

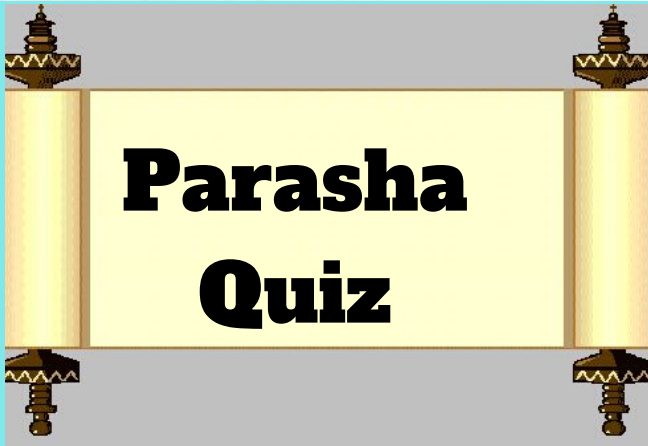


KMS Family Parasha

LEARN ABOUT THE PARASHA WITH THE KMS YOUTH DEPARTMENT
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Emor - אָמֹר

5.9.20



Elementary:

- 1) Who are the only people for whom a כהן can become Tamei? What about the כהן הגדול?
- 2) What is Terumah and who gets to eat it?
- 3) What is a Kiddush Hashem? What is a Chillul Hashem?
- 4) Which Yom Tov is celebrated after counting 49 days of the Omer?
- 5) What miracle happened with the Lechem Hapanim (special breads) on the Shulchan every week?

Middle/High School:

- 1) What does Rashi (21:1) learn from the repetition of the words "אמר ואמרת"?
- 2) According to Rashi (21:8) how are we supposed to treat a כהן with Kedusha?
- 3) According to Rashi (21:18) what is the difference between a נדר and a נדבה?
- 4) According to Rashi (23:15) when do we begin counting Sefirat HaOmer? What does the word שבת actually refer to in this pasuk?
- 5) According to Rashi (24:10) who was the father of the ממקלל?

What would you do?

Discussion starter for your Shabbat table..

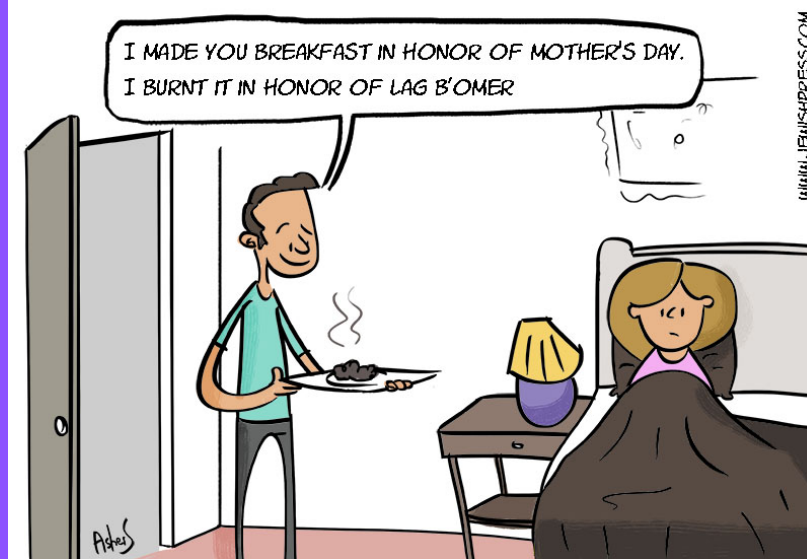
If you were granted one wish from Hashem what would you wish for?

Did You Know?

[Lag BaOmer \(Chabad.org\)](http://Chabad.org)

The Talmud describes how, during the period of Sefirat HaOmer a plague was visited on Rabbi Akiva's 24,000 students because they did not behave with proper respect for one another. To commemorate the tragedy, certain mourning customs are observed during this time. On the thirty-third day of the Omer count, however, the students stopped dying. (Lamed-gimmel, pronounced lag, is the Hebrew number 33.) The mourning customs are suspended, and we celebrate the day as a holiday. Lag BaOmer is also the yahrtzeit, several decades later, of the great sage and mystic Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, best known as the principal author of the Zohar, the fundamental text of Jewish mysticism. The Zohar relates that on the day of his passing, Rabbi Shimon revealed new and profound mystical ideas to his disciples, and commanded them that rather than mourn for him, they should rejoice on this day, just as he rejoiced in his soul's imminent reunion with G-d.

