

## Parshas Emor in a Nutshell

(Leviticus 21:1–24:23)

The Torah section of Emor ("Speak") begins with the special laws pertaining to the kohanim ("priests"), the kohen gadol ("high priest"), and the Temple service: A kohen may not become ritually impure through contact with a dead body, save on the occasion of the death of a close relative. A kohen may not marry a divorcee, or a woman with a promiscuous past; a kohen gadol can marry only a virgin. A kohen with a physical deformity cannot serve in the Holy Temple, nor can a deformed animal be brought as an offering.

A newborn calf, lamb or kid must be left with its mother for seven days before being eligible for an offering; one may not slaughter an animal and its offspring on the same day.

The second part of Emor lists the annual Callings of Holiness—the festivals of the Jewish calendar: the weekly Shabbat; the bringing of the Passover offering on 14 Nissan; the seven-day Passover festival beginning on 15 Nissan; the bringing of the Omer offering from the first barley harvest on the second day of Passover, and the commencement, on that day, of the 49-day Counting of the Omer, culminating in the festival of Shavuot on the fiftieth day; a "remembrance of shofar blowing" on 1 Tishrei; a solemn fast day on 10 Tishrei; the Sukkot festival — during which we are to dwell in huts for

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Our Sages explain that the opening verse of our Torah reading teaches us "to warn the elders concerning the children." Implied is that a parent must take responsibility for the education of his children. We cannot sit back passively and expect their education to happen naturally. It won't. -- *The Rebbe*

seven days and take the "Four Kinds" — beginning on 15 Tishrei; and the immediately following holiday of the "eighth day" of Sukkot (Shemini Atzeret).

Next the Torah discusses the lighting of the menorah in the Temple, and the showbread; (lechem hapanim) placed weekly on the table there.

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). ❖

## Anshei Lubavitch Congregation

Rabbi Levi and Leah Neubort

### Adult education:

Rabbi Avrohom and Rivky Bergstein

### Youth Outreach:

Rabbi Eli and Ruty Steinhauser

## Shabbos Schedule

### Erev Shabbos – May 5 / Iyar 14

Candle Lighting .....7:39 pm

Mincha .....7:30 pm

### Shabbos Day – May 6 / Iyar 15

Shacharis .....10:00 am\*

Torah Reading .....11:00 am

Kiddush.....12:10 pm

Mincha .....7:45 pm

Pirkei Avos/Rabbi's Drasha ...8:05 pm

Shabbos Ends .....8:44 pm

*\*Latest morning Shema is now 9:18 AM. Be sure to recite the Shema at or before that time (even if at home).*

### Weekday Schedule (not on a holiday):

#### Minyan

Shacharis (Mon-Fri) .....6:15 am

Shacharis (Sunday) ..... 9:00 am

Mincha (Sun-Thurs).....1:45 pm

Maariv (Sun-Thurs) .....9:15 pm

## Bulletin

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**Join us each weekday  
morning Mon-Fri as we  
delve into the mysteries  
of Chassidic concepts.  
5:55 am,  
followed immediately  
by Shacharis.**

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## Halachic Zmanim

Shabbos, May 6, 2023

Daylight Savings Time

Earliest Tallis..... 4:45 AM  
Latest Morning Shema ..... 9:18 AM  
Earliest Mincha (Gedola) .. 1:30 PM  
Plag Hamincha..... 6:34 PM  
Earliest Evening Shema .... 8:29 PM

## Chassidic Masters

### The Morrow of the Shabbat

*Based on the teachings of  
the Lubavitcher Rebbe*

In the Torah reading of Emor, the commandment of counting the omer is stated: "And you shall count unto you from the morrow of the day of rest ('Shabbat'), from the day that you brought the sheaf ('omer') of the waving; there shall be seven complete weeks" (Leviticus 23:15).

The Talmud (Menachot 65a) tells us that the sect of the Boethusians interpreted the word Shabbat to mean the seventh day of the week, rather than the "day of rest" of Passover. As a consequence, they held that the counting of the omer always begins on a Sunday. There was considerable debate, during which the Rabbis brought many scriptural proofs to establish that the Boethusian interpretation was false. But a persistent question remains: Why did the Torah leave room for this error, instead of stating explicitly, "on the day after Passover"?

