



OUR BELOVED RABBI  
SOKAVA REBBE

# BET

BRINGING EVERYONE TOGETHER  
**Journal**

"E Pluribus Unum"  
Latin for "Out of  
Many, One" - Achdus



## בית מדרש אור חיים BAIS MEDRASH OHR CHAIM COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER

UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF RABBI AARON LANKRY  
18 FORSHAY ROAD, MONSEY, NEW YORK 10952

ל"ג בעומר



**SHIURIM FOR ENTIRE COMMUNITY**

**RABBI YY JACOBSON WEEKLY CLASS** *Separate Seating*

**SHABBOS**  
NO CLASSES  
THIS SHABBOS

**EARLY BIRD**  
DAILY SHIUR  
MON - FRI 5:30 - 7:30AM

**SUNDAY**  
NO CLASSES  
THIS SUNDAY

**TUESDAY**  
TUESDAY MORNING  
9:30 - 10:30 AM SHARP  
20 FORSHAY RD  
FOR WOMEN ONLY



### NEW SHABBOS MINYAN

Shabbos Morning minyan  
starting at 8:00 AM  
18 Forshay Rd. Main Shul



OUR BELOVED RABBI  
SOKAVA REBBE

# Dear Kehilla,

BET Parashot Emor 5775

It seems so unfair, the concept of Kohen Bal Mum (Kohen with a blemish) who can't offer services in the house of Hashem. The pasuk gives these examples; "a blind or lame or whose nose has no bridge, or has one limb longer than the other. A broken leg or arm or just abnormally long eyebrows, or a membrane on his eye, or a blemish in his eye, or dry skin etc...." It is not the blemished Kohens fault that Hashem made him this way. Why should he miss out serving in the Bais Hamikdash? Additionally, if he can't get a job in Hashem's house why should anyone else give him a job? If the blemish reduces his ability to work it is understandable but having long eyebrows or dry skin etc. doesn't affect his capacity.

The limitations of whom a Kohen can or can't marry are comprehensible. The prohibition of marrying a woman who acts improperly is clear and every divorce has two sides to the story. A Kohen Gadol however may not marry even a widow. Hashem took away this woman's husband; it is not a reflection on her at all. Why is she not acceptable as a wife for the Kohen Gadol? Both these laws seem to portray a lack of compassion on behalf of the Torah. What is the meaning of them?

At this time of the year that we mourn the death of the 24,000 students the great Rabbi Akiva. We learn that the cause of their death was that they did not express the proper respect to one another. This too seems a bit harsh. As talmidai chachomim every other aspect of their lives was complete except this small sensitivity that they were lacking. Is this justified to be taken from this world so prematurely? It is hard to wrap ones head around this vague concept.

Let's travel to the beginning in time to the first person that brought a Korban to Hashem. Kayin was a farmer and in order to say thanks to Hashem he offered some simple vegetables. There was no response from Hashem. His brother Hevel watched and mimicked his brother changing one detail. He brought a Korban from the nicest of his sheep to which Hashem responded immediately and accepted his offering. This sent Kayin into a rage; why him and not me? What was I lacking?

Hashem did not eat the vegetables or the sheep so what does he care from what or how I gave the offering?

We learn a great lesson in Hashem's ways; it's never the quantity but always the quality. If and when you do something; do it right. It is better a little prayer with proper intent than hours of mindless reading of words.

The life and job of the Kohen is to connect us to Hashem. Therefore the proper connection is required and it must be a qualitative connection. If we were to bring a Korban and the Kohen showed up with a broken arm the entire process will be compromised. We would not look at the event of bringing a Korban seriously, it loses its grandeur. In all aspects of life the Kohen, due to his representation, needs and must follow a code that will be inspiring to all. This includes his marriage to a wife and personal grooming such as trimming his eye brows.

The same applies to Torah. The Rambam writes in the end of the laws of shmita and yovel that anyone who wants to connect himself to the tribe of Levy can do so with the study of Torah. This illustrates that the study of Torah and especially the perpetuation of Torah must be in the purest state. It's the quality of the student that is needed to be the transmitter of Torah and not the masses. Rabbi Akiva understood this and therefore after all the 24,000 passed away he started over with only 5 students. It is these outstanding students that transmitted the Torah and preserved it until this day.

Kind David heard people asking "when will the old man die and his son will take over and build the Bais Hamikdash?" These words were painful for King David to hear but he understood that they were yearning for a Bais Hamikdash to get closer to Hashem. David felt he was preventing the process and expressed his discomfort to Hashem. Hashem responded that "one hour of your pure study of Torah is more precious to me than 1000 Korbanot your son Shlomo will bring".

May you all be blessed with a wonderful qualitative life that is full with joy and blessing.

Shabbat Shalom  
Rabbi Aaron Lankry

# SHUL SCHEDULE



## SHABBOS ZMANIM

EARLY MINCHA ON Friday AFTERNOON at 1:30pm

SHABBOS NIGHT	Candle lighting	7:46pm	SHABBOS DAY	Shachris Vasikin	5:10am - DAF YOMI SHIUR	SHAB EVENING	Mincha& Daf Yomi	6:00pm
	Mincha Tent	7:00pm		Shachris	8:00 & 9:15am - Kiddush		Pirkei Avos	7:00pm
	Mincha 18 Forshay	7:30pm		Shachris Youth Minyan	9:15am - 18 Forshay		Mincha	1:45pm, 7:45pm
	Shkiya	8:04pm		Shachris Bais Chabad	10:00am - 20 Forshay		Shkiya	8:05pm
	Mincha Bais Chabad 20 Forshay	8:14pm		Pirchei - Bnos	2:00		Maariv	8:45& 8:50pm

## WEEKDAY MINYANIM

### SHACHRIS

20 minutes before Neitz (3) s 5:18 | M 5:17 | T 5:17 | W 5:16 | T 5:15 | F 5:14

6:15\* (1) 7:00 (1) 7:30 (5) 8:00 (1) 8:30 (2) 9:00 (1) 9:30 (2) 10:00 (1) 10:30 (2)

### MINCHA

1:30 PM, 7:00, 20 Minutes After Shkiya, 50 Minutes After Shkia (1)

### MINCHA & MAARIV

12 Minutes Before Pelag (1) s 6:24 | M 6:25 | T 6:26 | W 6:26 | T 6:27

12 Minutes Before Shkia (1) s 7:55 | M 7:56 | T 7:57 | W 7:57 | T 7:58

### MAARIV

9:00, 9:30 (2) 9:45 (1) 10:00 (1) 10:30 (1) 11:00 (1) 12:45 (1)

