

BS"D

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INTERNET PARSHA SHEET  
ON EMOR - 5763

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From: Don't Forget [[sefira@torah.org](mailto:sefira@torah.org)]  
Subject: Day 23 / 3 weeks and 2 days  
Tonight, the evening of Friday, May 9, will be day 23, which is 3 weeks and 2 days of the omer.  
Go to <http://www.torah.org/learning/yomtov/omer/> to learn more about the Omer.

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From: [torahweb@zeus.host4u.net](mailto:torahweb@zeus.host4u.net) Sent: May 07, 2003 To: [weekly1@torahweb.org](mailto:weekly1@torahweb.org) Subject: Rabbi Zvi Sobolofsky - Omer and Shte Halechem: Two Sides of Man  
to subscribe, email [weekly@torahweb.org](mailto:weekly@torahweb.org) the HTML version of this dvar Torah can be found at:

<http://www.torahweb.org/thisWeek.html>  
RABBI ZVI SOBOLOFSKY

OMER AND SHTEI HALECHEM: TWO SIDES OF MAN

Our thoughts focus on the mitzvah of sefiras haomer as we read, in Parshas Emor, about that mitzvah that we are in the process of fulfilling. Sefiras haomer begins and concludes with a korban. The korban haomer (barley offering) brought on the second day of Pesach initiates the countdown to Shavuos, which culminates with the korban of the shte halechem (two loaves of bread) offered on Shavuos.

There are certain similarities between these two korbanos. Both are grain offerings which are incumbent upon the community to bring, and in contrast to other korbanos, they can only be brought from grain that grew in Eretz Yisrael. Aside from these similarities there are certain stark differences between them. The korban haomer is brought from barley in deviation from the usual practice of offering wheat in instances of a grain offering. Although the shte halechem are made of wheat, they are required to be baked as chametz. A korban mincha which is chametz is an anomaly because all other menachos had to be matzah. The korban haomer, on the other hand, was the absolute antithesis of chametz. Not only was it bound by the regular prohibition of offering chametz in the Beis Hamikdash, but it was also brought on Pesach when it would be unthinkable to bring a korban which was chametz. What is the Torah trying to teach us by requiring us to bring these korbanos which are different from other menachos, and so radically different from one another?

Chazal (Pesachim 49b) comment on the pasuk (Vayikra 11:46) "This is the Torah concerning the animal and the bird" that only one who is involved in the study of Torah (talmud Torah) is permitted to eat animals and birds. Why should the study of Torah be a prerequisite to being permitted to eat meat? The significance of the omer and shte halechem, and the relationship between learning Torah and partaking of meat, are both rooted in the unique nature of man. Man is created as part of the animal kingdom with needs and desires similar to those of other

animals. Yet, only man is endowed with the gifts of creative thought and speech. As a member of the animal world, man has no right of dominion over other animals. It is only his unique status as an ovoid Hashem that gives him the right to elevate other living beings by using them for avodas Hashem. The man who uses the gifts of thought and speech for studying Torah has the right to partake of meat. The nutrition he receives enables him to achieve the lofty goal of elevating his thought and speech by using them for the purpose for which they were granted to him. Eating meat without living up to the unique status of man is merely one animal attacking another.

The korbanos of the omer and shte halechem reflect the dual aspects of man. The omer was brought from barley, which is a very basic food, primarily eaten by animals. The barley was not improved by becoming chametz. In contrast, the shte halechem were brought from the finest wheat flour baked as chametz. These elegant loaves of bread were the antithesis of the plain barley. By offering the omer on Pesach, followed by sefiras haOmer culminating with the shte halechem on Shavuos, we are demonstrating vividly the two parts of our existence. On Pesach we have not yet received the Torah; we have not begun the process of elevating our thought and speech by using them for the purpose for which they were given; we are still part of the animal kingdom, and our korban reflects this. It is only through our preparation for kabolas haTorah, and our commitment to and celebration of this kabolas haTorah on Shavuos, that grant us the privilege of offering a korban that reflects our unique status as humans.

May we be zoche to offer the shte halechem this Shavuos, celebrating our unique privilege of serving Hashem with our minds and our words through the mitzvah of talmud Torah.

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From: Ohr Somayach [[ohr@ohr.edu](mailto:ohr@ohr.edu)] Sent: May 08, 2003 To: [weekly@ohr.edu](mailto:weekly@ohr.edu) Subject: Torah Weekly - Parshat Emor \* TORAH WEEKLY \* For the week ending 10 May 2003 / 8 Iyyar 5763 from Ohr Somayach | [www.ohr.edu](http://www.ohr.edu)  
Parshat Emor

On His Majesty's Service "You shall not desecrate My holy Name; rather I should be sanctified among the Children of Yisrael." (22:32)

I just got back from renting a car. As usual, it proved to be a trying experience. I always assume that renting a car takes about 20 minutes, and so I failed to budget for the one-hour-plus that it actually took. Having made prior and important commitments, I didn't have this extra time to spare. So the net result was that I started to get impatient with the guy behind the counter. He looked up at me with a look that seemed well-used. It was his here's-another-ultra-Orthodox-getting-impatient look. Now G-d forbid to tar all those who wear black hats with my own inadequacies, but it dawned on me that the average non-religious Israeli expects something more from the religious, and often gets something less. Hence - "the look".

There is little doubt that the recent political success in Israel of those elements who wish to uproot and destroy Torah in the Land of Israel is based on a deep and implacable loathing to everything the Torah and its adherents stand for. However, there is a larger, probably overwhelmingly larger group who bears no inherent enmity to the Torah, but is dragged along by the rhetoric of contempt.

Why?

Someone once said "Don't judge Judaism by Jews."

Unfortunately, that's exactly what happens. The Torah isn't judged by the Reb Moshes and the Reb Shlomo Zalman of this world. It

is judged by the sum of each and every secular person's encounter with someone religious.

They expect a higher standard from us - and they are right to. We claim that the Torah should make us better people. If we can't show this to people in our everyday lives, then a large proportion of the Israeli electorate will continue to swallow the lies of our detractors.

My rabbi once told me this story: Many years ago, he came upon a street-cleaner. In one hand was a broom with which he was sweeping the street, in the other, a small transistor radio that was blasting out a tune. (No doubt the precursor of the Shechuna-blasters.) My rabbi said to him "Thank you for bringing happiness into our neighborhood." The street-cleaner looked at my rabbi with a deeply puzzled look. He then turned off the radio and with great seriousness said to him "If more religious people were like you, there would be no problems in this country."

Every Jew who wears a hat, or a kippa or a headscarf of a sheitel, is - like it or not - an ambassador. When we get on the bus and say "Good Morning!" to the bus driver; when we get up for and older person on the bus; when we wave thank you to someone who lets us in front of him in the traffic - we are sanctifying the Name of G-d.

It's not enough that "You shall not desecrate My holy Name...." It is also crucial that "...I should be sanctified among the Children of Yisrael."

It is our job to go out of our way to show that we are all On His Majesty's Service.

#### Bored With Breathing

"And you will bring a new 'mincha' offering (meal offering) to G-d." (23:16)

Are you 'burned out'?

You seem to hear that phrase a lot these days. I'm 'burned out' from this; I'm 'burned out' from that; I'm bored with this; It's just lost its excitement for me.

Why do people 'burn out'?

Take two people working hard. One self-employed, the other working for a salary. There's a big difference between them.

Someone who works for a salary has no particular interest in the company, except that it provides him with a living. And his apathy only increases if the company doesn't do well and there is no bonus to look forward to.

Someone who is self-employed, on the other hand, puts his very soul into his work. He is the company. He enjoys the moments of triumph and he grieves over the disasters, but bored and burned out? Never.

Unlike the salaried employee whose remuneration is fixed from the beginning with only limited scope for profit participation, the self-employed person knows that the sky's the limit. The company's success is his success.

When we learn Torah we should think of it like it was our own business. In your own business, if things aren't going right, who is there to put them right? Only yourself. If it takes extra time at the office, we would certainly, and gladly, put in the extra hours.

When we sit down to learn, do we mentally 'punch in'? Are we waiting for the next coffee break? For the check at the end of the month? Or do we feel the exuberance and challenge of our learning as though it was our own business?

How does the Torah refer to the monumental event of its being given at Sinai?

"And you will bring a new mincha offering to G-d."

Why is the reference so oblique? It's true that at the festival of Shavuot there is a command to bring a new mincha offering to G-d. But is that the most conspicuous aspect of Shavuot? How about the giving of the Torah? Wouldn't it have been more

appropriate to spell out that on this day the Torah was given at Sinai? And yet it is with these few covert words that the Torah hints to the central event of Judaism.

Why?

The Torah doesn't specify the date of its giving because it doesn't want us to feel that it was given as a 'one-off' event. Rather, it wants us to feel like it's being given to us every day, and for us to receive it every day as though we were hearing it for the first time at Sinai.

The Torah is our life's breath. Even though a person breathes millions of times in the course of his life, does anyone get tired of breathing? Why not? Because we understand that our life depends on breathing, it's not a subject for boredom. Boredom can only set in when a person sees something as optional.

Breathing isn't optional; it's obligatory.

This is the way we should feel about the Torah, for it is our life and the length of our days.