#### Three Months

In Exodus 3:12, G-d tells Moses: "When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve G-d upon this mountain." In other words, the purpose of the Exodus lay in the Giving of the Torah. Between these two events, came the seven weeks of the omer. These seven weeks were the necessary transition between the start and the completion of the redemption.

This process played out over three months: Nissan, in which the Exodus took place; Iyar, which is wholly taken up with the counting of the Omer; and Sivan, in which the Torah was given.

Only these three are explicitly mentioned in the context of the redemption. Of Nissan, it is written: "The month of Spring, . . . in it you came out of Egypt" (Exodus 23:15). Regarding Iyar we are told, "The second month . . . after they had come out of the land of Egypt" (Numbers 1:1). And of Sivan, "In the third month after the Children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt" (Exodus 19:1). All three are mentioned because each was an integral part of the redemption.

#### Three Kinds of Food

Passover is linked to the eating of Matzah, the omer was a measure of barley, and Shavuot involved a special offering of two loaves of fine flour baked with leaven.

This presents a number of difficulties.

Only two meal offerings did not consist of wheat: The omer, and the offering of a woman suspected of infidelity. Both of these comprised barley. In the latter case, the Talmud (Sotah 14a) explains: Her offering was to be of animal food as a humiliation for her immorality ("She did the deed of an animal, therefore she brings animal feed as an offering"). But why was the omer made from animal food?

On Passover we are forbidden to eat leaven, because leaven symbolizes man's inclination to pride and self-esteem.

The same way leaven causes dough to rise, pride inflates a man to arrogance. But why, in that case, are we allowed to eat leaven the rest of the year, and indeed obliged (in the Temple) on Shavuot?

#### "Draw Me; We Will Run After You"

In the Song of Songs (1:4), there is a verse, "Draw me, we will run after you; the king has brought me into his chambers." The Kabbalists see these three phrases as references to the three stages of the departure from Egypt. "Draw me" is the Exodus. "We will run after you" is the counting of the omer. "The king has brought me into his chambers" is the giving of the Torah.

"Draw me" is passive - it refers to the Israelites being taken out by G-d. Also it is singular, whereas "We will run after you" is both active and plural.

The Zohar explains that by the end of their enslavement, the Israelites were assimilated into the heathen ways of their captors. They were not deserving of redemption. They had to be seized and drawn out of their captivity by the initiative of G-d. Since they were not inwardly prepared for it, this unexpected revelation did not alter them inwardly. They were taken hold of by G-d rather than by the promptings of their heart. And although their "G-dly soul" responded, their "animal soul" was unchanged.

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One part of their being received the revelation, but the other, the capacity for evil, remained. Indeed, says Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, this is why the Israelites are described as having fled from Egypt (Exodus 14:5). What they were running from was the evil within themselves.

So we can understand the phrase "Draw me." Firstly, when we take possession of an object by seizing hold of it nothing is changed in the subject itself; it merely changes hands: In this case, Israel went from being in the hand of Pharaoh to being in the hand of G-d. Israel itself was unchanged.

Secondly, it was passive. The drawing out of Egypt was achieved by the hand of Heaven, not by any spontaneous act on the part of the Israelites.

Thirdly, it was singular. The revelation of this sudden intervention of G-d affected only one side of their being. Their spirit responded; their physical passions did not.

### **Intellect and Passion**

For all this, the purpose of a revelation is that the spirit should change the physical nature of man as well. As Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi puts it, if man were meant to be pure spirit, he would not have needed a body. The point of a G-dly life within the world is to bring every side of human nature into G-d's work. In the words of the Talmud: "'And you shall love the L-rd your G-d with all your heart' - this means, with both your inclinations."

This interplay not only elevates the physical side of man, but also his spiritual life, by adding to it the drive and energy of physical passion. Man as an intellectual being is dispassionate: his emotions and desires are mitigated by the rational control he exercises over them. But animal energy, be it literally in an animal or in the instinctual drives of man, is unchecked, powerful. "There is much increase by the strength of an ox" (Proverbs 14:4). When the animal in man is no longer at war with his spirit, but is sublimated to it, all its passionate intensity is transferred to the life of holiness.

This is why the omer consisted of barley, animal food. This was the labor of that period: to transform the "animal soul" of the Israelites which had remained unaffected by the initial revelation in Egypt.

