



CONGREGATION TORAS CHAIM

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May 4-5, 2018 ■ 20 Iyar, 5778 ■ Shabbos Emor, 35th of Omer
Mincha: 7P / Candlelighting: 7:54P ■ Shabbos Ends 9:03P

KIDDUSH this Shabbos is sponsored by the shul. **SHALOSH SEUDOS** this Shabbos is sponsored by the shul. Please contact Rabbi Yaakov Rich at 972-835-6016 if you are interested in sponsoring kiddush or shalosh seudos in the future.

■ SHABBOS SCHEDULE

Friday Night, May 4th

- » Mincha/Kabbalos Shabbos/Maariv-7:00P
- » Shabbos Candle Lighting-7:54P

Shabbos Day, May 5th

- » Mishnayos shiur with Rabbi Reuven Wortrich-8A
- » Shacharis followed by Kiddush-8:30A
- » Chumash Shiur for men & women-6:45P
- » Mincha/Shalosh Seudos for men in shul-7:45P
- » Shalosh Seudos for women & young children at Rich home-7:45P
- » Maariv/Shabbos Ends-9:03P

■ WEEKDAY SCHEDULE

- » Sunday Shacharis-8A
- » Weekday Shacharis-6:40A
- » Weekday Mincha/Maariv-7:50P

■ REFUAH SHELAIMA

Men

- » Shimon Yehuda ben Rivka Yittel (Grandson of Phyllis Lavietes)
- » Itai ben Shoshana (Son of Ehoud & Shoshana Wilson)

Women

- » Necha bas Leah (see Irwin Harris)
- » Rivka Basya bas Devorah (Rebekkah Bodoff)
- » Shoshana Elka bas Ettl Dina (Shoshana Strassman)
- » Leah Esther bas Yenta Leah (Lori Jarmel)
- » Yenta Leah bas Shayna (Mother of Lori Jarmel)

■ WHAT'S NU

- » **Parking Reminder:** CTC Shabbaton Reminder: No parking on street over Shabbos. There are 5 spots in back.

■ WHAT SET OFF THE MEKALLEL [BLASPHEMER]? / LAG B'OMER: RABBI YISSOCHER FRAND

What Set Off The Mekallel?

Parshas Emor contains the mitzvah of the Lechem HaPanim: "You shall take fine flour and bake it into twelve loaves; each loaf shall be two tenth ephas. You shall place them in two stacks, six to the stack, upon the pure Table, before Hashem. You shall put pure frankincense on the stack, and it shall be for a remembrance for the bread, a fire-offering for Hashem. Each and every Sabbath day he shall arrange it before Hashem continually, from the Children of Israel as an eternal covenant. And it shall belong to Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place; for it is most holy for him, from the fire-offerings of Hashem, an eternal decree." [Vayikra 24:5-9]

Each Shabbos, the Kohanim placed the twelve loaves on the Shulchan [Table]. The loaves remained there the entire week. The following Shabbos, the Kohanim removed the loaves from the Shulchan, placed new loaves on it and ate the loaves that they removed. In commemoration of this ritual, in some Chassidic circles, it is customary to have 12 challahs at the table when reciting the HaMotzi blessing on Shabbos.

Despite the fact that the Challahs lay on the table the entire week, the Talmud says that the bread remained fresh from Shabbos to Shabbos. Not only did it not become stale, the bread remained warm the entire week, as if it had just been baked. The Gemara [Chaggia 26b] writes that on the Festivals, the Kohanim lifted the Shulchan to show the fresh loaves to the people, saying "See how dear you are before the Almighty — miraculously, the loaves are removed (a week later) in the same state that they were placed upon it."

The Mishna in Avos [5:5] enumerates ten miracles that occurred in the Beis HaMikdash on a daily basis. For some reason, the Mishna does not mention this miracle. The Kohanim also did not call attention to any of the other miracles in front of the Festival pilgrims. The Kohanim did not point out that there were never any flies in the Beis HaMikdash, that the smoke went straight up, or any of the other wondrous events mentioned in the Mishna in Avos. Of all the miracles that took place in the Beis HaMikdash, only the fact that the twelve loaves stayed fresh the whole week was singled out to highlight the endearment of the Jewish people to the Almighty. Why? What is the symbolism of this?

