

Congregation

◆◆◆"Beth Yosef"◆◆◆

*** 2108 Ocean Parkway Brooklyn, N.Y. 11223 ***

Rabbi Aharon Farhi

Parashat Emor

15th Iyar 5783

Maqam Siga

Issue #1027

Mr. Eliyahu Levy, President

Haftarat VehoCohanim

May 6th 2023

*Candle Lighting 7:37pm * Shekiah 7:55pm * Shir Hashirim 7:00pm followed by Mincha Friday Night
Shaharit Shabbat 8:15am * Mincha Shabbat 7:20pm * Shabbat Ends 8:38pm & Rabbenu Tam 9:08pm
Time for Talit 4:27am * Seasonal Hour 82:00 * Alot Hashahar 4:11am * Netz Hachama 5:49am
Weekday Mincha 7:30pm * Earliest Time for Arbit 6:51pm * Tzet Hacoachavim 8:33pm * Chatzot 12:52
Latest Time for Morning Keriat Shema 8:17am * Latest Time for Morning Amidah 9:39am*

Friday May 5th will be Pesah Sheni

The night of Lag Ba'Omer, Monday May 8th, 8:00pm after praying Arbit, we will be lighting candles in Beth Yosef Leilui Nishmat Avot, Neviim, Tanaim, and Rabbanim. Those who wish to donate lighting a candle, \$100 each, should contact R' Aharon Farhi, Tizku L'Mitzvot, Amen.

Those who wish to contact Rabbi Aharon Farhi can call (646) 552-3412

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Please do not read this bulletin during Tefillah or Keriat Hatorah

The Parasha begins with the commandment for a Cohen to safeguard from contracting impurity from a corpse. Let's try to understand this commandment. Our Sages teach us: Why was man created as an individual, and not as a group? So that man can say, the world was created for me. All other beings were created in a category, as their essence is their group. Man was not created within a group or category, rather completely individual. A completely developed and refined man is greater than even a thousand others, as Shelomo Hamelech says, one from a thousand is found. We learn from this that while all other creations are already considered developed and do not need to be refined in any way, man needs to be grown, developed, and refined in order to fulfill potential and achieve completeness, this is man's essence. This means that man is valued based on his level of spirituality, the growth of his soul, while his body is already considered complete and does not need to be developed in growth, like all other creations. When the soul leaves the body, the body is left empty of further potential and growth without the soul, and it is returned to the

ground, to become part of all other creations once again. The Cohen is sanctified through his holy service in the Bet Hamikdash, and therefore cannot become impure by coming into contact with a body void of a soul, void of growth and potential. A Cohen who is in service to Hashem, with holiness and purpose, cannot even come within four Amot of a corpse. From here we learn the great value of a living person, busy with spirituality and service to Hashem, perfecting his character and fulfilling Mitzvot, for that is the eternal life within the body. Food possesses nutrition for the soul, which is absorbed once consumed, but after the nutrition is gone, what is left and released from the body is void of further potential, and is therefore naturally disgusting to man. We must grow and increase in spirituality throughout our lifetime to fulfill man's purpose of creation. May Hashem watch over us, Amen.

Lag Ba'omer (33rd of the Omer)

Lag Ba'omer is a day of celebration and a day of lamentation in honor of the great Tanna, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yohai, may his merits shield us.

From the greatest of the 4th generation of Tannaim, he lived 140 years after the Churban (Temple's destruction). He was the author of the 'Zohar', which is the foundation of Torah and Kabbalah. He is the Rabi Shimon that is always mentioned in the Gemara, and after a long life he passed away, after Rabi Yishmael. He first learned in Yavneh, in front of Rabi Yehoshua and Raban Gamliel. Afterwards, he was one of the five students of Rabi Akiva, along with Rabi Yehoshua, Rabi Yehuda ben Baba, Raban Gamliel, and Rabi Elazar ben Yehua. He had 22 students, which included: His son, R' Elazar bar R' Shimon, Rabi Dustai, R' Hanina, R' Yohanan, R' Yirmiya, Rabi Nahas ben Yair, etc. He learnt in Bnei Brak by Rabi Akiva for 13 years. Rabi Akiva loved him, called him his son, and told him, *It is sufficient for you that I and the Creator both recognize your spirit (Sanhedrin)*. Rabi Shimon bar Yochai came to Rabi Akiva and learned Torah from him even in difficult times. Many times in the Mishnah we find the two discussing a law. Once Rabi Shimon bar Yochai realized a sense of disrespect towards his Rav and therefore fasted many fasts, until his teeth turned black, in order to rectify the situation. 'Sifri' (*Medrash Halacha for Bamidbar and Devarim*) is by default the words of Rabi Shimon bar Yochai, what he learnt from Rabi Akiva with his four friends. The students relied upon Rav Yehuda ben Baba. Many times there were arguments with Rabi Yehuda and Rabi Meir. Rabi Shimon bar Yochai witnessed the Romans combing the skin of Rabi Akiva with iron combs just because he learned and taught Torah. He therefore became rebellious against the Roman authority. Once, he sat with Rav Yehuda, Rav Yossi, and Rav Yehuda ben Gerim and discussed the many decrees the Romans established only for their benefit. Rav Yehuda ben Gerim was not careful and told others what Rabi Shimon bar Yochai had said. The words soon reached the authorities and Rabi Shimon bar Yochai was sentenced with the death penalty. First he hid in the Bet Medrash of his son, Rabi Elazar, but then he hid in a cave. Through a miracle, he gained sustenance from a Carob tree that grew in the cave just for him, and

