"l make such a decree? The Midrash Tanchuma³ explains that making personal requests may lead a person to emotional distress. Feeling distress on Shabbos (or Yom Tov) is a problem, because, as the Midrash puts it, "Shabbos was given to the Jewish people for sanctity, pleasure, and tranquilly; and not for pain." Hence, to avoid pain and distress, Chaza"l prohibited us from making personal requests on Shabbos and Yom Tov.

To solve the challenge, think if this decree applies to any kind of personal request.

Menucha's Answer*: Yes

Explanation: The Magen Avraham⁴ rules that this prohibition is only applicable when there is an imminent problem (e.g., issues of health, parnasa, etc., *R"l*) Otherwise, personal requests are permitted. The Mishna Berura⁵ brings this ruling of the Magen Avraham.

Furthermore, the Shulchan Aruch HaRav⁶ holds that the prohibition of making personal requests applies only to physical needs — i.e. it is permitted to ask for the granting of personal spiritual needs⁷.

Based on these *halachic* authorities, Moishy may ask on *Shavuos* for a year of *ahavas HaTorah*.

1. גמרא ירושלמי שבת פרק טו הלכה ג. 2. מג"א סימן רצד ס"ק א. 3. מדרש תנחומא פרשת וירא סימן א. 4. מג"א סימן רפח ס"ק יא. 5. מ"ב סימן רפח ס"ק כב. 6. שו"ע הרב סימן רפח ס"ק ח. 7. פסקי תשובה סימן רפח ס"ק ח.

* Note: Menucha's answer is for Torah learning purposes only and not as a *halachic* ruling. To know laws of Shabbos on a practical level, the reader is encouraged to study them in depth, find out the *minhagim* of his/her family and community, and consult with a *halachic* authority. (The opinions of the sources cited in the article may not necessary reflect rulings of other *halachic* authorities.)

Short & Sweet

Kids Ask, Zeidy Answers



Zeidy, why did Hashem hold a mountain above our heads at *matan* Torah?



One of the explanations is as follows, kids. The day of *matan* Torah was a wedding day between Hashem and Am Yisroel. The mountain over our heads was our *chuppah*.

By the way, you know, on a wedding day, if a *kallah* asks for a present from her *chasan*, will he not give it to her? Of course, he will give her that present with great love. Since Am Yisroel is like a *kallah* on Shavuos, we should use the opportunity and ask Hashem for special presents in areas of *ruchnius*.
[based on Nesivos Shalom, Shavuos, "Hag Ha'atzeres"]

Riddles



After Pesach, Reuven and Shimon traveled from Eretz Yisroel to Australia. When they got there, Reuven said to Shimon: "I can no longer count the *Sefira* with a *bracha*." Shimon said back to Reuven: "I don't have that problem. I can still count with a *bracha*." *Why do they differ?*

The answer to the last issue's riddle

Riddle: *Klal Yisroel is benefiting from "the blessing of strength" that is being passed down to us from our Avos... Which one of the three Avos was blessed by Hashem with "the blessing of strength"?*

ANSWER: Yaakov Avinu. Hashem blessed him: וַיְבָרֶכֶת (Bereishis 29:14). Rashi explains that the word means והזיקת - and you should become strong.