### LOCATION DIRECTORY

(1) 18 FORSHAY DOWNSTAIRS

(2) 18 FORSHAY UPSTAIRS

(3) 20 FORSHAY UPSTAIRS

(4) 20 FORSHAY DOWNSTAIRS

(5) 18 FORSHAY TENT

\* NO SUNDAY MINYAN

### MAY 14 - MAY 19

NEITZ IS 5:38 am - 5:34am

PELAG IS 6:36 pm - 6:39 pm

SHKIA IS 8:07 pm - 8:11 pm

סוף זמן  
קריאת שמע  
MAGEN AVRAHAM  
8:40 AM - 8:37 AM  
GRA- BAAL HATANYA  
9:16 AM - 9:13 AM



## Insight From the Week of Hod

This week is unique. It started with Pesach Sheni on Wednesday which is also the yarzeit of Rabi Meir Baal Hanes. This is followed by the yarzeit of Rabi Shimon bar Yochai several days later. What are the connections between all three and how do they link to the days of sefiras haomer? And lastly how does it compliment the sefira of Hod which we count all week?

Based on what I saw in Nesivos Shalem, the Magen Elef and other sefarim, here is an idea that is informative and that we can hopefully put into action.

Let's begin with Pesach Sheni. The Ari Zak explains based the complaint of the Jews who missed out on the Korban Pesach that it wasn't about the practical action of bringing a Korban that was the important part of this mitzvah. Rather the people were disappointed for missing the opportunity to reach the revelation of the days of mashiach which are revealed on Pesach. As the pasuk states, they couldn't do the Korban Bayom Hahu--on that day-- a day of clarity. Because of this request, the day of Pesach Sheni became a day where anyone who was defiled or in a faraway path could make up for what he missed. This is an amazing chizuk and I thought that certainly the term derech rechoka is very applicable today.

With this in mind let's look at Rashbi. He was a person that reached the highest place in Kabbalah. He actually joined Moshe Rabienu's soul and brought down to the world the realm of mysticism.

Perhaps the greatest accomplishment derived from all the above is that every type of Jew shows up in Meron to celebrate Lag Baomer and somehow everyone feels some sort of closeness with Rashbi. Why? Because he was there for everyone no matter how low a person sank and his light was strong enough to penetrate any darkness.

This is an important message. It fits with Rabi Meir as well because Rabi Meir is the one who said that even when the Jews sin but they are still called children of Hashem.

The word 'hod' has essentially three meanings that are all connected to the above. Hod can mean thanking or admitting and hod also means splendor. What it says is that when a person is really true to himself and gives thanks to Hashem for everything he has, the inner meaning of this recognition and appreciation allows his hod, or his beauty to shine through.



## LAG B'OMER

Lag Ba'Omer was one of the Mittlerer Rebbe's (2nd particularly noteworthy festivals. He and the Chassidim would go out to the fields that day, and although he did not wash for bread, he did partake of mashkeh, which he was not allowed to do for health reasons. Many wonders were seen at that time, most of them involving the blessing of children for childless couples - and all year long people waited for Lag Ba'Omer.

==== Hayom Yom Iyar 18

## CUTTING EDGE LOSHAN HARA MUST END

With the advent of WhatsApp, text messaging, and email, we have virtually instant access to news. These are wonderful tools which can be used to spread Torah and provide useful information.

It is regrettable that these tools can also be used to spread loshon hara, rechilus and motzei shem ra. The instinct to judge without thinking and to forward these condemnations to your entire contacts folder without giving one seconds' thought to the number of aveiros this communication encompasses is epidemic, and troubling in the extreme.

In an era when we urgently pursue segulos as a panacea for every challenge that life presents, at a time when we run to rebbes or kivrei tzadikim to be mispallel for shidduchim, parnosa and r"l worse - should we not first take a long, hard look at ourselves?

The repercussion to demeaning even one individual - even one time - is frightening. Doing this to an incalculable number of people within seconds and without a moment's thought is truly terrifying. Think about the consequence of a single aveira, multiply this by your contacts, and then multiply it by your contacts' contacts, ad infinitum.

Chazal say that an individual who indulges in lashon hara denies the existence of Hashem, and that the Almighty declares, "I and he cannot live in the same world" (Erachin 15b).

When you judge others favorably, Hashem judges you favorably. This is guaranteed to be more effective than any segula .

### SUNDAY HALACHAH CHABURAH

Will be learning Hilchos Shabbos

Hilchos Ohel אוהל סימן שטו'

time: 9:45 Location: 20 Forshay

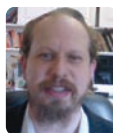
Erev Shabbos Plag MInyan for Mincha & Maariv

### BLUEBERRY HILL AREA

Parshas Emor

Mincha 6:15 Plag 6:35

30 Dr Frank Rd. Entrance From Humbert



## Celebrate Yom Tov like a Weekday

This week's Parsha discusses Shabbos and Yom Tov. The Gemara in Shabbos, daf kuf yud ches and in Psachim, daf kuf yud bais, amud alef say in the name of Rabi Akiva that a person should rather have a simple Shabbos, without any delicacies, rather than come on to other people for a loan or gift to enable them to procure the delicacies. We pasken this way in Shulchan Aruch, siman resh mem bais where it states that if someone has to borrow money from others but he has some money of his own, he should make sure to use his own money for Shabbos. We only say that one should celebrate Shabbos like a weekday (sans special foods) to someone who is in really dire financial straits.

The following question arises; does the same thing apply to Yom Tov as well? On Shabbos there is no din of Simcha whereas there is an inyan of Simcha on Yom Tov. Does this mark the differentiation between when someone should come on to other people or when they should rather keep it simple like what they may have during the week?

The Chemdas Yisroel and the Toras Chaim both say that Shabbos is different than Yom Tov. We are commanded to have oneg on Shabbos and the oneg may actually be based on the fact that one does not need to come on to other people. We are commanded to have simcha on Yom Tov. The Gemara says that this happiness comes from eating meat and wine. Therefore, in the case of Yom Tov, one would need to extend oneself to the extent of even coming on to other people to obtain the meat and wine, either via a loan or gifts.

Tosfos in Meseches Beitza, daf tes vov disagrees with this position and says that the same halacha applies to Shabbos and Yom Tov. Tosfos is basing this on the posuk that Hashem tells Bnei Yisroel, "Chedvas Hashem" is your strength. We see from here that a person should borrow money and not worry about repaying the loan; Hashem will pay. Tosfos asks, but what about the fact that a person should rather celebrate Shabbos as a weekday rather than have to come on to other people? The problem with Tosfos' question is that the posuk of "Chedvas Hashem" is referring to Yom Tov, so how can we compare Yom Tov to Shabbos? We see from here that Tosfos held that Yom Tov would have the same halacha as Shabbos.