Written and compiled by Rabbi Yaakov Asher Sinclair

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From: Kol Torah [[koltorah@koltorah.org](mailto:koltorah@koltorah.org)] Sent: Friday, May 02, 2003 1:22 PM Subject: Kol Torah Parshat Kedoshim Performing Kria upon Seeing the Mikdash, Jerusalem, and Judean Cities KOL TORAH A Student Publication of the Torah Academy of Bergen County Parshat Kedoshim This week's issue of Kol Torah has been sponsored by Mr. & Mrs. Larry Cohen in honor of Raanan reaching Gil Mitzvot this Shabbat.

#### PERFORMING KRIA UPON SEEING THE MIKDASH, JERUSALEM, AND JUDEAN CITIES

by RABBI CHAIM JACHTER

##### Introduction

The Gemara (Moed Katan 26a) teaches that one must perform Kria (rending one's garment) upon seeing the following three sites - Judean cities, Jerusalem, and the Bait Hamikdash in ruins. In this essay, we shall review classic and contemporary Halachic sources regarding the application of this Halacha throughout the ages and in contemporary circumstances.

##### Judean Cities - Modern Applications

The Tur (Orach Chaim 561) seems to believe that the Gemara requires Kria not only upon seeing Judean cities in ruins, but any city in Eretz Yisrael that is in ruins. However, most authorities disagree and believe that the rule applies specifically to Judean cities as noted by the Bait Yosef (ibid). Indeed, the Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 561:1) as explained by the Mishna Brura (561:1) rules that the obligation applies exclusively to Judean cities and not other Israeli cities. Judean cities seems to refer to the section of Eretz Yisrael that was the portion of the tribe of Judah, which extended basically from Jerusalem to the southern boundary of Eretz Yisrael. The question is why does the Halacha distinguish between Judean cities and other Israeli cities in this context. The Bach (O.C. 561) explains that Judean cities represent the core of Jewish sovereignty over Eretz Yisrael, as Jerusalem is both the "capital" of Judea and the entire country. The Levush (ibid, as explained by the Har Hakodesh p.1), though, believes that it is because Judean cities enjoy a greater degree of sanctity than other Israeli cities. This assertion is based on the Gemara (Sanhedrin 11b) that states that the Sanhedrin may proclaim the

addition of a month to the Jewish calendar only in Judea because Judea is the residence of the Shechina (divine presence). Indeed, the Ramban in a celebrated letter describing his travels to Eretz Yisrael (in the mid thirteenth century) notes that the greater the sanctity of the Land, the more profound is its desolation; Judea is more desolate than the Galilee, Jerusalem is more desolate than Judea, and the Bait Hamikdash is most desolate of all. The Mishna Brura (ad. loc.) cites only the explanation of the Bach as authoritative. Rav Hershel Schachter (B'Ikvei Hatzon p.105) writes that there is a major ramification of the Bach and the Levush dispute today that Jews maintain sovereign control over much of Judea, while the Bait Hamikdash is in ruins. Rav Schachter understands that the Levush views (based on the aforementioned Gemara in Sanhedrin 11b) Judean cities as an extension of the Bait Hamikdash. The Levush, accordingly, believes that the obligation to perform Kria on Judean cities (Arei Yehuda) flows from the obligation to perform Kria upon seeing the Bait Hamikdash in ruins. Thus, according to the Levush, one should perform Kria today upon seeing Arei Yehudah even though these cities are under Jewish control, since the Bait Hamikdash is in ruins. However, according to the Bach, one should not tear upon seeing Judean cities today because the obligation stems from the lack of Jewish control over Eretz Yisrael. Thus, since (Baruch Hashem) Jews control most of Judea the obligation to tear does not apply today. Rav Schachter notes that the Halacha follows the Bach as the Mishna Brura cites his opinion as authoritative. In fact, Rav Shlomo Yosef Zevin (Moadim BaHalacha p.371) in a celebrated passage, rules that we do not tear upon seeing Arei Yehuda after the establishment of our beloved Medinat Yisrael. This ruling appears to be supported by the Magen Avraham (561:1) and Mishna Brura (561:2) who rule that one should tear upon Arei Yehuda even if Jews inhabit these cities, if non-Jews maintain sovereign control of the area. The implication is if Jews enjoy sovereign control over Arei Yehuda then there is no need for Kria. Indeed, common practice among virtually all observant circles today is not to tear upon seeing a Judean city such as Bait Shemesh. For further discussion of this issue, see Rav Yehuda Henkin, Teshuvot Bnei Banim 2:24. Rav Schachter notes that some have criticized this approach; saying that we must tear until a Jewish government that functions fully in accordance with Halacha is established in Eretz Yisrael. Rav Schachter rejects this approach, noting that during the period of the first Bait Hamikdash and the second Bait Hamikdash there was no obligation to tear when seeing Arei Yehuda even though many of the Jewish rulers of the time worshipped Avoda Zara and murdered our greatest sages. Implications for our Observance of Yom Haatzmaut

This Halacha has enormous implications for our observance of Yom Haatzmaut. This Halacha teaches that we mourn the loss of Jewish sovereignty over Eretz Yisrael. Thus, we must celebrate the restoration of Jewish sovereignty over portions of Eretz Yisrael. Indeed, Rav Menachem Leibtag (see [www.tanach.org](http://www.tanach.org), Shiur for Yom Haatzmaut) notes that in the Piyut of Dayyeinu that we recite at the Seder we say "Had you only brought us into Eretz Yisrael and not built the Bait Hamikdash, Dayyeinu Rav Leibtag demonstrates that Dayyeinu does not mean that it would have been sufficient and we do not need anything else. Rather, Dayyeinu means that it would have been sufficient reason to obligate us to recite Hallel. We see that we must thank Hashem for establishing sovereignty in Eretz Yisrael even if the Bait Hamikdash is regrettably in ruins. Moreover, Rav Yehuda Amital, Rav Menachem Genack and others have noted that the Rambam Hilchot Chanukah 3:1, which is cited by the Mishna Brura in his introduction to Hilchot Chanukah, notes that we celebrate Chanukah in part because of the restoration of Jewish

sovereignty over Eretz Yisrael for more than two hundred years. The Rambam believes that this is cause for celebration even though many of the Jewish leaders of the time were wicked such as Herod and Yannai (both of whom killed great sages). We see that the restoration of Jewish control over Eretz Yisrael is cause for celebration even though the government falls short of Torah ideals.

Tearing upon seeing the site of the Bait Hamikdash

Rav Hershel Schachter quotes Rav Zvi Yehuda Kook (son of Rav Avraham Yitzchak Kook, who succeeded his father as the Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshivat Merkaz HaRav and is considered by many as his father's spiritual and intellectual heir) who rules that since the Israeli government enjoys sovereign control of the site of the Bait Hamikdash the obligation to tear Kria does not apply today. However, Rav Schachter notes that Rav Yosef Soloveitchik considers this approach to be obviously incorrect as the tearing at the Temple site is to mourn the destruction of the Bait Hamikdash and not the loss of Jewish sovereignty over the area. Indeed, common practice among virtually all circles of observant Jews is to tear upon seeing the Makom Hamikdash. Tearing upon Seeing Jerusalem

An unresolved dispute is whether we should tear Kria upon seeing Jerusalem today. Many Poskim (see the Siddur Minchat Yerushalayim p.1202) believe that there is no need to tear since Jews maintain control over Jerusalem. These authorities believe that the obligation to tear upon seeing Jerusalem emerges from the loss of Jerusalem as the political capital of the Jewish State. Thus, when Jews control Jerusalem the obligation to tear no longer applies. Rav Schachter notes that Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik disagrees and asserts that the obligation to tear upon seeing Jerusalem still applies. The Rav believes that the obligation to tear flows from Jerusalem's status as an extension of the Bait Hamikdash. The Rav cites in this context the Mishna (Keilim 1:6-9) that notes the ten levels of holiness that apply to different locations in Eretz Yisrael. The Mishna states that the holiness of Jerusalem stems from the fact that one may eat certain Korbanot (Kodshei Kalim) and Maaser Sheini there. The Rav argues that we see that the essence of Jerusalem is its status as an extension of the Bait Hamikdash. Another proof to this assertion is that in Sefer Devarim the Torah always refers to both Jerusalem and the Bait Hamikdash as "the place that Hashem will choose to rest His presence there." The fact that the same term is used to describe both places demonstrates that Jerusalem's identity is intertwined with that of the Bait Hamikdash. Accordingly, the Rav believes that since we must perform Kria upon seeing the Makom Hamikdash today, despite Jewish sovereignty over the area, we must also tear upon seeing Jerusalem. Accordingly, the dispute whether we should perform Kria upon seeing Jerusalem today depends on whether the obligation to tear is an expression of mourning the loss of the Bait Hamikdash or the loss of Jewish control over Jerusalem. Rav Schachter notes that common practice is not to tear upon seeing Jerusalem. Rav Schachter explains that since the dispute whether we must tear for Jerusalem applies today remains unresolved, we say Halacha Kidivrei Hameikel Biavel (see Moed Katan 19b), that we follow the lenient opinion regarding Aveilut. Moreover, Rav Schachter notes that if we choose to be strict regarding the rabbinic obligation to tear upon seeing Jerusalem, then we would thereby be lenient regarding the biblical prohibition to engage in needless destruction (see Pitchei Teshuva Yoreh Deah 340:1 where a similar line of reasoning is employed). Judean Cities controlled by the Palestinian Authority

In May 2000, I asked both Rav Hershel Schachter and Rav Yehuda Henkin whether one should perform Kria upon seeing Judean cities that are regrettably controlled by the Palestinian

Authority, such as Bait Lechem. Rav Schachter replied that one should tear upon these cities, as the existence of Jewish sovereignty over the area determines the obligation to perform Kria. Rav Henkin, though, argues that one should not perform Kria on these cities, as he believes that it is illogical to not perform Kria upon seeing Jerusalem and yet perform Kria when seeing a Judean city. One should ask his Rav for guidance regarding this question. Interestingly, the Shaarei Teshuva (561:1, this work was written more than two hundred years ago and is printed in most editions of Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim) notes that common practice is not to tear upon seeing the city of Chevron (even before the Israeli recovery of control over Chevron in 1967). The reason is that Chevron is an Ir Miklat (city of refuge, see Yehoshua 20:7) and is technically not defined as a Judean city (even though it is located in Judea). The Shaarei Teshuva, though, cites opinions that believe that this is a "weak" basis to excuse people from tearing upon sitting in Chevron. Rav Hershel Schachter (B'ikvei Hatzon pp.105-106) explains the stringent position at length and explains that even if Chevron is technically not defined as a Judean city its geographic location defines it as part of the core of Jewish control over Eretz Yisrael. The location is what determines the obligation to tear and not its status as a Judean city. Rav Schachter also demonstrates that Chevron is categorized as a Judean city, despite its status as an Ir Miklat.