Rav Tzadok HaKohen of Lublin in his sefer Pri Tzaddik writes that Chazal, the Kohanim, and indeed the Ribono shel Olam were trying to send

a message to Klal Yisrael. The twelve loaves corresponded to the twelve tribes. With this miracle, Hashem wants to say, "These challahs are so dear to me — they stay warm from one Shabbos to the next — because you are dear to me." Each loaf, representing another tribe, symbolizes the love and endearment the Almighty feels for each segment of the Jewish people.

Classic Rabbinic literature emphasizes that the 12 tribes each had individualistic ways of serving the Ribono shel Olam. Despite the fact that we all have the same Torah and the same 613 mitzvos and despite the fact that we all believe in the same Master of the Universe, every tribe approached their Divine Service with different nuances of worship. For this reason, it is brought down in halacha that a Beis Kenesses [House of Prayer] should have twelve windows. The Magen Avraham and other commentaries on the Shulchan Aruch note that this symbolizes the fact that every tribe has a unique path to Heaven. Through each window, so to speak, passes the unique prayers of a different tribe of Israel.

I do not know how it was in the days of the Patriarch Yaakov, in the Wilderness, or in Eretz Yisrael when every tribe lived in their own section of the country. However, if you look around Klal Yisrael today, you see that there is tremendous diversity within our nation. There are Chassidim, Misnagdim, Sephardim, and Ashkenazim. Within the Sephardim, there are Yemenites, Moroccans, Egyptians and Syrians — and they certainly do not all daven the same way! They all have their own nuances of nussach. Among Ashkenazim, there are Litvaks, Hungarians, Germans and the whole gamut of Klal Yisrael. As long as everybody abides by the Shulchan Aruch — whether they wear a Streimmel or do not wear a Streimmel, whether they wear a black hat or do not wear a black hat, all these nuances that we see today, are all the same to the Almighty.

This is the message of the twelve tribes and the twelve challahs: See how beloved you are before the Almighty. The Ribono shel Olam does not have a problem with our "differences" — as long as we are all keeping the same Torah.

Rav Tzadok says that now we can understand the next parsha in the Torah. "The son of an Israelite woman went out — and he was the son of an Egyptian man — among the Children of Israel; they contended in the camp, the son of the Israelite woman and the Israelite man." [Vayikra 24:10]. The Medrash asks, "From where did he go out?" Chazal say something very interesting (Rashi cites this opinion of Rav Berechyah): "He went out from the immediately preceding passage."

The mekallel was "ticked off" by the passage describing the Lechem HaPanim. He said, "What kind of business is this? Is it appropriate to serve one's King with week old bread? If this is the nature of this religion, I want to have nothing to do with it!" He then cursed the Name of G-d.

This is certainly strange behavior. Out of all the things in Torah that one might chose to take issue with, this mekallel focused on the Lechem HaPanim! What is this all about?

Rav Tzadok says that the mekallel was bothered by something other than the fact that the bread was a week old. Those twelve challahs represent the sanctity of every one of the twelve tribes. This individual had no tribe because he did not have a Jewish father. He was therefore lacking in complete Kedushas Yisrael [full Jewish sanctity]. This is a classic example of sour grapes. The people are told, "See how dear you are before the Almighty" and he feels left out. He has a problem with G-d's endearment with the members of the twelve tribes, because he does not possess that same sanctity. Therefore, his reaction is to curse the whole thing. This is what set off the mekallel.

We always read Parshas Emor between Pessach and Shavuos. We read it during the days of Sefiras Ha'Omer, almost always in close proximity to Lag B'Omer. Lag B'Omer represents a day in which we suspend the mourning practices of Sefiras Ha'Omer, during which we mourn the disciples of Rabbi Akiva, who died during this interval. Inasmuch as the disciples stopped dying on the 33rd day of the Omer, we cease mourning on that day.

