

SHABBAT SHALOM. Today is 13 Iyar 5779 the 28th day of the Omer.

TORAH DIALOGUE

(p. 513 Hz) (p. 740 S) (p. 468 Hi) (p. 672 AS)

EMOR אָמֹר Leviticus 21:1

[Compiled by Rabbi Edward Davis (RED) Rabbi Emeritus
Young Israel of Hollywood-Ft. Lauderdale]

1. In the beginning of Parshat Emor, Hashem told Moshe to *“Speak to the Kohanim, the sons of Aharon”* (21:1). The Midrash comments that Hashem showed to Moshe *“each generation and its judges, each generation and its kings, each generation and its wise men, each generation and its robbers, and he showed him King Saul and his sons falling by the sword in battle”* against the Plishtim. Moshe asked God, *“The very first king who took charge of Your children should be stabbed by the sword?”* God responded, *“Why are you complaining to me? Instead, you should speak to the Kohanim who he (Saul) killed (in the priestly city of Nov), for they are prosecuting him.”* The Midrash concludes that that is why it says *“Speak to the Kohanim.”* The prime sin of King Saul was not killing the Kohanim in the city of Nov! The verses tell us (Samuel I, Ch. 15) that King Saul was given an explicit command to kill out the entire nation of Amalek – men, women, and children. King Saul had mercy on Amalek and spared their king, thereby violating this command. Samuel came to Saul and told him that as a result of this sin, Saul was unworthy of the monarchy and Hashem would tear the Kingdom of Israel from him. So why does this Midrash say that the reason why King Saul was killed in such a horrible fashion was because of the incident with the Kohanim in Nov? The Reische Rav, in his sefer *“HaDerash V’ha Iyun,”* says that King Saul’s primary sin was, in fact, his refusal to kill all of Amalek. But, had it been for that sin alone, Saul would not have been killed in such a fashion. Why? Because he could have excused himself by saying, *“I am a compassionate person. I could not bring myself to kill innocent men, women, and children.”* That would have been a human emotion, which is understandable. Sometimes a person may have trouble controlling his emotions. However, the refutation of such an argument was the incident with Nov, the city of priests, where Saul was not compassionate. He wiped out an entire city of Jewish priests. Where was the compassionate person then? (R. Frand)

2. When a person brought a thanksgiving offering in the Holy Temple (e.g. when a person was saved or healed) the Torah says (Vayikra 22:29) *“Lirtzonchem.”* You shall sacrifice it. The Chizkuni translated *“Lirtzonchem”* as *“wholeheartedly.”* Here this is seemingly difficult because we see that people readily give thanks and spend money for this type of celebration. The Ktav Sofer explains that even though I am very happy and generous about my recovery, I could still feel that God shouldn’t have let me get sick in the first place. Therefore, the Ktav Sofer says, I should realize that even my misfortune was part of Hashem’s plan. We don’t understand why Hashem does many things, but must realize that He has His reasons and it is for our own good. (Rabbi Flom, o”h, Ohr Dovid Yeshiva)

3. The Torah states, *“And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corner of your field, and the gleanings of your harvest you shall not gather, for the poor and the stranger you shall leave them (the corners and the gleanings).”* Why is the owner commanded to leave the corners

and gleanings rather than being commanded to gather the produce and give it to the poor? (Rabbi Zelig Pliskin)

4. Parshat Emor contains the mitzvah of *Sefirat Ha’Omer*, the seven-week count from Pesach to Shavuot. As the nexus between Pesach and Shavuot, this mitzvah teaches that the primary goal of our redemption from Egyptian slavery was Kabbalat HaTorah, our acceptance of the Torah at Mount Sinai. The Exodus from Egypt was only a prerequisite for the servitude that the Jewish people would accept at Mount Sinai. The Rav wrote that the purpose of God’s freeing the Jewish nation from Egyptian slavery was not to create a political and social entity, but to establish *“a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”* To be a political leader, there were people more qualified than Moshe, but to be rebbe of the Jewish people, Moshe Rabbeinu was the most outstanding candidate. Only Moshe could lead the people to *“serve God on this mountain.”* The period of *Sefirat Ha’Omer* offers an opportunity to journey each day toward the mountain of Sinai. Each day counted brings us closer towards Shavuot, strengthening our commitment to the Torah of Sinai. The Rav explains the Torah’s repeated use of the word Shabbat in reference to *Sefirat Ha’Omer*. Just as God created the physical world in six days and set aside the seventh day of Shabbat to be a spiritual oasis, so must a Jew, during this expanded Shabbat, this seven-week period of *Sefirat Ha’Omer*, create his own spiritual world. (R. Bertram Leff)

