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## PARASHAT EMOR | ISSUE 25

Josh Caplan | Boger Dvar Torah

The parsha of Emor is all about the different things which invalidate Kohanim and about the Avoda in the Mikdash. We then get to the end of the parsha where the Torah seemingly goes on a complete tangent with a story about people who blasphemed and ends off the parsha with this story. The question therefore is this: why does the Torah put a seemingly irrelevant and out of context story here?

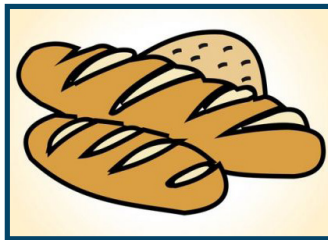
In order to understand this we need to know a bit of background about the Egyptian Moshe killed before he fled from Egypt. Rashi says in Shemot that the Egyptian 'cast his eyes' upon the Hebrews' wife. He took out the Hebrew man and had relations with his wife as she thought that he was her husband. The Hebrew man suspected what had happened and the Egyptian oppressed him for it and Moshe killed him for the oppression.

The woman fell pregnant with a child who turns out to be the blasphemer from this weeks parsha (as explained by Rashi). Rashi continues to say that according to a braisa his dubious ancestry denied him entry to the tribe of Dan, despite his mother being a part of Dan. Dan however did not want him in their camp because his father was not one of them. The matter was brought to the court of Moshe and he lost which caused him to blaspheme.

Rashi also states that prior to this man being denied entry into the camp of Dan,

he had already scoffed about the bread of the shulchan not being fresh every day - "Might a king eat cold, nine-day-old bread?" The last thing mentioned prior to this story is the shulchan of the Mikdash which is why this story is placed here instead of somewhere else in the Torah.

Of all the Avoda in the Mikdash; why did he choose to criticise the lechem hapanim? There are plenty of other things which can be criticised and people have criticised in Tanach and continue to criticise today. The first thought I would like to suggest is that because the number of loaves for the lechem hapanim is 12, there is some connection between the lechem hapanim and an idea of God always sustaining the Jewish people.



There is an idea brought down by Chazal which explains that the lechem hapanim is kept fresh for the 9 days after it has been baked. My second thought is that the

blasphemer was trying to deny the divinity and sovereignty of God by saying that the bread did not stay fresh. This is also why he sinned by the way of blasphemy.

Additionally, according to Rashi (s.v. שלמות) his mother was drawing attention to herself by talking with everyone; "she used to continually babble with many words (she was a ברת דברי) – she enquired after the health of everybody". Therefore another possible explanation as to why he sinned in this way is because she was not particular in the way of speech, therefore he sinned in speech.

# The “Great” and the “Small”



Rav Aharon Herskovitz | Rav Shaliach

We learn at the beginning of this week’s parsha various halachot that are specific to the kohanim: for whom they can and cannot become impure, to whom they can and cannot get married, and more. The command that opens up this section begins with a repetition (Vayikra 21:1): Hashem said to Moshe: “Say to the kohanim, the sons of Aharon, and you shall say to them: none shall cause himself to become impure for any among his nation.” This seemingly extraneous repetition of the word “say” is noted by Rashi, quoting the Gemara in Yevamot, who comments

אמור ואמרת, להזהיר גדולים על הקטנים. “Say” and “you shall say”, to warn the adults (literally “large ones”) for the children (literally “small ones”). The passuk is teaching us the halacha that adult kohanim are required to prevent kohanim children from becoming impure (from this stems the practice that even young kohanim may not enter a cemetery).

In addition to the specific law that this drasha is intending to teach us, I believe that a more general message can be learned as well. At the most basic level, adults are entrusted with guarding over the young, providing them with their most basic needs. The young cannot fend for themselves, and require being provided for by those who are self-sufficient in terms of the basic needs of safety, food, love and care. In that sense, the old are charged with providing for the young.

Over and above this, though, those who are older (not just adults) are expected to, and charged with, providing guidance to those younger than they are, showing them not just how to get by in life, but how to live their lives: what is meaningful, what values do we hold dear, and how do we balance those values with others. When an older kohen teaches a younger kohen about the laws of impurity, he is also teaching him about the what it means to be a kohen, and how that can be challenging, to be someone who must sometimes separate from being a part of a mourning community or mourning nation (despite the emotional difficulty in doing so, in separating yourself from the group) in order to maintain the unique holiness that he has, which in turn is supposed to be benefit the nation as a whole.

“We must be concerned not only with our own development, but also with the development of those around us. If there is an issue that requires work and improvement, it is not for those who are seemingly “great” at this issue to say “Well, I’m doing fine right now, if there’s something others are struggling with maybe I’ll go and start my own community, or join another one that doesn’t have this issue.”

Lastly, I would like to suggest that although usually גדולים and קטנים in this context is

translated as “adults” and “children/minors”, we can understand them as referring to different levels: distinguishing between one who has a higher level of appreciation or advancement in a certain attribute, and one who is at a lower level in that regard. As part of our community, we must be concerned not only with our own development, but also with the development of those around us. If there is an issue that requires work and improvement, it is not for those who are

seemingly “great” at this issue to say “Well, I’m doing fine right now, if there’s something others are struggling with maybe I’ll go and start my own community, or join another one that doesn’t have this issue.”