We could explain this machlokes based on another machlokes whether Shabbos has a din of simcha or not. The Rambam says one may not get married on Shabbos because "ein me'arvin simcha besimcha." This proves to us that there is an inyan of simcha on Shabbos. Other Rishonim say there is no Simcha on Shabbos, there is just oneg. If we say that there is no simcha on Shabbos, then there would be a difference between Yom Tov and Shabbos. You would then be required to make your Shabbos like a weekday rather than come onto other people whereas you would not do so for Yom Tov. If we say there is simcha on Shabbos then there would be no difference between the halachos of Shabbos and Yom Tov and in both cases you'd rather make both Shabbos and Yom Tov weekday rather than come onto other people.

Let us celebrate Shabbos and Yom Tov properly and we will be rewarded with unlimited rewards.

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

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

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

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

Emor concludes with the incident of a man executed for blasphemy, and the penalties for murder (death) and for injuring one's fellow or destroying his property (monetary compensation).

Haftorah Yechezkel 44:15-31.

In the haftorah for Parashat Emor Yechezkal prophesies about the rules for the priests that will serve in the Third Temple, to be built at an unspecified future date. He specifies that the priests must wear specific garments, and are commanded to keep their hair cut neatly. They cannot wine while they are performing their priestly duties, and they are prohibited from marrying women who are divorced or widowed (unless the widow was originally married to a priest).

The priests Ezekiel describes are charged with teaching the people of Israel about what is sacred and what is profane, what is pure and what is impure. They act as judges for the people, ruling according to the Torah. They are prohibited from going near a corpse unless it is the body of a person in their immediate families.

Finally, God stipulates that the priests should not be given a portion of the land in Israel. God is their portion, and they partake of the sacrifices, and benefit from some of the tithes.





### פרשת אמור

היום הגדול ביותר שבא עלינו מחדש כל ששה ימים זהו שבת קודש, שהוא הדעת יום האמונה מקור הברכה הזמן שבעצם הוא מרפה כמו"ש בשבת יב: שבת היא מלזעוק ורפואה קרובה לבא, בעצם השבת זהו זמן שמופקע מחולי, מאכלי שבת שנאכלים לכבוד שבת הם כמו הלחם אבירים שנבלעים באברים כמו המן ממש, ומובא בשם האר"י ז"ל שאוכל של שבת אין בו פסולת, והיינו ודאי בבחינת טועמיה חיים וכו, שזהו נטריקון 'טועם יה' שזהו לכבוד שבת קודש, כפשוטו ממש, והגדר הוא כתב החת"ס זיע"א שעצם העונג הוא בעצם שבזה מתענג בשבת, אבל יום טוב זה בעצם לשמוח בבשר (שלמים).

איזה פלאים הם הדברים למתבונן במתנה טובה שהיא השבת ביצה טו. שנתנה לנו ה' יתברך להתענג בו כפשוטו ממש, ועל זה נתן לנו ה' יתברך נשמה יתירה שנאכל ונהנה, ולא נוקץ מהאכילה כמו שפירש רש"י, ועל זה המענג את השבת לשם השבת מאריכה הש"ס בבבלי שבת ק"ח. שניצל מגוג ומגוג גבול בלי מיצרים ניתן לו משאלות לבוא, איזה מפליאה זה למתבונן, ה' יתברך בא לבקר אותנו וזהו קבלת שבת והצעת השולחן, וכן בסוף יש מלווה מלכה, ממילא מובן מה שהמענג זוכה באמת להכל מכל בכל, במענגו לשם התכלית והוא שמעונג על ה' שזהו יסוד הקירבה.

והענין הוא ש"כל פעל ה' למענהו" והיינו לשמו יתברך, להביאו לתכלית ממש ולהעלותו לשיא הרמה, שזה לעומת זה עשה אלוקים ולכך, נתן לנו ה' יתברך כל היכולת לבא לתכלית הנ"ל ע"י שאוכלים לכבוד השבת ולהתענג מטובו הגדול ממש, ובכך מעלים לרמה הגבוהה, יש, שניזכה באמת.

שבת שלום ומבורך  
דוד יהודה פייסרסון

### Parshas Emor

#### The Importance of Being Grateful. וכי תזבחו זבח תודה לה' לרצונכם תזבחו

When you bring a Korban Todah (sacrifice of thanksgiving), remember, there is so much to be thankful for.

To better understand this spiritual obligation and why the Torah has commanded us to be grateful, let us listen to a tale of teenage responsibility. (Is that an oxymoron?)

Danny had grown up with a silver spoon in his mouth, but was aching to take on responsibility. Turning 16 years of age- he was now the proud owner of a driver's license and headed straight to the bank to open up his very own checking account. All those years of watching his parents pay for his needs were now in the past- From this day on he would be the master of his fate.. he would write the checks..

The bank welcomed him with open arms-the son of one of their biggest account holders.

Danny filled out all the necessary forms, he signed in multiple places and was off.. out into the world -with a shiny new checkbook..in his very own name!

Walking outside down the main avenue, he noticed big signs, advertising the latest iphone.. the one he had he always wanted. Entering the Apple store that morning, Danny walked out 900 dollars later with the phone and all of it's accessories in tow..

Crossing the street he noticed a young boy crying. It was his friend Yaakov's younger brother, Shimmy . "Why are you crying?" he asked him.

Danny was from a very charitable family and loved to help people..So when Shimmy told him that his father had promised him a remote control racing car but could not afford to buy it for him.. Danny's emotions got the best of him and he told Shimmy.. "lets go to the store, I will get it for you!"

They went to the store together and many hundred's of dollars later they emerged into the daylight- big smiles on both their faces.

Danny had never felt better in his life. He felt so strong, so independent, so good..his confidence had reached new heights. Later that night he took several close friends out to dinner.. nothing fancy, but it was all adding up.

And the next night.. and the next. All paid for by Danny's new checkbook. The very next day Danny made yet another purchase.. and then the phone call came..

The manager of the bank was on the line.

"Please come as fast as you can down to the branch, Danny."

He hurried crosstown. What could the manager possibly want from him..?

"Danny, you have a \$2700 debt.. how will you pay this?"

"You are buying and spending like there is no tomorrow.. fulfilling your hearts desires.."