#### Conclusion

The obligation to tear Kria over Judean cities, Jerusalem, and the site of the Bait Hamikdash reflects fundamental Torah beliefs about our relationship to Eretz Yisrael and its different components at different junctures in Jewish History. It also expresses our longing for a time when the Bait Hamikdash will be rebuilt and these Halchos rendered moot.

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From: RabbiWein@jewishDestiny.com Sent: May 08, 2003  
Subject: Rabbi Wein's Weekly Columns Parsha Archive May 09, 2003  
EMOR

The very concept of an elite class among Jews is somehow disturbing to our modern mindset and societal value system. Our slavish devotion to the ideal of democracy has forced many Jews to forsake all Jewish values and traditions in order to prove us truly democratic. The current unceasing campaign against religious Jewry by the secular Left in Israel carries as its banner the cynical slogan, "We are for a democratic society in Israel." Of course democracy has many definitions in many different circles. As usual, it depends on whose ox is being gored. The religious are always guilty of "incitement" and "coercion" while the erstwhile leftist champions of democracy are only practicing "freedom of speech" and "the will of the majority." But, be that as it may, it is obvious to all of us that the democratic principles that form so much of a basis to our current Western civilization are dedicated to the principle of equality among citizens and frown upon the existence of a prescribed, dynastic, elite group within the society. Therefore, the special status of the children of Aaron - the kohanim - the priests of Israel - within the Jewish society smacks of being undemocratic. And yet the Torah, in its Divine wisdom ordains the creation of such a class of elite public servants within the body of Israel society in order to further the national challenge and goal of becoming a "a holy nation and a kingdom of priests." The world has left a most horrific century behind, one that has seen almost 150,000,000 human beings done to death by war, governmental policies and brutal social engineering schemes. One of those social engineering schemes, practiced in Russia and China and in other Marxist-run societies as well, was to make

everyone equal in those societies. Of course, some people were more equal than others, but basically the idea was to rid society of leaders, intellectuals, religious models and others who were "bourgeois" or "elitist." A drab facelessness covered the landscape of those countries and a tyranny almost unequalled in human annals devoured its "equal" citizens. And by making everyone "equal" these tyrannies attempted to effectively silence any dissident thoughts or politically incorrect behavior. For many centuries there was a concept of noblesse oblige in European and American society. The wealthy, the powerful, the talented and gifted were felt to have an obligation to work for the betterment of their society as a whole, simply because they were blessed with an unequal and favorable share in life's bounties. This concept was based upon the foundations of Torah thought that legislated special rules and obligations for the priest, the Levite, the Torah scholar and the king and temporal leaders of Israel. In democratizing the concept of leadership in our current world, we have lost the sense of obligation and duty that should inspire the elite of the society. There are higher standards by which to judge those who claim the right to rule and strive to be part of history's elite. Not everyone is the same. No one is above the law. But some people, the leaders, the kohanim, the representatives of Torah and its people must realize that there is a higher law that binds them to supremely moral and inspirational behavior. Shabat Shalom. Rabbi Berel Wein

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From: Kol Torah [koltorah@koltorah.org] Sent: May 08, 2003  
Subject: Kol Torah Parshat Emor KOL TORAH A Student Publication of the Torah Academy of Bergen County Parshat Emor 8 Iyar 5763 May 10, 2003 Vol.12 No.28

This week's issue of Kol Torah has been sponsored by Stuart and Ora Verstandig (Kew Garden Hills) in honor of Rabbi Steven Pruzansky, an outstanding dedicated leader for Klal Yisrael. In light of the current situation in Eretz Yisrael, it is important for everyone to do their utmost for the State of Israel and Klal Yisrael.

The NORPAC trip to Washington, May 21, is a great opportunity to do something for Klal Yisrael, meeting with Senators and Congressmen to support the State of Israel. [For more information: visit [www.norpacweb.org](http://www.norpacweb.org)

#### THROUGH HEAVEN'S EYES

RABBI AVI POLLAK

The first miracle that Elisha HaNavi performed during his many years of leadership was the sweetening of the bitter waters of Yericho. The Pesukim in Melachim Bet (Perek 3) record that the people of Yericho complained that their water supply had turned sour and unusable. Facing a dire crisis, they turned to Elisha for help. Elisha took a bowl, filled it with salt and promptly poured it into the water supply. In a moment, the water became pure and usable.

This story is strikingly similar to the miracle at Marah (see Shmot 15:22-26). Just days after the Jews crossed the sea they ran out of water. When they finally encountered an oasis in the desert, its waters were found to be bitter and unfit for drinking. The desperate Jewish People turned to their leader, Moshe Rabbeinu, for help. Moshe took a tree - etz, threw it into the water and miraculously sweetened the waters.

In both accounts of terrible drought, the Jews were saved with almost identical miracles; bitter waters were sweetened with an equally bitter added agent.

Why did G-d and the prophets choose to sweeten the waters by adding more bitterness to the waters rather than adding more sweetness?

The Midrash underscores this difficulty by noting that G-d does not work the same way that people do. When people want to

sweeten something bitter, they add something sweet. When G-d wants to sweeten something bitter, he adds more bitterness.

What are Chazal trying to teach us about G-d in this puzzling Midrash?

Some Meforshim explain that the key to our questions lies in appreciating the completely opposite perspectives with which man and G-d view the world. Man tries to improve difficult situations by injecting good or by removing bad. But G-d does not need to add or remove good or bad to improve a situation. G-d demonstrates to us that the bad that we observe is only superficially bad and from His perspective everything that occurs fits into the master plan. We strive to believe that the very things that seem most bitter to us are really not bad in the end and are choreographed by G-d Himself. Even bitterness can taste sweet when viewed "through heaven's eyes."

## LIVE TORAH, LOVE TORAH

BY WILLIE ROTH

In the first Pasuk in this week's Parsha, Hashem says to Moshe: "Emor El Hakohanim Bnei Aharon Viamarta Aleihem," "Say to the Kohanim the sons of Aharon and tell them." Immediately, Rashi explains why there is a double language of "Emor Viamarta" by saying that Moshe was supposed to speak to the adult Kohanim who should warn and educate the young Kohanim about everything that is said.

However, Rav Moshe Feinstein z"l asks why the word "Viamarta" has anything to do with the children - the word Viamarta could be referring to the adult Kohanim!. He explains that for a father to simply repeat to his child what was told to him is not considered educating the child. If the child does not see that the commandments are precious to the father, then the child will never listen to the father. If all that the child hears from the father is the difficulty that the father endures in regard to Shabbos and Yom Tov, then all that the child will learn is that he must stand up to tests. As a result, the child will not be educated and he will say that he cannot fulfill these tests because he is too weak to conquer his Yetzer Hara. However, when the child hears how beloved these Mitzvot are to the father, and how these Mitzvot are the father's way of life, then the child will be educated. This is why the double language is necessary.

One word alludes to the obligation that the father has to fulfill the mitzvot, and the other word is for the love that the father has for the Mitzvah. Only a lesson like this can be told over to the child.

In these crucial times, it is important for a person to recognize how precious the mitzvot are. During the Seder on Pesach, it was the wicked son that was not properly educated by the father.

This son did not see how beloved the mitzvot are to the Jewish People. However, with the Shavuot approaching, we have a chance to reaccept the Torah properly, and we can accept the Mitzvot out of love. Only then can a person be truly considered educated - when he learns to love the Torah.

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From: Rabbi Riskin's Shabbat Shalom List

[parsha@ohrtorahstone.org.il] Sent: May 06, 2003 To:

Shabbat\_Shalom@ohrtorahstone.org.il Subject: Shabbat Shalom: Parshat Emor by RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN

Shabbat Shalom: Parshat Emor (Leviticus 21:1-24:23) By Shlomo Riskin

Efrat, Israel - "And you shall count for yourselves from the morrow of the Sabbath (of the first day of the Festival of the leavened bread), from the day in which you bring the omer offering lifted high, seven complete weeks (of counting) shall there be..." (Leviticus 23:15)

What is the main function of the Jewish State, the State of Israel, and is that function substantively different from the significance of the City of Jerusalem and the Holy Temple? Rav Avraham Yitzchak Hakohen Kook, the first Chief Rabbi of Israel, often made the point that the barley omer offering on the second day of the Festival of Matzot (Passover) permitted the new crop of grain to be eaten within the land of Israel, and the two loaves of wheat bread that were brought on Shavuot seven weeks later permitted the new crop of grain for the Holy Temple and Jerusalem. The daily counting between both offerings emphasize the necessary connection between both concepts, the importance of joining the vision of the State with the vision of the Temple. What do these two places and ideals really signify and symbolize?