he drew water from a well. In order that his clothes do not wear out, he wore them only during prayers. All the while he was in hiding, he learned Torah and distanced from worldly matters. After 12 years the Caesar died and the decree was gone. When they left the cave, they saw people planting and plowing fields. *"You have forsaken the eternal life for a temporary one"* he would tell them. A sound from Heaven was heard – *"Have you come out to destroy my world?! Go back into the cave!"* After another year, he finally left the cave. He told his son, *"It is enough for the world for just you and me"* – But when he saw how precious and beloved the Mitzvot were to Bnei Yisrael, they were reconciled. Rashbi (Rabi Shimon bar Yochai) said that he could atone the entire world from judgment. He was able to perform miracles. When the government decreed harshly upon the Jews, Rashbi, along with Rav Elazar bar Yossi, went and overpowered the decrees. He was a shield for his generation and a rainbow never formed in his days. Rashbi passed away on the 33rd of the Omer (18 Iyar) and was buried in Miron. Praying by his grave, as many do, especially on the 33rd of the Omer, brings great protection and help from Hashem. It is very good to recite, *Bar Yochai Nimshachta Ashrecha*. We glorify the day with Torah learning and candle lighting Leilui Nishmat Rashbi. We will be celebrating Hillula in Beth Yosef on the night of Lag Ba'Omer, Monday May 8th, 8:00pm after praying Arbit. We will also be lighting candles in Beth Yosef Leilui Nishmat Avot, Neviim, Tanaim, and Rabbanim. Those who wish to donate lighting a candle, Leilui Nishmat any Tzaddik of choice, \$100 donation each, should please contact R' Aharon Farhi, for merit of protection, health, prosperity, and longevity, Tizku L'Mitzvot, Amen.

Insights on the Parasha

The Pasuk states that there are fifty days – if so, why do we only count 49 days of the Omer? The reason is because the Pasuk also says that we count seven weeks, which is 49 days. Even though the Torah wrote the number fifty as well, nonetheless the Torah means that we should

count one less than fifty, as we find by the punishment of *Malkut*, lashes, that one is given forty lashes minus one. When Bnei Yisrael initially came down to Egypt, although the Pasuk states that there were seventy people, if you count the names you will only reach 69. You can therefore split our Pasuk, and read it in a way that the number fifty written is not going on the first part of the Pasuk that refers to counting – rather, place a stop before the word fifty and use it for the next portion of the Pasuk that discusses bringing the sacrifice on the fiftieth day. (*Abudraham*)

Insights on Pirkei Avot

1 – *Shamaaya says: love working and hate leading.* Shamaaya and his friend Avtalyon were both considered converts, but their mothers were Jewish. There are many explanations for the above statement: 1 – If one works hard, he can be independent and provide for himself, while a leader must sometimes do things for the public that he would rather not do. 2 – Working is healthy for the body and mind, while being a leader who is forbidden to work and is granted provisions by the public can be detrimental to the body and mind. 3 – Who is Shamaaya speaking to in this lesson? If he is instructing the working class, then there is no point to tell them not to be a leader – they aren't. If he is speaking to the leading class, then who else will be left to lead? Somebody has to do the job of leading, right? Rather, he is instructing the leading class to be the type of leader who doesn't allow his position to get to his head. He is a servant of the people who must work hard as well and not waste time enjoying his high class, which would be bad for him.

2 – *Hillel says: be a student of Aharon.* Why doesn't it say to strive to be *exactly* like Aharon? Because while that will seem like an impossible thing to achieve, we should at least strive to be his student. Also, Hillel is not telling us to learn from Aharon in all areas and follow only in his ways of loving peace; rather, he is instructing us more specifically to be a student of Aharon and follow his character of humility and humbleness. He did not think himself worthy of priesthood when it was granted to him, and he did not become jealous of his younger brother Moshe when Hashem chose him as the leader. We must be the student of

Aharon and learn this great lesson of humility and humbleness from him.