"In the beginning your father covered your overdraft by putting money into your account, but he has stopped doing so."

Danny stepped to the side to call his father..

"Danny, I guess you will have to get a job this summer and pay your debt.."his father told him.

"But, Dad.. you paid for all of the expenses and then suddenly stopped.. why!?"

"Truthfully Danny- I paid for all your fun and games...but waited for at least a short call expressing your gratefulness.. a little thank you.. a recognition.. something.."

"But there was nothing... nothing whatsoever."

So I stopped.

Do not try thanking me now because it's simply too late. You will have to learn the hard way. I can help you get a job in the summer, but this is a life lesson you must learn."

The Korban Todah prompts us all to take stock of our lives-

Hashem gives us everything- life, sustenance, health. Everything has a price- there is no free lunch..material things like iphones, clothes, houses.. these all have prices and must be paid for.

But have we ever thought of paying someone for our brain that BH does wonders for us.. Our heart- the lungs that help us breathe and survive?

All this and more the L-rd above gives us.. and all He asks for is from us in return is a little gratefulness.

Hashem will never ask us for payment- and we can never possibly repay Him...

But to forget all we have received- this is truly a sin.

In this age of plenty we are grateful for all the opportunities that are available to us.. Our fathers and grandfathers suffered and we have more luxury and more enjoyment..but let us not forget to thank G-d appropriately. Because the only currency we can thank Him with is our gratefulness.

A piece of practical advice may be in order here.. Perhaps every morning when we first open our eyes to say Modeh Ani, we should take a slight pause to contemplate and mentally review the list of things we have to be grateful for.

Taking the time to do this will make our days much brighter. So much so that we might find ourselves thanking Hashem many more times throughout the day. These feelings of happiness and fulfillment will come because we are tapping into the inner essence of who we are -both as a nation and individually. Named for our forefather Yaakov Avinu's son Yehuda (Yehudim) we are truly a people of thankfulness and gratitude.

Good Shabbos!

### A Fantastic Summer Experience

A Few Summer Jobs Still Available For  
Junior Counselors: 11-12 years old girls  
&Senior Counselors: High School age girls

### Established Back Yard Camp

Please leave your Name and Number at

845-548-3496

If you love children, you will love this job

### Available for Part Time Work & Projects

An Amazing Talent proficient in:

Software Development, Systems Integration, Custom Reporting, Virtual Machine Management, AWS Cloud Setup, .NET, T-SQL, VPN, Vyatta  
Email ohrchaimjobs@gmail.com



**The Barber**

A man was getting a haircut prior to a trip to Rome. He mentioned the trip to the barber who responded, "Rome? Why would anyone want to go there? It's crowded & dirty and full of Italians. You're crazy to go to Rome. So, how are you getting there?" "We're taking TWA," was the reply. "We got a great rate! "TWA?" exclaimed the barber. "That's a terrible airline. Their planes are old, their flight attendants are rude, and they're always late. So, where are you staying in Rome?" "We'll be at the downtown International Marriott. "That dumps! That's the worst hotel in the city. The rooms are small, the service is surly and they're overpriced. So, whatcha doing when you get there?" "We're going to go to see the Vatican and we hope to see the Pope. "That's rich," laughed the barber. "You and a million other people trying to see him. He'll look the size of an ant. Boy, good luck on this lousy trip of yours. You're going to need it."

A month later, the man again came in for his regular haircut. The barber asked him about his trip to Rome. "It was wonderful," explained the man, "not only were we on time in one of TWA's brand new planes, but it was overbooked and they bumped us up to first class. The food and wine were wonderful, and I had the best service and they waited on me hand and foot. And the hotel-it was great! They'd just finished a \$25 million remodeling job and now it's the finest hotel in the city. They, too, were overbooked, so they apologized and gave us the presidential suite at no extra charge!" "Well," muttered the barber, "I know you didn't get to see the pope." "Actually, we were quite lucky, for as we toured the Vatican, a Swiss Guard tapped me on the shoulder and explained that the pope likes to personally meet some of the visitors, and if I'd be so kind as to step into his private room and wait, the pope would personally greet me. Sure enough, five minutes later the pope walked through the door and shook my hand! I knelt down as he spoke a few words to me." "Really?" asked the Barber. "What'd he say?" He said, "Where'd you get the lousy haircut?"

**Henry Ford and Air Conditioning**

It was a sweltering August day when all three Cohen brothers entered the posh Dearborn, Michigan, offices of Henry Ford, the car maker, "Mr. Ford," announced Norman Cohen, the eldest of the three. "We have a remarkable invention that will revolutionize the automobile industry." Ford looked skeptical, but their threat to offer it to the competition kept his interest piqued. "We would like to demonstrate it to you in person." After a little cajoling, they brought Mr. Ford outside and asked him to enter a black automobile parked in front of the building. Hyman Cohen, the middle brother, opened the door of the car. "Please step inside, Mr. Ford." "What!!!" shouted the tycoon, "Are you crazy? It must be two hundred degrees in that car!!" "It is," smiled the youngest brother, Max, "but sit down, Mr. Ford, and push the white button." Intrigued, Ford pushed the button. All of a sudden a whoosh of freezing air started blowing from vents all around the car, and within seconds the automobile was not only comfortable, it was quite cool. "This is amazing!" exclaimed Ford. "How much do you want for the patent?" Norman spoke up, "The price is one million dollars." Then he paused. "And there is something else. The name 'Cohen Brothers Air Conditioning' must be stamped right next to the Ford logo!" Ford, an infamous anti-Semite, retorted "Money is no problem, but there is no way I will have a Jewish name next to my logo on my cars!" They haggled back and forth for a while and finally they settled. Five million dollars, but the Cohens' last name would be left off. However, the first names of the Cohen brothers would be forever emblazoned upon the console of every Ford air conditioning system. And that is why even today, whenever you enter a Ford vehicle, you will see those three names clearly printed on the air conditioning control panel NORM, HI and MAX.

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We need to start over every day.  
And sometimes many  
times each day.  
-Rabbi Nachman



## Pirkei Avos : Perek 4

1. Ben Zoma said: Who is wise? He who learns from all men, as it is written (Psalm 119:99) "I have gained understanding from all my teachers."

Who is mighty? He who subdues his passions, as it is written (Proverbs 16:32) "One who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and one whose temper is controlled than one who captures a city."

Who is rich? He who rejoices in his portion, as it is written (Psalm 128:2) "You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be happy, and it shall go well with you." "You shall be" refers to this world; and "it shall be well with you" refers to the world to come.