HAFTORAH

(p. 528 Hz) (p. 761 S) (p. 883 Hi) (1176 AS)

EZEKIEL יְחִזְקִאל 44:15

This week’s haftorah reveals the status of an ordinary Kohen during the Messianic era. Yechezkel reviews the Kohen’s prohibition from drinking wine, shaving his head, and marrying a widow or divorcee. These details seem to be a repetition of the laws in this week’s parsha. However, a more careful examination reveals a shocking dimension of the era of Mashiach. According to most commentators, the ordinary Kohen will undergo a radical change reflecting an elevated life of sanctity and purity. In essence he will be almost parallel to the Kohen Gadol of previous times. Although the present day Kohen is restricted from marrying a divorcee, he need not marry a virgin and may certainly marry a widow. Yet according to the Radak, the Kohen of the Messianic era will be limited, for the most part, to marrying a virgin. Today’s Kohen is forbidden to serve in the Beit HaMikdash with overgrown hair; however no specific regulations are set for his actual hair length. But according to the Radak, the future Kohen, like the Kohen Gadol, will maintain an extremely short hairstyle. The Kohen’s garb consists of a mix of multi-colored wool and linen but the garb of the future Kohen will be restricted to the linen garb typically worn by the Kohen Gadol on Yom Kippur. This garb will even assume the sanctified status of the Yom Kippur garb and will be forbidden to be removed from the walls of the Beit HaMikdash. These new regulations illustrate that the future status of the ordinary Kohen will be tantamount to that of the Kohen Gadol. These phenomena indicate that the ordinary Temple service of the Messianic era will be on a par with the Kohen Gadol’s service of earlier generations. And in certain ways, this elevated service will resemble the Yom Kippur service of the Kohen Gadol in the Holy of Holies. (R. Dovid Siegel)

QUESTIONS FOR PARSHAT EMOR 5779
by Rabbi Edward Davis, Rabbi Emeritus

I. From the Text

1. To whom is the Kohen permitted to be in contact with the dead? (21:2,3)
2. Whom is a Kohen prohibited to marry? (21:7)
3. In addition to the laws of a regular Kohen, whom else is the Kohen Gadol prohibited to marry? (21:14)
4. May a Kohen's slave eat Terumah? (22:11)
5. Name the Biblical holidays in order.

II. From Rashi

6. Is an underage Kohen child (under Bar Mitzvah) allowed to go to the Jewish cemetery? (21:1)
7. When the Torah uses the word Pesach, what is it referring to? (23:5)
8. The Torah commands us to bring the Omer on the "day after the Shabbat." (23:11) When is that?
9. According to Rashi, what are the Sukkot in the verse: "I caused Bnei Yisrael to dwell in Sukkot when I took them out of the land of Egypt." (23:43)
10. Later a man, whose mother was Jewish and his father was Egyptian, came and pronounced the Name (of Hashem) and blasphemed... (24:10,11). Who was the Egyptian father?

III. From the Rabbis

11. Is a Kohen Gadol required to marry? (Ramban)
12. According to the Torah, for how many days are we required to take the Lulav and Etrog? (Talmud Sukkot 41a)
13. Why does Rashi include the convert in the Mitzvot of Sukkot? Why is the convert singled out for inclusion in this particular Mitzvah? (Rabbi Yaakov Kaminetsky)

IV. Haftorah : Ezekiel

14. In the Messianic period, how is the regular Kohen similar to the Kohen Gadol?

V. Relationships

- a) Aharon - Itamar
- b) Aharon - Levi
- c) Aharon - Reuven
- d) Aharon - Tziporah
- e) Aharon - Eliezer

ANSWERS FOR PARSHAT EMOR 5779

1. To his wife, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, and never-married sister.
 2. The Kohen is prohibited from marrying a divorcee, a harlot (a convert).
 3. To a widow
 4. Yes, he may.
 5. Pesach, Shavuot, Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot.
 6. No.
 7. Exclusively to the Pesach sacrifice. (In the Torah, the holiday is Chag HaMatzot.)
 8. On the second day of Pesach.
 9. Clouds of Glory.
 10. He was the Egyptian man whom Moshe killed in Egypt.
 11. Yes, he is.
 12. At home, only on the first day of Sukkot. In the Holy Temple, we are required to take the Lulav and Etrog for seven days of Sukkot.
 13. Hashem protected our ancestors in booths in the desert, not the convert's ancestor. Nevertheless, the convert is included in the Mitzvah.
 14. A regular Kohen would not be able to marry a widow!
- Relationships
- a) Father - Son
 - b) Grandfather Levi
 - c) Great Uncle Reuven
 - d) Brother-in-Law and Sister-in-Law
 - e) Uncle Aharon