The famed chassidic master Rabbi Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov, known by the title of his book as the Bnei Yissaschar, gives an interesting explanation for the custom of lighting bonfires. He writes that on the day of a tzaddik's passing, all the holy work he has done culminates and is revealed in this world. On Lag BaOmer, the true power of Rabbi Shimon's accomplishments as one of the foremost Mishniac sages and the author of the Kabbalah shone forth. In fact, it is recorded in the Zohar that the overwhelming deluge of spiritual light had such a potent effect on the world that the sun did not set until Rabbi Shimon had finished conveying his wisdom and passed on, and that a spiritual fire surrounded his deathbed the entire day. We light fires to commemorate the spiritual revelation that occurred on this day.



Shem MiShmuel (Aish.com)

Rabbi Akiva had twenty-four thousand students, and all of them died at the same time of the year [during the omer], because they failed to give honor to each other (Yevamos 62b). How could the greatest Torah scholars of the age fail in such a simple matter? What went wrong, bringing upon them such a terrible punishment? It is surely also significant that they died particularly at this time of year, rather than at any other. The nature of the omer period must in some way lend itself to their error and its punishment.

Provided that the constituents of the group continue to view each other as distinct people, this mutual admiration functions correctly. But let us imagine that the members of this society become too close to each other, regarding themselves as mere parts of a whole, rather than as discrete entities, perhaps even as limbs of the same body. And just as in a body the left arm doesn't praise the right arm for being stronger, so too, the members of this fraternity cease to honor each other, taking each constituent's special attributes for granted. We may suggest that this is the reason why the disciples of Rabbi Akiva failed to give honor to each other.

But surely unity is one of the great aims of Jewish life! What was wrong with achieving such a tremendous rapport with others? The answer is that by focusing so entirely on the community one loses sight of the fact that it is composed of individuals. Every tzaddik has his own role to play in the spiritual development of the world, one which is very precious and not attainable by anyone else. Failing to include this in one's view of life has disastrous consequences for Jewish survival. While we must concentrate on the development of communal unity, it must never be at the expense of the individual's worth. For people on the tremendous spiritual level of the disciples of Rabbi Akiva, this was a grievous error, so much so that they were smitten as a result.

My holy father added the following insight to our understanding of this matter: The period of the omer is during the months of Nissan, Iyar, and Sivan. The zodiac sign of Nissan is the lamb. Sheep bleat as one and stick together. This indicates that Nissan is a month of focusing on the klal, the community as a whole. In this month, the whole community was redeemed from Egypt, regardless of individual worth. Iyar has the sign of the bull, a more solitary animal, representing a complete change of focus to the worth of the individual. Sivan, however, is represented by the twins. This indicates the most ideal form of Divine service, blending the two opposite foci of the previous months.

It is crucial to note that the Torah was given in Sivan. Chazal tell us that when Yisrael reached Mount Sinai: Yisrael camped there (Shemos 19:2) - when they came to Mount Sinai they formed a homogeneous group. At that moment, God said that "the time has arrived to give My children the Torah" (Eichah Rabbah, Pesichah 20). This leads us to the view that unity is the only prerequisite for receiving the Torah. But the above excerpt is complemented by the following: Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai said, "If Yisrael had been lacking even one person, the Divine Presence would not have been revealed to them." (Devarim Rabbah 7:8). While God required unity for the most monumental revelation in the history of the world, this was never at the sacrifice of the need for individual existence and expression.

It is clear why misfortune befell Rabbi Akiva's students during the period of the omer. They had lost sight of the aim of Jewish life - to focus on both the community and the individual. It was during the omer, when this ideal is most potently felt, that their deficiencies were most strongly highlighted. They completely failed to learn from the nature of the Divine service expected of them during this period; hence their punishment was exacted at that time. God deals particularly stringently with His dear ones.

It is not insignificant that the plague terminated on Lag BaOmer. Just as the night is divided into three sections, the last of which is associated with the coming dawn, so too, the last third of the omer period, from after Lag BaOmer onwards, is associated with Shavuot. It is as if the proper appreciation of community and individual radiates from Sivan into the last part of the omer. Let us hope that we understand the importance of the error of Rabbi Akiva's students and make our sefiras ha'omer a happy synthesis of communal unity and personal growth.