Why did the students of Rabbi Akiva die? It is because they did not show proper respect towards one another. This is a very difficult teaching of Chazal to understand. How could Rabbi Akiva, who was the author of the teaching that "You shall love your fellow man like yourself" is the greatest principle in the Torah, have had thousands of students who did not show respect to one another? A person may speculate that the above referenced differences that always seem to manifest themselves may have caused these students to be a little intolerant of the practices of some

of their fellow students.

Reading Parshas Emor, the incident of the mekallel and the story of the Lechem HaPanim during this period of the year sends an appropriate message during the days of Sefira. Even though someone else might do things differently, nevertheless, it does not matter to the Ribono shel Olam — all 12 tribes are dear to Him — it should not make a difference to us either.

What Are We Celebrating on Lag B'Omer?

The Ramoh writes in Shulchan Aruch regarding Lag B'Omer that we increase somewhat our joy on this day and we do not recite thereupon Tachanun. There are many reasons given for why Lag B'Omer is a cause for rejoicing. Rav Chaim Vital, a disciple of the Ari z"l, writes in the Shaar HaKavonos that Rav Shimon Bar Yochai said that one should make a simcha out of the day of Lag B'Omer. That is why thousands and thousands of people go to the gravesite of Rav. Shimon Bar Yochai in Meron on this date. Ostensibly, it is supposed to be the day of his Yartzeit (even though the Chida says this is not the case).

The more conventionally accepted reason why we make a minor Yom Tov out of Lag B'Omer (cited by the Meiri in Tractate Yevamos) is that this is the day the students of Rabbi Akiva stopped dying. This is very strange. When do we ever make a Yom Tov out of the fact that people stopped dying? It is the equivalent, Rav Asher Weiss writes, of a person who has seven sons. They die one after the other until all seven are dead. Would anybody think of making a Yom Tov because now his sons stopped dying? Rabbi Akiva had 24,000 students who all died. They stopped dying on Lag B'Omer. Under these circumstances, is it appropriate to set up a day of rejoicing on the day of Lag B'Omer?

The Rema m'Pano (R. Menahem Azariah da Fano [1548-1620]) writes a novel idea: Really Rabbi Akiva himself was supposed to die. There was a decree from heaven — for whatever reason — that this great teacher of Israel would be taken from the nation at this time. The Ribono shel Olam did Klal Yisrael a tremendous favor and instead of taking Rabbi Akiva, took the equivalent thereof — 24,000 of his students! In this way, Rabbi Akiva was preserved. This gives us a bit of an insight into why Lag B'Omer is a Yom Tov. We can now better understand the context of the death of Rabbi Akiva's students. They were ransom, so to speak, for their teacher.

The Chida says further: After Rabbi Akiva lost the 24,000 students, he moved south and took five students (Rav Meir, Rav Yehuda, Rav Yossi, Rav Shimon, and Rav Elazar ben Shamua). They became the established Torah leaders of the subsequent generation. If any of us, Heaven forbid, would suffer anywhere near the tragedy Rabbi Akiva suffered, we would no doubt throw up our hands in futility and bury ourselves in a hole somewhere and never again seek out the light of day. Rabbi Akiva had the fortitude to go ahead and restart his entire Torah teaching enterprise. Indeed, there is almost not a single daf (page) of Gemara in the entire Talmud that does not mention at least one of these five disciples of Rabbi Akiva.

Now, it all makes sense. The fact that the students died was an atonement for Rabbi Akiva. In lieu of those 24,000 students, Rabbi Akiva himself survived. Rabbi Akiva saved the Talmud. He saved Klal Yisrael. This speaks to the greatness of Rabbi Akiva, to have undergone such a terrible personal tragedy and yet to persevere.

