



## The Chasid Who Taught Torah Parshas Bechukosai

The small apartment in the heart of Jerusalem was crowded. Rabbi Shlomo Schreiber, a famed Torah scholar and the owner of the apartment, was about to commence in his teaching of Torah, and many gathered to hear his holy words.

Rabbi Schreiber was the student of many Chassidic greats, and through him, many were able to encounter a world of Chassidic Judaism left behind in Poland and Austria.

Arriving in Israel shortly after World War II broke out, Rabbi Schreiber chose to live in Jerusalem, where he taught Torah for over 40 years to throngs of students.

I merited learning under his tutelage, also because he was a close friend of my father's, and both served together on the Rabbinical Council of the Agudath Yisroel Movement.

Rabbi Shlomo dedicated every moment of his waking hours to the studying and teaching of Torah, and his small home was known as a center of study for Torah and Chassidus.

\*\*\*

In our weekly parsha we read the verse: "If you follow My **statutes** and observe My commandments and perform them, I will send you rain in its season."<sup>1</sup>

The Torah commentator Ohr Hachayim provides 42 different commentaries for this verse.

In his first comment, the Ohr Hachayim says that fulfilling the commandment to study Torah is comprised of two elements: the first is to study Torah and the second is to teach it to others.

Therefore, the verse states that there are statutes, in plural, meaning to learn and to teach.

The Torah literally means "to guide" or "to teach." The Torah, in contrast to other religions, has new and relevant guidance every generation and era. The leadership in each generation

redefines the teachings of the Torah in accordance to their time, and thus the Torah's teachings maintain their relevance to this day.

Similarly, the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai was not a singular event. Our Sages teach us, based on the verse "on this day they arrived in the desert of Sinai,"<sup>2</sup> that we should relate to the Torah as if it was given to us today.

Every morning we recite the blessing "Blessed are You G-d who gives the Torah," in an active way and on a daily basis, for the Torah is re-given by G-d every day, and therefore one who has already immersed himself in Torah is obligated to pass it on to others.

On the Mishnah "Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai received the tradition from Hillel and Shammai. He would say: If you have learned much Torah, do not take hold it for yourself,"<sup>3</sup> the righteous would say that it means that one should not keep the words of Torah for oneself, but rather should share them with others.

\*\*\*

When the Gur Rebbe arrived in Israel in 1940 he asked Rabbi Shlomo to teach his son Torah. They established a *Chavrusah*, a study group, which was the envy of all of Jerusalem and was spoken of in high esteem. The Gur Rebbe repaid Rabbi Shlomo by showing him special affection.

Years later he would view the time he spent with the Rebbe's son as a true merit. Once, when visiting the Rebbe, he heard him recite the verse "and you shall teach them to your sons," possibly speaking to him.

Rabbi Shlomo, who was truly righteous, needed no more than that. He later said that the Rebbe intended to intimate a meaningful message through his whisper - the Torah commands us to teach our children, and our Sages explain that this relates to one's students as well. Rabbi Shlomo then asked- if the Torah explicitly mentions "sons," why extend it to students as well?

He answered that when one teaches students, it should be like a father-son relationship.

This message was a way of life for Rabbi Shlomo, and he implemented it to its fullest every day.

<sup>1</sup> Vayikra 26:3.

<sup>2</sup> Shmot 19:1.

<sup>3</sup> Tractate Avot 2:8.