How is this done? By meditation. Meditation on the nature of G-d awakens love and fear. At first, when one knows that rebellion, pride and animal obstinacy still hold power within oneself, one must "flee."

This is the time of suppression. But once one has left the "Egypt" of temptation, there comes a time of meditation and sublimation, when the two sides of man no longer battle for possession. The spirit rules, and physical nature transfers its energy.

Thus Solomon wrote, "We will run after you." We will run, because our service is quickened by this new source of energy. We will run, because it is we, not G-d, who take the initiative. And "we," in the plural, because both sides of our nature are caught up in this effort of reaching out towards G-d, and each gives impetus to the other.

### **The Final Stage**

There is still a further stage. At the Exodus, there was the Divine call. During the counting of the omer, there was man's response. But at the Giving of the Torah, there was the final abnegation of man in the face of G-d.

While for forty-nine days the Israelite was transforming himself, he was still a self, still using his powers and relying on himself. But at Sinai, in the face of G-d, "With every single word that went forth from the mouth of the Holy One, blessed be He, the souls of Israel departed" (Talmud, Shabbat 88b). They were empty: The only reality was G-d.

Thus it is that on Passover we may not eat leaven. At the outset, when pride and willfulness preserve their power, they must be suppressed, set aside. They cannot be combated rationally for they can subvert the mind: "They are wise to do evil" (Jeremiah 4:22).

At the stage of the omer, we use our understanding to redirect our emotions. We use the leaven in ourselves to change ourselves.

And when, at the point of Shavuot, we reach the final openness of all our being to G-d, we are obliged to use the leaven, making every part of our nature into a channel for the light of G-d.

### **Every Day**

The Rabbis tell us, "In every generation, and every day, a man is obliged to see himself as if he had gone out of Egypt that very day" (Talmud, Pesachim 116b; Tanya ch. 47). So each of the three stages of the Exodus are components of the task of every day.

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In the beginning of our prayers we say, "I give acknowledgment before you . . ." (the modeh ani prayer). This is the acknowledgment, the surrender to G-d, that precedes understanding. It is the Nissan of the day, the individual Exodus.

There then follow the Psalms of Praise (pesukei dezimrah) and the shema and its benedictions. These are the prayers of meditation, and understanding. "Hear, O Israel," the first phrase of the shema, means "understand." And through this meditation, the emotions are awakened, and the love of G-d is aroused with "all your heart and all your soul and all your might." This is the daily equivalent of the month of Iyar and the counting of the omer.

But, so far, this represents only the battle against half, the "animal" half, of one's nature (bittul ha-yesh). There still awaits the final extinction of self-consciousness (bittul bi-metziut) which comes during the Amidah prayer, when "like a slave before his master" we have no self with which to speak. We are empty of words. We say, "O L-rd, open my lips." And this is the Sivan of the day, the moment when we confront — like the Israelites at Sinai — the all-possessing presence of G-d.

### After the Shabbat

Now, finally, we realize why the Torah, in the verse quoted at the outset, says, "On the morrow of the Shabbat" instead of ". . . after the Passover."

To achieve the transformation of the "animal soul" demands the deepest reserves of spiritual energy. To have brought the Israelites out of their entrenched impurity needed more than an "angel" — an emissary — it needed G-d himself in His Glory and Essence. If this was true of the escape from evil, it is more so for the transformation of evil into good. The task demands a spiritual source able to enter into the heart of evil without being affected.

Shabbat is a source of intense spirituality. It is the apex of the week. But it still belongs to the week, and thus to time and the finite. "The morrow of the Shabbat" refers to the step beyond Shabbat, beyond time itself: A revelation higher than the world.

To count the forty-nine days of omer, that is, to transform our every emotion into holiness, we must rest our efforts on the "morrow of the Shabbat" - the light of G-d from beyond the world. ❖

### What Is Lag BaOmer?

Lag BaOmer, the 33rd day of the Omer count — this year, May 9, 2023 — is a festive day on the Jewish calendar. It is celebrated with outings (on which children traditionally play with bows and arrows), bonfires, parades and other joyous events. Many visit the resting place (in Meron, northern Israel) of the great sage and mystic Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, the anniversary of whose passing is on this day. ❖

#### **The Paterson Shul @Seniors Tower of Paterson (510 E. 27th Street/Paterson) will have the following Minyanim:**

1. SHABBAT MAY 6 – PARSHAT EMOR – 9:00 a.m.
2. SHAVUOT/ SHABBAT, MAY 27 – (SECOND DAY OF SHAVUOT) - 9:00 a.m.  
(Yizkor will be approximately 10:30a.m. led by the great Chazzan Mitch.)

