



THANK YOU HASHEM For Shabbos Kodesh!

Parshas Emor

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לדעות רפואה שלמה מלכה בת רחל, מיכאל בן שולמית, יעקב משה בן טוביה שירה ואברתם יחודה בן שרה הרבה

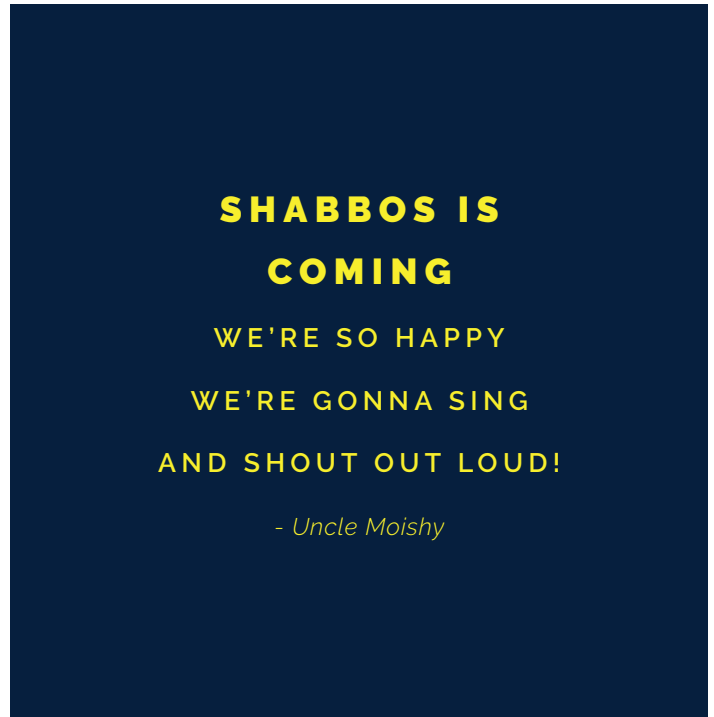
HaMeor Shebah

A Short Burst of Relevance

וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל־מֹשֶׁה אָמַר אֶל־הַכֹּהֲנִים בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן וְאָמַרְתָּ
אֲלֵהֶם לִנְפֹשׁ לֹא־יִטְמָא בְּעַמִּי׃

Hashem said to Moshe: Speak to the kohanim, the sons of Ahron, and say to them: they shall not defile themselves to any dead person in the nation.

THOUGH IT MAY seem paradoxical, it is true that a religious person is more likely to have complaints against Hashem than one who does not believe at all. In fact, whereas another person might never grapple with the existential injustice of evil, the more God-conscious one becomes, the stronger the tendency to see the apparent pain, lack, and evil in the world as a challenge to the goodness of Hashem. While such a person may not struggle with God's very existence, it is possible that the negativity abiding within the human experience of reality will drive him to resentment and anger at Hashem, from Whom he expects only kindness and goodness. The Mei HaShiloach teaches that our verse may be seen as a response to this theological trap designed specifically for the faithful. He explains that the kohanim referred to in our verse refer to all ovdei Hashem. As staunch believers in His infinite goodness, it is these tzaddikim who are most susceptible to the "spirit of impurity" embodied in anger, resentment, and complaints against Hashem. This verse, a reminder regarding this danger and a warning not to indulge in this alluring tendency, begins with the word "vayomer". This form of speech, *amirah*, always refers to a comforting, consoling, and loving



tone of voice. Hashem conveys His message to the tzaddikim in which He warns them of growing angry over their perception of negativity in a world purportedly "filled with the kindness of Hashem" (*Tehillim* 33:5) with whispered words of comfort and love, reminding them that there will come a time when they will understand that everything – even the severity and harshness – was truly an expression of Hashem's infinite goodness. 🙏

Parsha Roundup

A 60-second Review

- Parshas Emor begins with the special laws pertaining to the kohanim, the kohen gadol, and the *avodah* in the Beis Hamikdash. A newborn calf, lamb or kid must be left with its mother for seven days before being brought as a korban. One may not slaughter an animal and its offspring on the same day.
- The second part of parshas Emor lists the annual *yomim tovim* of the Jewish calendar: Shabbos, the korban Pesach, Pesach, the korban Omer offered on the second day of Pesach and the 49-day counting of the Omer, Shavuos, Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur, Succos, and Shemini Atzeres.
- The Torah then discusses the lighting of the *Menorah* in the Beis Hamikdash and the *lechem hapanim* which was placed on the Shulchan each week.
- Emor concludes with the incident of a man executed for blasphemy, and the penalties for murder (death) and for injuring one's fellow or destroying his property (monetary compensation).