Who is honored? He that honors his fellow men as it is written (I Samuel 2:30) "For those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be treated with contempt."

2. Ben Azzai said: Be eager to fulfill the smallest duty and flee from transgression; for one duty induces another and one transgression induces another transgression. The reward of a duty is a duty, the reward of one transgression is another transgression.

3. He also used to say: Despise no man and deem nothing impossible; for there is no man who does not have his day and there is no thing that does not have its place.

4. Rabbi Levitas of Yavneh used to say: Be exceeding lowly of spirit, for the hope of man is with worms.

5. Rabbi Yochanan ben Baroka said: Whoever profanes the name of Heaven in secret will pay the penalty in public, whether it be done accidentally or intentionally.

6. Rabbi Yishmael his son used to say: He who learns in order to teach will be enabled both to learn and to teach. But he who learns in order to practice will be enabled to learn, to teach, to observe, and to practice.

7. Rabbi Tzadok used to say: Do not make the Torah a crown with which to aggrandize yourself, nor use it as a spade with which to dig. As Hillel used to say: He who makes worldly use of the crown of the Torah shall perish. Thus you may infer that any one who exploits the words of the Torah removes himself from the world of life.

8. Rabbi Yosi used to say: He who honors the Torah is himself honored by mankind. He who dishonors the Torah shall himself be dishonored by mankind.

9. Rabbi Yishmael his son said: He who shuns the office of judge rids himself of enmity, theft, and false swearing. He who presumptuously rules in Torah matters is foolish, wicked, and arrogant.

10. He used to say: Judge not alone, for none may judge alone except One. And say not, "Accept my opinion,"

for it is for them to decide and not you.

11. Rabbi Yonatan said: He who fulfills the Torah in poverty shall in the end fulfill it in wealth. He who disregards the Torah in wealth shall in the end disregard it in poverty.

12. Rabbi Meir said: Engage little in business but occupy yourself with Torah. Be humble in spirit before all men. If you neglect Torah many causes for neglecting it will present themselves to you; but if you labor in Torah then God has abundant reward to give you.

13. Rabbi Eliezer ben Jacob used to say: He who performs one commandment acquires for himself one advocate, while he who commits one transgression has gotten for himself one accuser. Penitence and good deeds are as a shield against punishment.

14. Rabbi Yochanan the sandal-maker said: Every assembly that is for a hallowed purpose shall in the end be established. But any assembly that is not for a hallowed purpose shall not ultimately be established.

15. Rabbi Elazar ben Shammua used to say: Let the honor of your student be as precious to you as your own; and the honor of your colleague as the respect due your teacher; and the respect towards your teacher as your reverence for God.

16. Rabbi Judah used to say: Be careful in teaching, for error in teaching amounts to deliberate sin.

17. Rabbi Shimon used to say: There are three crowns—the crown of the Torah, the crown of the priesthood, and the crown of kingship, but the crown of a good name surpasses them all.

18. Rabbi Nehorai said: Go as a voluntary exile to a place of Torah, and do not say that the Torah will follow you, for it is your companions who will make it your permanent possession. Do not rely upon your own understanding.

19. Rabbi Yannai used to say: It is not in our power to explain the well-being of the wicked or the sorrows of the righteous.

20. Rabbi Matyah ben Cheres used to say: Be first in greeting every man. Be a tail among lions rather than a head to foxes.

21. Rabbi Jacob used to say: This world is like a hallway to the future world. Prepare yourself in the hallway that you may enter into the banquet hall.

22. He also would say: Better is one hour of penitence and good deeds in this world than all

the life of the world to come. Better is one hour of spiritual repose in the world to come than all the life of this world.

23. Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar used to say: Do not appease your fellow in the time of his anger, nor comfort him while his dead lies before him. Do not question him in the time of his vow. Do not try to see him in the time of his disgrace.

24. Samuel the Younger used to say (Proverbs 24:17-18) "Do not rejoice when your enemies fall, and do not let your heart be glad when they stumble, or else the Lord will see it and be displeased, and turn away his anger from them."

25. Elisha ben Avuyah used to say: He who learns as a child, what is he like? He is like ink written on new paper. He who learns as an old man, what is he like? He is like ink written on blotting paper.

26. Rabbi Yosi bar Judah of Kefar ha-Bavli said: He who learns from the young, what is he like? He is like one who eats unripe grapes and drinks wine fresh from his wine press. But he who learns from the aged, what is he like? He is like one who eats ripe grapes and drinks old wine.

27. Rabbi Meir used to say: Do not look at the flask but at what is in it; there may be a new flask that is full of old wine and an old flask that does not even have new wine in it.

28. Rabbi Eleazar ha-Kappar used to say: Jealousy, lust, and ambition remove man from the world.

29. He also used to say: They who have been born are destined to die. They that are dead are destined to be made alive. They who live are destined to be judged, that men may know and make known and understand that He is God, He is the maker, He is the creator, He is the discerner, He is the judge, He is the witness, He is the complainant, and it is He who will in the future judge, blessed be He, in whose presence is neither guile nor forgetfulness nor respect of persons nor taking of bribes; for all is His. And know that everything is according to the reckoning. And let not your evil nature assure you that the grave will be your refuge: for despite yourself you were fashioned, and despite yourself you were born, and despite yourself you live, and despite yourself you die, and despite yourself shall you are destined to give account and reckoning before the supreme King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.

# Jewish do-gooders: Naivete is worse than ignorance

Believing in the possibility of Utopia on earth when bombs are going off in marketplaces is worse than ignorance.

Rabbi Berel Wein

Ignorance is curable by knowledge, naiveté much less so. The naïve person, in most cases, is well aware of the facts. Nevertheless, he or she refuses to draw the correct and logical conclusion from those facts. Fanciful, wishful thinking clouds one's rational judgment. It is as though one believes that by wishing so, it will indeed turn out to be so.

The Torah bids us to be an optimistic and hopeful people, yet it warns us not be a naïve people. The paradox of Jewish belief is that it is utopian in nature but it is very wary about pursuing policies or revering individuals who are purely messianic and utopian in nature and conduct.

Part of its rejection of Christianity was the latter's rejection of the true nature and desires of humans in the naive pursuit of a perfect world and a utopian future. It is to this very idea that Maimonides addresses himself by stating that the world will continue as it is even in the messianic era.

The line between optimism, the belief in a better future and naïve wishful thinking is often blurred by humans. But there is no doubt that such a demarcation line does truly exist. As dangerous to society as ignorance is, I believe that naiveté is a far more dangerous and destructive human failing. The tragedies of the twentieth century and the attendant deaths of so many tens of millions of people came not from ignorance of facts and of history but rather from beliefs in terrible utopian ideas of empire, social class, economic wealth and naively foolish biological and racial theories.