Also, there will be a speaker on V-Day (May 9) commemorating the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany in 1945.

If you don't like long speeches, long walks, or long Shabbosim, this is the place for you.

We have Machzorim and Talaisim.

For more information, please email: JerrySchrantz@Gmail.com or visit Facebook: "The Paterson Shul"

## From Our Sages – Emor

***Nor shall he contaminate himself [even] for his father or for his mother (Leviticus 21:11)***

*But he does contaminate himself for the sake of a “meit mitzvah” (a dead person who has no one to attend to him).*

*(Talmud; Rashi)*

***These are the appointed times of G-d, callings of holiness, which you shall call in their appointed time (Leviticus 23:2)***

*The festivals are “callings of holiness” (mikra’ei kodesh), in the sense that each is a landmark in time at which we are empowered to call forth the particular holiness or spiritual quality embedded within it.*

*On the first Passover, for example, G-d granted us the gift of freedom. On the first Shavuot, He gave us the Torah; on Rosh Hashanah, G-d became king of the universe; on Yom Kippur, we received the gift of teshuvah; and so on. But freedom, wisdom, awe, joy, peace, and the other Divine gifts granted in the course of our history are constant needs of the soul; they are the spiritual nutrients that sustain her in her journey through life. G-d embedded these qualities within the very substance of time, and set “appointed times” at which they can be accessed. Each year, when we arrive at the juncture of time where a particular spiritual quality has been embedded, we are granted the ability to access it once again.*

*The special mitzvot of each festival are the tools with which we “call forth the holiness” of the day: eating matzah on Passover unearths the gift of freedom, sounding the shofar on Rosh Hashanah calls forth its quality of awe, and so on with all “the appointed times of G-d.”*

*(The Chassidic Masters)*

*A king was traveling through the desert, and his son, the crown prince, thirsted for water. But instead of dispatching a horseman to fetch water from the nearest town, the king ordered a well to be dug at that very spot and to mark it with a signpost.*

*“At the present time,” explained the king to his son, “we have the means to obtain water far more quickly and easily. But perhaps one day, many years in the future, you will again be traveling this way. Perhaps you will be alone, without the power and privilege you now enjoy. Then the well we dug today will be here to quench your thirst. Even if the sands of time have filled it, you will be able to reopen it if you remember the spot and follow the signpost we have set.”*

*This is what G-d did for us by establishing the festivals at those points in time when He initially granted us the gift of freedom on Passover, joy on Sukkot, and so on.*

*(Mar’eh Yechezkel)*

***You shall count for yourselves from the morrow of the Shabbat, from the day on which you bring the Omer offering; seven complete weeks they shall be . . . (Leviticus 23:15)***

*The word sefirah, “counting,” also means “illumination.” On each of the forty-nine days of Sefirat HaOmer (the “Counting of the Omer”), we refine, develop and illuminate another of the forty-nine traits of our soul.*

*(Rabbi DovBer, the Maggid of Mezeritch)*

## Haftorah for Emor in a nutshell

*Ezekiel 44:15-31*

This week's haftorah discusses various laws that pertain to the kohanim, the priests, a topic also discussed at length in the first part of the week's Torah portion.

Ezekiel prophesies about the service of the kohanim in the third Holy Temple which will be rebuilt after the Final Redemption. The prophet describes their priestly vestments, their personal care, whom they may and may not marry, and their special purity requirements which preclude them from coming in contact with a corpse, unless it's for a next of kin. He also discusses their calling as teachers and spiritual leaders.

The prophet conveys G-d's word: "You shall give them no possession in Israel; I am their possession." The kohanim do not receive a portion in the Land of Israel, instead they partake of the sacrifices as well as various tithes. ❖

## Did You Remember to Count the Omer?



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**Good Shabbos to all!**