P'nimiyus haParsha

An Encounter with the Soul of the Torah

OUR PARSHA OPENS with a warning to the kohanim to stay far away from any corpse so they do not become impure. This commandment is specific to kohanim; the loftiness of their souls and their bond to the pure life-force of spirituality makes it so that they are particularly susceptible to being damaged by the impurity of death which is born in the vacuum caused by the departure of the soul.

Introducing this prohibition, Hashem tells Moshe, “Speak to the Kohanim, the children of Ahron.” The tzaddikim wonder about the seeming redundancy in this verse. Everybody knows that kohanim are the descendants of Ahron! Why, then, does the Torah need to include the words “the children of Ahron”? It seems that the verse could simply have said, “Speak to the kohanim”!

The Berditchover Rav answers with an important thought. Because this particular commandment is founded upon the unique holiness of the kohen’s soul, it is conceivable that it will be the cause of arrogance. Considering his special status, the kohen may begin to grow proud. A spirit of haughtiness may slowly fill his heart. “Look at how special I am!” He may think. “Out of the entire Jewish nation, Hashem chose me to eat holy foods which are forbidden to others! I am so spiritually elevated that mere contact with death, the absence of spirituality, renders me impure!” Over time, this kind of thinking may cause him to look down on his brethren, the levi'im and yisraelim.

It was to protect against this sorry eventuality that Hashem prefaced this particular commandment with an important introduction. To the logical mind, it is obvious that an impressive line of *yichus* - pedigree is, alone, no reason for an individual to grow proud. It is only logical

for a person to take pride in personal accomplishments, in effort and toil that resulted in hard-earned success. A well-known quip notes that *yichus* is a line of zeroes – entirely worthless unless a “one” is placed before it. If one has nothing to show for himself, there is no reason for to grow proud because of *yichus* alone.

The Kedushas Levi explains that this is the message Hashem intended to convey to the Kohanim in a bid to prevent them from growing arrogant over the special holiness implied by the commandment which follows. **“Emor el haKohanim b'nei Ahron”**: “Speak to the Kohanim, the children of Ahron”. With these words Hashem is reminding the Kohanim, “There is no reason for you to grow proud over your special status. This status is only a result of your being *“b'nei Ahron”*, of your having a prestigious lineage. This *yichus* alone is nothing to flaunt without your building on it with personal effort. If you follow in the path of Ahron, your forefather who earned an elevated status due to his efforts, turning yourself into a “one”, then the line of zeros behind you will enhance your success. If not, they shall remain detached from your experience and, like the zeroes they are, remain entirely worthless.” The tzaddik’s message is clear: Each individual has a unique mission in life! Instead of merely taking pride in the successes of previous generations, we are charged with creating our own accomplishments. Let’s get to work! 🙏



The value of an impressive lineage is dependent upon the accomplishments of the present generation.

Zechus Avos

Yahrtzeit of the Week

18 Iyar (Monday night, Tuesday – May 12th)

Rebbe Shimon Bar Yochai (2nd Century Tanna)

18 IYAR IS the *yahrtzeit* of Rebbe Shimon Bar Yochai, the “holy angel who descended from heaven”, a Tanna of unique stature whose teachings were compiled in the chief work of Kabbalah, the Zohar HaKadosh. Rebbe Shimon was the primary disciple of Rabi Akiva. This exalted tzaddik was pursued by the Roman government for anti-Roman statements he had uttered. He hid in a cave with his son Rebbe Elazar for 13 years, during which time he merited to reveal the deepest secrets of the Torah. After emerging from the cave, Rebbe Shimon founded a yeshiva in Tekoa where the greatest scholars of the time gathered to study Torah. Among the students of this great academy was Rebbe Yehuda who later compiled the Mishna. Rebbe Shimon Bar Yochai is the fourth most mentioned Tanna in the Mishnayos. As one of the primary teachers of Torah in Jewish history, his many Halachic decisions and Aggadic teachings fill the Talmud.

The Gemara in Shabbos teaches that when the Rabanan came to a Kerem Beyavneh, they predicted that the Torah would be forgotten from Klal Yisroel. Rebbe Shimon disagreed and said that it will not be forgotten, as it states: **כי לא תשכח מפי זרעו** – “For it will not be forgotten from the mouth of his descendants.”

Rebbe Nachman of Breslov famously revealed the depths of Rebbe Shimon’s protest. He writes that the reason Rashbi based his guarantee that the Torah will not be forgotten on the **pasuk מפי זרעו מפי זרעו**, “for it will not be forgotten from the mouth of his descendants,” is because the closing letters of these words spell **יוחאי** (מפי זרעו). This means to say that the descendant of the one hinted to in the verse – Rebbe Shimon, the son of Yochai - would ensure that the Torah will not be forgotten. Rashbi was hinting that it would through his awesome efforts and unfathomable merit that the Torah would never be forgotten from our holy nation. *Torasagein lanu, hi me'iras eineinu!* 🙏

This section is adapted from the yahrtzeit remazim of R' David Friedman.