In order to achieve proper understanding, I would like to remind you of the momentous events which occurred during the First Commonwealth reign of King Hezekiah (Seventh Century BCE), a religious reformer who attempted to destroy idolatry and restore the Holy Temple to its proper place of glory (Kings 2,18: 1-8). When Sennacherib, the King of Assyria sent a great army to the ramparts of Jerusalem, "on that very night an angel of the Lord went out and struck down 185,000 people of the Assyrian camp" - enabling Hezekiah King of Judah to vanquish his powerful foe. Unfortunately, neither Hezekiah's religious reforms nor his miraculous military victory bore the kind of positive fruit that might have emerged. In the words of the Talmudic Sages, "the Holy One blessed be He desired to make Hezekiah the Messiah and Sennacherib Gog and Magog. Said the Measure of Judgement before the Holy One Blessed be He, 'Master of the Universe, if You didn't make David King of Israel the Messiah after he praised You with so many songs and blessings (the Book of Psalms!), how can You make Hezekiah the Messiah when, after You did all these miracles for him, he did not even praise You with one song? (B.T. Sanhedrin 94 a)." Imagine what Jewish history would have been like had only Hezekiah given proper praise to G-d! Wherein lay Hezekiah's fatal flaw? After all, the Talmud waxed poetic about the situation in Judah during his reign: "Hezekiah planted a sword at the entrance to every House of Study, declaring that anyone who did not study Torah would be pierced by that sword. They later investigated and found that from Dan to Be'er Sheva there was not one ignorant Jew, that from Gvat to Antiparis there was not one male or female child, not one man or woman, who was not completely conversant in the laws of ritual purity..." (B.T. Sanhedrin, ibid.). So if everything was so good, why didn't Hezekiah give praises to G-d?

The truth is that everything was not so good. After this outstanding military victory, the Bible reports: "But Hezekiah did not reciprocate the benevolence that he was shown, for his heart became haughty... Hezekiah had very many riches and honor. He made himself treasure houses for silver, gold, precious stones... storehouses for produce of grain, wine and oil, and stables for... Animals and herds. He made himself cities...(Chronicles 2, 32:25-29)

To make matters worse, when emissaries came from Babylonia "to inquire about the miracle that had occurred (outside of

Jerusalem)" (Ibid. 31), Hezekiah "showed them his whole treasure house – the silver, the gold, the spices, the fine oil, his warehouse and everything that was found in his treasuries; there was nothing that Hezekiah did not show them in his palace and in all his realm" (Kings 2, 20:12,13). The prophet Isaiah even rebukes him for his crass conduct, telling him that all of his treasures as well as some of his children, will be carted off to Babylonian exile (ibid. 17,18).

Hezekiah's fatal flaw stems from the fact that despite his desire to serve G-d and destroy idolatry, he remained enamored of all of the entrapments of a secular monarchy, especially the power and the wealth. Undoubtedly the very first concern of every State, including a Jewish State, must be to provide protection and sustenance for its citizens. The Torah understands this – and praises the land of Israel for providing sufficient fruits (Deuteronomy Chapter 8) and for serving as a safe fortress (the covenant with Abraham – including boundaries) for the children of Israel. But the soul of the land must be Jerusalem and the Holy Temple, the realization that all of our bounty comes from G-d and must be shared with the priests and the levites, the widow and the orphan, the stranger and the unfortunate. This is the content of the speech-song made by the pilgrim Israelite when he brings his fruit, fruits of wheat bread to Jerusalem on Shavuot (Deuteronomy 26: 5-13): "You shall sing and you shall say ' in the most correct translation'; this is the connection between the omer sacrifice which addresses our gratitude for land, sustenance and protection and the two loaves which addresses our profound gratitude to G-d and our spiritual sensitivity to the need to share with those who do not have, the message of the Holy Temple. Hezekiah never really made this critical connection between the Festival of Matzot and the Festival of Shavuot between the barley omer offering and the wheat first-fruits offering, between the new crops for the land-state and the new crops for the Jerusalem Temple. He got stuck on the wealth and power of the State – and the prophet during his reign, Isaiah, describes a Jerusalem fraught with ritual religiosity but devoid of ethical sensitivity (Isaiah 1 and 30). He even forces people, indeed children, to study Torah by planting a sword in front of the Study Houses, and when Babylonian emissaries wish to understand the nature of the Divine miracle, he can only point to his material wealth and power. Hezekiah lacks the song of the first fruits, the song which truly links him to G-d because it links him to all of the unfortunates (Deuteronomy 26:5).

May we in Israel reborn make certain not to repeat Hezekiah's mistake and to sing the song of G-d and human concern when we sing our songs of praise on Israeli Independence Day! Shabbat Shalom. You can find Rabbi Riskin's parshiot on the web at: <http://www.ohrtorahstone.org.il/parsha/index.htm>  
Ohr Torah Stone Colleges and Graduate Programs Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, Chancellor Rabbi Chaim Brovender, Dean To subscribe, E-mail to: <Shabbat\_Shalom-on@ohrtorahstone.org.il>

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From: Shlomo Katz [skatz@torah.org] Sent: Tuesday, May 06, 2003 9:48 PM To: hamaayan@torah.org Subject: HaMaayan / The Torah Spring - Parashat Emor

Hamaayan / The Torah Spring Edited by Shlomo Katz Emor: Do You Know Your Own Power Volume XVII, No. 31 8 Iyar 5763  
Sponsored by The Rutstein family, in memory of mother and grandmother Peshya Batya bat Zemach a"n (Bessie Rutstein) The Katz family, on the yearzeit of Yehuda ben Shmuel Indig a"n Today's Learning: O.C. 25:13-26:2 Daf Yomi (Bavli): Avodah Zarah 58

A large part of this week's parashah is devoted to the laws of the festivals - Pesach, Shavuot, Sukkot, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Hakippurim. These laws are introduced by the verse, "G-d's appointed festivals that you are to designate as holy convocations." This verse teaches, the Gemara

comments, that "you" - the bet din - are to designate when the festivals will occur. (This was done by hearing the testimony of the witnesses who saw the new moon and declaring which day would be Rosh Chodesh.) Even if the bet din were to miscalculate and declare Rosh Chodesh to be on the wrong day - even if bet din were to intentionally declare Rosh Chodesh on the wrong day - its declaration would be binding.

This halachah is reflected in a number of Midrashim. They record, for example, that the angels ask G-d, "When is Rosh Hashanah?" "I do not know," G-d responds. "Let us all go down to the bet din and see what they have decreed." This is reflected also in our Yom Tov prayers, in which we recite the blessing, "Who sanctifies Yisrael and the festivals." This reflects the fact that G-d sanctifies Yisrael, and Yisrael sanctifies the festivals. In contrast, the parallel blessing on Shabbat is simply, "Who sanctifies the Shabbat." Yisrael is not mentioned because we have no role in determining when Shabbat will occur.

R' Joseph B. Soloveitchik z"l (1903-1993) notes that G-d has literally given some of His dominion to us. Rosh Hashanah is the day when He judges us, yet we decide when Rosh Hashanah will be! In what other court system does the defendant enjoy that privilege? This power of the Jewish people sheds light as well on the Jewish view of kedushah / holiness, says R' Soloveitchik. Kedushah is not some magical force that appears on its own; it is something that we create through our deeds. Man can imbue time with kedushah and man can imbue objects with kedushah. Without our mitzvot, there would be no kedushah. (Divrei Hashkafah pp. 138-142)

"Speak to Bnei Yisrael and say to them, ' Mo'adei Hashem / G-d's appointed festivals that you are to designate as holy convocations, these are My appointed festivals. For six days labor may be done, and the seventh day is a day of complete rest, a holy convocation . . ." (23:2-3)

Why does the Torah say that it will speak about the festivals, but before doing so, it speaks about Shabbat? R' Aryeh Leib Zunz z"l (Poland; died 3 Iyar 1833) answers:

Our Sages say that a person's annual budget is determined on Rosh Hashanah except for what he spends in honor of Shabbat and Yom Tov. The Arizal states that this is alluded to by the word "mo'ed" / "appointed festival" (spelled "mem-vav-ayin-dalet"). Specifically, the gematria of the letters 'vav-ayin-dalet' equals twice 'mem' -- indicating that a person's wealth will be multiplied after he begins to honor the mo'ed. This, explains R' Zunz, is why Shabbat had to be mentioned here, so that it too would be considered a "mo'ed." (Me'lo Ha'omer)

"In the seventh month, on the first of the month, there shall be a rest day for you, a zichron / remembrance with shofar blasts, a holy convocation." (23:24)

R' Yaakov Ba'al Ha'turim z"l (Spain; 14th century) writes: The word "zichron" appears three times in the mesorah (i.e., the traditional spelling of words in Tanach): here; in the verse (Kohélet 1:11), "As there is no remembrance of the first ones . . ."; and in the verse (Kohélet 2:16), "For there is no comparison between the remembrance of the wise man and of the fool at all . . ."