Instead, Chazal tell us that those who are

further developed must feel a sense of responsibility to others around them, to work hard at creating an environment that encourages growth instead of stagnation or retreat.

Shabbat Shalom!

## Dvar Halacha: Weekly Question .....

Have a question? Please email [rav@bauk.org](mailto:rav@bauk.org) or call Rav Aharon at 07976642135.

איזה ענין שצריך לברך עליו שהחיינו, יברך

**QUESTION** from BOGER, KOBI WEINER: If one bought some clothes online, forgetting it was Sefirat HaOmer, need they return the clothes or can they keep them and not wear them till Lag B'Omer?

Despite the odd phrasing, Rav Chaim Kanievsky, the Kaf HaChaim and Rav Ovadia Yosef all permit saying shehechyanu on a lichatchila level.

**ANSWER:** The Shulchan Aruch (OC 551:17) paskens, based off of the Sefer Chassidim, to not recite a shehechyanu on a new fruit or article of clothing between the 17th of Tammuz and Tisha B'Av. For this reason, the practice is to not buy new clothing during the three weeks.

The question of whether new clothes can be bought seems to be dependent on the question regarding shehechyanu. Since one can recite shehechyanu, it appears there would be no issue buying new clothing. However, the Geonim mention a specific issue with buying new clothing during Sefirat HaOmer, as a sign of mourning. Although this appears in the Geonim, for whatever reason it is not mentioned by later poskim.

The Maamar Mordechai mentions that some had a custom to similarly not recite a shehechyanu during Sefirat HaOmer, but he believes this custom to be in error. The reason for a possible differentiation between the two time periods (which, I would argue, affects other laws of mourning, such as the use of recorded music) can be one of two reasons: either mourning for the destruction of the Beit HaMikdash is more severe, or the three weeks themselves have taken on a certain nature of days of punishment (as opposed to the days of Sefirat HaOmer, which are by their nature supposed to be more like Chol HaMoed, as the Ramban writes).

Other poskim disagree with the Maamar Mordechai and state that shehechyanu must also not be said during Sefirat HaOmer.

On a practical level: fundamentally, there is not an issue with buying clothes or making shehechyanu during Sefirat HaOmer. However, many people have developed a practice of not buying new clothes during this time period. Whoever has acted according to this practice should continue to do so (as far as I am aware, this was the practice in the communities in which I was raised, and I believe it is the practice here as well). If, however, there is a case of need, purchasing new clothing would be allowed, and it would be preferable to wear them initially on Shabbat (to have the additional aspect of kavod Shabbat).

The Mishna Berura (493:2) seems to pasken like the Maamar Mordechai, that on a fundamental level one may say shehechyanu, though his phrasing is a bit unclear (it seems like it ought to be avoided): ומכל מקום אם נודמן לו:

In the situation you describe, I would not see any need to return the clothes. If you could wear them initially for Shabbat that would be fine, but if there is another need (for example, you needed a new shirt because you don't have enough to get by comfortably), you can also wear it (and say shehechyanu) before Lag BaOmer.

# Community Updates .....

Last Shabbat saw the first 'Sixth Form Shabbaton' taking place in Hendon and bringing together sixth formers and bogrim from across London, and even Amsterdam!

RAV SHALIACH AHARON HERSKOVITZ said:

We were blown away by an amazing 6th Form Shabbaton this Shabbat! Held as part of Mizrahi UK's Shabbat of Inspiration, over 40 sixth formers came to Raleigh Close (joining with Raleigh Close-Youth) for a Shabbat filled with Torah, singing and meals. We heard great shiurim from



RAV REUVEN TARAGIN and RAV JESSE HORN from YESHIVAT HAKOTEL, as well as from our RAV SHALIACH and RABBANIT SHLICHA (SHIRA SOKOL HERSKOVITZ). We also enjoyed lunch and activity together with BNE AKIWA NEDERLAND - DE OFFICIËLE PAGINA (aka Bnei Akiva Amsterdam) and Israel Machane Group 1. Thank you to our amazing mazkirut and madrichim, Mizrahi UK and Raleigh Close!

Looking forward to similar future events!

LOOKING BACK AT YOM HA'ATZMAUT: "Bnei Akiva once again took over Kinloss United Synagogue for the largest Yom Ha'Atzmaut service in the UK. Over 1600 Dignitaries, Chaverim, Bogrim and Madrichim were in attendance. The community heard speeches from Chief Rabbi Mirvis, Ambassador Mark Regev from Israel in the UK, the RT Hon Gavin Williamson MP and BAUK's Mazkir Joe Boxer. They were also led by Chazan Jonny Turgel for a stirring

service with an atmospheric rendition of Hallel. Following the service, 600 people went downstairs for a dinner catered by Itzik and danced the night away with music from Eli Tamir. This was a hugely successful event that was greatly enjoyed by all who participated. For highlights and recordings of the speeches please head over to [www.youtube.com/bneiakivauk](http://www.youtube.com/bneiakivauk)"

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1st - 14th August 2018

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	GIMMEL   YEAR 10   Avila, Spain   £990

TO APPLY: [www.bauk.org/machane-apply](http://www.bauk.org/machane-apply)  
 More details: Hannah Denby | 02082091319 ext2  
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