A small portion of the massive crowds in Meron on Lag B'Omer



Tohameha

Tasting the Depth of Shabbos Kodesh

AS WE HAVE learned, the *avodah* of kiddush accomplishes an awesome rectification in the spiritual realms. When we hold the cup with our five fingers, we rectify the severity rooted in the five letters of the name *Elokim* and associated with the energy of *Hod*, triggering a great joy in all worlds. The Chernovitzer explains that the *zemiros* customarily sung before kiddush are for the purpose of preparing us for this awesome *tikkun*. In Yiddishkeit, the headquarters of song in avodas Hashem is rooted in the *avodah* of the Leviim in the Beis HaMikdash. The tzaddikim teach that while the souls of the Kohanim derive from the *middah* of *Chessed*-Kindness, the spiritual source of the Leviim is in the *middah* of *Gevurah*-Harsh Judgment. In order to rectify the severity in which their souls were sourced, the Leviim were blessed with a special musical talent. Through their joyous song, the Leviim would sweeten the energy of *Gevurah* with the *middah* of *Chessed*, producing abundant mercy. As we prepare to cause the sweetening of *Hod* with our kiddush, we sing *zemiros* and *piyutim* such as “*Shalom Aleichem*”, “*Azamer b’Shevachin*”, and “*Eishes Chayil*”, to begin this process. Through our the harmony of our song, the letters of the word “*Davah*”, a word associated with the severe impurity of *Niddah* (“*Niddas dovasah*”, *Vayikra* 12:2) are rearranged to spell “*Hod*”, the joyous splendor of exultation and praise to Hashem (“*hoda’ah*”). Thus, Shabbos may be seen as a mnemonic for both “*Shirah Bo Tashir*” (“Sing songs on this day”), as well as “*Shlishi Bo Tisakein*” (“Rectify, on this day, the third” – a reference to the *middah* of *Hod* which is third from the last of the *middos* (*Malchus, Yesod, Hod*)). 🕎

This section is adapted from the sefer “*Sidduro Shel Shabbos*” by R’ Chaim of Chernowitz zy”a (1760-1816)

P'nimiyus Ha'Halacha

The Inner Dimension of Jewish Law

THE DAY OF Lag B’Omer is packed with enormous spiritual significance. Celebrated, in large part, as the *yahrtzeit* of Rebbe Shimon Bar Yochai, it is no surprise that much of the day’s grandeur can only be understood by one who is familiar with the facet of Torah revealed in R’ Shimon’s work, the holy Zohar. In this short message, we shall try to explore some of the depth and mystical significance of this awesome day. Let’s begin by reviewing some of the *halachos*.

Tachnun is omitted both on Lag B’Omer itself as well as during mincha preceding Lag B’Omer. (*Mishna Berurah* 493:9) Unless one’s wedding is to take place that night (*Halichos Shlomo* 11:22) or one feels a need to perform a *taanis chalom* (*Bein Pesach L’Shavuos* 17:23-24), one should not fast on Lag B’Omer. (*Natai Gavriel Pesach* Vol 3, 59:5). While some say that one who has not yet counted the sefira of Lag B’omer should avoid telling someone else “Today is Lag B’omer,” since doing so may be considered counting the day (*Biur Halacha* to *Orach Chaim* 489, “*She’im*”), others permit this since one’s intention is simply to refer to the day and not to count it. (*Avnei Yushfei* 5:75:5). According to the Mechaber, one may not take a haircut until the morning of the 34th day. (*O”C* 493:2) However, the Rama holds one may shave on Lag B’Omer. Some say this applies even to the night (as there is already no *tachnun* erev Lag B’omer) (*Be’er Heitiv* 493:5) while others say it means first thing in the morning because if one waits a little in the morning it is as if one waited a whole day. (See *Mishnah Berurah* 493:6)

The *Meor Veshemesh* explains that the *gevurah* represented by the *middah* of *Hod* is the harshest of all the Ten Sefiros. Therefore, “*Hod Sheb’Hod*”, the trait of Lag B’Omer, represents the harshest judgment of all. Yet, we also know that Lag B’Omer is also a day of great mercy, as this is the day that the students of Rebbe

Akiva stopped dying. Reb Yaakov Emden explains this seeming contradiction with an amazing thought. He writes that just as when the Sanhedrin unanimously decides someone is guilty, he is automatically declared innocent (*Sanhedrin* 17a), this day of ultimate severity and judgment is transformed into a day of the greatest mercy.