R' Gavriel Ze'ev Margolis z"l (1848-1935; rabbi in Lithuania and Boston) writes that this mesorah teaches the following lesson: Our verse states that blowing the shofar will cause G-d to remember us favorably. One might ask: Why won't G-d remember us favorably in any case, in the merit of our ancestors? The answer may be found in Chazal's teaching that the merit of prior generations protects their descendants only when the later generations follow in their ancestors' footsteps. In contrast, blowing the shofar, which inspires repentance, causes G-d to remember us favorably no matter what our deeds have been. Thus, the mesorah may be read as a give-and-take, as follows:

"There shall be a rest day for you, a zichron / remembrance with shofar blasts." Why are the shofar blasts necessary? "Is there no remembrance of the first ones" - i.e., of the merits of our ancestors?" The answer is, "No! For there is no comparison between the remembrance of the wise man" - who follows in his ancestors' footsteps and who will be protected by their merits - "and of the fool" - who sins, and who will not be helped by the merits of his ancestors. (Torat Gavriel)

"The son of an Israelite woman went out . . . The son of the Israelite woman pronounced the Name and blasphemed . . ." (24:10-11)

The Midrash asks: "From where did he go out? He left his world." R' Pinchas Horowitz z"l (rabbi of Frankfurt, known as the Hafla'ah; 1730-1805) explains: Commentaries ask how this blasphemer could have been executed, since it is clear that he was not warned. (A warning is a halachic prerequisite to execution, yet the Torah is clear that before this incident occurred, Bnei Yisrael did not even know what the punishment for blasphemy was.) The answer is that a person may be executed if he is warned that he will receive a harsher punishment than he actually deserves, and he says, "Even so, I will sin." This blasphemer was warned that he would forfeit his share in the World to Come if he blasphemed, and he accepted that punishment. "He left his world," as the Midrash says. Therefore, he could receive the less harsh punishment of stoning. (Panim Yafot)

#### Pirkei Avot

"Rabbi Elazar Ha'modai says, 'One who desecrates sacred things, who disgraces the Festivals, who humiliates his fellow in public, who nullifies the covenant of our forefather Avraham, or who perverts the Torah [by interpreting it] contrary to the halachah - though he may have Torah and good deeds, he has no share in the World to Come.'"  
(Chapter 3, Mishnah 15)

R' Gedaliah Silverstone z"l (1871-1944; rabbi in Belfast, Ireland and Washington, D.C.) writes that this mishnah is speaking of talking in shul. Firstly, those who talk in shul desecrate those holy places. On Shabbat and Festivals, when children come to shul and see their fathers behaving thus, the Shabbat and Festivals themselves end up being disgraced. What do people discuss in shul? Much of it is lashon hara - humiliating their fellows in public. The effect of all of this is to drive people away from shul, with the result that those children discard the covenant of the Patriarchs and pervert the Torah.  
(Lev Avot)

"He [Rabbi Akiva] used to say, 'Everything is given on collateral, and a net is spread over all the living. The shop is open; the Merchant [G-d] extends credit; the ledger is open; the hand writes; and whoever wishes to borrow, let him come and borrow. The collectors make their rounds constantly, every day, and collect payment from the person whether he realizes it or not. They have proof to rely upon; the judgment is a truthful judgment; and everything is prepared for the banquet.'"  
(Chapter 3, Mishnah 20)

The "banquet" is a reference to the final reward after death. Why is it called a banquet? R' Simcha of Vitry z"l (see below) quotes R' Meshulam ben Klonimus of Rome z"l who explains that just as at a banquet, each person is assigned a seat according to his rank, so in Gan Eden, each person is given a "seat" commensurate with his performance of mitzvot. In this light we can understand the verse (Kohelet 12:5), "So man goes to his eternal home." Each person has his own home in the World to Come appropriate to what he accomplished during his life.  
(Machzor Vitry)

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The editors hope these brief 'snippets' will engender further study and discussion of Torah topics ("lehagdil Torah u'leha'adirah"), and your letters are appreciated. Web archives are available starting with Rosh HaShanah 5758 (1997) at <http://www.torah.org/learning/hamaayan/>. Text archives from 1990 through the present are available at <http://www.acoast.com/~seh/hamaayan/>. Donations to HaMaayan are tax-deductible. Torah.org: The Judaism Site <http://www.torah.org/> Project Genesis, Inc. [learn@torah.org](mailto:learn@torah.org)

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From: [nzion@mail.zahav.net.il](mailto:nzion@mail.zahav.net.il) Sent: Thursday, May 08, 2003 8:43 PM To: Ohr Yerushalayim Weekly Parsha Page Subject: OHR YERUSHALAYIM WEEKLY PARSHA PAGE - Parshas Emor  
OHR YERUSHALAYIM WEEKLY PARSHA PAGE  
Parshas Emor  
AVOID DEATH AT ALL COSTS  
BY RABBI MOSHE GORDON

Parshas Emor begins with the prohibition of Tumas Kohanim. This isur is unique in that it is the only instance that the Torah actually prohibits contact with tuma. Classically, tuma is just a reality - a status that limits the person or keli that becomes tamei - but there is no issur to actually become

tamei. Why, then, does the Torah place this issur of tumas meis, and why is it specifically directed to Kohanim?

The question is compounded in light of the Minchas Chinuch's discussion (Mitzva 263:34) that even in cases where the kohen won't actually become tamei, there still is an issur involved. For example, if there is a safek tuma in a reshus harabim, where the halacha dictates that "safeiko tahor," the kohen still is forbidden to pass. According to this shita, which the Achiezer 3:65:6 holds of as well, the issur isn't to become tamei, but rather to have "contact" with tuma. (It should be noted that the Marcheshes 1:2 argues with these opinions and holds that there is no issur in a case where the kohen won't become tamei.) What is Torah teaching us?

The Shem MiShmuel explains that in order to understand this prohibition we must examine the root of the idea of death in the Torah. Chazal, based on pesukim in Parshas Bereishis, tell us that when Adam was created he was meant to live forever. Only after the sin was death decreed upon him and the rest of the world. What was the source of the sin of the eitz hadaas, why did it happen? Here we find an important chain of events. Adam sinned after Chava encouraged him. Chava sinned due to the seduction of the Nachash. How did the Nachash convince Chava to sin? He convinced her regarding the "reason" for the issur of eating from the tree. In Bereishis 3:5, we learn, "Because E-lokim knows that the day you eat from the tree your eyes will be opened and you'll be equal to G-d in knowing good and bad." Accepting this reasoning caused her to not take the Mitzva as seriously as she should have. What should her response have been? Temimus. Pure faith in HaShem and His Mitzvos. The pasuk in Devarim 18:3 teaches, "Tamim teheyeh im HaShem E-lokecha." Rashi explains that we should have a pure faith in G-d and not try to delve into all the reasons behind His ways, actions, and commandments. This should have been Chava's attitude. If G-d said no, then no. My own subjective ideas are irrelevant in face of a Divine command. In essence, her lack of temimus brought death to the world.

This connection is brought out in other places in Chazal as well. Yaakov Avinu was an "Ish Tam" (Bereishis 25:27). This is why we find the Gemara in Taanis 5 that "Yaakov Avinu lo meis." Also, Rashi in Bamidbar 19:22 teaches that at Matan Torah, when the Jews proclaimed, "Naase V'Nisma," an acceptance of temimus, they were healed of all physical handicaps and the gezeiras misa was rescinded. However, when they sinned by the Eigel, which was based on a lack of temimus (calculating when Moshe would return), the decree of death was reintroduced.

This yesod will help explain our Parsha. The Zohar HaKadosh asks why the pasuk is worded, "Emor el hakohanim bnei Aharon" Do we not know who the kohanim are? Ramban (VaYikra 21:17) notes that the p'sul baal mum, that a kohen must be physically complete to serve in the Mikdash, is introduced by the words, "One of your descendants" This implies that Aharon himself is not included in this issur. The Ramban notes that, in fact, there was no reason for the halachos of baal mum to be addressed to Aharon. Aharon was "kulo yafe u'mum lo yehey bo." There will be no blemish on him. This is because he was a tamim. He cared about nothing other than the Ratzon HaShem. We find numerous examples of Aharon's pure faith in the Mitzvos. He was overjoyed at his brother being selected as the leader over him, his relentless pursuit of Shalom, etc. This temimus expressed itself in physical temimus (perfection) as well.

This is the simple answer to the Zohar's question. The issur of tumas meis for a kohen is addressed to the Bnei Aharon. As children of Aharon the tamim, they must strive for temimus. True temimus precludes death. Therefore, the kohanim are warned not to defile the trait of Aharon. After all, Shevet Levi didn't sin with the Eigel. To some small degree the reinstitution of death doesn't relate to them. The physical temimus that all Klal Yisrael had at Matan Torah is retained by them through the p'sul baal mum, and the gezairas misa is circumvented through the issur tuma. They must separate from any contact with death as a constant reminder of the ultimate purpose of life: tamim teheyeh.

E-mail comments or questions to Rabbi Gordon at [mdgordon@bezeqint.net](mailto:mdgordon@bezeqint.net).