On my recent trip to the United States I was privy to a conversation between a very intelligent community-minded, fine Jewish woman who was about to embark on her first trip to Israel. She was trying to employ a tour guide who would take her to see the "settlements" in Judea and Samaria. She also wanted him to arrange a meeting with a fair-minded Arab family with whom she could discuss her ideas about a permanent peace. I flippantly interjected: "So would we in Israel!"

The problem with most of the do-gooders in the Jewish community is not that they are insincere or ignorant of the facts and

issues that confront Israel, it is that they are hopelessly naïve about the Palestinian street and leadership. They have constructed an imaginary scenario in their minds and like all standard utopians, refuse to be budged from it by acts that they themselves are well aware of.

Thus many are led to believe, in their own naiveté, that the desired result is not only achievable but it is at hand if only Israel would somehow remove the "settlements." Whether actually viewing the facts on the ground will somehow sober her to the realities of our situation is questionable. Such people usually find it difficult to abandon cherished long-held beliefs and proposals. Witness those who supported the Soviet Union for over seventy years of murder and tyranny. That was the ultimate example of naïve behavior in our time.

The Oslo Agreements and the twenty year aftermath of violence and disappointment has pretty much cured most Jewish Israelis of their naiveté about the Arab world and its attitude towards the Jewish state. The original naiveté took two different and widely variant directions. One naïve belief was that there was going to be a greater Israel from the river to the sea.

Somehow the Arabs and the world were going to accept this vision and allow it to be translated into reality. The other path of wishful thinking was that the Arabs would now come to accept Israel as a legitimate country and presence in the Middle East by trading land for peace. Both of these naïve visions have proven to be unrealistic and most of the Israeli public has now accepted this reality.

The Arab world and particularly the Palestinian Authority have never been cured of their naïve vision of the fact that somehow they can make Israel disappear by terror, lawsuits, UN resolutions, stonewalling all proposals and by not fulfilling past commitments. As long as the Palestinian leadership and the Palestinian street continues to fantasize that what it wishes is what it will get, then there will be no meaningful progress towards a settlement and *modus vivendi* with a permanent Israeli presence in the Middle East.

So we are faced with dealing with continued naiveté instead of just plain ignorance. And that is really the crux of the problem.

## BOYCOTT ISRAEL

### AHMED AND MAHMED HAVE A LITTLE PROBLEM

By David F. Nesenoff

"Hello Ahmed, this is Mahmed. Sorry to call on your cell phone number but it's important; we have a little problem, do you have a moment?" Mahmed answers Ahmed. "Sure habibi tell me what's going on." Ahmed explains, "I'm proceeding with the boycott campaign against the Jews and Israel just like we planned." Ahmed interrupts. "Very good, how is the Facebook page coming along?" Mahmed says, "Well that's the problem. Facebook was created by a Jew, Zuckerberg, and we have to boycott it."

Ahmed sighs. "Okay you're right. Let's just instant message everyone." Mahmed replies, "Apparently instant messaging was invented in Israel." Ahmed thinks for a moment. "Then we'll just have to leave a voicemail for everyone." Mahmed hesitates and then responds. "Voicemail technology is from Israel." Ahmed is getting angry. "Okay, so call everyone and if they don't pick up then don't leave a message." Mahmed responds cautiously, "Well my friend that would be a really good idea, but Israel created the cell phone in its Motorola development office. Ahmed yells. "Then just take all the boycott information and put it on a flash drive and hand it to everyone."

Mahmed clears his throat. "Ahem, well, I don't want to upset you but Israel invented the USB flash drive and actually Israel invented the Pentium Intel computer chip and the Windows operating system." Ahmed is fed up and suggests, "Let's just all meet in person, we'll all get together and talk." Mahmed asks, "Where should we meet?" Ahmed says, "I don't care, how about Starbucks?" Mahmed says, "They're on the boycott list." Ahmed says, "Okay, okay, McDonalds!" Mahmed says, "They're also on the boycott list." Ahmed says, "Disney?" Mahmed says, "Boycott list."

Ahmed is beside himself. "Are you telling me there is no way to boycott Israel, its people, its products, its supporters and its technology without using their products, their supporters and their technology? Mahmed thinks for a moment and then offers a solution. "Maybe we could stand on the mountain top and blow a ram's horn to alert everyone." Ahmed replies, "Are you stupid, that was invented by the Jews too. Just hang up the phone and fly out to meet me." Mahmed explains, "Well I read in the paper that every plane has a part manufactured by Iscar the Israeli metal company." Ahmed has reached his limit. "So I'll walk and you'll walk, we'll walk and meet. We can still use our feet can't we?" Mahmed interjects. "To tell you the truth, the word for the heal of one's foot is Ekev which is the root of the name Yaakov, a patriarch of the Jewish people. I think we have to boycott our feet." Ahmed says, "We can't even use our own feet? Then tell all our brotherhood to chop off all our feet immediately." Mahmed responds, "That's a great idea Ahmed, but we have absolutely no way of communicating with our brotherhood."

Ahmed asks, "Didn't we ever invent anything?" Mahmed answers, "Yes, yes, we invented coffee and tea." Ahmed is finally satisfied. "Okay then, I'll just sit here with my chopped off feet and have a cup of coffee and tea." Mahmed informs Ahmed about just one more little problem. "But you'll have to have it black; Israel is the land of milk and honey."



# An Insight into the Joy of Lag Ba'Omer

Rabbi Chaviv Danesh

During Sefirat Ha'Omer we observe some laws of mourning because it was at this time that 24,000 students of Rabbi Akiva died. On Lag B'Omer, however, not only does the mourning period come to a halt, but there is even an idea to increase in happiness. The commentaries investigate the rationale for the extra happiness that we are meant to experience on Lag B'Omer. Some suggest that it is based on the tradition that on Lag B'Omer Rabbi Akiva's students stopped dying. However, this is hard to understand, since the reason why they stopped dying was because they had all already died! Others suggest that the source of the happiness is the fact that this day marks the yortzeit (day of death) of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. However this is also not an obvious reason to celebrate. There were many righteous people who died throughout the ages and never do we make a celebration on their yortzeit. In fact there is a custom to go to the other extreme and fast on the yortzeit of a righteous person, as many do on Moshe Rabbeinu's yortzeit. What then is the reason for the increase in happiness on Lag B'Omer?