Health and Recovery

1 – Figs, grapes, pomegranates, and almonds are healthy for the body whether dried or otherwise. They cleanse the kidneys, increase body mass, and improve overall conditions. Dry figs are in fact better than juicy figs. 2 – One should always be accustomed to eating a proper breakfast before starting his day. 3 – One should not sit down to a meal if he feels it necessary to relieve himself. 4 – One must regularly clear his intestines, as one who is not careful with this will experience terrible health issues. 5 – Elderly people should drink hot water with tea daily. 6 – A person experiencing digestion issues should distance his meals further apart, and eat lighter.

Mussar: Learning Torah

Torah is one of the three crowns Bnei Yisrael was given. This crown is greater than the crown of priesthood and the crown of kingship. There is no greater Mitzvah than learning Torah, as it says *Learning Torah is as great as all of them*. One who wants to be crowned with Torah should not waste his time. If you think that you'll first earn money and then learn Torah, you will not merit the crown of Torah. Make the Torah your permanent schedule and make work your temporary task. *Do not say when I have time I'll learn, for perhaps you won't have time. It is not in heaven*, meaning: to learn Torah you must be a "down to earth" person and not haughty. *It is not across the ocean*, meaning: one who travels and toils too much in work will not merit Torah. Learn *Lishmah* (for Hashem's name) and work *Lishmah*, for then Hashem will help you complete your work successfully and quickly so you can spend more time learning Torah. If a person learns Torah properly, Hashem will deliver the Torah to him with ease and precision, as we find by Avraham Avinu. Hashem testified that Avraham kept the Torah even though nobody taught it to him. Because Avraham toiled in trying to learn the Torah and the concepts of faith, trust, and belief in Hashem, Hashem gave him this great gift. Toiling in Torah distances you from sinning, while wasting valuable time, which could potentially be used for Torah, will just cause more sins and

terrible punishment. Even if you are traveling, think about Torah, as our great sages would not go even a short four Amot distance without thinking in Torah. The Torah will protect and watch over you. May Hashem merit us to toil in Torah, Amen.

Rishon LeSion:

R' Yaakov Shaul Elyashar 1817-1906

The German leader Wilhelm invited the distinguished citizens of Jerusalem, with their leader Rishon LeSion R' Elyashar at the head, to a banquet on Shabbat during his visit to the city. At the meal, the German leader gave R' Elyashar a valuable cigar to enjoy. Everyone watched the Rabbi as he thought of a way to navigate through this difficult situation. How could he smoke during Shabbat? But also, how could he refuse such a gift? He placed the cigar on the table. The German leader asked R' Yaakov if he perhaps didn't smoke. He explained that he definitely smoked, however he didn't want such a valuable gift to go up in flames, but would rather treasure it and keep it with him always, as a tribute of their friendship. The German leader appreciated this sentiment.

Laws of Yom Tov

- 1** – A woman who transgressed and cooked from Yom Tov to Yom Tov Sheni carries her sin, but has not caused the food to be forbidden to eat.
- 2** – One may take medication or pain relievers during Yom Tov, but may not use creams or ointments
- 3** – One may not squeeze fruits for their juices, with the exception of a lemon squeezed over salad or over food that will absorb most of the juice.
- 4** – When making dough on Yom Tov, one may take Challah from it with a Beracha, even if he has added sugar, provided that he bakes it, but if he fries it then he is except from Challah.
- 5** – Challah separated on Yom Tov mustn't be burnt on Yom Tov, rather after Yom Tov.
- 6** – One may use a cheese grater during Yom Tov provided that he changes the way he usually does it, i.e. he grates the cheese straight onto the table instead of into something, since he was supposed to grate the cheese before Yom Tov.
- 7** – One may shoo away flies and mosquitoes from the house during Yom Tov, provided that he doesn't actually hit them, and he must leave a window open for them to escape through.

8 – One may sew meat and poultry together on Yom Tov, provided that he threaded the needle before Yom Tov. If the thread came out of the needle, he may thread it again on Yom Tov. He may not tie the thread on Yom Tov. He may cut the thread from the meat or poultry while eating, even with an object, and during Shabbat.

Sponsors

*** **Mr. Houdar Ballas, his wife Suzi, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Amen. *** **Blessed siblings: Henry, Morris, Lydia, and Olga of the Abadi Family.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their brother **Victor Chaim Ben Salha a"h**, Amen. *** **Blessed siblings: Azar, David, Charlie, Estella, and Arlit of the Halabi Family.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their sister **Sonia Bat Rachel a"h**, Amen. *** **Mr. Eli Levy, his wife Becky, and their children.** Blessings, health, and success for the entire family, Amen. *** **Blessed siblings: Sammy, Seymour, and Renee of the Esses Family.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat their father **Ovadia Ben Rina a"h**, Amen. *** **Mr. Toby Cohen, his wife Shella, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat her father **Avraham Ben Badia a"h**, Amen. *** **Mr. Nissim Kassab HaCohen, his wife Maggie, and their children.** Blessings and success for the entire family, Leilui Nishmat his mother **Odette Bat Sofia a"h**, Amen.

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