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From: National Council of Young Israel [YI\_Torah@lb.bcentral.com]  
Subject: Parshat Emor8 Iyar 5763 May 10, 2003 Daf Yomi: Avodah Zara  
58 Guest Author:  
RABBI SHOLOM STEINIG  
Young Israel of Bayside, NY  
In the context of Jewish history--from Pharaoh and Amalek, through the Shoah and the current wars, G-d help us. Our people have come to

understand Kiddush HaShem, Sanctification of G-d's Name, all too well. We know that to perform an act that reflects our love of HaShem, and even more, to do so in a public setting, is perhaps the greatest act any of us may hope for. Over the centuries, countless numbers of our co-religionists have been made to pay for their Yiddishkeit with their lives, and millions accepted their fate with courage and faith, giving the words al Kiddush HaShem a poignancy beyond imagination. Who could not be moved by the recent story of the loving father telling his brave young son to recite Shema after a cowardly bombing attack, so that his pure and perfect soul would leave his body al Kiddush HaShem?

Our history echoes with stories such as this, and they will be told and re-told for as long as we exist. No one looks forward to their own death, yet we all hope and pray that our deaths, when they come, will reflect a lifetime of values, of morality, and humanity. After all, we spend our entire lives preparing for the moment when we leave this world. To do so while sanctifying G-d's Name publicly is the greatest act of Kedushah, Holiness, imaginable.

This week's Torah reading includes the positive Mitzvah of Kiddush HaShem, coming immediately after the prohibition against Chillul HaShem, profanation of or embarrassing G-d's Name. Coming as it does following a series of Mitzvos regarding the qualifications for an animal to be fit as a sacrifice, this incredible command may be overlooked in the text. But how crucial it is for our existence! The opportunity for Kiddush HaShem is so great, that when confronted with it, we have no choice but to do HaShem's will.

I do not mean to be morbid. Kiddush HaShem is more than knowing how to die; it is knowing how to live each and every moment as though HaShem's kavod, honor, depends upon it. Behaving honestly, with integrity and with sincere human compassion are ways to be Mekadesh Shem Shamayim as well. This means that our everyday "normal" behavior must always be imbued with our Jewish values. Behaving as though we know the whole world is watching is nothing new for a Jew. They've been watching us for centuries.

The opportunity to act Al Kiddush HaShem is not only available to martyrs, or those who receive too much change at the supermarket. We are told that several components of the prayer service are also considered to be acts of Kiddush HaShem, and therefore may not be recited unless one is in the presence of a Minyan, ten Jewish males above the age of thirteen. These include Kaddish and Kedushah (note that their names imply their intrinsic holiness) as well as Borchu, Torah reading and even the privilege of davening with a Shaliach Tzibur, a Chazzan.

I want to cite an opinion which is not accepted as Halachah, but deserving of mention nevertheless. In his Hilchos Tefillah, the Laws of Prayer, Rambam tells us that even the Kedushah found in the first of the two Brachos before Shema in the Shacharis service should only be said with a minyan. It is written that the Rambam's son, Rav Avrohom, said that his father had retracted from that opinion and permitted one to say this Kedushah even when davening alone. A distinction is made between the Kedushah in Shemoneh Esray, which is our attempt to sanctify G-d's Name just like the angels do, as opposed to this Kedushah, which just tells, story-like, that this is what the angels do. Since it doesn't bring us up to the level of the angels, a minyan is not required.

The Mitzvah of Kiddush HaShem is so great, we see that even the angels fear missing such an awesome opportunity. The angel that wrestled with Ya'akov Avinu struggled to leave his grasp once it saw that the sun was rising. Our Rabbis tell us that this angel had been chosen to sing in the Heavenly choir that morning, and that if it missed its chance, it would never have the opportunity to sing before G-d again. In its panic the angel actually tore the leg muscle of one of our Avos! Even more outrageously, the angel agreed to give Ya'akov a blessing, even though it had not been given that assignment from Heaven, because this was the only way it could get free! Do we realize how amazing this Torah scene is? An angel takes it upon itself to cripple one of the Avos, and then gives him a blessing without having had a Divine mandate to do so. And why? Because it didn't want to miss out on one "Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh," one "Yehay Sh'may Rabbah!" Is it a wonder that some people try to make a point never to be late for shul? Isn't it even a greater wonder that some people do show up late for shul, and some do not even make it a priority to daven regularly with a minyan?

To bring us to approach the level of martyrs and angels, and to allow us to recite prayers that otherwise are beyond the scope of the individual to recite them, we must come to see the incredible power of davening with a Minyan and how the opportunity for Kiddush HaShem is a privilege that

must never be wasted. But it goes even beyond that. G-d in Heaven Himself awaits our acts of Kiddush HaShem. The Zohar in Parshas Terumah tells us that without Holiness, Kedushah, in the world below, there is no Kedushah in the world above! Incredible! We say Kadish and Kedushah here so that the Kadish and Kedushah recited by tens of thousands of angels can have efficacy. Without our prayers, their songs are meaningless. We invest our own words and the Heavenly realms themselves with Holiness every time we respond to Devarim ShebeKedushah, those parts of the prayer service that require a minyan. That is the power of a "Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh," and a "Yehay Sh'may Rabbah."

We refer to the obligations of our People as "Ol Mitzvos," the burden of the Mitzvos. While this may be so, we must also consider the tremendous advantages that Mitzvos opportunities provide for us. Those whose participation helps to constitute a minyan, enabling all to say those prayers which may only be said with a minyan, stand on the highest levels of G-d's Creation. They are Mekadesh HaShem, they sanctify G-d's Name, as do the holy martyrs of our history and as do the Heavenly choirs. They invest Heaven itself with Holiness by dint of their acts of sanctification here on Earth. This greatest of all acts is within the grasp of all! Just daven with a minyan in shul, the true home of Kiddush HaShem.

This D'var Torah is written in honor of my son, Aharon Yehoshua (Ari to his friends) on the occasion of his Bar Mitzvah.

NCYI's Weekly Divrei Torah Bulletin is sponsored by the Henry, Bertha and Edward Rothman Foundation - Rochester, New York; Cleveland, Ohio; Circleville, Ohio

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From: Menachem Leibtag [tsc@bezeqint.net] [Par-reg]EMOR - shiur from last year

[RABBI MENACHEM LEIBTAG]

THE TANACH STUDY CENTER [http://www.tanach.org] In Memory of Rabbi Abraham Leibtag Shiurim in Chumash & Navi by Menachem Leibtag PARSHAT EMOR

What is a 'mo'ed'? Most of us would answer - a Jewish holiday [i.e. a 'yom-tov'. Most English Bibles translate mo'ed - a fixed time.]

However, earlier in Chumash, the Hebrew word 'chag' was used to describe the Holidays (e.g. see Shmot 12:14, 13:6, 23:16). So why does Parshat Emor prefer the word mo'ed instead? [See 23:2,4,37,44.] Furthermore, it is just by chance that the same Hebrew word mo'ed is also used to describe the Mishkan, i.e. the 'Ohel MO'ED'? [See Vayikra 1:1, Shmot 30:34 etc.] In this week's shiur, we attempt to answer these questions by taking a closer look at Vayikra chapter 23.

**TWO CALENDARS** Before we begin, a little background concerning the nature of the Biblical calendar. Even though we commonly refer to the Jewish calendar as 'lunar', in Chumash, we find the use of both 'solar' and 'lunar' dates. The solar calendar in Chumash corresponds to the seasons of the agricultural year ('kufot ha-shana'): spring = 'aviv' (see Shmot 13:3 & 23:14), and autumn = 'be-tzeit ha-shana' (see Shmot 23:16 & Devarim 11:12). The lunar calendar is based on the monthly cycle of the moon. These two calendars are correlated by the periodic addition of an 'extra' month to assure that the FIRST month of the lunar year will always correspond with the spring equinox (see Shmot 12:1-2).

**INTRODUCTION** Even though Parshat Emor discusses all of the Jewish holidays, these same holidays are also discussed in the other books of Chumash as well: \* in Sefer Shmot: Parshat Mishpatim (23:14-17) & Ki Tisa (34:23); \* in Sefer Bamidbar: Parshat Pinchas (chapters 28-29); \* in Sefer Devarim: Parshat Re'eh (chapter 16).

However, within these four 'parshiot' we find two distinct sets of holidays: A) The 'SHALOSH REGALIM' i.e. - chag ha-Matzot, Shavu'ot, & Sukkot; B) The 'YAMIM NORA'IM' i.e. - Rosh ha-Shana, Yom Kippur & Shmini Atzeret.

Sefer Shmot and Sefer Devarim discuss ONLY the shalosh regalim, while Sefer Vayikra and Sefer Bamidbar discuss both the shalosh regalim AND the yamim nora'im.

At first glance this 'multiple presentation' of the chagim in FOUR different books of the Chumash appears to be superfluous. After all, would it not have been more logical for the Torah to present ALL of these laws together in ONE parsha (and in ONE Sefer)? However, since the Torah does present the holidays in four different 'sefarim', we can safely assume that there must be something special about each presentation, and that each relates to the primary theme of its respective 'sefer'. Even though our shiur will focus on the chagim in Emor, we must begin our study with

the chagim in Parshat Mishpatim, for that 'parshia' contains the first mention of the SHALOSH REGALIM in Chumash. [As the shiur is very textual (more than usual), it is recommended that you follow it with a Tanach at hand.]

THE SHALOSH REGALIM IN PARSHAT MISHPATIM Let's take a quick look at Shmot 23:14-17, noting how the shalosh regalim are first presented:

"Three times a year celebrate to Me: (1) Keep CHAG HA-MATZOT, eat matza... at the mo'ed [appointed time] in the SPRING [when you went out of Egypt]... (2) and a CHAG KATZIR [a grain HARVEST holiday] for the first- fruits of what you have sown in your field, (3) and a CHAG HA-ASIF [a fruit gathering holiday] at the conclusion of the [agricultural] year... "Three times a years, each male should come to be seen by G-d..." (see Shmot 23:14-17).