To understand the reason why we stop the mourning process on Lag B'Omer we first need to investigate the reason behind mourning during the Omer period. After all, throughout history there were many tragedies that befell the Jewish People in which large populations died in a short period of time and yet the Rabbis did not designate a mourning period to commemorate those disasters. Furthermore the Ramban tells us that the period between Pesach and Shavuot is similar to Chol Hamoed, making it an even more inopportune time for mourning. Therefore we must ask ourselves: What was unique about the death of Rabbi Akiva's students to necessitate such an extensive mourning period at such an inopportune time?

The Gemara (Sanhedrin 86a) says that Rabbi Akiva was the source of the entire Oral Torah, Each one of the 24,000 students of Rabbi Akiva was in turn meant to be a link in the chain for transmission of a unique portion of the Oral Torah that Rabbi Akiva taught. The death of the students of Rabbi Akiva was therefore not only the death of individuals but also a direct threat to the transmission of Torah. With the loss of each student another layer of Torah was forgotten forever. This is the reason why we specifically mourn the death of Rabbi Akiva's students over other tragedies.

With this we can begin to understand why it was fitting to institute customs of mourning at a time that is compared to Chol Hamoed. The days of Sefirat Ha'Omer are meant to be a time to prepare ourselves to receive the Torah on Shavuot. However, the death of the students of Rabbi Akiva during this time and the loss of Torah that accompanied it made this period bittersweet. The Torah that we prepare ourselves to receive on Shavuot is no longer on the level of the Torah that we could have had if Rabbi Akiva's students would have been able to

transmit their Torah. This is why the days of the Omer are the most fitting time to mourn the loss of Torah that came through the deaths of Rabbi Akiva's students.

On Lag B'Omer however, things took a different turn. Basing himself on the Gemara (Yevamot 62b) the Arizal explains that on the 33rd day of the Omer Rabbi Akiva found five new students who became the new transmitters of his Torah. Based on this we can understand one aspect of the happiness on Lag B'Omer. During the Omer we observe customs of mourning because of the intense loss of Torah that Klal Yisrael experienced, but on Lag B'Omer, we celebrate because the loss of Torah ceased, and the dissemination of Torah continued through the ordination and survival of Rabbi Akiva's new students.

Let's now address the opinion that says Lag B'Omer marks the yortzeit of Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai. The Mishna in Sotah (Sotah 49b) says that the death of Rabbi Akiva marked the end of "kavod haTorah" (honor of the Torah). Rashi explains that this is because Rabbi Akiva was able to expound on even the crowns on the tops of the letters of the Sefer Torah. The Maharal explains that the crowns on top of the

letters represent the secrets of the Torah that are too lofty to be put into words. Rabbi Akiva had the unique ability to bring out these secrets through expounding on every drop of ink that is on the parchment of a Torah scroll. There is no greater honor to the Torah than showing how there is not even a drop of ink without depth and meaning.

Of Rabbi Akiva's five new students, Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai was the one who specifically received this deeper part of the Torah from Rabbi Akiva. The commentaries point out that on Lag B'Omer, the

day when Rabbi Shimon left this world, he revealed some of these deeper teachings to his students. In fact a major portion of the Zohar that we have today is based on the teachings that Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai revealed on Lag B'Omer. The B'nei Yisaschar explains that this is one reason behind the custom to light bonfires on Lag B'Omer. The bonfires symbolize the light of the Torah that Rashbi revealed on this day. Now we can understand why as opposed to the yortzeit of other tzadikim we celebrate the yortzeit of Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. It is because it was on this day that Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai lit up the world with his revelation of the secrets of the Torah.

To conclude, according to both opinions above, the happiness of the day of Lag B'Omer stems from the continuation and revelation of Torah that took place on this day. Rabbi Tzadok Hakohen explains that every year on Lag B'Omer the same revelation of Torah repeats itself and we are given the opportunity to understand the depth and beauty of the Torah on another level. May we all merit taking full advantage of this special day.



# THE SECRET SWISS BANK ACCOUNT

RAV CHAIM KREISWIRTH, ZT"l

HaGaon Rav Chaim Kreiswirth, zt"l, related that when he was in the Holocaust, he was with a man who became very close to him, and one day that man turned to him and said, "I sense that my time is slipping away and I want to pass along to you a secret, and that is, I have a secret Swiss bank account with a

large sum of money in it. I ask of you, that if you are worthy to survive this inferno and remain alive, please give this bank account number to my family".

That Jew was sacrificed Al Kiddush Hashem, and Rav Chaim merited to be saved. Over the course of many years Rav Chaim went around searching for the

man's family, however, he was not able to find them.

Thirty years went by, and one day a man who lives in Yerushalayim knocked on his door, and asked for financial help. He explained that he was marrying off his children and his situation was very dire. When the man told Rav Chaim his family name, thousands of bells began ringing in Rav Chaim's ears. This was the very same name as the man from the concentration camp! Rav Chaim began to investigate the lineage of this man, and to his great surprise, it became clear that he was the son of that very man.

Rav Chaim immediately told him about his father, and that there was a large inheritance waiting for him all these many years. He gave over the Swiss bank account number, and when the man went to the Swiss bank, it turned out that the balance in the account was several million dollars!

When Rav Chaim told this story over, he said, "That man was a millionaire for years, but he never knew it. Hashem guarded the salvation for him until just the right moment when he needed it the most!"



## Our Visit with Harav Kenig Shlita

*"Im so happy to see, to see good kids, i heard that you Daven beautifully and sing very well."*

Harav Elazar Mordechai Kenig Shlita speaking about our Youth Minyan Children

The words that we sang **HAMALACH HAGOEL OSI MIKOL RAH HU YIVARECH ES HANIRIM...** Words spoken by **YAKKOV AVINU** when he gave a special bracha to Ephraim and Menashe. He only desire was that Hashem should bless the children and protect them from outside influences. This special bracha is that in the merit of the **AVOS AVRAHAM and YITZCHAK**, Hashem should help you to continue to grow in *yiddishkeit* and *middos tovos*.

This bracha passed on from parent to child since the time of *Yaakov Aveinu* is our bracha to you. Treat each other with kindness and respect and never ever fight with one another. Show your parents the honor and respect they deserve. Do not fight at home with your brothers and sisters, honor your teachers and your rebbes and act with proper **DERECH ERETZ**. Acting with proper **DERECH ERETZ** guarantees that you will get all the blessings. One of the special traits of the *yidden* is to be modest and to feel shame & embarrassment when being a *chutzpadike* person. it says **BOISHES**

**PANIM LGAN EDEN** which means if one has shame then they are going to go to **GAN EDEN** and the opposite, **AZUS PANIM LIGIHE-NOM** a person who has *chutzpah* will go to **GIHENOM**. With Hashem's help you will always show only the best *middos* and know *chutzpah* is never acceptable. You must honor an older person. You must always respect your parents and teachers and listen to what they are saying. Hashem should *bentch* all of you that you should be healthy, happy and your parents should see a lot of **NACHAS**. By acting properly and learning well, with Hashem's help you will have a lot of success.