Now we understand what Rav Shimon ben Yochai meant. Rav Shimon ben Yochai is the author of the statement "Heaven forbid that Torah should be forgotten from Israel for it states 'It shall not be forgotten from the mouth of his descendants.' [Devarim 31:21]" [Shabbos 138b]. Perhaps this is what Rav Chaim Vital means to say in the name of Rav Shimon bar Yochai. The reason Rav Shimon bar Yochai said to make a Yom Tov on Lag B'Omer was because on Lag B'Omer, when the students stopped dying and Rabbi Akiva was saved, Rabbi Akiva ensured the continuation of Talmud and learning amongst the Jewish people.

For this alone, it is worthy to make a celebration, a holiday called Lag B'Omer. This speaks to the hidden ways of the Almighty. Why did the students need to die? Why was Rabbi Akiva himself deserving of death?

We will never know these things. However, we can derive from this episode the greatness of Rabbi Akiva — not only in his learning but in his personal perseverance and resilience.

■ BEIN ADAM L'CHAVEIRO: RABBI DONIEL NEUSTADT

Being that this is a time of mourning for the talmidim of Rabbi Akiva who did not — on their level — show sufficient respect for each other, this is the time of the year when we can all strengthen ourselves in this sensitive area. The following Discussion focuses on halachic issues of bein adam l'chaveiro:

Question: What are the halachos regarding the mitzvah min ha-Torah of rising for an older person — mipnei seivah takum?

Discussion: The Torah commands that one give honor to any frum Jew — man or woman — over the age of seventy by rising to one's full height when the older person comes within four amos (approximately 6-8 feet), until the older person leaves the area of his four amos. Although the older person is not necessarily a learned or distinguished person, we still recognize and pay tribute to him "because in his great number of years he has seen and recognized a bit of the workings of Hashem and His wonders, and he is thus worthy of honor."

Although the halachah clearly obligates one to rise to his full height when honoring an older person, it is true that many people are not careful to fulfill this mitzvah properly and rise only slightly when an older person approaches. While some poskim attempt to justify this custom on halachic grounds, it does not change the basic halachah that obligates one to stand fully in order to perform this mitzvah properly.

Question: Under which circumstances is one exempt from fulfilling the mitzvah of mipnei seivah takum?

Discussion: In the following cases the mitzvah of mipnei seivah takum, which requires one to rise to his full height, does not apply. Instead, the mitzvah is merely to show some measure of respect, such as rising slightly from one's seat:

When the "younger" person is also over seventy.

When the younger person is a greater talmid chacham than the older person.

When the younger person is an employee and standing up will require wasting his employer's time.

When the older person specifically forgoes the honor that is due to him.

When the younger person is in the middle of davening and standing will disturb his kavanah.

When the younger person is ill, or a mourner during shivah.

Question: How mandatory is Chazal's advisory that a guest should not change his customary lodging place?

Discussion: Rashi explains that there are two reasons behind this advisory:

Switching lodgings discredits the guest, since he will be considered hard to please or disreputable in some way.

Switching lodgings harms the host's reputation, since it gives the impression that his lodgings were unsatisfactory.

If a guest has a bona fide reason to change his lodging place, however, the halachah will not restrict him from doing so. For example, if a guest customarily lodged at a certain home, but came to town for a simchah and wants to stay at the home of the ba'al simchah, that would be permitted. If a guest customarily lodged at a certain home, but upon his return visit the original host was out of town or indisposed, or no longer had the space for guests, the halachic advisory would not apply and the guest could stay elsewhere.

Good Shabbos

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■ CLASSES

» Hilchos Niddah for men (Sunday 7-8A)

» Parenting/Marriage Chaburah for women (Sunday evenings)

» Gemara Yevamos for men (M-Fr, 6-6:40A)

» Gemara Nedarim for men (Sunday-Thursday 9P)

» Advanced Hilchos Shabbos for men & women (Mon evenings following M/M)

» Rabbi Heller on the Parsha (Wed evenings following M/M)

» Advanced Rashi on Chumash for men & women (Thursday evenings following M/M)

» Chumash for men & women (Shabbos 60 mins before mincha)