Note how these three holidays are described ONLY by the agricultural time of year in which they are celebrated (without any mention of the specific lunar date): Chag ha-Matzot: 'ba-aviv' - in the SPRING; Chag ha-Katzir: the wheat harvest - in the early SUMMER; Chag ha-Asif: the fruit harvest - in the AUTUMN.

Note as well (in 23:17) that the primary mitzva associated with each of these three holidays is 'aliya la- regel' - to be seen by G-d [i.e. by visiting Him at the mishkan / mikdash]. [A very similar presentation is found in Parshat Ki Tisa (see Shmot 34:18-26), recorded after Moshe Rabbeinu received the second luchot. However, that repetition is necessary due to the events of 'chet ha-egel' (see TSC shiur on Ki Tisa).]

THE SHALOSH REGALIM IN PARSHAT RE'EH In Sefer Devarim (see 16:1-17) we find a very similar presentation, although a bit more detailed. As you review that chapter, note that once again: \* Only the SHALOSH REGALIM are presented \* Only their agricultural dates are cited, and \* The primary mitzva is "aliya la-regel".

However, this unit adds two important details that were not mentioned in Parshat Mishpatim: 1) WHERE the mitzva of aliya l'regel is to take place, i.e. 'ba-makom asher yivchar Hashem...' - at the site that G-d will choose to have His Name dwell there. [See 16:2,6,11,15,16.] 2) that we must REJOICE on these holidays - not only with our own family, but also with the less fortunate, such as the stranger, the orphan, the widow etc. (see 16:11,14).

The Torah demands that when we celebrate and thank G-d for the bounty of our harvest, we must invite the less fortunate to join us.

AGRICULTURAL HOLIDAYS It is not coincidental that the Torah chose to use the solar calendar in its presentation of the SHALOSH REGALIM. Clearly, the Torah's intention is that we must thank G-d during these three critical times of the agricultural year: (1) when nature 'comes back to life' in the spring (PESACH) (2) at the conclusion of the wheat harvest (SHAVU'OT) (3) at the conclusion of the fruit harvest (SUKKOT)

In contrast to these two parshiot (in Mishpatim & Re'eh), when the Torah presents both sets of the chagim in EMOR (Vayikra 23) and PINCHAS (Bamidbar 28->29), it employs a lunar calendar as well. As you review these two units, note how each chag is introduced with its precise month and day.

THE CHAGIM IN PINCHAS Before we begin our study of Emor, we should note that Parshat Pinchas focuses on one primary topic - i.e. the details of the korban MUSSAF - the 'additional' sacrifice offered (in the bet ha-mikdash) on each holiday. That unit (i.e. Bamidbar chapters 28 & 29) opens with the laws of the daily "tamid" offering, then continues with the weekly and monthly 'additional' offerings on Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh. Afterward, it details the 'additional' offerings that are brought on the holidays. [Note that the 'mattir' reading on each holiday is taken from this 'parsha', and we quote from it in every tefillot mussaf!]

Let's summarize what we have discussed thus far: \* Sifrei Shmot and Devarim present the shalosh regalim in relation to their common purpose as a time for aliya la-regel during the critical times of the agricultural (solar) year. \* Parshat Pinchas details the specific korban mussaf of each chag (according to the lunar date of the holidays).

We have also noted how each of these units are presented as an integral part of a wider theme in each Sefer: \* In Parshat Mishpatim - as part of laws pertaining to 'social justice', and hence their thematic connection to the psukim that precede them in Shmot 23:6-12. [See TSC shiur on Parshat Mishpatim.] \* In Parshat Re'eh - in the context of the primary topic of chapters 12 thru 17, i.e. 'ha-makom asher yivchar Hashem'. [See TSC shiur on Parshat Re'eh.] \* In Parshat Pinchas - as part of the laws of tmidim u- mussafim. [See TSC shiur on Parshat Pinchas.]

In contrast to these units, Parshat Emor could be considered the Torah's primary presentation of the chagim, for it describes a unique mitzva of each holiday.

THE CHAGIM IN PARSHAT EMOR Review Vayikra 23:1-44, noting how this unit includes a UNIQUE mitzva for each holiday: Chag ha-Matzot - the special OMER offering (from barely); Shavu'ot - the special SHTEI HA-LECHEM offering (wheat); Rosh ha-Shana - YOM TERU'A - blowing the shofar; Yom Kippur - fasting; Sukkot - sitting in the SUKKA. and the ARBA MINIM (lulav and etrog etc.).

However, we must make special note of how these laws are presented, and the dates that are used.

DOUBLE DATING Parshat Emor, like Pinchas, presents the chagim in order of their LUNAR dates (month/day). Nevertheless, Emor is different! As the following table shows, when introducing the special mitzva to be performed in the mikdash on each of the SHALOSH REGALIM, the agricultural season (i.e. the SOLAR date) is mentioned as well! CHAG HA-MATZOT - mitzvat ha-OMER "When you enter the Land... and HARVEST the grain, you must bring the OMER - the FIRST HARVEST to the kohen (23:10); SHAVU'OT - mitzvat SHTEI HA-LECHEM "... count SEVEN WEEKS [from when the first grain becomes ripe], then... you shall bring a NEW flour offering..." (23:16); SUKKOT - the ARBA MINIM "On the 15th day of the 7th month WHEN YOU GATHER THE PRODUCE OF THE LAND... and you shall take on the first day a 'hadar' fruit..." (see 23:39).

In fact, look carefully and you'll notice that Parshat Emor presents the agricultural aspect of each of the shalosh regalim independently! For example, the agricultural mitzva to bring the korban 'ha-omer' and the 'shtei ha-lechem' is presented in a separate 'dibbur' (see 23:9-22) that makes no mention at all of the lunar date! Similarly, the mitzva of the arba minim in 23:39- 41 is presented independently, and AFTER the mitzva CHAG HA-SUKKOT is first presented in 23:33-38. [To verify this, compare these two sections carefully!]

Why is the structure of Emor so complicated? Shouldn't the Torah employ one standard set of dates and explain all the mitzvot for each holiday together? To answer this question, we must first take a closer look at the internal structure of Vayikra chapter 23.

THE COMMON MITZVOT Even though Parshat Emor presents the special mitzvot of each holiday, it also presents some common mitzvot for all the holidays. Review chapter 23 and note the pattern. Each holiday is: 1) first introduced by its lunar date; 2) a statement that this MO'ED is a MIKRA KODESH; 3) work is prohibited ('kol melechet avoda lo ta'asu'); 4) a korban is to be offered ('ve-hikravtem isheh l- Hashem').

To verify this, note the following psukim: CHAG HA-MATZOT / 23:6-8 ROSH HA-SHANA / 23:25 YOM KIPPUR / 23:27-28 SUKKOT & SHMINI ATZERET / 23:33-36 [Note that in regard to SHAVU'OT (see 23:21), a lunar date and the phrase 've-hikravtem' is missing! See TSC shiur on Shavu'ot.]

Therefore, in relation to the LUNAR date, Parshat Emor requires that on each holiday the nation must gather together [= 'mikra kodesh'], refrain from physical labor [= 'kol melechet avoda lo ta'asu'], and offer a special korban mussaf [= 've-hikravtem isheh l-Hashem'], as detailed in Parshat Pinchas. However, within this same unit, we also find that the shalosh regalim are presented INDEPENDENTLY - with a solar date, within the context of its agricultural mitzva. If we take a closer look at those psukim, we'll also notice that in each instance the concept of a SHABBAT or SHABBATON is mentioned in conjunction with the special agricultural mitzva [i.e. OMER, SHTEI HA-LECHEM & ARBA MINIM] of each holiday.

Furthermore, we also find the use of the word SHABBATON in the presentation of ROSH HA-SHANA and YOM KIPPUR as well! [See 23:24,32.] Finally, note the detail of the mitzvot relating to SHABBATON always conclude with the phrase: "chukat olam le- doroteichem [be-chol moshvoteychem]", see 23:14,21,31,41!

The following chart summarizes this second pattern in which the word SHABBAT or SHABBATON is mentioned in relation to each holiday: Chag ha-MATZOT - 'mi-mochorat ha-SHABBAT' (23:11) SHAVU'OT - 'ad mi-mochorat ha-SHABBAT ha-shvi'it...' (23:16) ROSH ha-SHANA - 'SHABBATON, zichron tru'a...' (23:24) YOM KIPPUR - 'SHABBAT SHABBATON hi lachem...' (23:32) SUKKOT & - 'ba-yom ha-rishon SHABBATON...' (23:39) SHMINI ATZERET - u-bayom ha-shmini SHABBATON' (23:39).

Note also that within this parsha, the SHABBAT / agricultural aspect is first introduced by a separate dibbur: "And G-d spoke to Moshe saying... When you ENTER THE LAND that I am giving you REAP ITS HARVEST,

you shall bring the OMER - the first sheaf of your harvest to G-d. This OMER shall be waived in front of G-d... on the day after SHABBAT the kohen shall waive it..." (23:9-14). The most striking example of this 'double pattern' is found in the psukim that describe Sukkot. Note how the Torah first introduces this holiday as a MIKRA KODESH by its lunar date: "On the 15th day of the 7th month Chag Sukkot seven days: on the first day there shall be a MIKRA KODESH... and on the eighth day a MIKRA KODESH..." (23:35-36). [As this is the last MO'ED, the next pasuk summarizes all of the chagim: 'eileh mo'adei Hashem...' (23:37-38)].