The Arizal teaches that when counting the 33rd day of the Omer, one should concentrate on the Name *Elokim*, which represents the trait of harsh-judgment. The Arizal teaches that the letters which appear before *Elokim*, (א-ל-ו-י-ה), represent a “sweetening” of the *din*, as these letters are numerically equivalent to the word *עד* which appears in the verse *בטחו בה' עדי עד*, “Trust in Hashem forever.” The word *עד* is numerically equivalent to *בטחון*. When a Jew expresses *bitachon* even in the most difficult times, the judgement is sweetened. While the preceding letters of *aleph* and *mem* do not change from their value in the word *Elokim*, the three letters that do change (representing the primary sweetening), *chaf*, *dalet*, and *tes*, together equal “*Gal*”. Add this to the collective value of all the letters and we get the word *גלעד*. The Meor V’Shemesh explains that when Yaakov Avinu gathered stones together at the end of parshas Vayeitzei and called the place *גלעד*, he was hinting to his sons that if there will be love and togetherness between them, they will be able to sweeten all judgment. As a day of unity and oneness which sweetens the harsh-judgements of *Hod Sheb’Hod*, it was specifically the day of Lag (*גל*) B’Omer that the students of Rebbe Akiva, who had not treated each other with the proper respect, stopped dying. This spirit of togetherness occupied a central role in the kabbalistic teachings of Rebbe Shimon, as his teachings stressed the all-encompassing nature of the divine Unity. In the awesome merit of Rebbe Shimon and his Torah, may we be able to tap into the *bitachon* and *achdus* embodied in this special day and experience the sweetest, most amazing salvations! 🕎

A Quick Mayseh

A Story to Warm the Heart

THE TZADDIK REB Yeshayah Asher Ze'ev Margolis, author of "Sefer Hillulah D'Rashbi" related the following account which he witnessed with his own eyes.

In the year 1923, Lag B'Omer fell out on Friday. Many thousands of those who had traveled to Meron to spend this exalted day by the tziyon of Rebbe Shimon stayed for Shabbos, intending to travel back on Sunday.

After Musaf on Shabbos morning, a tremendous tumult was heard around the tziyon. It became known that a three-year-old Sephardi boy had suddenly contracted the dreaded typhus disease and had passed away. He was now lying in one of the small side rooms off of the main building. The British authorities had come to quarantine the entire building out of fear of the infection spreading. When many inside the tziyon tried to escape, families were torn apart as some were locked out while their loved ones were trapped inside.

The voice of the boy's poor mother rose above the pandemonium. She was screaming with heart-wrenching sobs, in acute agony over her son's sudden fate. I personally saw the dead body lying on the floor, with no sign of life. There was nothing we could do or say to comfort her.

Suddenly, the mother picked up her son's body and proceeded downstairs, directly to the kever of Rebbe Shimon. She placed the body on the floor opposite the grave and cried out, "Holy Rebbe, I have brought my son, whom I begot through your blessing, to you tziyon for his chalahah. Yesterday he was alive and healthy, and we celebrated with singing and dancing amidst great joy and celebration. How can I return home without him?" Shaking with tears, she cried out, "Tzaddik, Tzaddik, I am going to leave my son where he is right now next to you. Please, I beseech you, do not turn me back emptyhanded."

Everyone left the room and the door was locked. A few minutes passed in silence. Suddenly, unbelievably, the cry of a small child was audible. The door was opened, and, to our great shock, the boy was standing up and crying for a drink of water. It was clear that Rebbe Shimon had brought about this awesome miracle for the honor of Hashem's Name.

The day of Lag B'Omer, saturated with the exalted spirit of Rebbe Shimon, is bursting with a miraculous energy that is activated through bitachon. Let's come together in perfect unity and use this day of tefillah to storm the heavens with our prayers, awakening the ultimate salvation with the coming of Moshiach! 🙏

"THANK YOU HASHEM FOR SHABBOS KODESH!" IS A WEEKLY PROJECT OF @TYHASHEM

"Thank You Hashem" is a powerful sound bite. These simple words are a prayer, blessing, appreciation, sanctification, and expression of spiritual intimacy—all in one. Jews from all walks of life utter them in all life circumstances, finding meaning and strength in direct access to Hashem. Our mission is to ignite that passion and pride in every Jew worldwide. To remind us all that Hashem exists in every single aspect of life. That He loves each of us in every situation, environment, and spiritual position. And that by saying His name with gratitude, we return His love every day.

"THANK YOU HASHEM
FOR SHABBOS KODESH! WEEKLY"
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