We spoke before on the **MIDDAH** of **BUSHA**-being embarrassed this is also when we come into shul., We need to come in with awe, fear and embarrassment. We must honor the place that Hashem is residing in. we must come to daven and not to speak about other things, only to come and daven. This is also called the **MIDAH** of **BUSHAH** and these are the **SIMANIM** of **AM YISROEL**-the signs of the Jewish people and then we will be **ZOCHE** as we discussed, to **BOISHES PANIM LGAN EDEN**.

A trait of every Jew is, the more he gets used to the **MIDAS HAYIRAH**-trait of fear and the **MIDAS HABUSHAH**-

trait of embarrassment, you will automatically distance yourself from speaking with *chutzpah* and begin to speak with embarrassment and **YIRAS SHOMAYIM**. This will bring every success to a person. Hashem should help you to be successful in everything you do. With Hashem's help, you will be a true source of **Nachas** to your parents.

AMEN

WHAT A SPECIAL EVENT IT WAS. HEARING WORDS OF KEDUSHA FROM HARAV HATZADIK RAV ELAZAR MORDECHAI KENIG SHLITA, SINGING, SAYING TEHLILM, AND (of course) GETTING SPINNERS

A very special thank you to Reb Yankel Klien for hosting the event at Anshei Briarwood



Thank you Rabbi Fried



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Rabbi Yossi Fried



### MILAH – WHAT IT ACHIEVES

I would like to share some more highlights of the shiur that I gave at the Night Kollel, on the unique significance and power of the mitzvah of milah.

As already mentioned, the Tur underscores the exclusiveness of bris milah, that it is a symbol embedded in our bodies, testifying to our unique and inbuilt status as the Chosen Nation. Additionally, the Mishna (Nedarim 31b) tells us that the expression “bris” is used 13 times in reference to milah, and therefore 13 brisos (bonds with Hashem) are created by performing this great mitzvah.

Furthermore, the Tur points to the Mishna (Avos 3:15) that one who nullifies bris milah will not receive a portion in the next world. Conversely, he quotes the Gemara that Avraham Avinu guards over the entranceway to Gehinom and does not allow one who is circumcised to enter. Thus, without a bris no other accomplishments will be meaningful and with a bris one is saved from punishment in the next world.

Another fundamental question is to the extent of the mitzvah of bris milah, which is a subject of discussion in the Rishonim. What is achieved through the mitzvah of milah? Does it just remove imperfection or does it actually infuse kedusha in a person and facilitate reaching greatness?

The Mishna in Nedarim asserts that one who has no milah is disgraceful and only through milah can a person reach totality. This – says the Mishna – is clear in the pasuk in Parshas Lech Lichah, where Hashem told Avraham in regards to the mitzvah of milah: הִתְּשֶׁלֶךְ לִפְנֵי ה' וְהָיָה לְךָ כָּמֹנִים וְאֶתְּנָה בְּרִיתִי בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ, “Go before Me and you will be complete,” which shows us that only after the milah did he become “complete”. The Gemara (Nedarim 32a) elaborates on this point how Avraham Avinu, even after all his great devotion to performing mitzvos, still did not achieve his highest level of complete spirituality until after his circumcision.

Hence, we see that bris milah removes imperfection. The Rambam, in his classic Moreh Nevochim, as well as the Sefer Hachinuch, elaborates on this point, how a person is born incomplete and his purpose in this world is to complete himself. This is similar to a person’s physical dimension, where one works to accomplish and achieve greatness. The Moreh Nevuchim continues by saying that the milah weakens one’s draw to material and physical desires, thereby facilitating one’s achievement of tikun hamidos, reaching a level of having refined character traits.

These Rishonim seem to be of the opinion that the milah accomplishes removal of the spiritual blemishes.

However, other Rishonim elaborate on the greatness of this mitzvah and explain that there is much more to milah than just removal of spiritual imperfection. As mentioned earlier, the Tur delineates many great spiritual levels that can be reached through milah.

Additionally, the Beis Halevi quotes the sefer Akeida who maintains that the mitzvah of milah actually encompasses both dimensions: removal of spiritual imperfection, as well as infusing a person with kedusha. The Beis Halevi elaborates on this notion and suggests that both of these ideas are actually alluded to in the pasuk in Parshas Lech Lichah, where Hashem told Avraham: הִתְּשֶׁלֶךְ לִפְנֵי ה' וְהָיָה לְךָ כָּמֹנִים וְאֶתְּנָה בְּרִיתִי בֵּינִי וּבֵינֶךָ, “Go before Me and you will be complete, and I will place a bond between us.” The milah was twofold: it brought him to reach completion as well as bringing him close to Hashem.

The Beis Halevi proposes that these two facets of milah are accomplished by the two components of the mitzvah: milah and priah, which correspond to these two dimensions of milah, thereby putting every child on the road to reach completion, as well as infusing them with great powers of kedusha, bringing them close to Hashem.

### COMMUNITY KOLLEL NEWS:

As we continue to count the seven weeks to Shavuos, come join one of our many learning programs and prepare for the yom tov of Kabalas Hatorah.

The Kollel Boker has resumed their trek through Meseches Beitzah. The Night Kollel has started Hilchos Milah. Additionally, The Night Kollel has a number of different tracks for various learning styles, including a Daf Yomi Shiur, as well as Daf Hashavuah.

The Night Kollel, learning hikchos milah, hosted a shiur from Rabbi Eliezer Krohn, son of the renowned Maggid, Rabbi Pesach Krohn, and 6th generation mohel. Rabbi Krohn is a well-known and popular speaker and teacher. Details will be forthcoming in a future article.

I gave a shiur at the Kollel Boker, on Wednesday, Pesach Sheni: “Similarities & Differences between Leil Haseder and Pesach Sheni.” As always, CDs of the various shiurim are available on the shul’s website 18Forshay.com.

Wishing you a wonderful Shabbos and Lag B’omer,

*Rabbi Nachum Scheiner*



**The Night Kollel is now learning Hilchos Milah. Come join one of our many learning programs and prepare for the yom tov of Kabalas HaTorah!**



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