Then, in a very abrupt fashion, AFTER summarizing the mo'adim, the Torah returns to Sukkot again, but now calls it a SHABBATON: "'ACH' - on the 15th day of the seventh month, when you GATHER THE HARVEST OF YOUR FIELD, you shall celebrate for seven days, on the first day - a SHABBATON, and on the eighth day - a SHABBATON" (23:39).

Hence, it appears from Parshat Emor that each holiday is treated as both a mo'ed (in relation to mikra kodesh, 'issur melacha', & ve-hikravtem) AND as a 'shabbaton' (in relation to its special mitzva).

A DOUBLE 'HEADER' Let's take a look now at the introductory psukim of this entire unit (i.e. 23:1-3), for they appear to allude as well to the double nature of this presentation. First of all, note how the opening psukim of chapter 23 appear to contradict each other: \* "And G-d told Moshe, tell Bnei Yisrael... These are the MO'ADEI Hashem (fixed times), which YOU shall call MIKRA'EI KODESH (a sacred gathering) - these are the MO'ADIM". (see 23:1-2). \* SIX days work may be done, but the SEVENTH day shall be a SHABBAT SHABBATON 'mikra kodesh'... (see 23:3) \* THESE are the 'MO'ADEI HASHEM'...: On the 14th day of the first month - Pesach On the 15th day of the first month - chag ha-matzot... (23:4-6)

Should SHABBAT be considered one of the MO'ADIM? If yes, why does pasuk 4 repeat the header 'eileh moadei Hashem'? If not, why is SHABBAT mentioned at all in the first three psukim? Furthermore, there appears to be two types of 'mikra'ei kodesh' in Parshat Emor. (1) MO'ADIM - those that Bnei Yisrael declare: "asher tikre'u otam [that YOU shall call] - mikra'ei kodesh" (23:2) (2) SHABBAT - that G-d has set aside to be a 'mikra kodesh' (read 23:3 carefully!).

This distinction, and the repetition of the header 'eileh mo'adei Hashem' in 23:4, indicate the first three psukim could be considered a 'double' header: i.e. MO'ADIM and SHABBATONIM. As the unit progresses, this 'double header' reflects the double presentation of chagim in this entire unit, as discussed above. In regard to the shalosh regalim, the SHABBATON aspect is presented separately. In regard to Rosh ha-Shana and Yom Kippur, the SHABBATON aspect is included in the 'lunar' MIKRA KODESH presentation. [In regard to the agricultural nature of Rosh ha-Shana and Yom Kippur, see TSC shiur on Rosh ha-Shana.]

What is the meaning of the double nature of this presentation? Why does Parshat Emor relate to both the lunar and solar calendars? One could suggest the following explanation.

THE AGRICULTURAL ASPECT As mentioned above, Parshat Emor details a special agricultural related mitzva for each of the shalosh regalim: Chag ha-Matzot: The korban ha-omer - from the first BARLEY harvest. Shavu'ot: The korban shte'i ha-lechem, from the first WHEAT harvest. Sukkot: Taking the arba minim, the four species - [i.e. the lulav, etrog, hadas and arava]

These mitzvot relate directly to the agricultural seasons in Eretz Yisrael in which these holidays fall. In the spring, barley is the first grain crop to become ripe. During the next seven weeks, the wheat crop ripens and is harvested. As this is the only time of the year when wheat grows in Eretz Yisrael, these seven weeks are indeed a critical time, for the grain which will be consumed during the entire year is harvested during this very short time period. Similarly, the ARBA MINIM, which are brought to the mikdash on Sukkot, also relate to the agricultural importance of the fruit harvest ('pri etz hadar ve-kapot tmarim') at this time of the year, and the need for water in the forthcoming rainy season ('arvei nachal'). Therefore, specifically when the Torah relates to these agricultural mitzvot, these holidays are referred to as SHABBATONIM for the concept of shabbat relates to the DAYS of the week, and thus, to the cycle of nature caused by the sun, i.e. the agricultural seasons of the year. They also relate to the natural cycle of the sun. [Recall that the 365 day cycle of the earth revolving around the sun causes the seasons.]

As these holidays are celebrated during the most critical times of the agricultural year, the Torah commands us to gather at this time of the year in the bet ha-mikdash and offer special korbanot from our harvest. Instead

of relating these phenomena of nature to a pantheon of gods, as the Canaanite people did, Am Yisrael must recognize that it is G-d's hand behind nature and therefore, we must thank Him for our harvest. [This challenge - to find G-d while working and living within the framework of nature - is reflected in the blessing we make over bread: 'ha-motzi lechem min ha-aretz'. Even though we perform 99% of work in the process of making bread (e.g. sowing, reaping, winnowing, grinding, kneading, baking etc.), we thank G-d as though He had given us bread directly from the ground!]

THE HISTORICAL HOLIDAYS Even though these agricultural mitzvot alone provides sufficient reason to celebrate these holidays, the Torah finds HISTORICAL significance in these seasonal holidays as well. The spring commemorates our redemption from Egypt. The grain harvest coincides with the time of Matan Torah. During the fruit harvest we recall our supernatural existence in the desert under the 'ananei kavod' (clouds of G-d's glory) in the desert. Just as the Torah employs to the SOLAR date of the chagim in relation to the agricultural mitzvot, the Torah also employs the LUNAR date of these chagim in relation to their historical significance. For example, when describing Chag ha-Matzot, which commemorates the historical event of Yetziat Mitzrayim, the lunar date of the 15th day of the first month is used (23:6). Similarly, when the Torah refers to Sukkot as a mikra kodesh, it employs solely the lunar date and emphasizes the mitzva of sitting in the sukka, in commemoration of our dwelling in sukkot during our journey through the desert (see 23:34-35,43). One could suggest that specifically the lunar calendar is used in relation to the historical aspect, for we count the MONTHS in commemoration of our Exodus from Egypt, the most momentous event in our national history: "Ha-chodesh ha-zeh lachem ROSH CHODASHIM..." This month (in which you are leaving Egypt) will be for you the FIRST month... (see Shmot 12:1-3). REDEMPTION IN THE SPRING From the repeated emphasis in Chumash that we celebrate our redemption from Egypt in the early spring ('chodesh ha-aviv' / see Shmot 13:2-4 and Devarim 16:1-2), it would appear that it was not incidental that the Exodus took place at that time. Rather, G-d desired that our national birth take place at the same time of year when the growth cycle of nature recommences. [For a similar reason, it would appear that G-d desired that Bnei Yisrael enter the Promised Land in the first month of the spring (see Yehoshua 4:19 & 5:10).] One could suggest that the celebration of our national redemption specifically in the spring emphasizes its proper meaning. Despite its importance, our freedom attained at Yetziat Mitzrayim should be understood as only the INITIAL stage of our national spiritual 'growth', just as the spring marks only the initial stage in the growth process of nature! Just as the blossoming of nature in the spring leads to the grain harvest in the early summer and fruit harvest in the late summer, so too our national freedom must lead to the achievement of higher goals in our national history. Thus, counting seven weeks from chag ha-matzot until chag ha-shavu'ot (sfirat ha-omer) emphasizes that Shavu'ot (commemorating the Giving of the Torah) should be considered the culmination of the process that began at Yetziat Mitzrayim, just as the grain harvest is the culmination of its growth process that began in the spring. [One would expect that this historical aspect of Shavu'ot, i.e. Matan Torah, should also be mentioned in Parshat Emor. For some reason, it is not. We will deal with this issue 'iy"H in our shiur on Shavu'ot.]

By combining the two calendars, the Torah teaches us that during the critical times of the agricultural year we must not only thank G-d for His providence over nature but we must also thank Him for His providence over our history. In a polytheistic society, these various attributes were divided among many gods. In an atheistic society, man fails to see G-d in either. The double nature of the chagim emphasizes this tenet that G-d is not only the Force behind nature, but He also guides the history of nations. Man must recognize G-d's providence in all realms of his daily life; by recognizing His hand in both the unfolding of our national history and through perceiving His greatness as He is the power behind all the phenomena of nature.

KEDUSHAT ZMAN In conclusion, we can now return to our original question, i.e. why does specifically Sefer Vayikra describe these holidays as MO'ADIM? The Hebrew word mo'ed stems from the root 'vav.ayin.daled' - to meet. [That's why a committee in Hebrew is a 'va'ad', and a conference is a 've'ida'. See also Shmot 29:42-43 and Amos 3:3. Finally, note Breishit 1:14! The mishkan is called an OHEL MO'ED - a tent of meeting - for in that tent Bnei Yisrael [symbolically] 'meet' G-d. In a similar manner, the Jewish holidays are called MO'ADIM, for their primary purpose is that we set aside special times during the year to MEET G-d.

Clearly, in Parshat Emor, the Torah emphasizes the 'bein adam la-Makom' [between G-d and man] aspect of the holidays. Not only do we perform the mitzva of aliya la-regel, we also perform a wide range of special mitzvot that occupy our entire day during those holidays. [See Sefer Kuzari ma'amar rev'i in relation to the chagim!]

As we explained in last week's shiur, this is the essence of KEDUSHA - the theme of Sefer Vayikra. We set aside special times, and infuse them with special KEDUSHA to come closer to Hashem. However, our experience during these holidays provides us with the spiritual strength to remain close to G-d during the remainder of the year.

shabbat shalom

menachem

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